

# THE CHICAGO EGYPTIAN

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SIU's Talent on Display at NeoCon

Commander and Chief Leo Schmitz

Playwright Joanne Koch

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Issue 17

## CVS Caremark Government Affairs Has a Saluki Flair

The largest provider of prescription health benefits in the country entrusts its state government affairs department to three Southern Illinois University Carbondale graduates.

Fellow Salukis – Lauren Rowley, Eric Douglas and Erik Woehrmann – took diverse paths to CVS Caremark, a Fortune 20 company that has 7,500 pharmacies in 44 states, and provides prescription drug benefits for a large client base that includes City of Chicago employees. But they spearhead a unit that impacts government in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

CVS Caremark has annual revenues in excess of \$100 billion and employs over 200,000 people. It encompasses a chain pharmacy, pharmacy benefits manager and large retail health clinic. Lauren, who has been with CVS for 10 years, is Vice President of Government Affairs and works in the CVS Caremark's Washington, DC office. She is the head of the state government affairs team that serves on the larger enterprise public affairs group responsible for external-facing issues for the company, including federal affairs, policy, communications and community outreach.

"Our role is to listen to business units and their issues related to regulatory and legislative activity in the state," says Lauren, a 1993 radio-television graduate. "We advocate on behalf of our company to make sure our interests are heard.



Erik Woehrmann



Lauren Rowley



Eric Douglas

We strive to protect and grow our business."

Lauren previously served in state government affairs roles with the National Rifle Association, National Association of Chain Drug Stores, and Americas Health Insurance Plans.

"The ability to influence public policy urged me to continue in this line of work. I enjoy testifying on bills and influencing the outcome of legislative issues," she says. "Our team is a hard-charging group of individuals who keep me excited about going to work every day. CVS Caremark faces unique challenges and opportunities in the states, and the work our team is involved in is quite fulfilling."

Eric admits to getting into government affairs by accident. The 1998 paralegal studies graduate initially planned on pursuing a law degree, but a college friend urged him into another direction.

"My friend worked at a Carbondale law firm and hated it," he says. "My mother was friends with our state representative and I volunteered to do media research for his U.S. Congressional campaign, which we later won. From that point on, I was hooked on politics and government."

The Schaumburg resident eventually received a position with the Illinois State House and then the State Senate in Springfield. That might have been the end of Eric's story had fate not intervened when his longtime girlfriend (now wife) decided she wanted to move back closer to Chicago; and that's when Eric started searching for government affairs opportunities. As it happened, Walgreen's was developing a state and local government affairs function, and the company hired Eric to lead and to expand

that team, where he stayed for nine years. He joined CVS Caremark a year ago, following a two-year stint in state government affairs at Baxter Healthcare. As Senior Director of Government Affairs with CVS Caremark, he is responsible for a nine-state region in the western U.S.

Erik, a 1998 political science graduate who joined CVS Caremark in May, manages nine states in the Upper Midwest. He is Director of Government Affairs. He and Eric work together in the CVS Caremark's regional corporate office in Northbrook. He previously worked in the Illinois Legislature for three years before moving to Washington, D.C., where he worked for a member of Congress from Illinois for approximately four years. Erik joined the Walgreens Government Relations team in 2007, where he and Eric first worked together.

"Walgreen's was just building its government affairs team and I got in on the ground level," he says. "It was a unique opportunity to represent the company in front of state legislatures all across the country. Most states have citizen legislators who are not full-time and don't have a large support staff. Therefore, they count on advocates like us to provide accurate information on the issues."

All three Salukis agree that accuracy and honesty are essential. "My integrity is something I take very seriously. All we have is our honor," Eric says. "Otherwise, you will be tainted in the capitol. Word gets around quickly and people know if you're credible or not."

Lauren adds: "All you have as a lobbyist is your credibility. If you are dishonest in your dealings, you'll never be welcome back to the table."



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# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## SIU's Interior Design Talent Was on Display at NeoCon 2012



Danielle Cacioppo

SIU Carbondale was well represented at this year's NeoCon, North America's largest design exposition and conference for commercial interiors.

Five of the University's most talented interior design students had their work on display at the annual convention, held at The Merchandise Mart. The portfolios of Danielle Cacioppo of Schamburg, a May 2012 graduate; Leslie Wodrich of Hampshire, a junior; Rick Stewart of Carbondale, a May 2012 graduate;

Kendra Swartz of Springfield, a May 2009 graduate; and Jessica Nollman of Mt. Vernon, a Master of Architecture student, were on display at this year's convention.

The event provides nearly 40,000 architecture and design professionals with more than 100 seminars and forums, keynote speakers, previews of new products, and exhibits for commercial building, design and construction, according to the NeoCon website. Students in attendance were also able to network with fellow designers.

