

# IMAGiNE

# 2030

PROGRESS REPORT 2025



Southern Illinois University  
CARBONDALE



# IMAGINE 2030



STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT



RESEARCH & INNOVATION



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION



BRANDING & PARTNERSHIPS



SUSTAINABILITY



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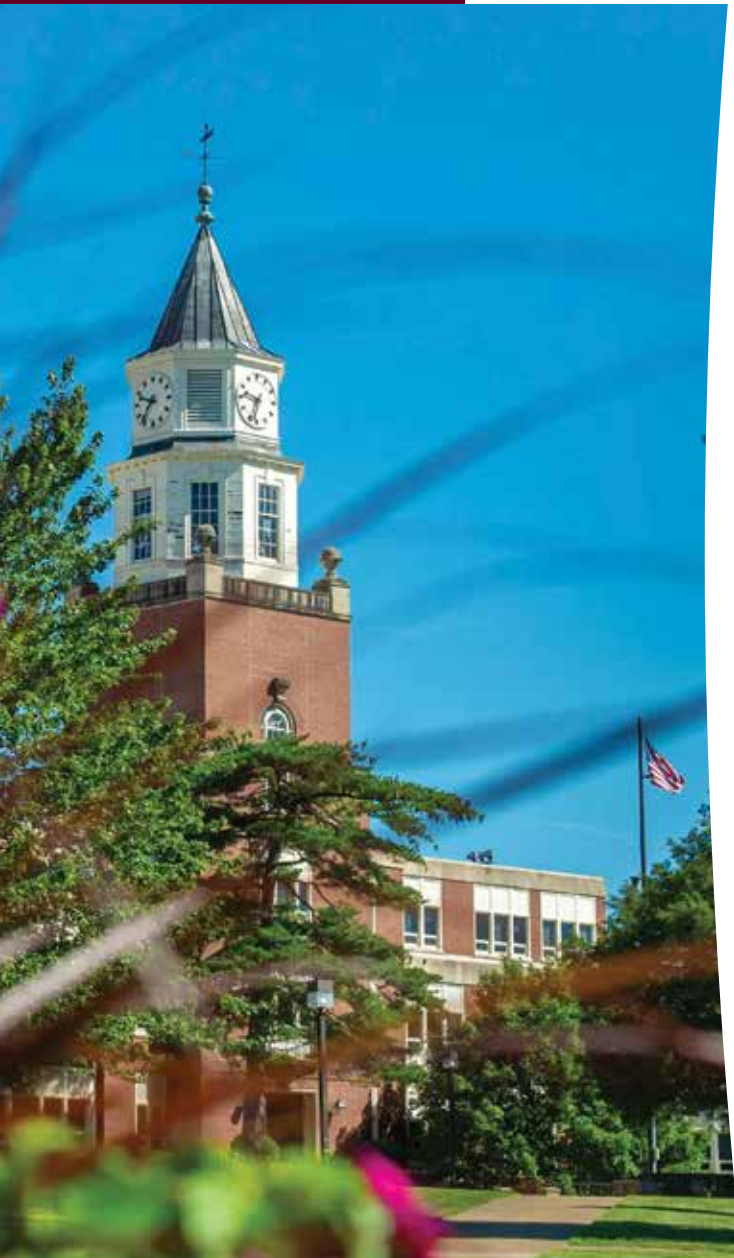
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## REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF MOMENTUM

Over the past year, Southern Illinois University Carbondale has continued to build measurable momentum across research, student success and institutional growth. These accomplishments reflect a focused effort to expand opportunity while strengthening the academic foundation that supports long-term impact.

**R1 + Opportunity  
Designation**

**3% Growth  
Spring Retention**

**6% Growth  
Freshmen from Southern Illinois**

**6% Average Growth  
Underrepresented Students**

### RESEARCH & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

SIU achieved Research 1 (R1) status and was designated an Opportunity University, positioning the institution among a select group nationally recognized for both research intensity and student outcomes.

### ENROLLMENT GROWTH & DEMAND

The university continues to experience sustained multi-semester growth, reversing prior declines and increasing demand – particularly from Southern Illinois and surrounding regions.

### STUDENT SUCCESS & RETENTION

Spring retention increased by 3%, reflecting expanded investments in advising, tutoring, first-year initiatives and student support services.

### INVESTING IN OUR EMPLOYEES

The university is strengthening its workforce through salary equity efforts guided by a comprehensive compensation study, expanded professional development through free employee tuition, and upgraded hiring systems that improve recruitment and operational efficiency.

### ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

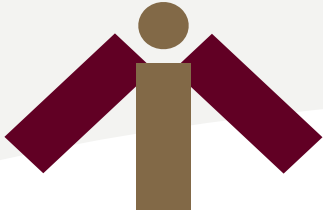
Programs such as Saluki Commitment, Say Yes admissions, and Saluki Step Ahead continue to reduce financial barriers and expand pathways to student access and completion.

### ONLINE & GRADUATE GROWTH

Online enrollment increased significantly, with graduate programs expanding rapidly to meet demand from working professionals and nontraditional learners.

