

# SIUE Athletics Announces Staff Promotions

by Joe Pott  
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EDWARDSVILLE – SIUE Director of Athletics Andrew Gavin continues to bolster his staff as SIUE Athletics restructures its leadership team heading into 2023-24. Gavin announced on Wednesday the promotions of Laura Smith-Keck and Luke Young.

Smith-Keck has been promoted to Director of External Relations while Young has been elevated to Director of Marketing.

Smith-Keck has been with the Cougars since 2020 and has been instrumental in the planning, management and execution of SIUE Athletics special events. She is directly responsible for events such as the SIUE Red and Black Benefit, Hall of Fame Induction ceremony and department's golf outing, while also overseeing gameday hospitality

during men's and women's basketball games. In addition, Smith-Keck will assist revenue generation through the annual fund and sponsorships and will maintain relationships with donors and corporate partners.

"SIUE is in a time of growth, and I am grateful for the opportunity to keep growing with it in my new position," Smith-Keck said. "It has always been my goal to help our student-athletes have the best possible experience here as I continue planning our special events and begin fostering relationships between SIUE Athletics, donors, and our surrounding community. It's so rewarding to showcase just how successful our student-athletes are both on and off the field."

A native of Troy, Illinois, Smith-Keck is a 2016 graduate of Illinois State where she earned a bachelor's degree in Mass Media: Management, Promotions and Sales and a master's degree in communications.

"Laura is such a critical member of our team," Gavin said. "Her commitment to serving others and attention to detail allows her to excel in this role while creating positive experiences for our stakeholders. Our ability to build relationships, provide first-class service, and partner with our communities will be enhanced with Laura in this role as Director of External Relations."

Young has been part of the Cougars' marketing team since Spring 2022 and previously served as part of the volleyball coaching staff for eight seasons. In his new role, Young will have full oversight of Athletics marketing and gameday atmosphere and promotions at home contests. Young also will lead the Cougars' branding and social media efforts.

"It is an honor to serve the community of SIUE and the Cougars Athletics department," Young said. "I am humbled to be asked to serve in this role, and grateful for the mentorship that has guided my passion in giving our fans and student-athletes a fantastic game day experience at all Cougars sporting events. I want to extend my appreciation to Andrew Gavin for putting his trust in me. It is exciting to be asked to take part in fulfilling his vision for a new chapter in Edwardsville. I also want to thank my wife Lisa for continually being my biggest fan."

Young earned a bachelor's of arts in visual communications from Graceland University, and a master's of fine arts from Northern Illinois.

"Building our brand, engaging our fans, and telling our story are priorities for SIUE Athletics," Gavin said. "Luke is ready to take charge of our marketing and fan engagement efforts while enhancing our digital presence on social media. I'm excited to watch him continue to grow with this opportunity."