

Things to do While a Student at UIS



An Introduction

Moving to a new city, new state or new country is an exciting experience! Exciting because of (or despite of) all the unknowns that come with relocating to a new place. UIS recognizes the fact that, while your educational experience is what drew you to us, it's your life here that will remain in your memory and heart for the years to come. We love Springfield, it's our home and we want you to feel the same.

Listed here you will find a variety of Sightseeing, Local Foods, Seasonal Events, Annual Events, Holiday Fun, Day Trips and a few UIS Events. All of which make life here full and memorable. Don't worry, when you leave your home and make your way to us, you won't be bored!

(Most photos have hyperlinks for more information.)

This list of '100 Things to do While a Student at UIS' is the project of the Admissions Department at the University of Illinois at Springfield. The department does not own the rights to the photos and information within this list. The purpose of this list is to advertise and draw attention to the city of Springfield, businesses of Springfield and the UIS campus. This presentation does not claim the ownership or responsibility for the events, photos, or information given here.



Sightseeing

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Old State Capital

Located in the heart of downtown, it's where Abraham Lincoln served as both a lawyer and an Illinois senator.







Abraham Lincoln's Home

The only house that Abraham Lincoln ever owned is just off of 8th street downtown. Located in a carefully restored neighborhood you can enjoy a detailed tour and get a feel for how Springfield used to look.







Lincoln's Law Office

Currently in the process of being restored, you'll eventually be able to explore the law offices where Lincoln used to work and where his children wreaked havoc.







Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum

Built in 2005, this museum honors the life of our beloved Abe. Excellently put together, with a number of engaging shows, creative exhibits and gift shop, the Abraham Presidential Museum is a must see.











Eat/Shop Downtown

Lined with a number of shops and local restaurants, the downtown strip makes for fun exploration. Local favorite places to eat are Café Moxo and The Feed Store. It's possible to spend a few hours in the Prairie Archives, a locally loved book hoarders paradise.







Illinois State Museum

A museum dedicated to informing the public about Illinois cultural heritage and natural resources. Open everyday with varying hours.







Lincoln's Tomb

The final resting place for our 16th president, the Lincoln tomb is open daily from 9-5. During the warmer summer months there is a Flag raising ceremony where the flag that has been flown over the tomb for the week is replaced and given away to a observer as a unique souvenir. Locals will also tell you to rub the nose of Lincoln's statue for good luck.







State Capitol



The state of Illinois' current capitol building and the center of Illinois' politics. Beautiful building with amazing architecture – open to the public on select week days.

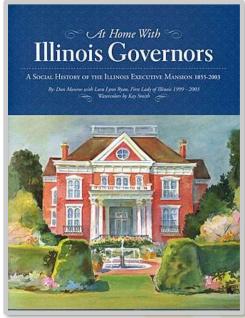




Governor's Mansion

Also in the process of being restored, but eventually will be an updated home for the governor, should the official choose to use it, and a public space featuring a museum, art space and lecture center.







Vachel Lindsey House

Birthplace and lifelong home of poet, Vachel Lindsey. Known as the father of 'modern singing poetry', he used to travel the US by foot and trade drawings and poems for lodging/food. Rose to fame in the 1910s.







Dana Thomas House

'Perhaps the best-preserved example of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright's "Prairie period" dwellings.' Created for Dana Thomas around an existing home she inherited. Amazing architecture and beautiful art glass. Photos do not do the home justice, you need to go on a tour.









Edward's Place

The home of Mary Todd Lincoln's sister and her husband, the home was often visited by the Lincoln's and a local hub for Springfield aristocracy. Owned by the Springfield Artist's association, the home is largely utilized for events. There's an annual art fair/book sale where the home will be open for tours, but then it's also used for events such as the 'Murder Mystery Dinner' and a historical fashion show.







