

SIUE's International Studies Days Featured Presentation On Ukraine, Highlighted Program Success

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE - The fifth edition of International Studies Days at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, held virtually May 3-6, was as successful as previous editions in helping address important global issues. The series of events included senior assignment presentations, panel discussions on organizations with an international focus regionally, and international education opportunities available to students, as well as a lecture aimed at educating the public on current developments in Ukraine.



“International Studies Days has become a tradition of student, faculty, and community engagement for the International Studies Program within the College of Arts and

Sciences,” said Sorin Nastasia, PhD, director of this program and associate professor in the Department of Applied Communication Studies. “Given the war in Ukraine and the plights of students, both local and international, this year’s series of events featured prominently a discussion of the difficulties related to survival under siege and the efforts to offer quality educational programming even during wartime.”

The keynote presentation, “Continuing Academic Practices Virtually during the Challenging Times of the Ukraine War,” featured Tetyana Mayboroda, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Management at Sumy State University in Ukraine. Mayboroda also serves as the deputy director for coordination of collaboration with foreign institutions and for work with international students at the Institute of Business, Economics, and Management of Sumy State University.

Mayboroda expressed appreciation for the opportunity to make remarks on the war in Ukraine and its impact on higher education, noting that such activities as International Studies Days constitute the best way to raise awareness about what is occurring in Ukraine and what Ukrainian academics are doing to support their students.

“As it stands, the war requires everyone to hold their front in their capacity, and the new motto of Sumy State University since the war has started is: our front is quality education,” shared Mayboroda. “We use academic platforms to deliver the message to faculty and students worldwide on what is happening in Ukraine and how we manage to continue our educational mission during the challenging times of the war.”

“I strongly believe that learning about the situation in Ukraine and with Sumy State University firsthand is crucial for students and staff of SIUE in terms of understanding current global issues, including the challenges our education system is facing, the motivation and desire we have to continue providing our education and research despite relocations, military actions, infrastructure damages, and many other problems,” continued Mayboroda. “At Sumy State University, we believe that a university is not only about its buildings, but also its people who continue holding the educational front wherever they are.”

“We have been developing international partnerships and e-learning platforms for years, and this helps us maintain our educational processes even ‘under shelling,’ a new term that has appeared in the Ukrainian education system,” Mayboroda said. “Significantly, SIUE has shown us its empathy.”

Additional events at International Studies Days were centered on the current state of organizations with an international focus in the greater St. Louis area and the array of international education possibilities open at SIUE.

Representatives of local businesses and nonprofit organizations talked about learning opportunities they can offer, while SIUE faculty and representatives of partnering organizations highlighted study abroad options.

“At SIUE’s International Studies Days, I had the opportunity to share how programs such as Go Global with USAKO Group can deliver learning opportunities to SIUE students,” added Han Ko, president, and CEO of USAKO Group. “The program provides a practical example of how two markets, U.S. and South Korea, with different cultures, languages, and goals can work together and bring value to each other in a peaceful and productive manner.”

“This is beneficial to SIUE students because industry and nonprofit leaders impart their first-hand experience and provide their international perspective. It not only gives an opportunity to grasp the knowledge in an interesting way but also creates opportunities like internships, jobs, even entrepreneurship besides networking,” stated Dhiraj Kumar, Technology Executive and Founder of EAI Vision LLC.

“The study abroad panel at International Studies Days provided an opportunity to highlight that you need to feel at home in a fast-changing world, no matter your major or where you think you may end up when you graduate from SIUE,” said Grahaeme Hesp, PhD, SIUE alumnus and regional director of institutional relations at the Foundation for International Education (FIE). “By studying abroad, students will experience new perspectives, learn how to navigate different cultures, and become more competitive in the job market.”

Those interested can find the recordings of the panel presentations and keynote address from the 2022 virtual edition of SIUE’s International Studies Days at www.facebook.com/siueints.