

SI NOW HAPPENING



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TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

Cairo Makes History: First 3D Printed Home in Illinois

“We’ve got people – they’re ready to come home, and I don’t blame them. Folks, this is just the beginning.”

THOMAS SIMPSON
MAYOR OF CAIRO

With the sun beaming down on a hot August day, hundreds of community leaders and residents gathered at the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue and 16th Street in Cairo to take part in a groundbreaking for the first 3D printed home in Illinois. Harrisburg-based Eminence Resource is behind the project and plans to donate the 3D printed duplex to the City of Cairo.

Eminence purchased the 3D printer through Black Buffalo, making it just one of only seven in the country. The towering system stretches into the sky as the machine, guided by a computer rendering, layers a specialty concrete mix in layers to build the walls of the building in around 45 hours.

From there, the home is finished like a traditional building with trusses, utilities, and fixtures added. These first two units will be offered to two families displaced when Elmwood and McBride were demolished in 2019, relocating nearly 400 residents in Cairo.

Following the groundbreaking, a huge block party to celebrate the occasion offered free lunches and ice cream. Through a grant from ADM Cares, the Fowler-Bonan Foundation also offered free groceries and produce along with a chance to take home items from an Amazon truck. This marks the first new home constructed in Cairo in decades with hope to see more 3D printed in the community in the future.



A WIN FOR ONE IS A WIN FOR ALL OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS !

by Dr. Deb Barnett



We are experiencing very special times in Southern Illinois and many **FIRSTS!** The **FIRST** STAR bond project in Illinois has made the way for transformational development in Marion that will impact the entire region (see pp. 10-13 at southernillinoisnow.org/now-magazine/).

The **FIRST** 3D printed home in Illinois is being constructed (printed) in Cairo and is the beginning of what is projected to be an entire development for the community.

And for the **FIRST** time ever, Southern Illinois is receiving international recognition for excellence in regional partnerships by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), a testimony of SI Now's work and the tremendous partnerships that make it all happen. Nearly every day I hear someone say how they feel part of something bigger than their community, county, or business. That difference is what happens when we **celebrate each other's wins, share knowledge, and commit to collaboration over competition. Keep it up, Southern Illinois! Together, we're all making a difference for our region and for future generations.**

ADVANCING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

PRIORITY ONE: BUSINESS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Southern Illinois Shines on the National Stage!

SI Now is honored to have been selected for a **2024 Excellence in Regional Partnership Award** by the **International Economic Development Council (IEDC)**, the largest economic development organization of its kind. But that's not all—the NOW! Magazine has also been named a **Silver Winner in the IEDC's 2024 Excellence in Economic Development Awards!**

In addition, we are proud to share that **Landmarks Illinois** has chosen **Havisham House in Alto Pass and Montgomery's Place in Carterville** as winners of this year's Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards. These awards celebrate exceptional preservation efforts that honor the history and heritage of the community, preserving the past while paving the way for the future.

It has been quite a year for Southern Illinois, as the Jefferson County Development Corporation (JCDC) has also had a banner year, securing a **trifecta of awards from national publications**. Business Facilities recognized the City of Marion as one of the **Top 24 Economic Development Organizations (EDO) in the "Small EDOs" category for the Star Bond Project.**

These awards not only raise the profile of Southern Illinois but also showcase the collaborative efforts that are transforming our region into a better place to live, work, and do business. Southern Illinois is truly in the spotlight, and we couldn't be prouder of the progress we're making together.



Regional Development

by Nick Holdinghausen



Southern Illinois is a region of growth and opportunity. This economic vitality is reflected in the **addition of 1,017 jobs** over the past year. Healthcare and manufacturing are two of the sectors that saw the biggest growth. In addition to jobs, Southern Illinois gained a **net positive of 63 new businesses with at least one employee** between Spring 2023 to Spring 2024. The region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) experienced a **6.2% increase in 2023, bringing the total GDP to over \$15 billion in Southern Illinois**, a 28% increase since 2020.

Southern Illinois offers an exceptional quality of life, combining affordability with a strong sense of community and opportunity. While costs have increased, so has the average wage. In fact, over the last five years, **average wages are up 20%**. In Southern Illinois the cost of living remains significantly lower, **some 15% below national average**, and

18% below the Illinois average. This affordability extends to housing, where the average home value in Southern Illinois is nearly 60% less than the national average.

It may not seem like it because everything is expensive these days, but Southern Illinois remains a lower cost option when compared to almost anywhere in the country. Factor in the small town feel, safety, and the sense of community and education, it makes our region a very appealing place to raise a family.

Marketing the Region

Marketing Southern Illinois outside the region is crucial for driving economic growth, attracting new visitors and potentially new residents. By showcasing the area's unique blend of natural beauty, centralized location, and business opportunities, the region can appeal to tourists, entrepreneurs, and investors who might otherwise not know about Southern Illinois. Promoting Southern Illinois beyond its borders helps diversify the economy, stimulates local businesses, and enhances the quality of life for all residents. Additionally, it builds a positive image of the region, encouraging external partnerships and investments that are essential for long-term sustainability and development.

Most recently, the Illinois Farm Bureau showcased several Southern Illinois destinations in the **Fall 2024 "Partners Magazine"**. Southern Illinois was also featured with ads and feature stories in **Trade & Industry** and **Business Xpansion**, two national publications focused on corporate executives.



Education and Workforce Development



The third Southern Illinois Workforce Summit is coming up in October! This is a chance for local employers, educators, and community leaders to listen and learn from one another to understand challenges they are facing in our region. National speakers and local employer panels will lead discussions on the present and the future of the workforce in Southern Illinois.

The event will be held at John A. Logan College on October 2nd from 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Register today!

WhySI?

Building Community: Taps & Vine Social House - Pinckneyville, IL



Jacob and Lauren Moore embarked on an exciting business journey with a vision of creating a vibrant community space in Pinckneyville. They began by purchasing a small wine bar in Pinckneyville, which was a beloved local spot, and later leased it to a pizza restaurant. Transforming a clothing store with a coffee bar into a dynamic social house was a dream come true. Their new venture serves an array of treats, including ice cream, coffee, flatbreads, donuts/pastries, alongside crafted cocktails. Free video games and exciting slot machines ensure there is something for everyone. Jacob and Lauren’s motivation behind this expansion was to introduce a family-friendly location where people can gather, celebrate, and enjoy a variety of experiences, fostering a sense of community and togetherness in Pinckneyville and throughout Southern Illinois. [READ MORE...](#)

Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour Receives Recognition as World’s Greatest

Did you know that Southern Illinois offers some of the best ziplining in the world? Shawnee Bluff Canopy Tour is being featured on Bloomberg’s “Worlds Greatest!...” this month! The segment first aired on August 31st, but it will air again on September 7th at 1 p.m. Owner Marc Miles is excited to bring this national exposure to Southern Illinois and the Shawnee National Forest.

“From the feedback we get from people that have previously ziplined not only in the US, but world wide, we knew that this location and canopy tour were above the rest. Massive planning and work went into transforming what we offer to people who come to create lasting memories. It is awesome that a major worldwide network gave us this recognition and videoed us to share with the rest of the world.”

- Marc Miles



#SINowYouKnow