

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

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ICCB
Chairman Guy Alongi
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ISAC
Chairman Don McNeil
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Catching up at the Statehouse

Pension Reforms



Facing a gazillion-dollar deficit and the prospect of a bond rating downgrade, the General Assembly passed [SB 1946](#) in a single day last week. The House approved the measure before lunch on Thursday, and the Senate followed suit just after dinner the same evening.

The bill sets up a two-tier pension system for the state's five retirement systems, with the changes in benefits and new rules affecting employees hired as of January 1, 2011. Among its features, the bill:

- changes the compensation calculation,
- increases the retirement age for full benefits,
- limits pensionable salary,
- limits cost of living allowances for annuitants, and
- suspends a pension for retirees who take a new job with an agency covered by one of the state pension systems.

Budget Crisis

[University borrowing bill runs into trouble.](#) Legislation (SB 642) reluctantly supported by most public universities to permit individual institutions to borrow against expected state GRF funding hit a snag as the General Assembly began its spring break. Several amendments were added in the House that all but preclude the schools from exercising the borrowing authority. The delinquent payments owed to the universities and community colleges are approaching a billion dollars.

Following the Federal scene

[Federal SAFRA becomes law](#)

The US DOE describes the passage last week of the *Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act* (SAFRA), which was included as part of the health care reconciliation bill:

- investing \$36 billion over 10 years to increase Pell Grants for low-income students, increasing the maximum award to \$5,975 by 2017 and adjusting the maximum award annually to match rising costs of living;
- investing \$750 million over five years to bolster college access support for students;
- making federal loans more affordable for borrowers to repay by strengthening the Income-Based Repayment (IBR) program, allowing borrowers to cap monthly payments at 10% (down from 15%) of discretionary income and shortening the repayment period to 20 years (down from 25 years);

UPCOMING

April

- 6** IBHE Meeting, Harold Washington College, Chicago
- 21** Save our Schools Save our State Rally, Springfield
- 21** University of Illinois Day at the Capitol, Springfield
- 22** UNITED to Save Education Rally—ICCB-SAC, IBHE-SAC, FIICU students, Springfield
- 30** DFI Program Board Meeting, Kennedy King College, Chicago

- investing \$2.55 billion over 10 years in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, tribal colleges, and other minority-serving institutions; and
- investing \$2 billion in a competitive grant program for community colleges to develop and improve both educational and career training initiatives.

[Education Secretary Duncan announces new Teacher Quality Grants aimed at improving student academic success: 2 Illinois universities successful grantees](#)

On March 30, Secretary Duncan announced 12 new five-year Teacher Quality Partnership grants, totaling \$99.8 million, that aim to raise student achievement by improving instruction in the nation's schools. These grants, funded by the ARRA, will be used to reform traditional university teacher preparation programs and create teacher residency programs for professionals from other fields entering the teaching profession. The partnerships are comprised of high-need school districts and their high-need schools, and institutions of higher education and their schools of education and arts and sciences. The Illinois grantees are: **Governors State University**--Project Name: Chicago Southland Region Teacher Quality Partnership, Project Director: Pamela Guimond; and **University of Chicago**--Project Name: University of Chicago Urban Education Institute's Urban Teacher Education Program, Project Director: Timothy Knowles.

[Delaware and Tennessee Win Race to the Top](#)

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that Delaware and Tennessee have won grants in the first phase of the Race to the Top competition. While Illinois did not receive funding, it did rank 5th among the sixteen finalists. The U.S. Department of Education will have about \$3.4 billion available for the second phase of the Race to the Top competition.

[Federal grants for campus emergency management](#)

The US Department of Education has posted a notice for the Emergency Management for Higher Education Grant Program (CFDA 84.184T). EMHE grants support efforts by institutions of higher education to develop, or review and improve, and fully integrate, campus-based all-hazards emergency management planning efforts within the framework of the four phases of emergency management: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. The closing date for grant applications is May 12, 2010.

