



SIUE STEM Center Hosts 31st Science and Engineering Research Challenge

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Nearly 200 budding scientists will be visiting the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville campus Saturday, March 28. The STEM Center is hosting the regional competition for the 31st Science and Engineering Research Challenge (SERC) from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Morris University Center Meridian Ballroom.

The regional SERC event brings 5-12th graders from 10 counties together to present their experimental results. Students are eligible for a number of awards as well as a chance to move up to the next level of competition. Twenty-six winners from the SIUE regional advance to the state competition. Top prize is an all-expense paid trip to compete at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh.

SERC provides young people with a chance to try out the scientific method to answer a question they have about the world. With the help of a school mentor, students develop a research question, carry out experiments and write up their results.

“This is a great way for students to get a look at what scientists do every day,” said Colin Wilson, SIUE STEM Resource Center manager. “The SERC regional competition introduces families from the region to our campus, helps them meet people working in STEM jobs, and connects the SIUE faculty and students to the broader community.”

“SERC participation encourages students to follow through on STEM majors in college. Students are also more likely to be successful in classes having seen the scientific

method in action,” said Sharon Locke, director of the SIUE Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach. “Encouraging individuals into STEM classes is critical to the U.S. economy as the number of STEM jobs is growing and providing great opportunities for career advancement.”

The general public is welcome from 1-3 p.m. to view student posters and talk to the young scientists.

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#) provides students with a high quality, affordable education that prepares them for successful careers and lives of purpose. 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 nearly 14,000.