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Alton - East St. Louis - Edwardsville
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93rd commencement of
southern illinois university edwardsville

The Alestle
Alton - East St. Louis - Edwardsville

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All hard copy letters should be typed and double-spaced. Letters should be no longer than 500 words.

Please include phone number, signature, class rank and major.

We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar and content. However, care will be taken to ensure that the letter's message is not lost or altered.

Letters to the editor will not be printed anonymously except under extreme circumstances.

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About the Alestle:

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Let us know!

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The Alestle
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Ceremonies set for Saturday

Some summer grads to walk in ceremonies

by Allan Lewis
Alestle Reporter

From filling out college applications and moving into the dorms to completing senior projects and getting jobs, the college experience is about to culminate.

1,364 students are prepared to walk across the stage and receive their diplomas during SIUE's 93rd commencement May 10.

Ceremonies will take place throughout the day Saturday, beginning at 9 a.m., with 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. ceremonies rounding out the day.

Arts and Sciences graduate Chermaine Washington will speak at the 9 a.m. ceremony, Jason Batty of the School of Education will speak at 1 p.m. and engineering student Jenna Toennies will speak at the final ceremony.

English Professor Emeritus Eugene Redmond will be the honorary speaker at the 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. ceremonies.

"It is going to be a very busy day with three ceremonies," Chair and Coordinator of Commencement Jean Paterson said. "Nearly 1,700 students are eligible for graduation."

An additional 146 students are slated to participate in the spring ceremony, as summer commencement was canceled due to summer construction in the Vadalabene Center.

Paterson said graduates are asked to limit their guest count, but it is not a direct result of the additional flow of graduates.

"We have been getting crowded and more crowded each semester," Paterson said. "We are asking graduates to limit their guests to six, although it is completely voluntary."

Allan Lewis can be reached at alewis@alestlelive.com or 650-3527.

College of Arts and Sciences – 9 a.m.



Speech communication student Chermaine Washington looks at a textbook with her daughter, LaShaunta. Washington will speak at the College of Arts and Sciences commencement ceremony Saturday.

'Be a lifetime learner'

Speech comm student earns degree while raising three children, prepares for master's

by Sydney Elliot
Alestle Reporter

At age 32, Chermaine Washington is a non-traditional student who has raised her three teenage children while going to school full time to earn her degree in speech communication.

"(She is) so classy, polished, articulate and driven," speech communications professor Elizabeth Grant said. "(She is) really very goal oriented."

When she first transferred to SIUE, Washington was originally a business major and decided to make the change to speech communications.

"Not to knock the School of Business, but it wasn't for me, it wasn't my fit," Washington said.

Washington said she immediately fell in love with the speech communication program, and after graduation, she will be staying at SIUE for graduate school.

Washington chose SIUE instead of a graduate program at another university because she already knows the department's policies and level of expectations.

"For my first year of grad school, I wanted to be in an environment that I was somewhat acclimated to already," Washington said. "So the transition from undergraduate to graduate school wouldn't be too much."

She also received the Competitive Graduate Award, which will pay for her tuition for nine months and pay her a monthly stipend during that time as well.

Speech communication professor Sofia Zamanou-Erickson nominated Washington to speak at this spring's commencement ceremony. Zamanou-Erickson said she chose Washington to speak because she was a non-traditional student and wanted Washington to be able to share her knowledge with others.

College: A growth experience

College is not for the faint of heart, as I have discovered these past four years at SIUE.

No parents to tell you to get out of bed for school. No parents to act as your bank account when tuition payments are due. Oh and no parents to tell you "everything is alright" when you get kicked out of University Housing for excessive underage drinking.

I almost dropped out of college my freshman year because I did not know how to manage my own finances and meet those payments. I thought mom and dad would rescue me, but instead they gave me forms on how to take out additional loans.

Classes were overwhelming, especially with professors who expect a much higher level of excellence and will not let anyone slide just because they were the homecoming king at their high school or got a perfect ACT score.



Zach Groves

Meanwhile, SIUE is not entirely a residential campus so the real world, in many ways, still applies. For example, life without a car is difficult, but both achievable and necessary. The reality that not everything is within walking distance can be hard, but many like myself found a way to somehow make everything work. In fact, time management was a piece of cake partially because of the bus schedule.