Go Dawgs!

Austin A. Lane  
Chancellor



## STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT

**18 Objectives Achieved**

**30 Objectives Being Pursued**

**48 Total**

Accomplished **60%**

In Progress **40%**

## GROWING THE PACK

- This fall, we saw gains in the region and bordering states, more online students, and a 161% increase in online graduate enrollment.
- More good news: Three consecutive years of spring enrollment growth.

### By the numbers:

- **Fall 2025 enrollment remained steady, at 11,785 students**
- Southern Illinois students: +6%
- Border states students: +16%
- Online students: +23%
- Retention: +5%
- Saluki Step Ahead is fueling transfer enrollment — up 10% — through partnerships with 40+ community colleges across Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas.

**A stronger class, by design.** Simmons Law School boasted a 25% increase in first-year students for Fall 2025. The law school's commitment to experiential learning, affordability, dynamic and accessible faculty and small class sizes contribute to this success.

- 134 first-year law students
- 745 applicants (up from 600 in 2024)

## OPPORTUNITY IN ACTION

### Full-ride scholarships

**Chancellor's Scholarships** for first-year students:

- 35 students selected total
  - 26 from Southern Illinois
  - 7 from upstate Illinois
  - 2 from out of state

**Provost's Scholarships** for transfer students:

16 students selected total

- 10 from Southern Illinois
- 5 from upstate Illinois
- 1 from out of state

**First-Generation College Celebration Grant**

**Saluki Success Initiative** student retention program

**2025 Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society's Transfer Honor Roll**

- 3rd consecutive year
- Top 25% of transfer-friendly colleges and universities

*In a time of rapid change and shifting demographics across higher education, this is a significant achievement for Southern and a reflection of the hard work, resilience and commitment shown by every member of our campus community.*

**Chancellor Austin A. Lane**



## FIFTY YEARS OF IMPACT

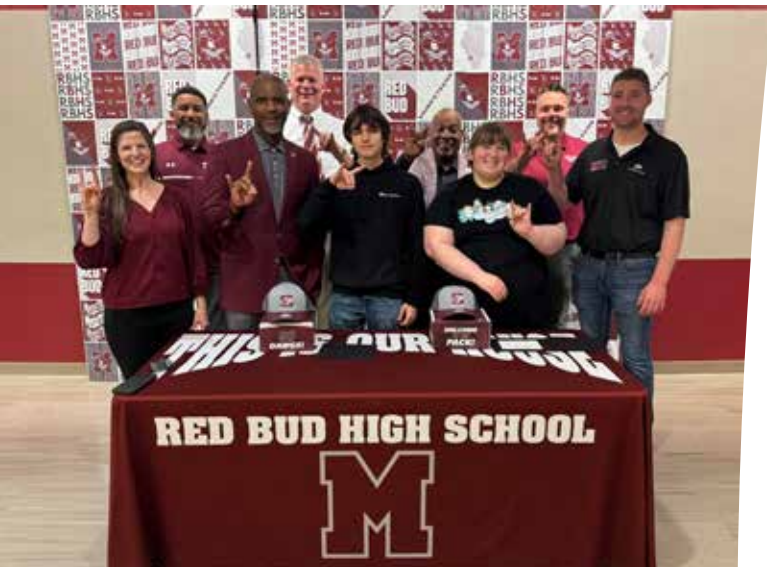
Our Hospitality, Tourism, and Event Management program celebrates its golden anniversary! Keeping with the program's mission to make the community the classroom, students created a marketing plan to help Carbondale's Varsity Center celebrate its 85th year. (Above) Autumn Montague and Regan Stoll and their classmates created marketing plans for the Varsity Center in 2025.

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME AT SOUTHERN

More and more students from Southern Illinois are choosing to stay close to home and build their future at SIU. They're finding that they don't have to leave the region to get hands-on experiences, strong career preparation, and a community that truly has their back. By staying local, these students are investing in themselves while strengthening the place they call home.



Carterville High School



Frankfort Community High School/ West Frankfort



# A DIFFERENT



## RESEARCH 1: VERY HIGH SPENDING AND DOCTORATE PRODUCTION

The prestigious designation by the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching confirms that we are on a level with the Ivy League and with top private and flagship universities across the country.

**Fewer than 5%** of the nearly 4,000 classified institutions are designated Research 1.

### Here's what it takes to be R1

On average, in a single year:

- \$50M+ in research expenditures
- 70+ doctoral degrees awarded

**Fewer than 5%** of all postsecondary institutions in the U.S. earn R1 status.

### Research grant funding:

- Total Federal Sources: \$28.80 M
- State of Illinois: \$25.49 M
- Private and Non-Profit Sources: \$21.48 M
- Doctoral degrees granted in 2025: 79



**Faculty prestige.** We are nothing without our people. The more we accomplish, the more top faculty we attract.

Students. Ambitious students in research fields know that R1 status ensures funding support and top-faculty mentorship. This is relevant for students at all levels. An R1 university encourages an atmosphere of academic aspiration and a community of curious, enterprising knowledge-seekers.