"The convention had a student section. We were able to share our portfolio and resume with professionals and professors to get their opinion on our work," Cacioppo says. "They offered suggestions for improvement and discussed qualities that employers are looking for in potential employees."

The knowledge she gained helped Cacioppo in her job hunt. She is currently employed at Nelson, a design firm based in Chicago.

"I work as a designer for Nelson, as part of their Chicago in-house design team with the Bank of America," Cacioppo says.

The recent graduate credits her time at SIU Carbondale with her career preparation.

"My education at SIU was an all-around learning experience. The professors were great at teaching us both the fun and

serious side of design," Cacioppo says. "I felt very prepared going into the industry after graduation."

The Interior Design Program at SIU Carbondale is the oldest accredited program in the state and one of the oldest in the nation, according to Melinda La Garce, Interior Design Program Director and an alum of the University. The program is housed in the School of Architecture.

SIU Carbondale's large 7"x10" display at NeoCon was evidence of the program's talent. Cacioppo's displayed work included an installation piece that appeared in Quigley Hall on campus (pictured). The display also featured Rick Stewart's winning entry into the Sherwin-Williams Stir Student Design competition.

"The Interior Design Program has an outstanding reputation, and its student work is among the best in the country," La Garce says. "Our graduates go on to be leaders in the top interior design and architecture firms in the world."

Pictured at right is Danielle Cacioppo's installation piece, which appeared in Quigley Hall on SIU Carbondale's campus. The installation was made of laser-cut card stock. It was placed in the building for three weeks in April 2012.

*Photos by Nicole Hester.*



# A SALUKI YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Leo Schmitz: Making a Difference in Englewood

Many may avoid a law enforcement leadership role in a community that records high crime rates annually. But SIU Carbondale alumnus Leo Schmitz is the exception to this rule.

Schmitz, who received an administrative sciences degree in 1982, has been commander in chief of Englewood's 7th district since January. While serving in command of more than 400 police officers, his primary charge is to coordinate efforts with federal, state and city agencies to develop crime fighting strategies to reduce violence in the district.

"There are misconceptions about Englewood. We have a lot of good people in this community," he says. "Our crime rates were high because gangs were perpetuating it. Our job is to get things under control."

A Superintendents Violence Reduction strategy, initiated upon Leo's arrival, is generating positive results. This strategy includes the assistance of leaders and other citizens in the community. Crimes in Leo's district in Englewood have been reduced by 48.6 percent year-to-date, and murder cases have decreased by 34.2 percent.

"Our police officers are the difference, but we couldn't do it without community support. They are our biggest ally," Leo says. "People see us working hard on a daily basis to address this issue, and they want to help. They often call to make us aware of something that is about to happen.

"We also meet with church organizations regularly who share helpful ideas; aldermen go out of their way to assist us and our high school principals are outstanding. The Chicago Public Schools try to stop



things before they happen."

Leo's trek to Englewood began as a patrolman in the 12th district in 1986. He was subsequently assigned to the district's tactical unit. Leo, who had initial thoughts of attending law school, instead discovered his niche when he joined the tactical unit through the Chicago Police Department.

"I loved it," he says. "I didn't want to do anything else."

Leo joined the Joint Robbery Task Force in 1991, and was promoted to sergeant in 1998. Other pertinent duties have included stints in the Detective Division and Organized Crime Division, along with investigating robberies, gangs and

homicides. He earned the rank of lieutenant in 2004. Leo's many honors include Illinois State Crime Commission Police Office of the Year, and he has been a recipient of the Illinois Law Enforcement Medal of Honor – presented by the Governor of Illinois. Also, he's a recipient of the Superintendent's Award of Valor, The Hundred Club Medal of Valor, Cook County Sheriff's Medal of Valor, and Illinois Police Association Medal of Valor.

The 1977 Brother Rice High School graduate and his wife, Ellyn, a Police Lieutenant with the Chicago Police Department, have a 13-year-old son, Jake, who is an honor student entering the eighth grade. Leo, a nature enthusiast, and his brother, Gary, a fellow SIU graduate and police detective in Arizona, visit their college alma mater twice a year.

"Gary and I enjoy visiting Carbondale. We go hunting and take in football games. I still love the nature in southern Illinois."