Local Food

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Eat a Horseshoe

"The horseshoe is an open-faced sandwich originating in Springfield, Illinois, United States. It consists of thick-sliced toasted bread (often Texas toast), a hamburger patty, French fries, and a "secret" cheese sauce." — wikipedia The locals love it. For 'authentic' horseshoes Some prefer D'arcy's, others Dublin. Eat at both. There are also a number of 'special horseshoes' around town.









Snow Cone at Sno Bizz

To quote a review on yelp, "Although small in stature, Sno Bizz has a huge selection of flavors. Portions are generous. It's cash only so come prepared. It's also worth springing for Hawaiian style if you like your snow cone served with ice cream!" It's almost always pretty busy during summer.









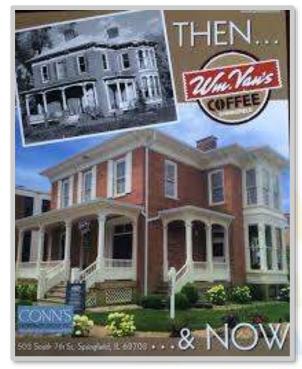
Coffee

Love good coffee? Springfield's got you covered. Grab a Java, Custom Cup, WM Vans and Free Press are just a few of the options in the local coffee scene. WM Vans is right by Lincoln's old neighborhood, the house the café is in was relocated to it's current location when it was in jeopardy of being demolished. The original owner of the home took out a loan from Lincoln in order to build it.











Local Americana Restaurants

There's too many to name them all individually, but each one is worth the trip! Some favorites like American Harvest, Engrained, and Obed & Isaac's are all locally owned spots. There's a great variety scattered around town. American Harvest uses locally grown ingredients and it's dishes change each season. Great place for lunch!









Local Popcorn and Treats

Located in the heart of the Midwest, it's not surprising that Springfield does popcorn right. Del's and Pease's have been local staples for years, mastering traditional flavors like cheese, butter, white cheddar, and chocolate covered popcorn. Pittman's, a new shop located off Wabash, has about 80 flavors ranging from Lemon Poundcake to Jalapeño Ranch. Worth the stop to sample.









Pease's at Bunn Gourmet

Pease's is a candy shop that has been 'Local Since Lincoln' and Bunn is the company that makes coffee machines. Together they host a beautiful shop known for handmade chocolate, cakes and other treats, Pease's is also the home to Freakshakes! Only available once a week, they are best shared.







International Grocery Stores

Springfield has a number of international grocery stores including Asian, African, Indian and Mexican ones. If you are an international student missing a product from home, or just an adventurous eater, you'll have fun exploring the shelves of these establishments. Don't feel like cooking? You can google the international restaurants we have in town.











Cozy Dog

The home of the corn dog on a stick, Cozy Dog is a stop for 'foodies' around the US. It was even featured on 'Man vs Food.' As it's pretty close to campus, there's no reason not to check it out!







Springfield Chili

Another feature on "Man vs. Food" was Springfield's Joe Rodger's Chili parlor due to their Firebrand Chili. Now known as 'The Chili Parlor,' it and 'The Dew' are famous spots around town. Go hungry.







Charlie Parker's



An Americana-styled diner that's known for Breakfast Horseshoes and it's 6.5 lb. Pancake Challenge and is a winner of a number of national awards. Open all day, it's the breakfast food that is the main draw. Was also featured on Diner, Drive-Ins. & Dives!





Incredibly Delicious

"Incredibly Delicious is a locally owned French Bakery and Café located in the historic Weber House near downtown Springfield, Illinois. Founded in 1995, they specialize in artisanal breads, traditional croissants, handmade pastries, specialty cakes, and desserts."







Sports & Activities

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Local Sports Teams

Springfield has a few local teams that you can support. The Sliders is the local baseball team and The Junior Blues the local hockey team.

They are definitely a fun time!







