

SIUE Names Engineering Classroom in Honor of Leading Concrete Materials Expert

by Kalli Collins

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EDWARDSVILLE – Southern Illinois University Edwardsville’s School of Engineering (SOE) celebrated a classroom dedication recognizing the founding chair of the Department of Construction Luke Snell, PE. Snell, a leading lecturer and specialist on concrete, contributed \$100,000 to the Department of Construction in the SOE. The dedication ceremony and unveiling took place Wednesday, Sept. 13 in Engineering Building, Room 1008.

“SIUE had a lot of faith in me and supported me with a lot of research possibilities when I was coming there to start the program,” said Snell. “This is a way of saying thank you for supporting me. I had several graduate students working with me on projects and the

University supported a lot of the travel for the students. SIUE became a well-known group because of their successes. That got me well known in my professional societies.”

Snell began the day of celebration with a lecture to the CNST210 class available to both in-person and Zoom attendees followed by the classroom ceremony and dedication.

Snell’s endowment will enhance concrete related education and student activities in the Department of Construction in the SOE. He retired from SIUE in 2002 and earned the ranking of professor emeritus.

Throughout his SIUE teaching career he integrated classroom learning with students competing and winning numerous competitions sponsored by the American Concrete Institute (ACI) where Snell has been a fellow and has served on both technical and educational committees. He is the past chair of several ACI committees including the ACI 120 History of Concrete, the Educational Activities Committee and the Chapter Activities Committee.

Snell is responsible for previous contributions to the Department of Construction, like his \$15,000 donation to support the SIUE student chapter of the American Concrete Institute (ACI).

“Professor Snell started the ACI club at SIUE in 1980,” said John Cabage, PhD, associate professor and chair of the Department of Construction. “That same year he helped six students compete in a concrete cube competition. That team won the competition. The department has been very successful at ACI competitions over the years as demonstrated by the two full display cases in the hallway around the corner.”

Snell’s work also extends beyond SIUE to extensive consulting on construction and concrete problems throughout the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. He has also written more than 150 articles covering methodology of measuring and improving concrete construction techniques. He has been instrumental in starting concrete certification programs in China, India, Taiwan, Mongolia and Saudi Arabia.

Snell acknowledges that those outside of the industry may be curious about his profession.

“People outside of the industry wonder how someone could specialize in what they consider a narrow field,” said Snell. “Concrete is the second most used material in the world right now only surpassed by water. This brings up interesting conversations at parties.”

Snell earned his bachelor's and master's degree in civil engineering and is a licensed professional engineer in Illinois and Missouri.

The [School of Engineering](#) offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and two cooperative doctoral programs, all housed in a state-of-the-art facility. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment.