

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

IBHE
Chairwoman Carrie J. Hightman
Executive Director Judy Erwin

ICCB
Chairman Guy Alongi
President/CEO Geoff Obrzut

ISAC
Chairman Don McNeil
Executive Director Andy Davis

October 9, 2009

MAP Quest

[Students plan Springfield rally for MAP grants](#)

Busloads of students from colleges and universities from throughout Illinois will descend on Springfield next Thursday, October 15, to demonstrate the need for the General Assembly to restore funding for the second semester of grants through the Monetary Award Program (MAP). Without legislative action to appropriate about \$200 million to MAP, nearly 138,000 students will lose state financial aid for the spring semester.

The rally begins at 12:30 p.m. in the parking lot of the Illinois Education Association headquarters at 100 E. Edwards St. in Springfield.

Governor all over the map for MAP

- [Quinn, UI students rally for MAP grant funding](#) (News-Gazette)
- [Quinn rallies students to fight for MAP](#) (The Southern Illinoisan)
- [Quinn urges restoration of state student grant program](#) (Quincy Herald-Whig)
- [Quinn drawing attention to college financial aid](#) (Chicago Tribune)
- [Quinn will rally for student funds](#) (Peoria Journal Star)

[Petition drive tops 8,000](#)

An electronic petition urging funding for MAP grants exceeds 8,000 – 80% of the 10,000 signature goal – and continues to climb.

Faculty voice support for MAP

Faculty senates at [Southern Illinois University Carbondale](#) and the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#) have approved resolutions supporting the restoration of \$200 million in state funds to pay for second semester financial aid for MAP recipients.



THE ILLINOIS PUBLIC AGENDA
FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS

[IBHE gets lesson in Affordability 101](#)

ISAC's Andy Davis offers ideas on helping students afford college

Illinois ranks below the national average in the percentage of students attending college from low-income families and the participation rate has dropped 5 % in the past decade. Those grim figures were presented to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) at its October 6th meeting by Andy Davis, executive director of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), to illustrate the dimension of the problem of college affordability in Illinois. Davis was the featured *Illinois Public Agenda* speaker. "College affordability in Illinois has changed quickly," Davis said. "In less than a decade, we've gone from being a leader among the states in higher education to somewhere in the middle of the pack."

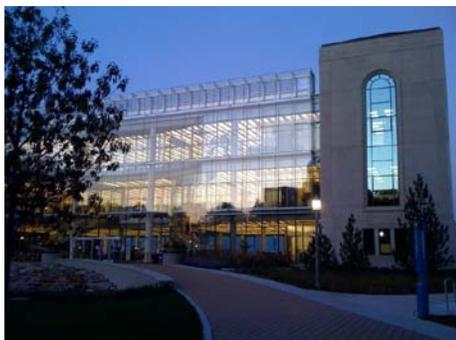
UPCOMING

October

- 14-16** General Assembly
- 28-30** veto session
- 14** House Higher Education Committee hearing
- 15** Student Lobby Day for MAP funding, Springfield
- 15** Joint hearing, House Higher Education Committee, House Appropriations Committee
- 15** DFI Board Meeting, Springfield

Davis offered several suggestions for restoring the state's stature and assisting students from low-income families gain access to college:

- **Get students through their programs faster** – shortening time-to-degree saves students money.
- **Get students to complete their academic programs** – low retention rates drive up costs for MAP.
- **Get control over college costs** – without cost containment by universities, even increased financial aid will fall short.
- **Invest in more need-based aid for low- and middle-income students and spend it more wisely** – nearly as many eligible students are denied grants as receive them.



The IBHE met October 6th at Loyola University Chicago. The University hosted a reception for the Board at the Richard J. Klarchek Information Commons – a library without books.

Davis suggested a [new funding scheme](#) for MAP students could be considered based on an approach similar to Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts – bonding to pay for the development of human capital and retiring the debt from graduates' increased future earnings resulting from their college degree. A handful of states are experimenting with the idea now.