# KIND OF ELITE



**AT SIU IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU'RE FROM. IT MATTERS WHERE YOU GO.**

**Here's what it takes to earn Opportunity status**

- 2 in 5 students are First Generation College students
- Almost 40% of students are from underrepresented populations
- More than 33% of students receive Pell Grants
- Our graduates earn almost \$3 for every dollar invested at SIU

**Only 16%** of institutions nationwide are on the list of Opportunity Colleges and Universities – Higher Access, Higher Earnings.

**Opportunity means:**

We combine broad student access with strong graduate earnings. We expand access and help students achieve competitive career outcomes. Because student success doesn't end at graduation.

**Fewer than 1%** of colleges and universities in the nation hold this dual designation from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Higher Education. We're humbled. And we're proud.



## **R1 + Opportunity Universities**

Arizona State University Campus Immersion

Florida Atlantic University

Florida International University

George Mason University

Howard University

New Jersey Institute of Technology

Nova Southeastern University

Ohio University-Main Campus

San Diego State University

### **Southern Illinois University Carbondale**

Stony Brook University

Temple University

The University of Texas at Arlington

The University of Texas at El Paso

The University of Texas at San Antonio

University of California-Irvine

University of California-Merced

University of Central Florida

University of Houston

University of Illinois Chicago

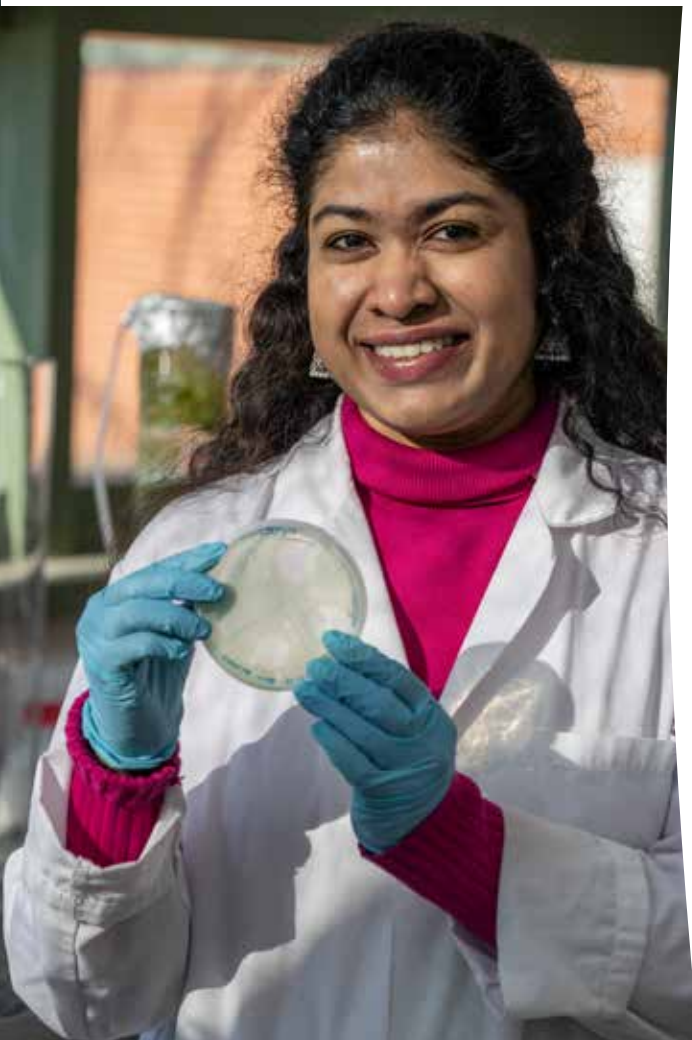
University of Louisville

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*As the only R1 in rural Illinois and within 100 miles, we are uniquely positioned as a powerhouse for innovation in this region. Our faculty and staff imagined earning this designation, and they worked tirelessly to get us to achieve it. I am especially grateful for our talented, hard-working faculty.*

**Chancellor Austin A. Lane**

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## RESEARCH & INNOVATION

**11** Objectives Achieved

**9** Objectives Being Pursued

**20** Total

Accomplished **55%**

In Progress **45%**

## WE ARE A RESEARCH UNIVERSITY AND THE WORLD IS OUR LABORATORY

Everywhere. All the time.

From our faculty to our first-year students.

### FARMING, REENGINEERED

**UAVs and UGVs on the farm.** Billy Graham Ram, Assistant Professor of Precision Agriculture, is teaching machines to detect plant disease and stress. He's bringing students into the ag tech lab to become drone designers, robot navigators and fluent in agricultural-AI.

**The 'holy grail' of CO<sub>2</sub> capture.** Saikat Talapatra, Professor in the School of Physics and Applied Physics, wants to use biowaste for carbon sequestration — even direct-air capture, which he calls the holy grail. His Fulbright Scholarship takes him to India, where he'll begin with rice waste.



