In this holiday edition of the Embracing Diversity and Inclusion Newsletter, we would like to celebrate the month of December across cultures and religions. With diverse holidays being celebrated this month, including Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas, it is increasingly important to promote inclusion on our campus during this time of year. It is vital to acknowledge differences in celebrations and customs with a humble heart and an open mind.

We encourage the SIUE community to celebrate togetherness this month with people from diverse backgrounds.

If you would like to contribute or have any questions about the Embracing Diversity and Inclusion Newsletter, please contact Dr. Venessa A. Brown at 618-650-5867 or vbrown@siue.edu.
SIUE PHARMACY STUDENTS TAKE PASSION FOR HEALTH AND HELPING OUTSIDE

By cleaning and beautifying senior citizens' yards in Edwardsville and Glen Carbon, SIUE School of Pharmacy students improve the health and well-being of the region through service. Read More

SIUE EAST ST. LOUIS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GIVE THANKS FOR GOOD FRIENDS AND GOOD FOOD

In the spirit of the holiday, SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School (CHS) continued its tradition of turkey, thankfulness and togetherness during its fifth annual Thanksgiving Day Meal Celebration. More than 100 students walked into the festively decorated room to the cheers and applause from enthusiastic supporters. The meal was catered by Sunday Dinner Catering, owned by SIUE alumna and former staff member Terri Montgomery. “This is an amazing event, and I’m thankful to be a part of it,” said SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembrook. “Thanks to each of you for all you do at the SIUE East St. Louis Center all year.” Read More

SIU SDM PROVIDES NEARLY $22,000 IN FREE DENTAL CARE DURING VETERAN’S CARE DAY

Faculty, staff and students at the SIU School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) demonstrated their appreciation for the sacrifice and service of the nation's veterans by providing free dental care at the inaugural Veteran’s Care Day. SIU SDM third- and fourth-year dental students, under the supervision of dental school faculty who are all licensed dentists, provided free exams, x-rays, cleanings, fillings and extractions at no cost. “We understand that the selflessness of those who serve our country is the very reason we enjoy our freedoms,” said Katie Kosten, DMD, director of Community Dentistry. “We know there are a lot of veterans in need of dental care. This was a way that we could give back in the way we are equipped. We were honored to say thank you to our veterans.” Read More

ANGEL TREE EVENT AIDS FAMILIES IN NEED

Student Government’s Angel Tree invites sponsors to help bring gifts to children just in time for the holiday season. Names of children are then placed on the tree, which sits just inside the Meridian Ballroom. Through the help of the Salvation Army, people can adopt or sponsor children by picking their name off the tree. Read More
As graduate students, some of the most important learning and skill building often occur off campus, and attending a professional conference can be a meaningful event in your early career. Professional conferences provide attendees with the opportunity to learn from nationally recognized speakers, attend exceptional education sessions to expand knowledge, as well as meet and network with leading professionals in the field. As a full-time Art Therapy Counseling graduate student and graduate assistant for the Office of Institutional Diversity & Inclusion, I was afforded the opportunity to attend the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) Conference held Oct. 31-Nov. 4 in Miami, FL.

Here I attended a variety of presentations, workshops, and panels covering a wide-variety of topics that enlarged my vision and understanding of art therapy. As a minority student, this was also an opportunity to network with other minority graduate students and professionals in the field from around the world. Attending this conference has inspired me to encourage other students at SIUE to seek out early opportunities for professional development. The costs may seem intimidating but the support is available and the opportunity begins with a conversation.

Please contact Tanadja Barber at tabarbe@siue.edu if you would like to know more.

Click Here to View More Photos from AATA 2018

FALL COMMENCEMENT CELEBRATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GRADUATION
DECEMBER 3, 2018, 2:30 P.M., MERIDIAN BALLROOM

RAINBOW GRADUATION
DECEMBER 3, 2018, 4 P.M., MUC MAPLE/DOGWOOD ROOM

BLACK GRADUATION
DECEMBER 4, 2018, 4 P.M., MUC CONFERENCE CENTER

LATINX GRADUATION CELEBRATION
DECEMBER 5, 2018, 4 P.M., MUC MAPLE/DOGWOOD ROOM

NONTRADITIONAL STUDENT GRADUATION
DECEMBER 8, 2018, 11 A.M., MUC CONFERENCE CENTER

DECEMBER COMMENCEMENT
DECEMBER 15, 2018, 9 A.M., VADALABENE CENTER

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION
Hanukkah (or Chanukah) is an eight-day Jewish festival celebrating the rededication of the Temple to the service of God in 164 BCE. According to religious stories, when the Maccabees entered the temple, they found a single jar of oil sufficient to burn for only one day of light. However, the jar continued burning for eight days until a messenger could return with more oil.