Roller Derby

"Roller derby is a contact sport played by two teams of five members roller skating in the same direction around a track. Game play consists of a series of short match ups in which both teams designate a jammer who scores points by lapping members of the opposing team. The teams attempt to hinder the opposing jammer while assisting their own jammer—in effect, playing both offense and defense simultaneously." And Springfield has it's very own team.







Golf

In addition to the two golf clubs, the city of Springfield has a few free courses. It's a great way to get off campus and enjoy the weather.





Mini Golf

Perhaps you are more interested in golf with a twist? We've got you covered. There are a few options.







Quarter Midget Racing

Lincoln, IL hosts it's own speedway and there are a variety of races held there. An interesting event to highlight is the children's racing in a car 1/4th the size of a standard car. Family oriented, fun and unique. Stop by.







Cards/Cubs Game

Baseball really is an American past time, and in the Midwest there is no bitter rivalry like that of the St. Louis Cardinals and the Chicago Cubs. While you are Stateside, you need to attend a game. It's an experience.





Nelson Center Ice Rink

While there are a number of games and lessons that take place on the ice, there are also public hours. Enjoy!





Sky Zone

Sky Zone is a trampoline park located on the Westside of town. There's rock climbing as well as places to play dodgeball. Healthy and fun, check it out.







Night Out

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

The Muni

Open since the 1950s, this "long-running seasonal venue hosting Broadway-style musicals in an outdoor lakeside amphitheater." You'll be able to see classics like the "Little Shop of Horrors," "Mary Poppins," and "Annie" preformed live.









Hoogland Center for the Arts

"The Hoogland Center for the Arts is a community based performing arts center located in the heart of downtown Springfield, Illinois. The Hoogland is home to 19 different resident organizations, including 19 different arts groups representing theatre, music, dance, the spoken word, visual art, poetry, ballet and more." It's also been a location for presidential speeches and weddings. Our Springfield community hub.









Escape Springfield



"Our escape rooms are designed to test your wits so we can make any ordinary evening out or team building experience unforgettable.

Our amazing staff is dedicated to providing superior customer service and developing events that leave you wanting more."





The Radon

A DIY music venue hosting various artists – from locals to musicians traveling the US. Located in the basement of a local home, it's a place you can only find if you ask. Check the site for an email.







Paint Nite

Not an artist? Doesn't matter! You can get with a group of friends, enjoy some good food, and create your own masterpiece. They do a tour of local restaurants so it's a new experience each time you attend.





Twin City Trivia

A trivia group that exists to facilitate a good time with old friends or a chance to make new ones! Lasting about 2 hours, it's free to play and potential for prizes! Mondays they meet at Hy-Vee, Tuesdays at the Barrel Head, and Wednesdays at the Burger Bar.











Bowling

Springfield has two different bowling lanes, on the Northside and Westside of town. With specials for college students, it can make for a good night out. Grab a few friends and enjoy.









Friday Jazz Nights

At Robbie's downtown you can enjoy jazz Friday nights, when the weather is nice it's out on the patio. Jazz not your favorite? Check out the Illinois Time "Pub Crawl" for other live music events around town.

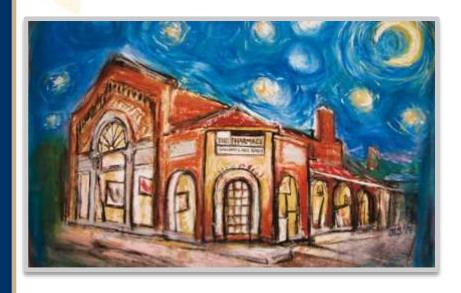






The Pharmacy Gallery & Art Space

Local cultural center striving to enrich and educate the community through a number of events. Often featuring local artists, it's a great place to engage in the community. Felicia Olin, Bill Crook, & more!











Seasonal Events

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Parks and Walking Paths

While UIS' campus is beautiful, there are a numbers of places in the city that you can enjoy a nice evening stroll as well. From Centennial Park to Southwind Park, Carpenter Park to Lincoln Park and more. A well kept Springfield secret is the Lewis Memorial Acres. Check it out.









