

ROCKET NATION

WITH DIANE DUCEY



By Diane Ducey
Staff Writer

St. Louis Cardinal players, alumni and broadcasters came to the Hilton Garden Inn on Friday, January 16th.

Doors opened to fans at 11am, giving them a chance to support the Champaign County Freedom Celebration Committee as they make plans for America's 250th patriotic party on the 4th of July.

Raffle tickets were sold by volunteers with those purchasing hoping to win swag including suite experiences,

calendars, shirts, hats and items for the kids with the Cardinals logo.

The morning show host with studios in Philo, Stevie Jay, introduced Michael McGreevy, Thomas Saggese, Yohel Pozo and Andre Pallante along with alumni Brad Thompson and Bengie Molina with Chip Caray the broadcaster/emcee.

Fans heard stories from the players of their upbringing, struggles and dedication to baseball along with sharing insight about their families.

Towards the end of the program, "Fred Bird" came out to get people fired up and then posed at the selfie station with a red backdrop that included various St. Louis Cardinals logos and 2026. Kids fifteen and under were given autograph passes to go through the line in priority groups to get signatures from the panel, then older fans could have one item signed as the line continued until the Cardinal Caravan wrapped up to get on their tour bus and head to the next stop in Peoria.

EIU Placement Rates Rank Highest Among State Universities

NACE data positions EIU as top choice in Illinois for connecting students with careers, advanced education opportunities

CHARLESTON, IL (01/08/2026) For Illinois students and families weighing their college options, recent statewide data offers encouraging insight into what happens after graduation at Eastern Illinois University.

In the most recent report from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), EIU recorded a 91.2 percent placement rate for its graduates, meaning more than nine out of ten students were employed or enrolled in further education within six months of earning their bachelor's degrees.

Also according to that data from NACE, issued for 2024, EIU's placement rate ranks the highest among public universities in the state of Illinois and is more than four percentage points above the national average.

"This is a remarkable achievement by EIU and a testament to our deep dedication to our students," said Vice President for Enrollment

Management at EIU Josh Norman. "A large part of EIU's success is defined by its exceptional outcomes. EIU students and their families can be assured that EIU graduates are leaving our campus prepared, credentialed, and ready to thrive in their careers and communities."

The NACE placement rate reflects outcomes that matter most to students and families: whether graduates are successfully transitioning into careers or continuing their education. The 2024 report is based on survey data collected from the previous year's graduating class, following nationally recognized standards for measuring post-graduate success. The 2025 update will be available in the upcoming year.

Bobbi Kingery, Director of Career Services at EIU, says Eastern's all-in commitment to student success and outcomes is a cornerstone of the EIU experience. "Students' preparation for post-graduate success is evident through our career outcome data," Kingery said. "EIU's career placement rate as defined by NACE consistently exceeds

the national average thanks to the robust support services EIU provides. That includes assistance inside and outside of the classroom, across campus, and even beyond their time at EIU."

"The students and alumni of EIU have so much to contribute, including excellent academic preparation, a strong work ethic and a desire to be successful," Kingery added. "EIU's Career Services Department is committed to providing innovative centralized career development and experiential learning services to students and alumni that enrich career readiness and economic viability in our region, throughout the State of Illinois, and across larger national and global societies."

Eastern Illinois University emphasizes personalized learning, close faculty mentorship, and accessible academic and career support -- elements that many students and families identify as key factors in making a confident college choice. Prospective students and families can learn more about EIU Admissions at eiu.edu/admissions.

Annabelle Steg Named to SNHU Dean's List

MANCHESTER, NH (01/06/2026)-- Annabelle Steg of Tolono has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Fall 2025 Dean's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earn-

ing 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate,

graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

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L-R: Ted Rund, a member of the Catholic Charities Advisory Board, from Philo, with his great grandson Will Stone and son-in-law Rod Schweighart at the St Louis Cardinals Caravan on January 16, 2026 at the Hilton Garden Inn. Photo by Diane Ducey.

UW - Stevens Point Undergraduates Honored for Scholastic Achievement

STEVENS POINT, Wis. (January 13, 2026) - The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point honored more than 2,872 undergraduate students for attaining high grade point averages during the fall semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.

Full-time undergraduates who earned grade points of 3.90 to 4.0 (4.0 equals straight A) are given the highest honors designation.

High honor citations go to those with grade point averages from 3.75 to 3.89 and honor recognition is accorded

to those with grade point averages from 3.50 to 3.74.

Personalized certificates of scholastic achievement are sent to those who earned highest honors distinction.

Students who received honors include: Eric Vlahovich, High Honors from Philo, IL

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
Champaign County, ILLINOIS
Freedom Mortgage Corporation
PLAINTIFF

Vs.
UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF RITA A. GUDGEL AKA RITA GUDGEL; NANCY ROMINES; MICHAEL GUDGEL; CITY OF URBANA; JOHN BROWN AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR RITA A. GUDGEL; TAMMY ELFAWAL; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON RECORD CLAIMANTS;

DEFENDANTS
No. 20CH58
NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on November 26, 2025, Champaign County Sheriff's Office Illinois of Champaign County will sell the mortgaged real estate described below to the highest bidder in an online auction, located at <https://champaigncountysheriff-il.roup.com/>. Bidding will begin on 02/16/2026 10:00 AM CST and will remain open until at least 02/18/2026 10:00 AM CST. If any bidding occurs in the final moments of the auction, the end of the auction will be extended automatically for successive fixed periods of time (the "anti-snipe time") to give all bidders the opportunity to submit their highest bid. The auction will end after no bidding occurs during the anti-snipe time.

The notice of sale relates to the following described mortgaged real estate:
Legal Description: Lot Nine (9) of a Subdivision of Outlot Ten (10) of James S. Busey's Addition of Outlots to the Town, now City of Urbana, being a portion of the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section Seventeen, Township Nineteen North, Range Nine East of the Third Principal Meridian, situated in the City of Urbana, in the County of Champaign, in the State of Illinois
PIN: 92-21-17-259-004
Improved with a Single Family

COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 208 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL, 61801
Sale Terms: The winning bidder must pay the full bid amount within 24 hours of the auction's end. Accepted payment methods include certified or cashier's check. Personal checks are not accepted.

FOR INFORMATION: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney:
Diaz Anselmo & Associates
1771 W Diehl Rd., Ste. 120,
Naperville, Illinois, 60563
(630) 453-6960
Please refer to file number 1463-187968

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.
6095-960318
printed 01/07, 01/14, 01/21/2026

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The subject property is subject to real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the Court. The property will NOT be open for inspection.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises. The property will NOT be open for inspection and Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.

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SURPLUS OFFICE FURNITURE SALE



After combining several offices into one, we find ourselves crowded with too many desks, tables, and other furniture that needs to go. Sofa and loveseat, end tables, coffee table, filing cabinets, credenza, mini-fridge, shop tables, etc. Lots desks. So many desks. Come buy a desk.

Some of it is in good shape. Others not so much. Make an offer. Sold as-is with no warranty. Items are cross-posted and subject to early sale.

Thursday, Jan. 15 — 10a - 5p
Friday, Jan. 16 — 10a - 5p
Saturday, Jan. 17 — 10a - 12 noon
115 W. Sale St., Tuscola