

Pembrook, Budzban look to new year

Wednesday, August 15, 2018



With a blink of an eye, summer vacation has ended and students are returning to the campus at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville for a new academic term.

On this week's episode of Segue, the University's premier radio program, SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembrook and College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Dean Greg Budzban look back at what happened in 2017-2018, and ahead to what students and faculty might be seeing on campus or in their classrooms in 2018-2019.

This episode of Segue airs at 9 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound.

"Once again, we have a state budget! We emerged from our regular legislative session with a budget on time," Budzban mentions. "How did that change things on campus?"

"It certainly changes the way we do our planning," Pembrook replies. "We had a two percent increase in our state budget, which allows us to move forward with improvements and innovations. It has reignited citizens' confidence in state higher education institutions, and as you know, that is important! Unfortunately, when the budgets were tied up, it gave surrounding states the opportunity to raid the brainpower of Illinois."

The SIU System also welcomed its new interim president, J. Kevin Dorsey, PhD, MD. He previously served as the dean and provost of the SIU School of Medicine for 14 years.

"I've spoken with him four or five times, and one of the things I think is helpful in the current situation is his profession," Pembrook says. "He is using metaphors of healing and opportunities for the System as a whole to become healthier than it has been over the past few months.

"As an individual, he had a PhD background before he received his MD, so he thinks from an interdisciplinary standpoint. The conversations we've had revolved around interdisciplinary collaboration and the creation of new opportunities to meet the needs of Illinois citizens."

Those who have been to SIUE during the summer could not help but notice the plethora of construction projects occurring across the 2,660-acre campus.

"We're about to reopen our large science complex after a \$30 million building and renovation project. What other projects have you been excited about?" Budzban inquires.

“We’ll soon be cutting the ribbon on our Science East Building,” Pembroke says. “Combined with the building of Science West, this has been the second largest building project in higher education in Illinois in the last two or three years!”

Additionally, Art and Design East received interior and exterior renovations that not only improved its aesthetics, but also its energy conservation and efficiency.

The Morris University Center’s Goshen Lounge also received an update. New glass was installed in its massive sky light fixture; a project Pembroke explains took place during a major rainstorm.

“The Goshen has taken many forms—a sand volleyball court, a skating rink— during that storm, it was also a waterfall,” Pembroke recalls.

Aside from a few other cosmetic projects, such as improving sidewalks and walkways, other large projects are about to get started, including the massive overhaul of Founders Hall. Lovejoy Library and other aspects of Library and Information Services are also revamping their methods in order to better serve students and faculty.

In addition to the new buildings and renovation projects on campus, Pembroke outlines some of the new programs coming soon to campus (or to a computer screen near you).

“In 2018-19, we will have an online criminal justice policy master’s program, a new online MBA, a master’s in nutrition and an MFA in creative writing,” Pembroke says. “We’ll also soon have a master’s in public health, which is expected to receive final approval for the 2019-20 term.”

As always, SIUE will continue to emphasize interdisciplinary degree opportunities and international programs, as well as expand its doctoral degree programs.

“You will hear a lot of talk about doctorates in occupational therapy and physical therapy, cyber organization or management from the School of Business, or something hardware or software-based in cyber security from the School of Engineering,” Pembroke says. “These programs will also be locally developed.”

“With everything you hear about elections being compromised or even corporate internal warfare, the amount of infrastructure you need to keep your data safe is intense,” Budzban says. “I’m glad that there are areas out there in need of those students.”

To hear the entire conversation between Pembroke and Budzban, listen to this week’s episode of Segue at 9 a.m. this Sunday, Aug. 19, on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound.

.

By Madelaine Deardeuff, SIUE Marketing & Communications