### SALUKI SHOUT-OUT

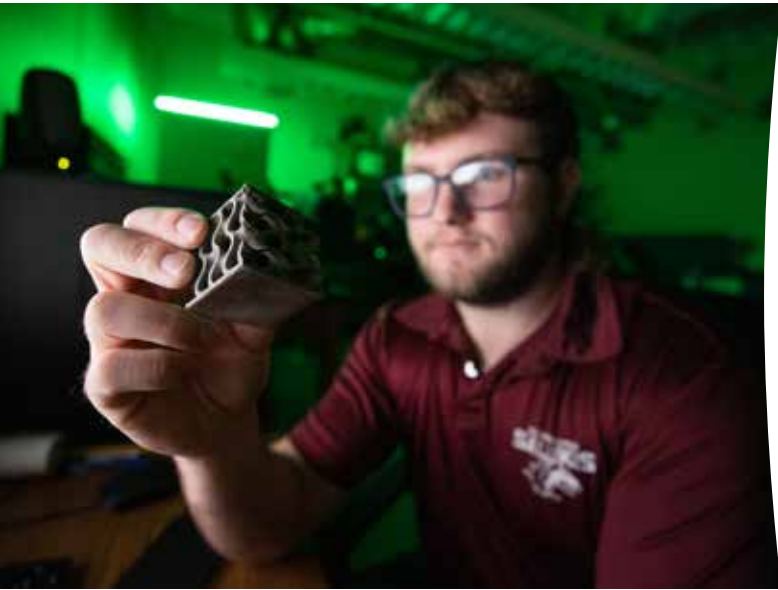
Khalid Meksem, Professor of Biotechnology and Genetics, is a 2025 Researcher to Know, so named by the Illinois Science & Technology Coalition. He focuses on growing a better soybean, from enhancing plant resilience to boosting protein and oil content in the seeds.



### WE LOVE A CHALLENGE

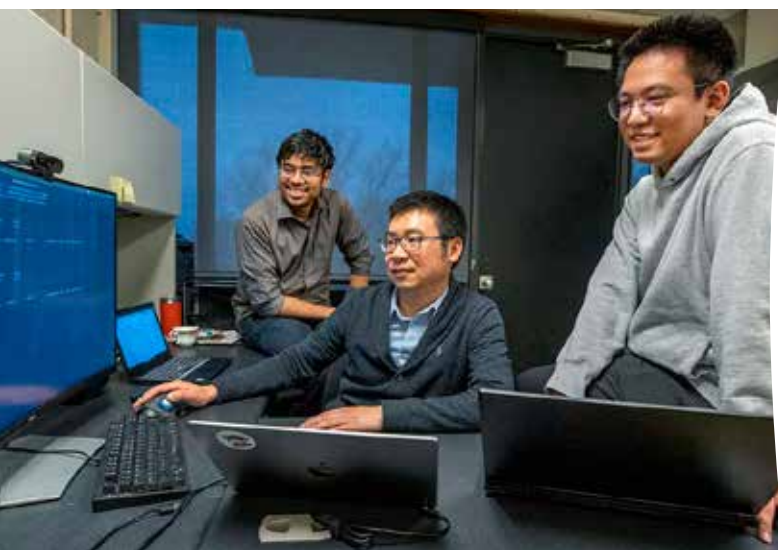
**Far-sighted vision.** Lahiru Jayakody, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Fermentation Science, is leading a research team, including students, to turn recycled caffeine into 7-MX, a drug to treat childhood myopia.





**Make it metal.** Sangjin Jung, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and a team including student researchers, has a National Science Foundation grant to bring reliability and design freedom to 3D metal manufacture.

**Cyber conservation.** With advances in AI often outstripping the capacity of existing hardware, Xiaopeng Jiang, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, is using an NSF grant to leverage the existing computer environment with “united learning.”



**Brainiac.** Chao Lu, Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, is using an NSF grant to support advancements in memristor-crossbar-array (MCA). He’s developing software tools to accelerate high-energy efficiency and brain-inspired neuromorphic computing.

## FROM PHOTOGRAPHY TO PHOTOSYNTHESIS

We embrace a broad definition of research. Innovation and discovery in the arts happen every day at SIU. From the Big Muddy New Play Festival and the Big Muddy Film Festival to Outside the Box New Music Festival and the Rickert-Ziebold Trust Award art competition for graduating seniors, we encourage those who are free to leave their comfort zones far behind.

## SALUKI SHOUT-OUT

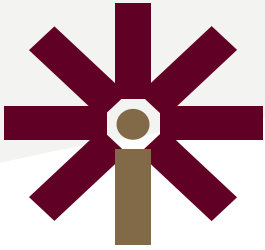
Nancy Yu, MFA student in glass, won top honors at the International Glass Art Society conference with her intricate glass headdress “Crown of Glass: Yang Guifei,” a piece paying homage to one of the Four Beauties of the Tang Dynasty.



