

Inclusive Welcome Receptions Build Community for all at SIUE

by Kalli Collins
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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's Inclusive Excellence, Education and Development Hub (The Hub) and the Kimmel Student Involvement Center hosted a series of special receptions throughout the week, welcoming and celebrating the various identity groups of incoming students.

Students that identify as Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American, Pacific Islander, LGBTQIA+, or Black were invited to the student welcome receptions. And while the receptions were tailored for the specific identity groups, all students were welcome to attend.

“The welcome events give students the opportunity to meet and engage with one another in a purposefully inclusive environment,” said Lindy Wagner, assistant vice chancellor for Inclusive Excellence, Education and Development. “The goal for these events is for students from various identity groups to feel seen and know that the university and surrounding communities have resources for them.”

Each welcome event included food from locally-owned businesses, music, games, and an opportunity to mingle with faculty, staff, and returning students. The welcome receptions helped new and returning students build a sense of belonging and make connections with one another, the campus, and their surrounding community.

“We want students to know that they belong here,” Wagner added. “We want them to feel that sense of belonging no matter how or if they choose to get involved on campus. We want them to know that there is a community that will surround them, support them, and do what it can to ensure they make it to graduation day and beyond. The welcome receptions are the beginning of the journey and graduation is the end goal. We want each student to know who will be there to help them along the way.”

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#) provides students with a high-quality education that powerfully transforms the lives of all individuals who seek something greater. A premier metropolitan university, SIUE is creating social and economic mobility for individuals while also powering the workforce of the future. 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.