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[HTTPS://BLOG.NEWS.SIU.EDU/CHECK-OUT-FRESH-CHECK-DAY-DAWG-LOUNGE-AND-OTHER-WAYS-SIU-HELPS-STUDENTS-FIGHT-STRESS-AND-BE-HEALTHY-INSIDE-AND-OUT/](https://blog.news.siu.edu/check-out-fresh-check-day-dawg-lounge-and-other-ways-siu-helps-students-fight-stress-and-be-healthy-inside-and-out/)

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SIU helping students fight stress and be healthy inside and out

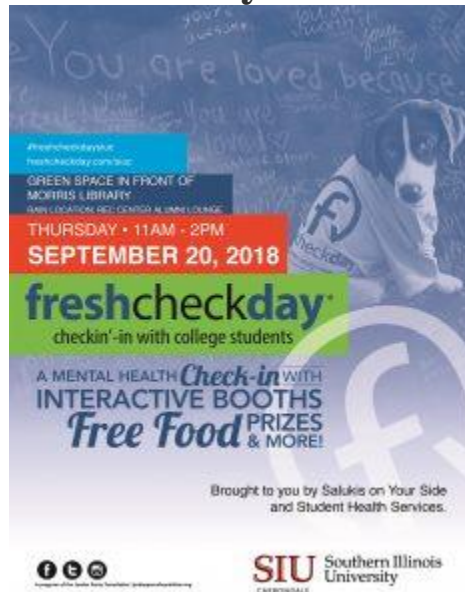
Big things are happening in [Wellness and Health Promotion Services](#) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale and it's all about helping students be as stress-free and healthy as possible during their college adventure.

“We want to do everything we can to address the whole student – mind, body and spirit – so every aspect of the person is healthy,” said Beth Morrison, assistant director of Student Health Services and director of wellness.



Kyle Miller, a social work graduate student, welcomes a student to the new, bigger and better Dawg Lounge.

Carnival-style Fresh Check Day to feature free food, prizes and more



The second annual campus [Fresh Check Day](#), set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 20, invites all Salukis to stop by for free food, prizes, dog-petting and interactive booths.

The carnival-style event will be at the green space in front of Morris Library (or in the Alumni Lounge at the Student Recreation Center in the event of rain.)

Salukis on Your Side and Student Health Services are pairing up to sponsor the event.

Win a 32-inch TV

A 32-inch LED TV, a wide variety of gift cards and other prizes are up for grabs; sign up to win while you're there. St. Francis Care Animal Shelter will have dogs on site for students to pet and visit with.

The day is designed to promote connectivity among students, helping them get acquainted with others and feel a sense of belonging.

Stress screenings, introduction to counseling and other services available on campus

It's also a chance to find out about the wide variety counseling and health services available for students and to learn about other campus organizations or units, including the Student Recreation Center, Touch of Nature Environmental Center, the LGBTQ center, the Center for International Education/international students, Campus Ministries, the Career Center and more.

Student Health Services will also be offering free stress screenings for students. Staff will be on hand to interpret the results and suggest coping methods or referrals to CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) on campus.

Federal grant funding is covering the costs. SIU is in the third year of a three-year, \$300,000 Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. More than 200 students attended last year's Fresh Check Day. It takes place during National Suicide Prevention Month.

Plans call for continuing the event in the future, with costs to be sustained through wellness and health programming.

Bigger and better Dawg Lounge offers massage chairs, yoga, biofeedback and more

The new and improved Dawg Lounge recently premiered at the Student Health Center. Located in a new and bigger spot, near the rear entrance of the facility, it's a place where "students can come relax and watch their stress melt away," according to Morrison.

Located on the first floor of the building, it's open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays and features comfy massage chairs, adult coloring pages and colors, yoga mats, a calming water feature on the wall, a salt lamp and other amenities.

Included is a sandbox is filled with kinetic sand and small stones; students use a small rake to make patterns in the sand, creating a “zen garden.”

