

Style and Smiles Shine During SIUE Meridian Derby Event: “All About That Hat”

by Megan Wieser
May 10 2022 2:25 PM



EDWARDSVILLE – The Kentucky Derby is notorious for its showing of not only incredible horse racing but also fabulous hats and fascinators brimming with color and flowers galore.

During the main event on Saturday, May 7, Rich Strike stunned audiences worldwide with its top finish at the 148th Kentucky Derby. In preparation and anticipation of the big race, the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Meridian Society hosted a festive derby event, “All About That Hat,” on Tuesday, May 3 at The Outlet at Edison’s in Edwardsville.

Fit with a red carpet entrance and derby-themed lunch, music, and games, the lunch reception featured awards for Biggest Hat, Best Hat, Most Glamorous, Dapper Dan, Glitzy Gal, Hattitude, and more.

Meridian Society President Ethel Shanklin shared the mission of the Meridian Society. “We are an auxiliary organization of the SIUE Foundation, and we promote leadership and philanthropy and invest in SIUE community-based projects,” she shared. “Since 2003, we have given \$394,079 to 148 projects.”

“It is wonderful to be together and see everybody’s smiling faces,” said Mary Trice, of Edwardsville, a member of the Meridian Society. “I joined the Meridian Society because I know the good that they do for the community through awards. I am honored to be a part of that.”

Judy Koen, of Edwardsville, is a former employee and longtime supporter of SIUE. She attended the event donned in a hand-crafted hat that won the award for “Best in Show.”

“I take a craft foam and put it around the ribbon and then glue everything onto the form and the ribbon,” she explained. “Then, I can take it off to switch up the colors and mix and match my hats and outfits.”

“I had a delightful day,” Koen added. “Kudos to the ladies that put this event on. It has been a lot of fun!”

For more information or to join the SIUE Meridian Society, contact Julie Babington, director of annual giving with the SIUE Foundation, at 618-650-2378 or jbabing@siue.edu.

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville provides students with a high-quality, affordable education that prepares them for successful careers and lives of purpose to shape a changing world. Built on the foundation of a broad-based liberal education, and enhanced by hands-on research and real-world experiences, the academic preparation SIUE students receive equips them to thrive in the global marketplace and make our communities better places to live. Situated on 2,660 acres of beautiful woodland atop

the bluffs overlooking the natural beauty of the Mississippi River's rich bottomland and only a short drive from downtown St. Louis, the SIUE campus is home to a diverse student body of more than 13,000.