

# Nurse Anesthesia Doctoral Candidates Receive Traditional White Coats

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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Nursing (SON) recognized 32 nurse anesthesia doctoral candidates during a traditional White Coat Ceremony held Tuesday, Jan. 10. The traditional ceremony symbolizes the transition into the clinical portion of the [nurse anesthesia Doctor of Nursing Practice](#) (DNP) specialization.

“The White Coat Ceremony is a rite of passage symbolizing how hard these students have worked over the past year in the program and how far they have come in such a short time,” said Kevin Stein, DNAP, CRNA, chair of the SON’s Department of Nurse Anesthesiology. “The relationships these students have built with one another will serve as much-needed support network as they continue to navigate the rigors of the program.”

The candidates will graduate in 2025 as SON’s eighth cohort of doctorally-prepared nurse anesthesiologists.

“We continue to see a strong interest in our nurse anesthesia program across the county with over 160 applicants for our last cohort,” said Leah Baecht, DNP, CRNA, APRN, nurse anesthesia DNP specialization director. “Our program is tailored to meet the needs of adult learners, ensuring a supportive and rich intellectual environment for our students.”

SIUE’s nurse anesthesia program boasts almost 60 clinical sites, giving the students experience of all anesthesia models and various levels of facilities. The students learn from faculty that are practicing clinicians in diverse areas of anesthesia.

*The [School of Nursing](#)’s programs are committed to creating excellence in nursing leadership through innovative teaching, evidence-based practice, quality research, patient advocacy and community service. Enrolling more than 1,700 students in its baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral programs, the School develops leaders in pursuit of shaping the nursing profession and impacting the health care environment. SIUE’s undergraduate nursing programs on the Edwardsville campus help to solve the region’s shortage of baccalaureate-prepared nurses and enhance the quality of nursing practice within all patient service venues. The School’s graduate programs prepare nurses for advanced roles in clinical practice, administration and education.*