Resourcefulness, to me, was the most important aspect of college life.

The attitude on campus was: if there was a problem, figure it out. If one place is closed, find another place to print out that paper. If something comes up unexpectedly, find some way to get the homework in anyway.

Emotionally, college can be a drain. Adversity is at its best and only the strong can deal with the pain and frustration that associates with tragedy and mountain-like challenges. Additionally, relationships change and the same people you were tight with in high school may be completely different people and forget you even exist.

On the bright side, the friends you meet in college usually relate to you and stick by you through thick and thin. So look for those, and keep them close.

If you have not grown as a student and a person, chances are nothing was really accomplished.

A degree and a job are the goals college students strive for when they begin their advanced studies. How they survive the challenges between freshman year and graduation day determines who gets that bachelor's degree and who goes home with nothing.

Best of luck to everyone, and keep working on that degree. The end result is beyond worthy and gives you a better perspective on life.

Zach Groves is a senior mass communications major from O'Fallon. He can be reached at zgroves@alestlelive.com or 650-3527.

WASHINGTON/pg.10

School of Education, School of Nursing – 1 p.m.



Derrick Hawkins/Alestle

Kinesiology student Jason Batty runs on the indoor track in the Student Fitness Center. Batty aspires to share his interest in exercise with students while working as a physical education teacher.

Crossing the finish line

After surviving in-class cardiac arrest, student plans to teach physical education

by Erika Helmerichs
Alestle Reporter

Few students, when reflecting on their college careers, can say their classmates and professors literally saved their lives. Jason Batty is an exception to that rule.

"My classmates thought I was dead," Batty said of when he collapsed in a kinesiology class Oct. 3, 2007. "When they saw what had happened, they instantly took action ... They breathed for me."

Now, seven months later, Batty is not only earning his degree in kinesiology, but has been chosen to speak at commencement as well.

Batty credits his survival to the quick thinking of his fellow classmates and a few professors.

"I was planning on doing an eight-mile run later that day with my friend Sarah when my heart stopped," Batty said. "I flat-lined in that classroom for three and a half minutes."

Batty said it was a blessing from God that he was in class when he collapsed.

"Twenty minutes later I would have been on my eight mile run, and I would not have made it," he said.

Senior and good friend Christopher Kahn was seated directly behind Batty when he went into cardiac arrest that day.

"I saw him start to fall and caught him before he hit the floor," Kahn said. "It appeared that Jason was having seizures, and we all knew he was in distress."

Kahn said the class rushed to clear a table where he, kinesiology and health education professor David Cluphf and professor John Smith, who has since left SIUE, worked with classmates to perform CPR on Batty.

When Batty remained unconscious after minutes of CPR, another student ran to retrieve an automated external heart defibrillator from SIUE's Student Fitness Center.

"Once we hooked up the defibrillator and Jason was revived, the paramedics arrived," Kahn said. "We were all so fortunate that day."

Batty has not let his near-death experience tarnish his drive to become a physical education

teacher, he said. It has only made it stronger.

"If I wasn't as healthy as I was that day, it could have affected me a lot worse," Batty said. "I aim to make sure every one of my students realizes how important physical education is."

Batty said his cardiologist told him that his excellent physical condition also allowed his body to recover much quicker than normal.

"They installed a permanent defibrillator in me," Batty said, "and I didn't miss that class once."

Just a few weeks ago, Batty shot a commercial for the American Red Cross and United Way that will begin airing near the end of summer 2008.

"Both Dr. Smith and Chris were certified through the Red Cross," Batty said. "It's what saved my life."

Kahn, Cluphf, Smith and student April Damien received the Heartsaver Award from Lt. Governor Pat Quinn soon after the incident.

Cluphf said Batty was an extremely "mature and responsible" student, who went above and beyond to get involved within his department.

"Batty has always been very driven," Cluphf said. "I knew that he would be a good teacher when I met him."

Though Cluphf said Batty's permanent heart defibrillator may someday limit his physical education instruction, he said he believes Batty will push through to reach his students.

"He has a genuine concern for people, you know?" Cluphf said. "He will try to make a difference in them."

