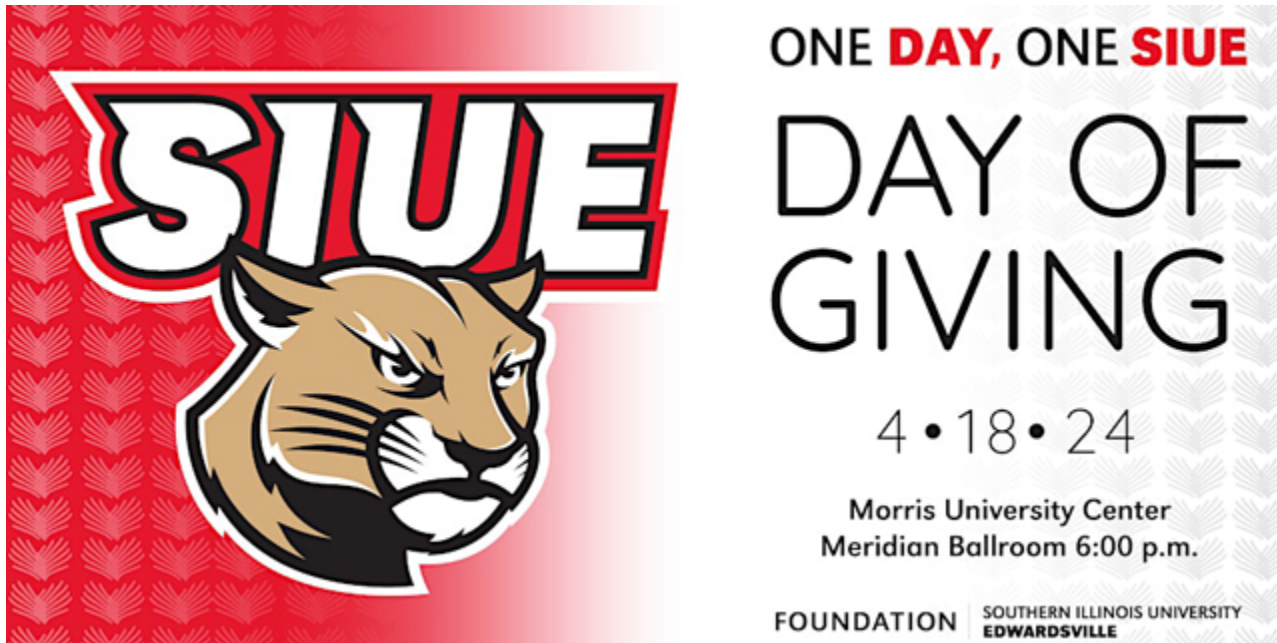


"One Day, One SIUE" Donations Feed Cougar Cupboard Mission

by Nicole Franklin
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EDWARDSVILLE - In a recent survey on the campus of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, nine percent of SIUE students admitted to the inability to afford a meal, which meant not eating for an entire day. The 2023 Basic Student Needs Survey with nearly 2400 respondents provided the data that affirmed the expansion of SIUE's nonprofit food pantry known as The Cougar Cupboard. This program will be one of many to benefit from [the third annual ONE DAY, ONE SIUE premier fundraiser](#), hosted on the Edwardsville campus in the Meridian Ballroom, Morris University Center on Thursday, April 18 at 6 p.m., which aims to "Give Today and Own Tomorrow." Scholarships for deserving students, faculty research in SIUE colleges, Lovejoy Library, Cougar Athletics offer a round of choices for donor dollars. The Cougar Cupboard is also on the menu as an effective initiative that supports student success.

[Watch SIUE students introduce the Cougar Cupboard here.](#)

Food and toiletry items, funded entirely through donations, are available in the Cougar Cupboard, which consists of a main location in the Morris University Center and miniature pantries throughout campus. At no cost, SIUE students, faculty and staff have access to provisions of fully stocked shelves.

“Student hunger should not inhibit a student’s path to graduation. We know that schoolwork and wellness suffer when students don’t have access to nutritional and reliable meals. Donors during ONE DAY, ONE SIUE can help feed student success by supporting the Cougar Cupboard,” said Miriam Roccia, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Lealia Williams, Student Care and Advocacy coordinator in the SIUE Office of Student Affairs, manages a staff of volunteers who start and end their shifts stocking donated essentials. Both Roccia and Williams recently shared concerning data from the aforementioned survey that informs which items to acquire and how often supplies need to arrive.

The Cougar Cupboard currently serves more students in a month than it served in its entire first year.

- 37% of SIUE students experienced limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner in the prior 30 days.
- 38% worried that food would run out
- 31% had to cut the size of their meals or skipped meals
- 23% did not eat
- 14% lost weight

(2023 Basic Student Needs Survey, n=2,398 respondents)

Williams notes that although the statistics are grim, students are encouraged to fill out an on-site survey to address their specific needs.

“We had 36 students come in yesterday, so that's letting us know that there is a need. Our students need food,” said Williams. “And a lot of our clients are international students. You have to remember that they're not used to the food that we have. They're used to fresh fruits and vegetables. I mean, they eat oatmeal. They eat some types of noodles, but they're used to fresh fruits. So the good thing about us having our survey is being able to ask them what items they would like to see.”

Roccia has personally pledged to match \$1500 in donations during the ONE DAY, ONE SIUE celebration. She hopes to inspire the community to come together around this effort and feels support for SIUE goes beyond the campus.

“Our SIUE students work, live, and contribute to our local community. Caring for our neighbors is at the heart of what makes the GlenEd community special. And our community is enhanced by SIUE students,” said Roccia.

ONE DAY, ONE SIUE is a giving opportunity with check presentations and live entertainment from the Robert Perry Band. [Visit siue.edu/oneday to register and make a gift.](https://siue.edu/oneday) The event is free to the public.

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](https://siue.edu) 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. Home to a diverse student body, SIUE is 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.