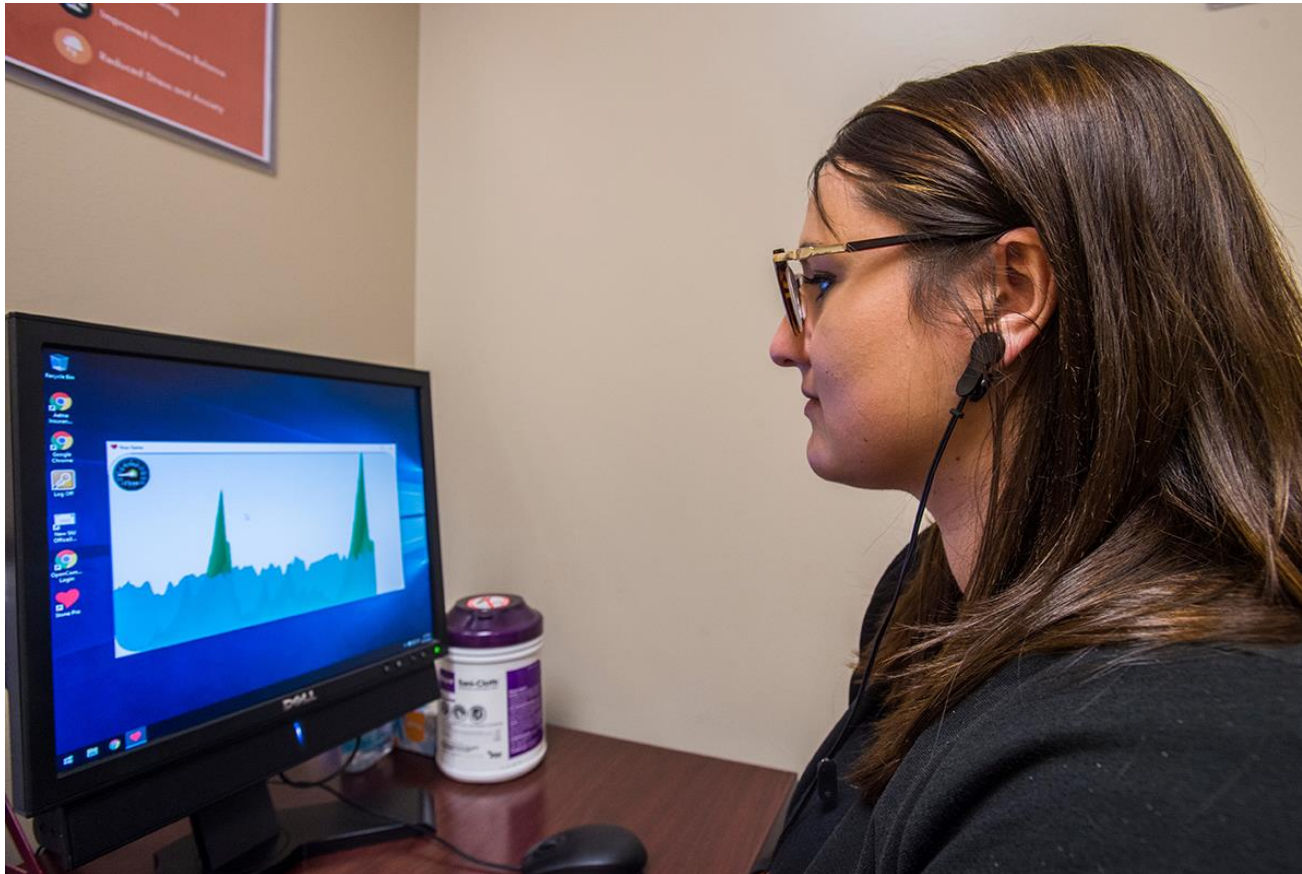


Brittany Sievers, a student completing her practicum in the Student Health Services Counseling and Psychological Services, enjoys a free massage chair session.