The eight days of Hanukkah are attributed to this miracle of this single jar of oil. The central feature of the observance is the nightly lighting of the Chanukiah or menorah. In short, Hanukkah celebrates the triumph of light over darkness and of spirituality over materiality. For Jews this holiday is also a celebration of family and heritage.
Kwanzaa is a seven-day celebration honoring African-American heritage and its continued vitality. The word “kwanza” is a KiSwahili (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) word meaning “first.” Dr. Manulana Karenga introduced the festival to the U.S. in 1996 as a ritual to welcome the first harvests to the home. This festival was created for African Americans as a response to the commercialism of Christmas.

During this observance, people decorate their homes with a candleholder called a *kinara* and light a candle in the home each evening. There are seven candles that reflect Kwanzaa’s seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. This week-long celebration often ends with a feast and the exchange of gifts.
Christmas is a holiday celebrated in many countries, commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the Bible does not mention a date for his birth, Pope Julius I chose December 25. The celebration of Christmas spread to Egypt, England, and Scandinavia by the eighth century. Over two millennia, Christmas has evolved into a worldwide religious and secular celebration.

Today, Christmas is a time for family and friends to get together and exchange gifts. Additional customs include decorating Christmas trees, attending church, sharing meals, and of course, waiting for Santa Claus to arrive.
ADVENT (12•2-12•24)
A season of spiritual preparation in observance of the birth of Jesus. Learn More

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (12•3)
Raises awareness about persons with disabilities in order to improve their lives and provide them with equal opportunity. Learn More

BODHI DAY (12•8)
Also known as Rohatsu, it observes the spiritual awakening (bodhi) of founder Siddharta Gautama, the Buddha, ca. 596 BCE. Learn More

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY (12•10)
Commemorates the day in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. Learn More

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE (12•12)
Celebrates the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary (by her title, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness of Mexico and the Americas) before Juan Diego, an indigenous convert to Roman Catholicism. Learn More

BILL OF RIGHTS DAY (12•15)
Commemorates the signing into law of the ten original amendments of the United States Constitution in 1791. Learn More

WINTER SOLSTICE (12•21)
The day with the fewest hours of sunlight in the whole year. In the Northern Hemisphere, it marks is the astronomical first day of winter. Learn More

WOUNDED KNEE DAY (12•29)
Commemorates the lives lost in the massacre of more than 200 Lakota Sioux by U.S. troops at Wounded Knee in South Dakota. Learn More
47TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR  More Info

GONE TO THE DOGS  More Info

SIUE’S GONE TO THE DOGS

FALL COMMENCEMENT 2018
More information can be accessed at siue.edu/commencement or by calling 618-650-2252.

THE NUTCRACKER AT SIUE

EMBRACING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
This month we feature Florence Chears-Lawrence and Dorothy Volansky. Florence, the mentor, is the current Center Coordinator for SIUE Cahokia Head Start Center. Dorothy, the mentee, is a member of BUILD.

Why did you want to become a mentor?
I became a mentor because I wanted to “stretch myself.” I feel like I have a lot of positive energy and great advice to give and I could be an amazing support in someone’s life.

What do you like most about the mentoring relationship you have with Dorothy?
How pure and honest it is. We have only met a few times but we text and email too. She is just an amazing young lady with so much potential and such high hopes and dreams to make this world better—as she progresses on her journey I hope I can be a part of that.

How has your relationship evolved?
Our relationship is continuing to grow and prosper into one of vision. I say that because I know being young in college it’s hard to sometimes see the end, and it’s sometimes difficult to know it all will work out. Dorothy is a young lady that really has maturity and vision beyond her years. I think she is very intelligent, she knows her limits, and she’s not afraid to slow down and enjoy the process that will take her to her goal. I hope I can continue to offer her encouragement and advice and support in whatever way she allows.

What would you tell someone who is interested in being a mentor?
I would tell anyone—DO IT!! This process has stretched my heart. I want to be a part of my mentees’ success! No matter how busy the day to day madness of your job is, the community efforts you have committed to, your family obligations are, there is always time to offer help and support to someone else. You cannot beat the warmth it makes your heart feel when you can provide support, and/or just a listening ear to someone else.

If you want to feel good in your heart, do something for someone else and don’t expect anything in return. It doesn’t get any better than that. I didn’t know what to expect, but the feeling has been most rewarding.

If you are interested in mentoring opportunities, click here for more information.

UPCOMING MENTORING WORKSHOPS
Mark your calendars for our upcoming mentoring workshops sponsored by ACCESS and the Office of Institutional Diversity & Inclusion:

- Self-Care | January 2019 & March 2019
- Leadership & Intersex | February 2019
- Healthy Relationships | April 2019

More Information TBA
Visit our website at siue.edu/diversity
where our Institutional Diversity & Inclusion Programming Calendar is always updated with campus and community events.

Keep in touch with the Office of Institutional Diversity & Inclusion!
Check out news & events on our social media websites:

- facebook.com/siueidi/
- @siueidi
- @siueidi

See something missing from this newsletter, that you feel should be acknowledged by the SIUE community to celebrate diversity & inclusion? We want to hear from you!
Please contact the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion at siueidi@siue.edu or call (618) 650-5382