## SALUKI STARS

An SIU production crew, including more than 40 students, contributed to the NASA television documentary of a live eclipse broadcast, “2024 Total Solar Eclipse: Through the Eyes of NASA,” that won a News & Documentary Emmy in 2025. And in 2026, two SIU alumni were on the red carpet for the Academy Awards! Jack Piatt tied for Best Live Action Short Film with his production of “The Singers.” And Hilla Medalia was nominated for Best Documentary Short for “Children No More: Were and Are Gone.”





## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

**9 Objectives Achieved**

**9 Objectives Being Pursued**

**18 Total**

Accomplished **50%**

In Progress **50%**

### RETHINKING HOW STUDENTS LEARN

An interdisciplinary team launched a three-year NSF-funded project to rethink challenging introductory classes — especially those that can create barriers for students not fully prepared for college-level work.

This model flips the classroom: lectures and readings happen outside class, while class time focuses on hands-on learning, interaction and discussion.

This project is led by Senetta Bancroft, Associate Professor with the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Sciences and the School of Education, alongside Associate Professor Heidi Bacon and Professor Jennifer Koran in the School of Education.



### WITH YOU

With You, an exhibition at Morris Library, celebrated the rise of women's sports over the past 50 years, honoring female trailblazers including women boxers and the SIU Women's Rugby Club.

Featured speaker Bobbi Knapp, Associate Professor of Sport Studies, said: "I've noticed there have always been women who've fought for and taken the opportunities to be physically active — and when society has cracked a door open, there have been girls and women there to push the door further for more women to have such opportunities."

**That's the Saluki Spirit!**

## YOU BELONG HERE

**At SIU, you're free to be you.** Providing fair opportunities for all Salukis is an essential part of our mission — and always has been, starting with our first graduating class. Anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion aren't a passing trend or political statement. **It's who we are and what we do.**

### SUPPORT THAT SHOWS UP

Nearly 60% of college students experience a diagnosable mental health condition. More than 66% say it impacts their academic performance.

*Source: [mentalhealthstats.org](https://www.mentalhealthstats.org)*

- Student Health Services is one of only 71 higher education institutions to earn the 2025 Excellence in Mental Health and Well-Being award from Insight into Academia magazine. The recognition highlights campuswide integration of mental health initiatives, peer support and promotion of emotional resilience.
- A grant-funded team effort between our Department of Public Safety and Counseling and Psychological Services places crisis counselors on first-response teams for mental-health-related calls — paired with support and follow-up care. **This program is the first of its kind in the nation.**
- Air Force ROTC offers an interactive mental health training program using avatar-based characters voiced by actors trained in emotional intelligence, presenting realistic scenarios — a major improvement over lecture-only formats.

## SALUKI SHOUT-OUT



**Jonny Gray**, Associate Professor in Communication Studies, is the 2025 Lindell W. Sturgis Award recipient. A longtime advocate for the LGBTQ+ community and environmental causes, Gray said the award signifies SIU’s commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion.



**Yahaira “Yaya” Vargas** received the 2025 Dr. Wesley G. Robinson-McNeese ADEI Lifetime Achievement Award. A community employment specialist with the Evaluation and Development Center and mentor in the School of Health Sciences, Vargas advances SIU’s ADEI mission through her work with SI CARE.

## CELEBRATING THE WINS

### New Citizens

We are proud to welcome new citizens to the United States. SIU’s Simmons Law School hosted a naturalization ceremony for 65 of the nation’s newest citizens in April.

### Belonging Week

Each academic year begins with Belonging Week, a campuswide celebration of diversity, equity and inclusion. The 2025 theme: Southern. You Belong Here.

### Military Friendly

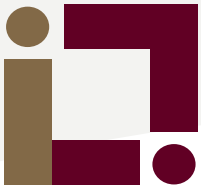
SIU Online and Extended Campus locations in Florida and California earned 2025–2026 Military Friendly® School distinctions from VIQTORY, a service-disabled, veteran-owned organization, with the list published annually in G.I. Jobs magazine.

### Even Bulls Have Tests at SIU

Part community outreach, part hands-on learning, the SIU Beef Evaluation Center hosts an annual Bull Performance Test and Sale. Students evaluate growth performance, body condition, genetic traits and probable carcass quality.

This year’s all-female team includes RJ Hunt, Alayna Menees, Cecilia Castillo, Jorri VanDyke, Alexandra Mero and Lacey Bourn.





## BRANDING & PARTNERSHIPS

**14** Objectives Achieved

**8** Objectives Being Pursued

**22** Total

Accomplished **64%**

In Progress **36%**

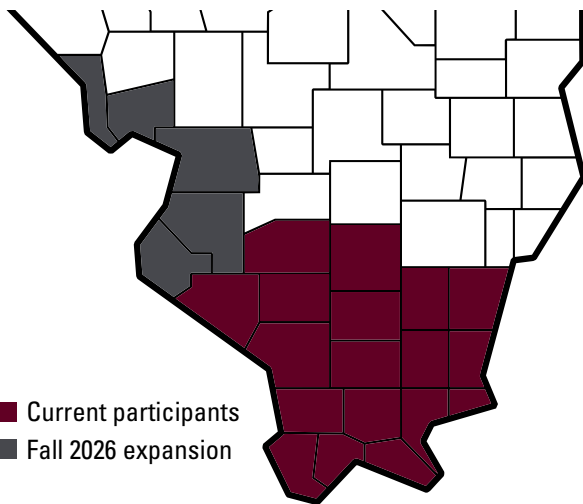
## SALUKI START CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

We're offering high school juniors and seniors in the Southern Illinois area a jumpstart on an SIU degree. Students recommended by their schools, with a 3.0 GPA and demonstrated readiness for college-level work, can begin taking courses — tuition-free.