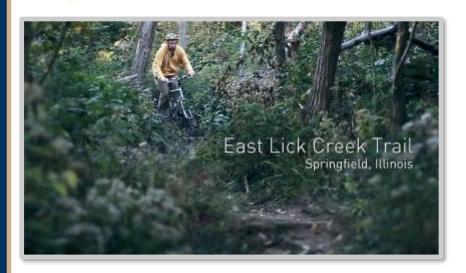




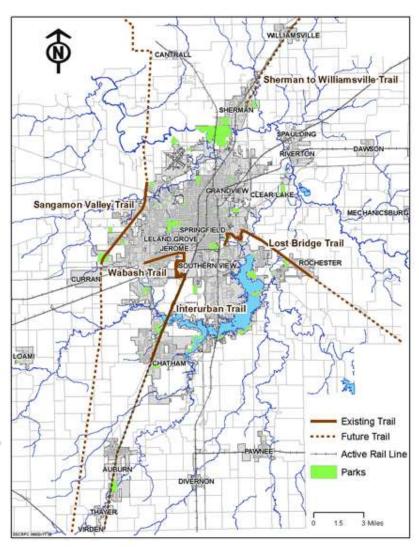


Bike Trails

Enjoy riding your bike to more than just class? There are places in town that will let you bike for miles.







The Marina

"The ultimate source for fun and recreation during your visit to Lake Springfield!" Rent boats, water skis, kayaks, etc. They also host a number of events during the year, such as July 4th Fireworks!









Farmer's Market

The market typically is open from mid- May until October on Wednesdays and Saturdays downtown from 8 am — 12:30 pm.







Apple Barn Orchard

Open daily from 9 am – 6 pm from April 1st to December 24th, you'll find an array of plants, cider, jams, and other homemade bakery goods. It's in Chatham, so not really all that far out of town. Worth the trip.



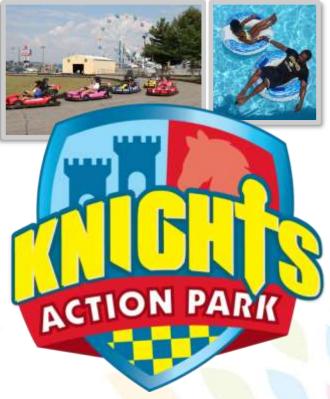




Knights Action Park

An amusement park with a race car track, mini golf and a water park, it is a great place to go with friends during the summer!







Route 66 Twin Drive-In

At their peak of popularity in the 1950s, drive-in movie theaters have a large outdoor screen, a projection booth and a large car park for you to enjoy your film from the comfort of your car. Springfield's drive-in was able to stay open as the popularity of the indoor cinema took off as it was purchased and renovated. Open between Memorial Day (mid-May) – Labor Day (mid-September), and weekends in October.







Henson Robison Zoo

"Springfield Park District's Henson Robinson Zoo is home to animals native to Australia, Africa, Asia and North and South America. Come visit and walk through the naturalistic exhibits that house more than 90 species of native and exotic animals."











Washington Park Botanical Gardens

The Washington Park Botanical Garden, which is open year round, has 20 acres of land featuring more than 1800 species of plants in 10 specific garden areas and the Conservatory. The Conservatory is a 50-ft diameter glass dome containing over 150 species of plants with exotic plants that are arranged by regions to which they are native.



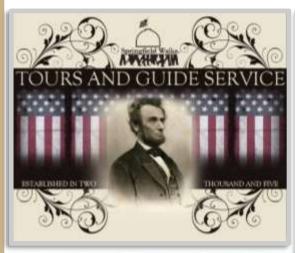






Springfield Walks

Take a walking tour of 'The Lincoln Experience,"
"Springfield Ghost Walk: Legends & Lore," and
"The Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk." Typically 90
min with about a \$15 charge (prices vary), you'll
enjoy a personal tour lined with engaging stories.
It's a great way to see Springfield.









