

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo



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Executive Director Judy Erwin

ICCB
Chairman Guy Alongi
President/CEO Geoff Obrzut

ISAC
Chairman Don McNeil
Executive Director Andy Davis

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[President outlines education policy in major address](#)

On March 10, at a meeting of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, President Obama delivered the first major education speech of his presidency. "The relative decline of American education is untenable for our economy, it's unsustainable for our democracy, it's unacceptable for our children, and we can't afford to let it continue," the President said.



The President proposed five pillars of education reform:

- Investing in early childhood;
- Encouraging better standards and assessments;
- Recruiting, preparing, and rewarding outstanding teachers;
- Promoting innovation and excellence in America's schools;
- Providing every American with a quality higher education.

[Read the Speech](#)
[Watch the Speech](#)

[Secretary Duncan, Jill Biden key on importance of community colleges](#)

Secretary Arne Duncan and Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of Vice President Joe Biden, held a panel discussion at Miami Dade College to exchange ideas on improving the nation's higher education system and the importance of community colleges in job creation. "As a community college professor [at Northern Virginia Community College], I can see first-hand the significant and critical role that community colleges play in educating students and preparing them for a fiercely competitive workforce," Dr. Biden emphasized.

They also talked about how federal stimulus funds will help make college more affordable for families. Of the \$30.8 billion in the stimulus money for higher education, \$17 billion will be used to close the shortfall within the Pell Grant program and boost grant amounts by \$500 to \$5,350 in the first year. Such an increase in aid will benefit low-income students who are disproportionately represented at community colleges.

UPCOMING

March

18 Governor's Budget
Address to the General
Assembly

Legislative Reception of
the Higher Education
Legislative Coalition,
Illinois State Museum,
Springfield

20 ICCB meeting, College of
Lake County,
Grayslake

IBHE Faculty Advisory
Council, Chicago State
University

April

3 ISAC meeting, Harper
College, Palatine

7 IBHE Meeting, Springfield

22 Student Lobby Day,
Federation of
Independent Illinois
Colleges and
Universities

Friday Memo Profile: [Senator John Sullivan](#)

Sen. Sullivan calls for a unified voice from higher education advocates



(photo by Brandy Rees)

"In the back of my mind, I have been thinking about studying education," answered Sen. John Sullivan, when asked by **Friday Memo** what he would do if given a chance to return to college. As the new chairman of the Senate Appropriations II committee, with responsibility for over 30 state agencies, including Illinois higher education, Sen. Sullivan may not need to go to college to study education. He will learn plenty sitting at his post in the Illinois Statehouse. And, he plans to do just that.

[Read the interview in its entirety.](#)

[Duncan: Data key to improved student success](#)

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan urged states and school districts to continue their momentum towards building longitudinal data systems and developing the capacity of educators, policymakers, and other education stakeholders to understand and use this data to proactively drive continuous improvement throughout the education system. "Now that the [Data Quality Campaign](#) has put data quality on the map, we need to work together to leverage this work and push it to the next level by using data to drive reform," said Secretary Duncan

[No time for retreat on access, affordability, National Center says](#)

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, producer of *Measuring Up: The National Report Card on Higher Education*, has issued a statement calling on state policymakers and higher education leaders to make access and affordability for undergraduate students the top policy priority for higher education during the current fiscal crisis.

[Report advocates tax increase, sustained spending to battle recession](#)

The Center for Tax and Budget Accountability (CTBA) this week released the "Moving Forward" report on how Illinois can best weather the current economic storms. The report shows that in order to counter the recession, Illinois state government should maintain or enhance spending, even if it means progressive tax increases, rather than cut its budget.

[Spring community college enrollment at another record high](#)

The statewide Full Time Equivalency (FTE) Spring enrollments at Illinois community colleges reached a record 202,804 for the current semester, an increase of 4.2% from last year. The previous record high was in Spring 2004. "I believe we are seeing demand from those in the workforce who need to enhance their skills, plus the accessibility and open admission policies make community colleges an attractive option," said Geoffrey S. Obrzut, president and CEO of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

[Agency seeks 'a few good grads' to serve students and families throughout the state](#)

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) announces it is hiring 78 positions in conjunction with All-Access Illinois, a college access initiative seeking to unify ISAC's many valuable outreach services, products, and initiatives into one comprehensive campaign designed to engage students from lower-income families in planning for future postsecondary education.

[By the Numbers – NCES releases statistical portrait of higher ed](#)

Some findings? In fall 2007, institutions in the U.S. enrolled a total of 18.7 million undergraduate and graduate students -- 62% in four-year colleges, 36% in two-year colleges, and 2% in less-than-two-year colleges. Approximately 57% of full-time, first-time bachelor's or equivalent degree-seekers attending four-year colleges completed their degree at the college where they began their studies within six years. During the 2006-07 academic year, 73% of the 2.8 million full-time, first-time degree-seekers attending institutions located in the U.S. received financial aid.

Want the "mini" version (77 pages)? Go [here](#).

[People in the News](#)

[Steve Bragg](#), the vice president who has handled Illinois State University's finances for more than a decade, will retire next month. "I can think of no one who has provided more important leadership to this University over the past ten years than Steve Bragg," said President Al Bowman. Before joining ISU, Bragg served in a variety of capacities at the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Nobel Laureate and IMSA Resident Scholar [Dr. Leon Lederman](#) is the recipient of the 2009 National Space Grant Distinguished Service Award. The award is presented to individuals whose life and career have had a long-lasting impact in a science, engineering, or education field that is related to aeronautic, aviation, or space endeavors.

Campus News

[BHC, WIU-QC join forces to benefit transfer students](#)

MOLINE – Quad Cities residents interested in engineering, nursing, and liberal arts and sciences will soon be able to complete classes at both Black Hawk College (BHC) and Western Illinois University-Quad Cities (WIU-QC) as part of a new dual enrollment program. The 2+2 agreement between BHC and WIU-QC will allow students in those programs to complete courses at both locations simultaneously.

[EIU invites educators to faculty development event](#)

Eastern Illinois University's Office of Faculty Development is pleased to host Dr. Barbara E. Walvoord, Fellow Emerita of the Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame, on April 1 and 2. Dr. Walvoord will present three sessions: Making the Grading Process Fair, Time-Efficient and Effective for Learning; Increasing Student Motivation & Engagement; and Determining Whether a Teaching Strategy is Working Well. Interested individuals from Illinois colleges and universities are invited to attend any of the workshops, free of charge.

[Nursing program receives state licensing approval](#)

MACOMB/MOLINE – The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) and the National Council of State Board of Nursing have granted final approval to Western Illinois University to begin offering its four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree beginning Fall 2009. The new 125-semester hour BSN degree is designed for individuals who wish to become registered nurses and obtain a bachelor's degree.

[Watch the press conference](#)

News from Higher Education

[Data-collection advocates weigh progress toward accountability](#)

(Chronicle of Higher Education)

With the help of \$250-million in federal money, accountability advocates are seeking to make a quantum leap forward in analyzing what works in education (or doesn't), from preschool through college.

[Senate president: Education should be last thing cut](#)

(News-Gazette)

The president of the University of Illinois was happy to hear what the president of the Illinois Senate had to say about education funding. While not suggesting there would be more money for higher education and elementary and secondary education in next year's budget, Senate President John Cullerton said those would be the last items cut. Given what Cullerton called the "dramatic downturn" in tax revenue to the state, that counted as good news

[Official: Ill. prepaid tuition plans OK](#)

(Southtown Star)

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission is reporting that despite the nationwide economic downturn, Illinois' fund for parents prepaying college costs is not in danger.

[MD: State to use stimulus funding to freeze tuition for fourth consecutive year](#)

(The Baltimore Sun)

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley has stated that he plans to use some of the \$1 billion in federal stimulus money earmarked for education to increase funding for community colleges by 5 percent and extend the state's public college and university tuition freeze for a fourth year. The governor also seeks to fund some campus construction projects.

[MI: Effort to cut grants to private colleges criticized](#)

(The Detroit News)

Leaders of Michigan's private colleges and universities have criticized a move by Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D) to eliminate \$56.7 million in tuition assistance for needy students to attend the state's private colleges and universities.

[In-state tuition increase limited to 3-5 percent](#)

(Stateline.org)

VERSAILLES, Ky. -- In-state tuition will increase no more than 3 percent to 5 percent next year at Kentucky's public universities and community colleges because of the staggering economy, the state's Council on Postsecondary Education agreed.

Illinois Board of Higher Education
431 East Adams, 2nd Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1404
Phone: (217) 782-2551
<http://www.ibhe.org>
FridayMemo@ibhe.org