## SIU Alumna Is 'MITY NICE' Award Recipient



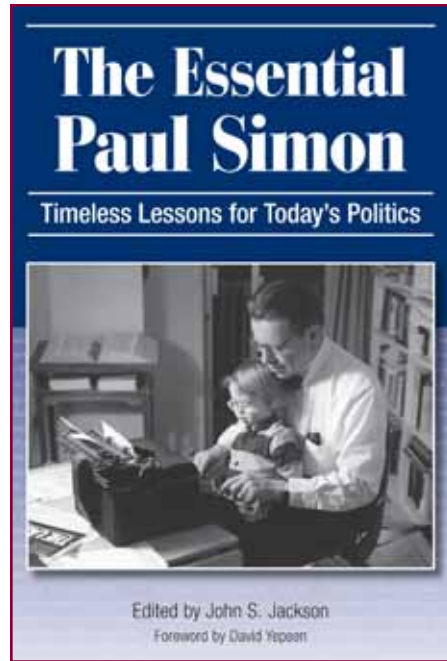
Francine Spacek (*The Chicago Egyptian*, April 2012), a 1974 SIU Carbondale who founded SEWonderful Quilts, was honored with the "MITY NICE" Award at a July 22 reception hosted by the restaurant on Michigan Avenue. MITY NICE recognizes a Chicagoan on a quarterly basis who gives back to the community. Recipients are honored with a photo and story on the MITY NICE menu.

Francine founded SEWonderful, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that recycles, new, but discontinued fabric into unique, one-of-a-kind quilts, six years ago. These quilts are gifted – free of charge – to children with life-threatening illnesses. Currently, SEWonderful Quilts is gifting to 10 hospitals, two hospices, and two sexual abuse centers in the Chicago and central Illinois areas, and Spacek either mails the quilts or delivers them personally. Spacek says SEWonderful Quilts has received over 3,000 quilts, most of which have been distributed. Several SEWonderful supporters – including quilters, board members, donors, interns and others impacted by the quilts – attended the reception in Francine's honor.

Francine says: "I was so delighted and elated to see such a nice conglomeration of people. It was truly an honor that had me on cloud nine all night." **Francine is pictured above (at left) with Sandi Lynd**, who has made more than 300 quilts, and refers to SEWonderful Quilts as "the best therapy in the World."

If you know of a child who is eligible to receive a quilt, or, if you would like to donate or make a quilt yourself, please contact Francine at (312) 307-7733.

## Paul Simon Public Policy Institute Events



### *The Essential Paul Simon: Timeless Lessons for Today's Politics*

Thurs., Sept. 27, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Union League Club of Chicago  
65 W. Jackson Blvd.  
(312) 427-7800

Join Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon and the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute for a book signing of *The Essential Paul Simon: Timeless Lessons for Today's Politics*. Paul Simon dedicated his life to public service and often used his writings as tools to make the complexities of politics accessible to the average citizen. In *The Essential Paul Simon: Timeless Lessons for Today's Politics*, editor John S. Jackson carefully selects the best of Simon's decades of writings, and sets the work into the context of its time, emphasizing the connection to today's continuing political questions and conflicts. RSVP appreciated to (618) 453-4001 or [baughman@siu.edu](mailto:baughman@siu.edu).

### *Ethics Reform Conference on Illinois Government*

Thurs.- Fri., Sept. 27-28  
Union League Club of Chicago, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., (312) 427-7800

The Institute's Ethics Reform Conference on Illinois Government will explore how to improve the ethical climate in Illinois governments. The event will pull together public policy practitioners, leading academics, and the general public to look at questions like: What are the basic causes of the ethical problems we have, and how can they be changed? Where should we go with our reform efforts? What has worked elsewhere?

Keynote speakers will include: **Michael Josephson**, Founder and President of the Josephson Institute of Ethics and one of the nation's most sought-after and quoted ethicists; **Alan Rosenthal**, Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University; experts from the National Conference of State Legislatures; and reform leaders in Illinois.

For more information on these and other events, contact the Simon Institute at (618) 453-4009 or [paulsimoninstitute@gmail.com](mailto:paulsimoninstitute@gmail.com), or visit [www.paulsimoninstitute.org](http://www.paulsimoninstitute.org).

## SIU Playwright's Work Comes to Waukegan Stage

Acclaimed playwright and SIU Carbondale graduate Joanne Koch will bring her work to Clockwise Theatre in downtown Waukegan this fall.

*Soul Sisters*, by Joanne Koch and Sarah Blacher Cohen, will run from Oct. 19 - Nov. 11. Individual tickets are \$20 and may be purchased from Brown Paper Tickets at (800) 838-3006. For directions and information about Clockwise Theatre, visit [www.clockwisetheatre.org](http://www.clockwisetheatre.org) or call (847) 775-1500.

The musical, directed by Joyce Becker Lee, celebrates Jewish and African American cultures by finding the common ground through music and shared struggles. The show features music by George Gershwin, Billie Holiday and Debbie Friedman. *Soul Sisters* has toured the country to great acclaim, and was published in *Shared Stages: Ten American Dramas of Blacks & Jews*.

Koch earned her doctorate at SIU Carbondale in 1994. She visited the Carbondale campus for the first time after winning the Eighth International Playwriting Contest, sponsored by the Piscator Foundation and the University, for her play, *Haymarket: Footnote to a Bombing*. She later won SIU Carbondale's Best New Play Award for *Nesting Dolls*.