'History Comes Alive' Events

"Many sites and attractions in historic Springfield will be brimming with free live performances and fun activities that will transport you and your family back in time – to the Springfield Abraham Lincoln knew and loved. From storytelling and interaction with costumed interpreters to visits with Mr. Lincoln, himself, this is a trip to the past you won't want to miss! History Comes Alive will run through August."



SPRINGFIELD

Tractor Pulls

Also known as 'Power Pulling' dates it's origins back to the day farmers used to pit their horses against each other in a test of strength. With the advent of modern technology into farming, the new test is the power within these multi-engined, modified tractors. There's no better place to see a pull for the first time than in America's heartland.







Garage Sales

A true 'Midwest' Experience, when the weather is right you will find homeowners all around the city organizing sales in their driveways, or front yards. It'll begin in the spring and go into the fall. It's a fun way to 'hunt for treasure' and see what the neighborhoods in the area look like. You can look up sales posted on Facebook, online or literally just drive through neighborhoods on nice days. Sometimes they are put together on short notice. You might even meet a new friend.









Funks Grove

Funks Grove is a national natural landmark of Illinois. Originally privately owned by the Funk Family, the grove was donated to the State of Illinois as a nature preserve. On site there is the Sugar Grove Nature Center, Funk Prairie Home/Museum, & Chapel in the Trees.

There's enough for a full day of activity! Maple Syrup too!



Jefferies Orchard

Offering a diverse range of fresh produce throughout the growing season, you can go to Jefferies Orchard to get asparagus, rhubarb, strawberries, cherries, blueberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, peaches, squash, apples, pumpkins, cabbage, broccoli and much more!









Paintball

If you enjoy the game (a sport where you eliminate opponents by shooting them with colorful balls of paint), and you want to get a group of friends together, here are places in town that you can go.





Camping Trips

During the Summer, when the weather is nice you'll find a lot of locals take to the road and enjoy nature camping. BBQs, S'mores, Hobo Stew and the great outdoors! It's a experience you can't miss out here! You can rent tents and other items on campus at the Campus Rec Center.



Sled Hills

Springfield has 2 designated sled hills. When it snows, might as well enjoy it! Sledding is only permitted when snow is present and goes from dawn to dusk.



ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD



Annual Events

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Old Capitol Blues & BBQ

Annual Blues music and BBQ competition hosted by The Alamo and the Central Illinois Blues Club. Good food, great music, charming atmosphere and close friends. What's not to love?



SPRINGFIELD



Illinois Horse Fair

"Presenting the wonder of horses to the young and old alike. Have you ever seen a real, live, horse...in person? Have you not been around horses since you were a little kid, and want to bring back that joy you felt when you rode for the first time? Experience the wonder of horses for the first time, or experience it again, at Illinois Horse Fair."







Illinois Products Expo

Sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, this fair brings all of Illinois home grown products to you in one place. Over 70 Illinois' companies will bring FREE food samples. It costs \$5 to get in, but it's well worth it. You won't be leaving hungry.











Amaranth Apple Festival

"The Amaranth Apple Festival in downtown Springfield features over 15 local food vendors, including Twisted Deli and Augie's Front Burner among many others. The live concerts are a part of the Bedrock 66 Live! concert series, which features local and regional bands."

The event happens annually in July.





