

SIUE Cougar Baja Places First at International Competition

by Kalli Collins

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EDWARDSVILLE - A first-place finish in an international competition highlighted a recent showing by the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Engineering's Cougar Baja team. The team competed in the Baja SAE® series held Sept. 29-Oct. 2 in Green Valley, Ariz. The series consists of competitions that simulate real-world engineering design projects and their related challenges.

“We placed first in the sled pull at the competition and that means a lot to everyone on the Cougar Baja team,” said Matthew Buchholz, president of the Cougar Baja team. “It feels great to have all of our hard work pay off.”

Along with the 1st place finish in sled pull, the team also succeeded in the following categories:

- 8th in maneuverability
- 16th in acceleration
- 22nd in suspension
- 33rd in endurance

Buchholz, together with teammates Michael Voltz, Joshua Ford, Ethan Ditzel, Caleb Hildebrandt, Brian Smith, Gabe Dudek, Curtis Lake and Sam Churchill, competed against athletes from across the world.

“Being part of the Cougar Baja team definitely brings it all together from an academic perspective,” Buchholz said. “To be able to get hands-on experience and see our studies applied in front of our eyes solidifies the learning process.

The [School of Engineering](#) offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master’s degrees and two cooperative doctoral programs, all housed in a state-of-the-art facility. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. All undergraduate programs are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies.