

Austin A. Lane has served as chancellor of Southern Illinois University Carbondale since **July 1, 2020**, leading the university through a period of remarkable growth and transformation. Under his leadership, SIU launched **Imagine 2030**, a strategic plan built on five pillars: student success, diversity, branding, research, and sustainability.

During his tenure, SIU earned **Research 1 (R1)** status and was recognized as an **Opportunity University** by the Carnegie Classifications in 2025. Enrollment has risen for six consecutive semesters, including the largest increase in 33 years. Lane's initiatives—such as the **Saluki Commitment**, **Saluki Step Ahead**, and **Say “Yes” Initiative**—have expanded access, affordability, and community college partnerships. **Through more than 40 Saluki Step Ahead partner institutions in Illinois, Missouri, and Texas, community college graduates can complete their SIU bachelor's degrees remotely.**

In coordination with the SIU Foundation, Southern launched the **Imagine SIU 2030 Campaign**, aimed at raising **\$500 million**, and expanded alumni engagement through **Saluki Takeover Tours** and the **Saluki Ball**. The fundraising campaign has surpassed **\$423 million** toward its goal.

A New Jersey native, Lane earned degrees from **Langston University** (B.A. in psychology), the **University of Oklahoma** (M.A. in human relations), and the **University of Alabama** (Ed.D. in higher education administration). He and his wife, Loren, have three children: Lauren, Chase, and Lance.

Before SIU, Dr. Lane held various leadership roles in higher education, including president of Texas Southern University and executive vice chancellor at Lone Star College System. Lane's leadership and dedication to higher education have earned him numerous honors, including:

- **Business Leader of the Year (2025)** – Carbondale Chamber of Commerce
- **Educator of the Year (2024)** – 100 Black Men of Southern Illinois
- **Centennial Scholar (2024)** – University of Alabama Graduate School
- **KAPAL Lifetime Achievement Award (2024)** – KAPAL Foundation
- **Honorary State FFA Degree (2024)** – Illinois Association of Future Farmers of America
- **Rising Star Award (2022)** – 100 Black Men of America