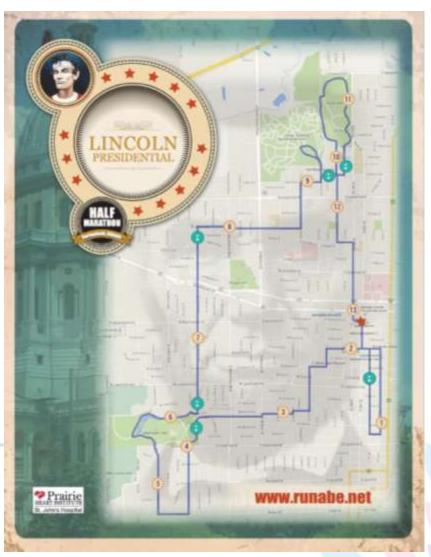


Lincoln Presidential ½ Marathon

"Run where Lincoln Walked."
Occurring annually, the race takes
place in the historic downtown of
Springfield. Attracting runners
from across the nation and globe,
participants come to collect a
unique medal.







Old Capitol Art Fair

Attracting about 30,000 viewers annually, the art fair was established 50 years ago and continues to attract artists from around the country to compete for first prize. Usually taking place in May, it's an event you won't want to miss!











Illinois State Fair

The Illinois State Fair is an annual summer festival. There are rides, performances and competitions – most centering around agriculture...don't miss out on seeing the "butter cow"





Carillon Festival

Thomas Rees Memorial Carillon in Washington Park is the largest instrument in Springfield. During the festival each summer Carillon players from around the world preform while members of the community gather to eat, drink and celebrate summer.





Lincoln Library Book Sale

The 'Friends of Lincoln Library' host an annual book sale. If you enjoy browsing through old books and music, this is an event for you.







Monster Truck Nationals

Hosted at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, this unique event is something that you need to see. Huge cars, dangerous tricks, energetic atmosphere. The photos will be fun to share and you'll have some interesting stories to tell your friends back home.











Route 66 Drive & Car Show

"U.S. Route 66, also known as the Will Rogers Highway, the Main Street of America or the Mother Road, was one of the original highways within the U.S. Highway System. US 66 was established on November 11, 1926. The highway, which became one of the most famous roads in the United States, originally ran from Chicago, Illinois, ending at Santa Monica, California, covering a total of 2,448 miles (3,940 km)."











Paint the Street

The Springfield Art Association hosts an annual block party where you paint the streets of Downtown Springfield! There are a few "popular choice" awards, as well as food and entertainment throughout the day.















Hummingbird Festival

The Log Cabin Binders and the Lincoln Land Association of Bird Binders will band a series of Hummingbirds as they head on down, preparing for their non-stop flight over the Gulf of Mexico. The hummingbirds are banded in order to collect data for research and educational purposes.

















Lincoln Hot Air Balloon Festival

Previously hosted by the Lincoln-Logan Chamber of Commence, the city of Lincoln is looking to continue hosting the annual event. Until the event is resumed, contact a local hot air balloon owners for a ride!





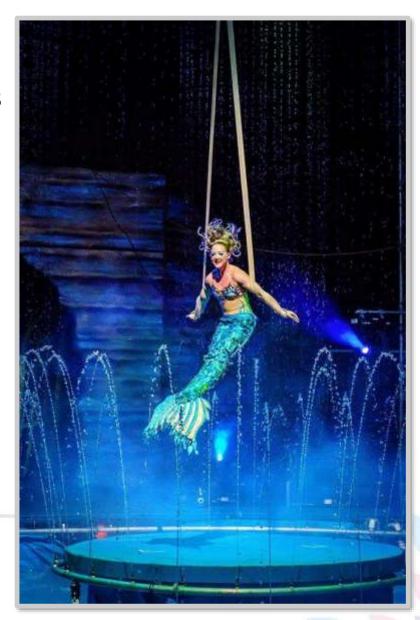


Cirque Italia

There are a number of annual circuses in the area, but one of the most unique shows that regularly visits the area is the Italian Water Circus that camps out at the While Oaks Mall once a year. It generally happens once a year, but in keeping with age old circus traditions, they don't announce they are coming until about 3 weeks before they show up.