Batty, who moved from Schaumburg with his wife two years ago, said his experience at SIUE has been more than he could have ever anticipated.

"I thought I was just going to go to school and go to the classes and get my degree," Batty said. "I've made lifelong connections here."

Batty encourages future SIUE students to "take every opportunity that professors give you and go above and beyond what they expect from you."

"Put in more than your share here and you will get it back tenfold," Batty said.

Erika Helmerichs can be reached at
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School of Engineering,
School of Business – 5 p.m.

Biology interests mix with engineering degree

by Whitney Tate
Alestle Reporter

Jenna Toennies, a senior mechanical engineering major, came to SIUE with a biology emphasis, but her dream slowly shifted from the medical field to biomechanics and robotic surgical tools.

"After starting my undergraduate studies, I realized I liked the challenges involved in analysis and design," Toennies said. "By pursuing a degree in mechanical engineering, I had the ability to implement these problem solving skills and the flexibility to tie it in with my interests in biology and medical sciences."

With a double minor in mathematics and physics and her switch from biology to engineering, Toennies has taken a number of classes which separate her from other students in her current field, according to her professors.

Richard Essner, a biological science professor, co-mentored Toennies in the Undergraduate Research Academy her junior year.

"I wish I had 100 students just like her," Essner said. "She's unique because she's taken a lot of biology courses, giving her extensive background information in biology and engineering. That really sets her up and puts her in the position to tie the fields together."

Toennies puts her Undergraduate Research Academy experience at the top of her list when considering collegiate achievements for herself.

"I remember presenting my final project at the URA Symposium and having a true sense of gratification that probably topped any other that I've had during my undergraduate career," Toennies said.

For her senior design

project, Toennies participated in a Mini Grand Challenge Team. The objective was to submit a one-person electric golf cart in an autonomous robot competition in Pennsylvania.

"Not only did I learn a lot about my own field of study throughout this project, but I also learned a good amount about the other engineering disciplines," Toennies said. "I truly learned what dedication means in every respect by participating in this project."

Computer science professor Jerry Weinberg offered Toennies a leadership position on the Mini Grand Challenge Team and had her in a robot making class.

"There is no group isolation for this type of project," Weinberg said. "It helps them learn about other expertise and understand all the systems."

The experience helped Toennies establish an intense background within her field, according to Weinberg.

Toennies has been asked to give the address during the School of Engineering and School of Business Commencement ceremony, so she thought it would be appropriate to talk about "succeeding in a world full of numbers."

Wrapping up her final few days as an undergraduate, Toennies had time to reflect on her last four years at SIUE.

"I am extremely excited about culminating my undergraduate career at SIUE on May 10, and I look with anticipation on being an alumnus of this great institution," Toennies said. "... I want to congratulate every member of the Class of 2008 on reaching a significant milestone in their academic career."

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photo courtesy Jenna Toennies

Engineering student Jenna Toennies works on her Undergraduate Research Academy project comparing feeding and jumping patterns in frogs.

college of arts and sciences

spring degree candidates and summer applicants who have elected to walk in the spring ceremony