Another one of Koch's productions,



*Belle Barth: If I Embarrass You, Tell Your Friends*, will preview at the Falcon Theater in Los Angeles on Jan. 8 and 9, 2013, before a national tour. The show will star Lainie Kazan (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding*) as the bawdy 1950s comic who sold millions of "party" records. *Belle*, an original musical with composer Ilya Levinson and lyricist Owen Kalt, was first produced at Theo Ubique Theater in Chicago.

# Former Saluki Shaker Joins Chicago Slaughter Dance Team

Algonquin native Brittany Cheves (*The Chicago Egyptian*, June 2011) was known for participating in various extra-curricular activities in college. The 2011 SIU Carbondale public relations graduate held leadership roles for Delta Zeta Sorority, Public Relations Student Society of America and the Saluki Shakers.

Nothing has changed.

Since graduating and returning to Chicago, Brittany – one of SIU Carbondale’s **25 Most Distinguished Seniors** in 2011 – has stayed busy. She was hired as an account manager for A&A Marketing, an online affiliate marketing firm that specializes in research, media buying, customer acquisition and e-marketing. Her interview was set up by 2010 SIU Carbondale business graduate Krissy Albano, Brittany’s sorority sister. Brittany was recently promoted to affiliate manager. In addition, she works weekends as a server for Duke’s Alehouse and Kitchen in Crystal Lake, where her manager is fellow SIU Carbondale graduate Ryan Perry. And, Brittany continued her dancing career as a

member of the 2012 Chicago Slaughter of the Indoor Football League. Brittany says she looks forward to dancing again next season, too.

“I was one of 13 girls chosen for them team. We perform at every home game and handle promotions for the Slaughter, too,” Brittany says. “I absolutely love my team and I’m so glad to have an opportunity to continue dancing and performing.”

The Slaughter plays at Sears Center in Hoffman Estates. Brittany, a graduate of Harry D. Jacobs High School, says her commencement was held at Sears Center because her high school was “overcrowded.” Brittany has even done some choreographing for one of the team’s routines.

“I designed the whole concept for our halftime performance,” she says. “It’s much like the Saluki Shakers. The Chicago Slaughter allows me to meet interesting people and do some networking. I’m really having fun dancing for a professional team and representing the city of Chicago.”



Brittany Cheves is pictured at far right with the Chicago Slaughter dance team.

## Criminology & Criminal Justice Reception

The **Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice** (formerly the Department of Administration of Justice) will host a reception from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 14, at 17 N. State Street (eighth floor).

This is a chance for alums to reconnect with the Department, update the University about their professional accomplishments, and hear about exciting new changes in the Department’s undergraduate and graduate

degree programs.

The majority of the faculty will be in attendance, as will Kimberly Kempf-Leonard, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

The event will include time to mingle and socialize with faculty and other SIU Carbondale graduates. Light refreshments and drinks will be provided. Please RSVP to [criminology@siu.edu](mailto:criminology@siu.edu) by Nov 6.

## Calling All Administration of Justice Alumni:

Let us know how you’re doing! Career and personal updates are welcome. Please send your story to [criminology@siu.edu](mailto:criminology@siu.edu).

## Technology and Innovation Expo at SIU

Innovations developed by researchers at Southern Illinois University Carbondale will be on display at the **Technology and Innovation Expo** on Friday, Oct. 19, at the Dunn-Richmond Economic Development Center.

The fourth annual event helps raise awareness of the University’s important technological advances. Additionally, it aims to stimulate growth of new businesses and licensing relationships in the southern Illinois region.

Attendees can enjoy morning sessions featuring faculty and staff presenting on inventions that are either patented or patent pending. A luncheon follows with guest speaker Michael Marlaire, a distinguished alumnus with four degrees from SIU Carbondale, who serves as Director of the NASA Research Park. The event culminates with an afternoon panel discussion related to sustainability, moderated by John Caupert, two-degree SIU Carbondale alumnus and Director of the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center, followed by a closing awards reception.

“We strive to provide a clear picture of the innovation occurring at the University. The annual Expo gives us the opportunity to focus in on new technologies each year and follow the progression of our inventions over time,” says Amy McMorro Hunter, Technology Transfer Specialist at SIU Carbondale.

Also, the inaugural Saluki Idea Competition takes place this fall. Individual students and student-led teams will compete online at [siu.launcht.com](http://siu.launcht.com) and at the Expo for prizes.

For further information, including a complete agenda, list of speakers, panelists, sponsors and registration information, visit [www.tie.siu.edu](http://www.tie.siu.edu). The event is organized by SIU Carbondale’s Technology Transfer program, along with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Dean, the Southern Illinois Research Park and Small Business Incubator.

The Technology and Innovation Expo will also be **webcast** live. Go to [www.tie.siu.edu](http://www.tie.siu.edu) to sign up