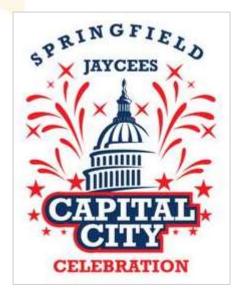


Holiday Fun

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

4th of July Fireworks

While there are a number of places that you will be able to see fireworks around the time of the 4th, Downtown Springfield's Capital City Celebration is one that will make for great photos!







Terror in the Graveyard

Originally hosted in a 1930s funeral parlor, the group has expanded to a plot out in the woods. Truly a frightening Halloween experience you won't forget. Don't go alone.





Carter Brothers Haunted Hayrides

"Looking for an event that will bring the scare back to Halloween this year? Carter Brothers Haunted Hayrides offers a fun-filled haunted hayride experience that will keep entire families laughing and screaming all night long!" It's the best of the ones in the area.





Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular

The annual Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular and Carve for the Carillon were founded by former Rees Carillon Society Board Member Brenda Poston. Everyone is invited--from students, individuals, families and artists--from the community to participate and carve their own pumpkin at Carve for the Carillon, then they are displayed during the Spectacular.







Memorial's Festival of Trees

Hosted by Memorial Medical Center, the Festival of Trees is a fundraiser for the hospital system. Businesses, organizations and members of the community come together to showcase decorated Christmas trees, centerpieces, wreaths and Gingerbread structures.









Holly Fair Bake Sale

There are always a number of local organizations that are hosting events, one to highlight is the St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church Bake Sale. Baklava, Spinach Pie, Gyros, & more. The food is amazing! There will be a line, but it is worth the wait for this homemade food.



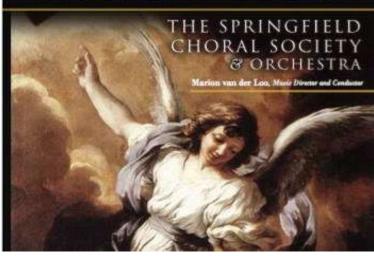




Handel's Messiah

Presented annually by the Springfield Choral Society and held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception downtown. Enjoy beautiful music and amazing architecture for this new holiday tradition.

MESSIAH





ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD



Light Up the Park

Hosted by Chatham Friends of the Parks, the annual 'Lights in the Park' display created by the community is a holiday 'must-see.'



Old Capitol Holiday Walk

During the Holiday Season the Downtown Springfield businesses work together to make a memorable holiday experience. Businesses will be open later in the middle of the week so that people in town can enjoy the festivities. Running from late November through December.













First Night

Inspired by a tradition that started in Boston, Springfield was the first in Illinois to host a 'First Night' as a celebration of the New Year. You'll find a variety of performances to usher in the new year in with the arts.







Day Trips

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Hannibal, MO

A city on the coast of the Mississippi River and hometown for Samuel Clements, also known as Mark Twain, the beloved American author. Explore the area that inspired his books, see the museums, take a river boat and shop downtown. There's great local food as well!















Lincoln's New Salem

Abraham Lincoln's first home after leaving his boyhood home to pursue work. The town only existed for a few years, as the Sangamon River changed course. Volunteers dress in period clothes and help recreate the town as it was. A great time of year to go is in October when they hold the annual evening Candlelight Walk.













Arthur, IL

A small town that hosts a substantial Amish community. Enjoy handicrafts, specialty wooden furniture, local produce (especially the cheese) and amazingly good homemade food (eat some pie). There are a number of festivals and events they host year round.





Starved Rock, IL

One of the main attractions in the state of Illinois, this state park hosts thousands of tourists a year. The school often takes trips up, it's about a 2 hour drive from school. With 13 miles of trail, be ready to walk.







Antiquing on I-55

There are a series of Antique shops along Rt. 55. If you like older collectable items such as furniture, jewelry, books, clothes, or records, grab a friend and explore. You never know what you'll find.