### PROGRAM LAUNCH AND EXPANSION

Saluki Start Concurrent Enrollment launched across Southern Illinois with **37 partner high schools**.

**Expansion into the Metro East region is underway for Fall 2026.**



## SAY YES TO SIU

We are proud to participate in the State of Illinois' One Click College Admit initiative, which streamlines the admissions process for qualifying students in Illinois. We offer automatic admission for most programs for Illinois high school students with a 2.75 GPA.



## PARTNERSHIPS THAT MATTER

Partnerships build community — and community builds partnerships. Established: the Deaconess Illinois Scholars Program, a supportive agreement to give experiential learning opportunities to our College of Health and Human Services students, and to keep highly trained, new professionals in our region. Partnerships are part of the Image 2030 strategic plan.

**Soaring.** SIU and Chaoyang University of Technology (CYUT) in Taiwan signed a memorandum of understanding that offers in-state tuition to CYUT students in our School of Aviation. The agreement extends access to international internships and global opportunities for our students.

## SIU DAY

This year, 800+ students from 19 area high schools came to campus for a sneak-peek at what it means to be a Saluki — participating in hands-on learning opportunities from glassblowing to auto tech. It's about helping prospective students see themselves as Salukis, getting them excited about college, and opening their eyes to the career paths of the future.

**MORE THAN A MESSAGE**

In marketing, we speak directly to students, their families, and our community. We favor direct language and efficient communication. We prioritize inclusive language and we don't use jargon.

Some of what we say about SIU may sound like other universities. What's important, though, are the qualities that make Salukis stand out, stand up, and dig in.

**A DIFFERENT KIND OF ELITE**

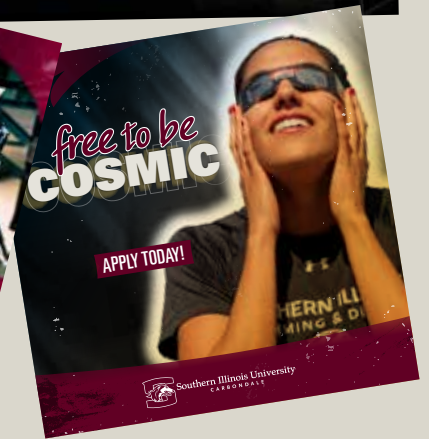
We have something big to talk about. Not only are we ranked as a top-level research university, but we are also recognized as a place that opens doors for students from all backgrounds — with a proven track record of post-graduation success

**R1 + Opportunity University**

Our R1 status gives your degree added weight and increases your opportunities to walk into your career with hands-on, professional, practical experience – in every major. Fewer than 1% of colleges and universities are officially designated Opportunity Universities and R1 by the Carnegie Classification for Institutions of Higher Learning. We believe it doesn't matter where you're from. **It matters where you go.**

**FREE TO BE YOU**

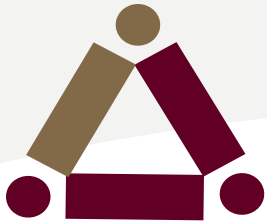
Salukis don't come here to fit in. We come here to be real. Authenticity takes courage. SIU is where we shed what we've been told we should be and embrace our genuine selves. We're here to let our individual lights shine. You know who you are. You belong here.



**NEWSWORTHY**

A \$2.25 million estate gift from alumnus Roy D. Franke will support the Charlotte Thompson Suhler School of Journalism and Advertising, sustaining immersive, career-focused learning experiences.





## SUSTAINABILITY

**13** Objectives Achieved

**12** Objectives Being Pursued

**25** Total

Accomplished **52%**

In Progress **48%**

## BLEEDS MAROON, THINKS GREEN

From a living laboratory campus to research that resonates worldwide, sustainability is more than a value — it's a practice. It shapes how we learn and lead, create and plan for the future. At SIU, sustainability is second nature.

### DECODING ECOSYSTEMS

**Up past bedtime.** Light pollution keeps birds up about an hour longer — worldwide. Brent Pease, Assistant Professor of Forestry and a research partner at Oklahoma State University teamed up to compare 180 million+ bird vocalizations with global satellite imagery. Science magazine published their findings. Next: understanding how birds use that extra hour — and whether it helps or harms them.



**Indicators of change.** SIU graduate student Cristina La is studying pollution's impact on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem by focusing on indicator species — delta smelt and longfin smelt.



**Bioaccumulation in iconic fish.** Michael Lydy, Professor of Zoology, and Kara Huff Hartz, senior scientist at SIU's Center for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, are studying how — and how much — pesticide exposure interferes with prey-avoidance behavior in juvenile Chinook salmon.

