

## **Sweet Corn Circus PodCAST Transcript**

### **Kara Snyder:**

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 4-Minute Friday episodes are quick chats about what's up on campus.

Helping you to make the most of your time as a Redbird. Today, we have the opportunity to talk about Sweet Corn Circus with Rainie Themer Bosquit, Program Director for the Gamify Circus. Welcome, and thank you for being here.

### **Rainie Themer:**

Thanks so much for having me, Kara.

### **Kara Snyder:**

So, first, before we talk about this upcoming Sweet Corn Circus event, tell us about Gamify Circus. What is it, and what should we know about it?

### **Rainie Themer:**

Sure, I'd be happy to tell you more about our program. So Gamify Circus is the oldest collegiate circus in the nation, and there's only one other collegiate circus that is similar to our program, and that's at Florida State University. So this makes Gamify Circus one of the most unique traditions here on campus at Illinois State University.

We are a registered student organization, and our members produce a professional-level circus performance every April, and we also have smaller performances throughout the year.

Membership is open to all full-time ISU students, as well as faculty and staff, and circus experience is not required to join.

**Kara Snyder:**

Well, thanks so much for telling us more, because I think it is something that is so unique to Illinois State, and something that I definitely want people to know about, because it has such a great tradition. When you say oldest collegiate Circus, tell us how old. How long has Gamify been around?

**Rainie Themer:**

Yeah, we will be celebrating our 97th year this year, so we were founded in 1929 by Clifford “Pop” Horton, who was a professor and eventually director of men's physical education. He started Gamify Circus as a gymnastics fraternity, and within just a couple of years, it changed from gymnastics only to a full-fledged circus.

**Kara Snyder:**

Amazing. And what is Sweet Corn Circus?

**Rainie Themer:**

Sweet Corn Circus is a free two-day festival that is hosted by the Town of Normal, and it celebrates our community's agricultural and circus roots. So, being in the Midwest, we know corn is a major crop, and one that we absolutely love to celebrate.

But one thing that a lot of people don't know is that Bloomington, Illinois actually has an incredibly rich circus history, not just with Gamify, but in general. From the 1870s through the 1950s, Bloomington was considered the trapeze capital of the world. So this festival helps celebrate that and helps educate about that.

This year, the festival is on Saturday, August 23rd, and Sunday, August 24th.

**Kara Snyder:**

So, if I'm new to ISU and have never experienced Sweet Corn Circus before, what should I not miss?

**Rainie Themer:**

Great question. Firstly, you absolutely do not want to miss the performances by Gamify Circus. We perform twice a day at the festival. We open the festival and we close the festival, and it's a 45-minute performance.

We also have stations throughout the festival where you can try different circus skills. And then we also have a few smaller performances spread out throughout the day.

Aside from our performances, Sweet Corn Circus also has other entertainment throughout the festival. They have Iron Spirit Pro Wrestling with a wrestling match, and they have a musician, Maestro Jones, who performs every year, and it's all a lot of fun.

And another thing that you absolutely have to do is make sure to get corn. As an Illinois State University student, if you present your ISU ID, you get a free ear of corn.

**Kara Snyder:**

Excellent, I love that.

So, if I go to this event, and I see Gamify perform, and I want to be a part of it, I want to join, what do I do?

**Rainie Themer:**

You can actually talk with any of our circus members who are at the event. You'll see them throughout. When they're not performing, they'll be in red Gamify Circus shirts that say "Troop Member." You can speak with any of them.

We will also be hosting our annual open houses following the festival. Our open houses are an opportunity for interested students to try out circus skills, and again, you don't have to have any circus experience. You don't have to have any gymnastics experience or anything like that—you can just come and check it out and try some of the skills.

We have three open houses. They are Sunday, August 24th, Monday, August 25th, and Thursday, August 28th, and they're all from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at Horton Fieldhouse South Gym.

You can come to one day, or you can come to all three days. It all just depends on what you want to do and what your availability is. At the end of the open house, our members also show some of the more advanced skills so you can see some of the other acts you could work up to if you wanted to join.

You can also stop by the Gamify Circus table at Sweet Corn Circus. I will be there, and you can get more information that way as well.

**Kara Snyder:**

Excellent. Thank you so much for that information, and thanks again for being here.

**Rainie Themer:**

Of course, thanks for having me, and I hope to see lots of students out at the festival.

**Kara Snyder:**

That was Rainie Themer-Bosquit, Program Director for the Gamify Circus. Thanks for tuning in to this episode of 4-Minute Fridays. If you have an idea of something that we should chat about on these short episodes, contact information is in the show notes.