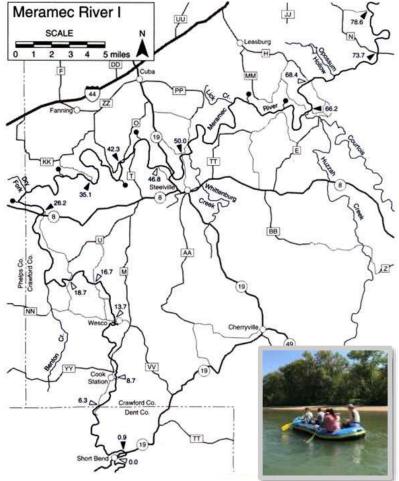




Meramec River

A slow moving river in Missouri that's great to go for a 4 mile ride down in a raft. Enjoy!







Cahokia Mounds

The only UNCESO world heritage site in the state of Illinois. Cahokia was the site of the largest pre-Columbian settlement north of Mexico. Come and learn about the native American culture that existed there 1050-1150 B.C. There is a great museum on site.







Elkhart, IL

Illinois is flat, so if you are on I-55 heading to Springfield you'll notice Elkhart, the tallest natural point in the area. The small town is quaint with a few stops, a great café, an old family farm and a section of Edwards Trace. Beautiful spot for photos.











Quincy, IL

"Located along the Big Muddy, Quincy is a cornucopia of Midwest culture. The city has a vibrant art, theater and music scene. Villa Kathrine, a 1900 Mediterranean-style mansion on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, makes a great starting point on any Quincy itinerary. Quincy is also home to 11 museums, including the Quincy Arts Center, Lincoln-Douglas Debate Interpretive Center."









St. Louis, MO

Only about 1 ½ hrs. from Springfield, it's full of things to keep you occupied for days. If you miss the 'big city' feel, St. Louis is a quick and easy trip to get your fill.





UIS Events

ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Springfest

Hosted by the Student Government Association on campus, you can organize a group and participate in a week of events that will make memories for a lifetime! You won't want to miss it.











International Festival

The longest running student led event on campus, you'll see a number of performances, be able to visit tables from a number of organizations on campus and eat a variety of foods from around the world.

UIS FESTIVAL













Star Parties

Hosted by the Astronomy/Physics department on campus, the public is invited to the roof of the Brookens library in order to enjoy the UIS Observatory's telescope. Usually held in the fall.







Alternative Spring Break

Alternative Spring Break at UIS is a week-long service experience that takes place during Spring Recess, usually in mid-March. Students travel off-campus, have the opportunity to make an impact with a national reach, and bring valuable and sometimes life changing experiences back to Illinois with them.





Athletics

With 15 different teams on campus, you can show your Prairie Star Pride by supporting your student athletes.













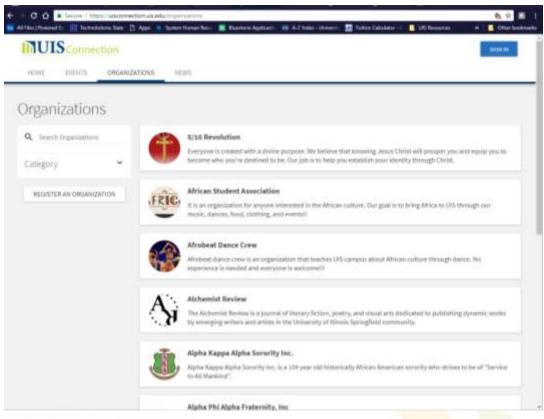




Student Organizations

Log onto UIS
Connections and browse
through the list of
student organizations.
Don't see what you were
looking for? Start it!
Once you find likeminded fellow students,
contact Student Life.







Campus Events

There are a great number more activities going on campus than are mentioned here, as a student you'll get daily emails. You can also check the UIS calendar online. You'll find there's more going on than you have time to attend. That's a great problem to have.















Interested in our community?

ww.UIS.edu

