

Stephanie Duquette PodCAST Episode

Kara Snyder

Kara, hello and welcome to a special edition of the Podcast, the podcast produced by the College of Applied Science and Technology. I'm your host, Kara Snyder, and I serve as the assistant dean of marketing communications and constituent relations for the College. Our four-minute Friday episodes are quick chats about what's up on campus, helping you to make the most of your time as a red bird. Today, we have the opportunity to talk all things homecoming with Stephanie Duquette, Senior Director of Alumni Engagement. Homecoming is an incredible Illinois State tradition, and it starts next week. Welcome and thank you for being here. Thank you for having me. Well, let's jump right in. How does homecoming week start?

Stephanie Duquette

Well, we traditionally start with our homecoming kickoff and tree lighting that Monday of Homecoming. So our kickoff is a really great event as a partnership with our town of normal, we fill the streets with Redbird spirits, and we move right into our annual, much beloved Tree Lighting event, where the town of normal lights up the trees red and white, and we begin our celebration of Homecoming with that.

Kara Snyder

And to me, when I think of Homecoming, Saturday is quintessential homecoming. Walk us through what that Saturday celebration looks like.

Stephanie Duquette

Yes, it's definitely our most busy day of homecoming week. We start bright and early with our town and gown 5k one-mile fun walk, run, that starts bright and early at 8am and then we move into our second longest ISU tradition, the homecoming parade. That's a fan favorite. And right after the parade, we move into tailgating alumni engagement, host this really great indoor tailgating event called the Redbird village inside Horton Field House. And then, of course, right after tailgate, we celebrate Redbird football with our football game.

Kara Snyder

So I'm curious, there's so much going on that week. What is your favorite homecoming event?

Stephanie Duquette

Oh, see, that's that's a hard one. If you know me, you know, I have a lot of ISU spirits, and I've, you know, been working alongside homecoming for 17 years now, so that's a hard one. But the parade, the parade is by far, I think, stands out. It's, it's really neat. We usually get about 200 units, campus units and community units that participate in the parade. So, it's, a long one, and we have 1000s and 1000s of alums that come back for it, community members that come out for it, our students participate in it. So, it's that like one event that really feels like we're bringing the ISU community together. And like I said, it's the second longest tradition. You know, commencement is our first longest running tradition at ISU and home homecoming parade a second. So it means a lot

Kara Snyder

If I'm new to ISU and I have never experienced homecoming before. What should I not miss?

Stephanie Duquenne

Well, I have to say the football game. I don't think that we talk enough about participating in and and going in and watching our red bird football. So, if you haven't done that, we don't have tickets yet. They're on sale now, so get those tickets and make sure you show up to that game. But it'll be a good one. So, I wouldn't miss I would not miss our games.

Kara Snyder

And if our listeners want to learn more about Homecoming and all of the events going on, where should they go?

Stephanie Duquenne

They should visit our website. Homecoming. Dot, Illinois state.edu, it is constantly being updated. It has all of our event information, information on how to sign up for things, how to register for that parade, how to get those football tickets, everything that's going on all week. You can find maps there. You can find suggestions of local hotels where to stay. So it's your one stop shop. So homecoming.ils.edu

Kara Snyder

Well, thank you, Steph, thanks so much for being here and sharing all of this great information with us, and we wish you luck as you start another great homecoming week, looking forward to it. That was Stephanie Duquesne, Senior Director of Alumni Engagement. Thanks for tuning in to this episode of four-minute Fridays of the podcast. If you have an idea of something that we should chat about on these short episodes, contact information is in the show notes. Foreign.