[Board gets gloomy fiscal forecast](#)

State revenues are sliding. The mountain of unpaid bills is rising. The demands for dollars for pensions, health care, Medicaid, and K-12 education are unrelenting. Federal stimulus dollars are evaporating. Short-term borrowing is coming due. Those present and lurking challenges add up to a scary financial scenario as the IBHE begins development of the fiscal 2011 budget, according to a fiscal context report presented to Board members October 6th.

In addition, if Board members had any lingering doubt – or hope – Senator Heather Steans addressed the Board to reinforce that the state's fiscal condition is not good. She said, "As bleak as it is now, our next year's budget is far worse. We have solved our current year budget by doing \$3.5 billion in pension obligation notes, and we have billions of dollars in federal stimulus dollars that helped us close our budget gap. These things both go away next year. And by the way, our bond ratings by the national bond rating agencies have already dropped two levels because of the financial responsibility with which we are dealing with our budget right now. So, doing bonding, while I agree it is good to think creatively, we are in a situation which is going to be getting harder and harder for us to be doing that."

[Rep. McCarthy proposes study of MAP 'sustainability'](#)

Rep. Kevin McCarthy has introduced House Joint Resolution 75, directing the Board of Higher Education – in consultation with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission and the Illinois Community College Board – to conduct a study of ways to "improve the efficiency and sustainability of the Monetary Award Program." The resolution notes that the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success* cites the diminished buying power of a MAP grant and the thousands of students denied MAP grants as impediments to achieving the goal of raising educational attainment in Illinois to the best-performing U.S. states. The resolution is posted for a hearing before the House Higher Education Committee next Wednesday, October 14th, at 4 p.m.



[Campus News](#)

[NIU installs sculpture 'Remembered' at Forward, Together Forward memorial garden](#)

Standing nearly 18 feet tall, its quintet of flames interwoven toward the heavens, the

final element of Northern Illinois University's Forward, Together Forward Memorial Garden is now in place.

Workers installed sculptor [Bruce A. Niemi's](#) "Remembered" last week in the front-and-center spot of the garden just east of Cole Hall, the site of the Feb. 14, 2008, tragedy.

[University Center receives Educational Leadership Award](#)

The Coalición Latinos Unidos de Lake County selected University Center of Lake County for its 2009 award to an outstanding leader in the education and leadership promotion of Latinos.

People in the News

Former University of Illinois President [Stanley O. Ikenberry](#) was appointed October 3 as interim president at a special meeting of the Board of Trustees. Ikenberry, who previously served as U of I president for 16 years, will become interim president effective January 1, 2010. On September 23, President [B. Joseph White](#) announced his resignation effective December 31.

News from Higher Education

[Community colleges begin \\$1-million project to improve graduation rates](#)

(Chronicle of Higher Education)

With a \$1-million grant, eight community colleges across the country are beginning a two-year effort to study how they can produce more graduates at a lower cost per student.

[Education agency will offer grants for innovative ideas](#)

(The New York Times)

The federal Department of Education sketched out a new nationwide competition on Tuesday under which some 2,700 school districts and nonprofit groups are expected to compete for pieces of a \$650 million innovation fund.

[Hispanic students aspire to higher education but face barriers](#)

(USA TODAY)

WASHINGTON — Nearly nine in 10 Hispanics say it's "necessary" to get a college education to get ahead in life — more than any other ethnic or racial group in the USA. But Hispanic students' plans to get an actual diploma fall well below those of other groups, a survey finds: Fewer than half of Hispanic 18- to 25-year-olds say they plan to get a bachelor's degree, well below the 60% of all young people who say the same.

[Governor proposes new merit-based financial aid program](#)

(Juneau Empire)

Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell (R) has proposed a \$400 million scholarship program designed to encourage greater high school academic performance and increase state student financial aid. The "Governor's Performance Scholarship" would make high school students take specific classes and would reward them with a 100 percent college scholarship if they received an "A" average, a 75 percent scholarship if they achieved a "B" average and a 50 percent scholarship if they earned "C's." University officials praised the governor's interest in college affordability issues but maintained that the state would be better served by bolstering need-based aid.

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