**The secret lives of deer.** Understanding how deer socialize may be key to slow the spread of diseases like chronic wasting disease. A team of SIU researchers, including Center for Wildlife Sustainability Research Associate John Vinson, Assistant Professor of Zoology Guillaume Bastille-Rousseau, and about 10 Zoology students studied 300 hours of camera-collar footage in this study.



**CHALLENGE WASTEFUL THINKING**

Food makes up 22% of municipal waste and is the third-largest human source of methane. 60% of plastics go to food packaging. Bhagya Jayantha, a doctoral student in Microbiology, is tackling both issues. He’s developing ways to turn food waste into biodegradable food packaging using oxidative hydrothermal dissolution — a technology developed at SIU by Ken Anderson, Professor and Director of SIU’s Advanced Energy Institute.



**GET THE LEAD OUT**

SIU’s School of Aviation is partnering with Swift Fuels, an Indiana-based fuel developer and supplier, to test low-lead and unleaded fuel in piston aircraft. Early results are promising, with comparable performance and a cleaner burn.



**WELCOME TO THE FAMILY**

We are only as great as our people. The School of Biological Sciences is advancing research in global environmental change with its cluster-hire of four new tenure-track faculty.



Laís Petri, Iris Holmes, Marie-Sophie Garcia-Heras and Michael Grundler gather in the Plant Biology Greenhouse and Conservatory.

**GROUNDBREAKING**

A new Wildlife Habitat Education Center will anchor year-round programming at Touch of Nature, serving as a hub for environmental education, visitor check-in, and indoor learning. The hands-on conservation facility is made possible by a \$3M gift from SIU alumnus Chuck Trover.

**MILES OF MOMENTUM**

At SIU’s Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center, more than 12 miles of interconnected, multi-use trails offer 12 distinct trail segments for hikers and mountain bikers of all skill levels. The system includes nearly 10 miles of bike-optimized singletrack, all anchored by the new SIU Credit Union Trailhead Pavilion — a purpose-built gateway that welcomes visitors at the main point of entry. The pavilion is the result of a \$500,000 gift from the credit union.

**SALUKI SHOUT-OUT**

The Center for Wildlife Sustainability Research, formerly known as the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory, celebrates its diamond jubilee — 75 years of research, conservation, impact and inspiration.



# CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

## The structure of Imagine

A data-driven framework to align our facilities investment, our priorities, and our long-term financial sustainability. Our emerging plan connects research environments, centralizes the student experience and enhances the traditions and natural beauty of our campus.

**1,000+ faculty, staff, students and community** participated in our master plan survey.



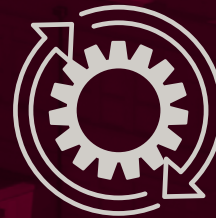
### CENTRALIZED

- Shift student housing to Campus Lake, including a Saluki Village for upperclassmen
- Revitalization of the Student Center
- Enhancement of the Quads and other open spaces
- Connecting research environments highlighting R1-forward collaboration



### RIGHT-SIZED

- Consolidation of academic buildings
- Phase out aging structures that present operational risk
- Divest from Southern Hills



### MODERNIZED

- Research facilities upgrades
- Dining and housing facilities modernization
- Tunnel-system improvements



### NEXT STEPS

- Finalize projects
- Project phasing strategy
- Rough order of magnitude cost estimation
- Master Plan report
- Final Board Approval

# COMPENSATION EQUITY STUDY



University-wide compensation modernization initiative conducted in partnership with CBIZ Compensation Consulting, a nationally recognized higher education compensation firm.

**Compensation 2030 began in 2024** in partnership with CBIZ to investigate salaries and develop a data-based compensation model to adjust wages for both current and new employees.

- Development of a modern career architecture framework
- Market benchmarking against peer R1/R2 institutions
- Internal equity and salary compression analysis
- Compensation adjustments impacting more than 100 employees
- Creation of standardized job families and career pathways
- Compensation review and analysis supporting more than 4,000 employees
- Multiple campus forums and employee engagement sessions conducted throughout the study process



## INVESTING IN OUR EMPLOYEES

### *Non-Represented Employee Salary Adjustments*

Non-Represented Employees	986
Number of Increases to New Market Minimums	226
Number of Compression Increases	239
Average Percentage Increase	3.79%

**Total Increase \$1,900,657.35**

# SALUKI NATION

**THE FLYING SALUKIS** won the top spot at the 2026 National Intercollegiate Flying Association championships -- making them 10-time national champs.

The nationally recognized aviation team has placed in the top five for 17 consecutive years, including 14 of 15 years in the top three in the nation.

Ben Campbell, Thomas Nguyen and Kroosh Patel each took home individual national titles at the 2026 competition.



# BUILDING A LEGACY

**Roger and Sally Tedrick.** Welcoming Salukis in style! The Tedrick Welcome Center, our first major campus building project in more than a decade — is now open. The 44,000-square-foot facility includes a 14,000-square-foot welcome center to serve as a central hub for campus engagement and the new home of the SIU Foundation.