Eugene Aaron
Jordan Adams
Frank Adduci
Emily Affolter
Jordan Agne
Esther Aguilera
Babatunde Aiyeomoni
Kim Albers
Matt Albers
Kaitlin Alderman
Hannah Allen
Marvin Allen
Melissa Allen
Andrea Allston
Emily Alvarez
Hala Alzubi
Jon Amesquita
Jessica Anderson
Nicholas Armentrout
Samantha Arnold
Aimee Arseneaux
Carolyn Atchley
Natalie Atherton
Michael Augustine
Annette Austin
Stephen Backhus
Ashley Bailey-Whitt
Margaret Baldwin
Genevieve Ballard
Brandon Barber
Beau Barfield
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Danielle Bartolomucci
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Joseph Becherer
Lori Belknap
Sara Bennett
Elise Berger
Nathan Bernaix
Summer Bernal
Wendy Berry
Adam Betz
Nathan Biggs
Joshua Billington
Daniel Bish
Christina Blackford-
Dinkela
Claudette Bland
Jennifer Blankinship
Amy Blasdel
Mingcoya Blount
Melanie Bold
Amanda Bolen
Mandisa Bonds
Robert Bone
Jacob Boone
Buzz Borders
Maria Borejsza-Wysocka
Aaron Bottorff
Tara Bradstreet
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Tiffany Branham
Larry Brantley
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Eric Brown
Loretta Brown
Matthew Brown
Melinda Brown
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Kelli Brunk
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Ryan Bull
Zachary Burch
Peggy Burchard-Ballad
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Fritz Bush
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Kimberly Charlton
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Chad Cochran
Maria Cochran
Jenine Cole
Derwanda Collins
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Robert Cooper
Wesley Copper
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Nathan Corso
Amy Corzatt
Erin Cronin
Pamela Cross
Marlene Cunico
Ryan Cunningham
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Mary Darwin
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Amosnee Davis
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Omara Ousley
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Alexis Overstreet
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Clifford Paradise
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Ian Privette
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Brian Schmidt
Angela Schmitz
Rebecca Schmollinger
Adam Schneider
Joshua Schobert
Elizabeth Schoening
Kallie Schonert
Robert Schorsch
Matthew Schroyer
Rebecca Schulz
Brian Schutte
Stephany Schwalenberg
Amanda Schwartzkopf
Paul Scimone



college of arts and sciences

spring degree candidates and summer applicants who have elected to walk in the spring ceremony

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|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| Ashley Scoggins Danielle Seckel Zachary Senger Aaron Sester Jennifer Shacklady Amisha Shah Lauren Sheehan Joshua Sherrock Thomas Shimunek Joshua Short Mark Shumake Emily Siemer Audrey Sierman Kimberly Simpkins Linda Sinco Kenneth Sindel Meghan Slobodecki Andrea Smith Damia Smith Erin Smith Jenna Smith Michael Smith Sherry Smith William Smutz | Andrew Snyder Anthony Sorrentino Andrew Spainhour Virginia Spees Bethany Spengler Amy Stahlshmidt Eric Stamm Rebecca Staples Erik Steffens Dustyn Steinhorst Mary Stephen Emma Stewart Katherine Stewart Elizabeth Stirnaman Michael Stockley Cole Stoltz Michael Stout Phillip Strack Chad Stuehlmeier Elizabeth Stygar Kyle Suchomski Jennifer Suffern Amber Suggs Seth Swanson | Allison Taake Kyle Talton Matthew Theuerkauf Antonio Thomas Caitlin Thompson Ian Thompson Kyle Thompson Sean Thoms Daniel Thouvenot Sarah Tichy Holly Tieman Kelsey Tipsword Marshall Todt Nicholas Toennies Julie Tolly Darci Trader Sara Trebing Mathew Trout Jon Tysse Rindi Uhlich Katie Upton Colleen Van Buren-Williams Carrie Van Vleet | Geeteeca Vanaik Melissa Vaughn Ashley Velez Devin Veselenak Alexis Vice Bethany Villines Michael Viverito Christopher Vogt Christina Volkmann Sarah Volle Travis Volle Joseph Volsch Patricia Vonholt Anthony Voss Thomas Vredenburg Brian Waldman Shereece Wallace Steven Wann Abby Ward Erin Warzala Chayla Washington Chermaine Washington Laura Waterworth Candice Watkins | Adam Watson Diedra Weaver Moncharo Webb Amy Wegener Ryan Weisenborn Timothy Wellen John Wendler Adam Wendt Shae Westendorf Ellen Wharrie Katrina Wharton Hilary Wheeler Nichole Whelan George White Kyle White David Wiatrolik Laura Wiechert Katie Wilcox Betty Williams Donna Williams Thomas Williams Vincent Williams Amanda Willis Margaret Wilson | Noelle Winkle Laura Witherspoon Kyle Wolf Christina Wombwell Michael Wong Ashley Wood Daniel Woods Emily Woods Kathleen Wooley Christine Wright Emily Wunderlich Darlene Wyatt Jennifer Wyatt Natalie Wyper Casey Yingling Audrey York Victoria Youmans Alisabeth Young Stephanie Young Robert Zdroj Amy Zentgraf |
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school of business

spring degree candidates and summer applicants who have elected to walk in the spring ceremony