Belainesh Nigeda, a Med Prep Program/Master's in Public Health program student, relaxes with a sandbox feature.

There's also a stress lab where students can use the computer and biofeedback instruments to visualize the stress points in their bodies in order to help deactivate that stress.



Julie Robertson, program assistant for Wellness and Health Promotion Services, demonstrates the biofeedback system. Students with Season Affective Disorder (SAD) can also take advantage of light therapy.



Brad Kruze, a public administration graduate student, tries light therapy. In addition, there's a massage room in the Dawg Lounge and plans call for students to be able to take advantage of free massages in the future on an appointment basis.



Betsy Bishop, Student Health Services staff member, gives a massage to Belainesh Nigeda, a graduate student simultaneously working on her master's in public health and also completing the med prep program.

Helping students attain a blue mind

In keeping with the “blue mind theory” which is based on evidence that being around water makes you happier and healthier, there’s also a new blue room at the lounge. It features a cool bubble wall, ocean sounds, a water mural and a comfy hammock swing. The grand opening for the new and improved Dawg Lounge was Sept. 13.



Kyle Miller, a social work graduate student, experiences the peace, relaxation and contentment of the new “blue mind” room.

New Beverage Bar available

In addition, the Student Health Center has added a free beverage bar and charging station in the Wellness Office. Stop by any time the office is open and grab coffee, tea or hot chocolate and charge your cell phone.



Kyle Miller, a social work graduate student, enjoys a free drink from the new beverage bar.

Workshops and classes also offered

Wellness and Health Promotion Services is offering a wide variety of [workshops and presentations](#), available at specific times or by request.

A sampling of the options includes:

- Kintsugi: the art of broken pieces – a new, grant-funded resilience workshop based on the Japanese art form. Essentially, it stems from a traditional tale about a man who sent broken pottery to be repaired but the damage was too extensive and the artist repaired it by putting gold between the pieces, creating a beautiful new piece. The two-part workshop includes a re-creation of the broken pottery craft as well as a celebration of how we can take the broken pieces in our lives and turn them into something beautiful and wonderful.
- Koru mindfulness – now offered at SIU. It's a four-week mindfulness and meditation program with proven results in reducing stress and anxiety while promoting good sleep, self-awareness and self-compassion in young adults.
- “The Naked Truth” and “Consent is Sexy” – providing all the information you need about sex, birth control, diseases, consent and more.
- “Break up with Stress” and “Sleep is the New Sex,” focusing on stress reduction and the need for restful sleep and how to get it.
- “Resilience: I may Bend, but I will not Break,” “Talk Saves Lives” and “QPR Gatekeeper Training” – all geared toward suicide prevention.
- “Alcohol 101,” “Buzzed to Blacked Out” and “Prescription Nation” – focusing on alcohol and other drugs.
- “Mindless Eating,” “Beer is Not a Food Group,” “Weight Mistakes” and “Let's get Physical” – addressing nutrition and physical activity.
- “Relationship Remix,” “Love the Way You Lie: Pop Culture and Intimate Partner Violence” and “In the Headlines: Sexual Assault and the News Media”- focusing on violence prevention and awareness, especially within relationships.

New website coming

As Student Health Services seeks to be helpful in addressing the needs of students, plans are also in the works for a revamped, more student-friendly website. And, staff members have assisted in providing training to University Housing residence assistants in order to help them better meet the needs of students.

Committed to students

Morrison emphasized that SIU's Student Health Services and the components therein are dedicated to providing high-quality medical and mental health care to students, helping them handle stress and whatever may come their way so they can focus on their studies and living their daily lives in order to be as successful as possible.

Learn more at <https://shc.siu.edu> or by calling 618/453-3311 or emailing shcinfo@siu.edu.



Brad Kruze and Brittany Sievers check out some of the features of the new blue mind room and Dawg Lounge.
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