# TAKEOVER TOURS

The Saluki Takeover Tour for the 2025-2026 academic year brought together alumni, students, faculty, staff and future Salukis. We reached **more than 50 high schools in Southern Illinois alone** and drew hundreds of attendees at each major stop – from Indianapolis and Washington, D.C. to St. Louis, Chicago, central Illinois, and sites in Florida and Texas. The tour reflects the hometown connection and national reach that define our Saluki network.



**• SIU FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- \$39M raised in FY2025 — the second-highest year on record
- \$448M raised toward our \$500M by 2030 campaign goal

**Day of Giving. A record-setting year.**

- \$5,714,315 raised in 24 hours
  - 1,073 donors
  - 10th annual event
- Since it began in 2017, Day of Giving has generated \$23.6M+ total



**Pat and Bob England.** Through a \$250,000 gift, the SIU sweethearts — married 50+ years — established the England Student Center Lounge, a student-designed gathering space on the fourth floor. The lounge also honors former student radio station WIDB.



# SALUKI SPIRIT

## HOME RUN

\$4.5 million from an anonymous donor will leave a lasting impact on generations of Salukis:

- \$4 million to support scholarships for female student-athletes
- \$500,000 for improvements to Charlotte West Stadium, home of Saluki softball

SIU alumnus Ronald Smith donated \$250,000 for a new video board at Charlotte West Stadium.



## BEHIND THE SCENES

The Steve Wells Production Studio for the Saluki Athletics media team is a modern space designed to elevate how Saluki Spirit is shared. The renovations included updating the studio and acquiring much-needed media equipment. The gift is from alumnus Steve Wells.

## BACK IN MAROON

Saluki quarterback DJ Williams will return to the Saluki football program in 2026! The record-breaking quarterback finished eighth in the Walter Payton Award voting and third in the Missouri Valley Football Conference Offensive Player of the Year voting in 2025. Williams also earned All-American honors from FCS Football Central, Associated Press, and Stats Perform, along with All-MVFC Honorable Mention.




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*I'm excited to continue to build on what I started with this team last year. Time to go win a championship now.*

**DJ Williams**  
Saluki Quarterback

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## SALUKI SHOUT-OUT

**Ashley Jackson** is a Saluki Shaker and business owner. She runs Studio 84 in Murphysboro — the same dance studio where she started competing at age 2. After years of national competition and weekend performances, she calls dance one of the most rewarding parts of her life. She chose SIU to stay close to home and keep dancing. Now, she's balancing it all: owner, student, performer and community leader.

## HALL OF FAME

Six new inductees joined the Saluki Athletics Hall of Fame in 2025: Jeremy Chinn (football), Fabray Collins (football), Shaye Harre (softball), Brianna Jones (softball), Rodney Watson (men's basketball) and Peyton Wilhoit (men's golf). Chinn served as the 2025 Homecoming Parade Grand Marshal.

The Hall also honored the university's 11 national champion men's and women's gymnastics teams from 1964-1975.

## TOP DAWGS IN THE CLASSROOM

### State Farm Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) Good Neighbor Award

- Joshua Delgado (men's track & field): Finance major, MVC Honor Roll 3x, community service includes tutoring and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) leadership roles.
- Eva Krakowski (volleyball): Communication Design major, American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Academic Award-Winning Team, 2x MVC Honor Roll, dean's list and community services.
- Kelowna Ngovi (women's basketball): Computer Science major, dean's list, MVC Honor Roll, community service includes community clean-up, 9/11 Stair Climb Challenge, Hopewell Baptist Church Vacation Bible School volunteer, Special Olympics fundraising.

### MVC Elite 18 Award

- Alex Cimera (men's swimming & diving): Aviation Management major, earned this award for the highest cumulative GPA in his sport.

### MVC Scholar-Athletes

- Across the board, Salukis earned recognition as MVC Scholar-Athletes, a recognition of academic success in addition to athletic honors.



The **SIU Dawg Pound** is the official student section for all 16 Division I Saluki athletic programs, and we are **the best** student section in the MVC. Go Salukis!

# AT A GLANCE



## STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT

18 Objectives Achieved

30 Objectives Being Pursued

48 Total

Accomplished 60%

In Progress 40%



## RESEARCH & INNOVATION

11 Objectives Achieved

9 Objectives Being Pursued

20 Total

Accomplished 55%

In Progress 45%



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

9 Objectives Achieved

9 Objectives Being Pursued

18 Total

Accomplished 50%

In Progress 50%



## BRANDING & PARTNERSHIPS

14 Objectives Achieved

8 Objectives Being Pursued

22 Total

Accomplished 64%

In Progress 36%



## SUSTAINABILITY

13 Objectives Achieved

12 Objectives Being Pursued

25 Total

Accomplished 52%

In Progress 48%



## TOTAL PROGRESS

65 Objectives Achieved

68 Objectives Being Pursued

133 Total

Accomplished 49%

In Progress 51%