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|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| Kumar Abhay Nicole Adams NFN Ahsanuzzaman Benjamin Akers Randy Ali Nicole Arview Stephanie Asaro Shannon Atterbury | Scott Audo Ryan Baer Atticus Bailey-Stobbs Cassie Barr Nicole Barron Steven Bartlett Marilee Beck Neil Becker | Miranda Behm Andrew Behrens Abby Bergman Adam Berry Barbara Bleich Nicholas Boelter Stephanie Bogowith Erik Boone | John Bordewick Amber Boulanger Eric Brandt Bree Brinkoetter Denay Brown Joshua Brown Daniel Bryce Tricia Buehne | Gregory Bulva Anna Burk Roy Burns Andrew Burton Chelsea Camfield Chris Carlson Elizabeth Carmitchel Jenee Carr | Paul Chang Amber Chesnut Romere Childress Stephanie Cloe Kevin Cloninger Katrina Coffman Kimberly Coleman Brian Collins |
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Neal Darr
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Matthew Dittman
Curtis Doetsch
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Stephanie Dowdell
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Dale Erspamer
Micki Evansco
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Sonya Froehling
Gregory Fuchs
Kandall Fultz
Dustin Gholson
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Victoria Gipson
Gregory Godar
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George Goscinski
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Deven Gray
Eric Gray
Lamarr Gray

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Lisa Grummel
Sharon Gugliotta
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Alexander Hagen
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Meghan McGinnis
Lindsey McKinney
Kelly McMillen
Timothy McNeill
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Amy Meyer
Miranda Middleton
Cody Miller
Katie Miller

Lacey Miller
Sally Miller
Mark Millikin
Kristopher Mitchell
Catherine Money
Shelly Morrison
Kelli Mueller
Jeremy Mueth
Joseph Muita
Scott Munn
Laura Murphy
Angela Niebruegge
Ryan Niebur
Luke Niemeyer
Monica Nolan
Miranda Nonn
Michelle Otto
Latascha Parker
William Parker
Alysse Patsaros
Beth Patterson
Emily Penrod
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Elizabeth Pratt
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Robin Quattlander
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Rachel Reitz
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Kevin Reynolds
Christopher Richardson
Alaina Riewerts
Jordon Riley
Sarah Riley

Amy Roach
Trista Roberson
Eric Robert
Jazmen Rose
Ashley Roseman
Breanna Rummerfield
Darren Salger
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Laura Sanders
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Campus Activities Board

WASHINGTON from pg. 2

"She has a wealth of life experiences in addition to her academic knowledge," Zamanou-Erickson said. "I think she had a lot of things to say, and I wanted other people to hear them too."

English language and literature professor, Howard Ramsby, agreed with Zamanou-Erickson, and said he nicknamed her "C-Washington" because she had a 'hip, professional style to herself."

Ramsby, who is also the director of the Black Studies Program, sought out Washington to fill the position of student researcher when he needed a replacement.

"I really needed a professional student, someone who was dependable and self-motivated," Ramsby said. "And she was the one I thought about."

Ramsby said he attended her senior project presentation and said it was important to see her go from the beginning of her academic career at SIUE to "this specialized area."

Although Washington will still be involved with the Black Studies Program on a volunteer basis, she will not be able to work for the program full time due to her graduate work.

Washington has chosen to formulate her speech for the

graduation ceremony around "being a driver of change."

"I wanted people to realize that just because you are graduating from this point of your life doesn't mean education shouldn't continue," Washington said. "I want people to realize this isn't the end, even if you aren't in school, be a lifetime learner."

Washington hopes to share with those at the graduation ceremony the potential of being a lifelong learner, but also that undergraduate students should get to know their professors.

Washington said throughout the years it was her professors who helped her the most when she was at her weakest points. She said when she felt she could not handle the pressures of school and family, her professors, though they never knew exactly what was going on in her life, were able to help her focus on school. Washington hopes to pass that on to others, she said.

"I just pray that when someone looks back on my life, it's one that influences them in a positive way," Washington said. "I want to be somebody that people can reach out to when they are at their lowest point and offer them that support."

Sydney Elliot can be reached at selliot@alestlelive.com or 650-3527.

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