

# Students Honored During SIUE's Special Graduation Celebrations

by Kalli Collins  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Inclusive Excellence, Education, and Development Hub (The Hub) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville hosted five special celebrations to honor graduates representing various historically minoritized populations during the week of Dec. 5-9, ahead of the University's fall 2022 commencement exercises being held Friday-Saturday, Dec. 16-17.

SIUE recognized graduates who identify as Hispanic/Latinx, Black, Asian American, Pacific Islander (AAPI), LGBTQIA+, and non-traditional during the week of celebrations. The pre-commencement ceremonies celebrated the extraordinary achievements made by these students.

“It is an honor for The Hub to celebrate students at events such as this,” said Lindy Wagner, assistant vice chancellor for Inclusive Excellence, Education, and Development. “It is our responsibility to ensure students feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and know they are a part of a community here at SIUE. What better way to do that than by honoring and celebrating them for their achievements.”

The ceremonies were originated by the Kimmel Student Involvement Center, the Student Opportunities for Academic Results (SOAR) Office, and the SIUE Safe Zone program. The groups continue to support the events alongside The Hub.

“We know that each student has a unique journey and has encountered a variety of moments in their college experience that have brought them to this moment,” Wagner added. “We also know that some of those may have been challenges and obstacles. Additionally, many of our students were able to participate in multiple graduation celebrations because we know our students don’t exist with one singular identity. Our goal is to show students that we see them for all that they are, all that they have been through to make it to graduation, and all that they will be as they journey from SIUE student to alumnus. We are privileged they celebrate with us.”

[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 12,500.

Photo: SIUE held Hispanic/Latinx, LGBTQIA+, Black, AAPI, and non-traditional graduation ceremonies.