More Illinois happenings

[P-20 Council hears about higher ed initiatives](#)

The P-20 Coordinating Council met March 23 to discuss higher education initiatives underway involving the three postsecondary agencies – IBHE, ICCB, and ISAC – along with the Illinois State Board of Education to advance student success across the preschool (P) to grad school (20) continuum. The three higher ed agencies reported on several initiative and programs aimed at:

- ▶ Supporting College and Career Readiness,
- ▶ Focusing on Affordability for Postsecondary Education,
- ▶ Emphasizing Student Success and Completion,
- ▶ Fostering Accountability through the P-20 Data System.

[Education Caucus to see PBS documentary on challenges of being a school principal](#)

Rep. Bob Pritchard, co-chair of the legislature's Education Caucus, has announced that the Caucus will meet April 20th for a reception highlighted by the viewing of "The Principal Story," which portrays the challenges faced by principals in turning around low-performing schools. The video, sponsored by Advance Illinois, features a one-year journey through the eyes of two dynamic principals: one in only her second year in the Chicago Public Schools and the other, a seven-year veteran in Springfield, Ill. The film's principals motivate teachers and students by using data to make better decisions, by offering professional development and training for struggling teachers, and by allocating resources to

build a learning community within and beyond the school.

IBHE SAC elects new board members, officers

The IBHE Student Advisory Committee has named new Board members and officers for the 2010-2011 academic year.

Elected as a member of the Board of Higher Education was **Dimitra Georgouses**, who attends Roosevelt University. Georgouses served as SAC chair this year, a position she will retain.

Named as the SAC nontraditional Board member to IBHE Board was **David Benjaih**, from Northeastern Illinois University.

Ari Shroyer, also of Roosevelt University was chosen as the SAC Secretary.

And **Priciliano Fabian**, who attends Southern Illinois University Carbondale, was named the Executive Chair to SAC.

[ISAC Partners With Fifth Third Bank For College Smart Fair](#)

Two-day event hosted by UIC Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

 CHICAGO — The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is pleased to announce its partnership with Fifth Third Bank to present the College Smart Fair, April 23-24, at the University of Illinois Chicago Student Center East. The two-day event is part of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's Money Smart Week, April 17-24, which provides free financial classes to consumers throughout Chicago and the state.

[Registration materials for the IERC 2010 Focus on Illinois Education Research Symposium available](#)

Symposium information, including the schedule of events, the presentation and poster sessions, and a registration form, are posted on the website. The Symposium will be held at the I-Hotel in Champaign on June 8-9.

ILCCO adopts strategic plan

Illinois Community Colleges Online officially adopted its new strategic Plan on March 11, 2010. Email jeff.newell@illinois.gov for more information, including a copy of ILCCO's March newsletter.

People in the News



City Colleges of Chicago's Board of Trustees appointed [Cheryl Hyman](#) as chancellor, effective April 1, 2010. Hyman is a graduate of Olive-Harvey College and holds an Executive Master of Business Administration degree from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, a Master of Arts degree in Community Development from North Park University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the Illinois Institute of Technology.

[Sally Blount](#), the dean of the undergraduate college and vice dean of the Stern School of Business at New York University, has been named dean of Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern Provost Daniel I. Linzer announced today (March 30). Blount will begin in July. Blount, 48, the Abraham L. Gitlow Professor of Management and Organizations at NYU Stern, is an expert in the fields of negotiation and behavioral decision-making and has extensive international experience in higher education. In 2007 she was appointed by NYU's president and provost as their special advisor for global academic integration.

Campus News

WIU-QC riverfront campus groundbreaking

The official groundbreaking for the Western Illinois University-Quad Cities Riverfront Campus took place at Building One along River Drive in Moline on March 31st. Businesses, industries, local organizations and higher education have banded together over the past few years to lobby for the new campus, and have been met with support from the State of Illinois to expand educational opportunities for the Quad Cities region. "This unique regional coalition is a role model for the rest of the state. We have come together with a shared, common goal and through persistence and cooperation, the WIU-Quad Cities Riverfront Campus has become a reality. Partnerships are the key to moving this state forward and I am most appreciative of our many Quad Cities partners," noted WIU President Al Goldfarb.

University Center psyched about new degrees

Pursuing a graduate degree in psychology will soon be easier for those who live or work in Lake County. The University Center of Lake County's Governing Board recently approved the addition of two new graduate degrees slated to begin in Fall of 2010: a Master of Arts in Psychology (MAP) and a Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology (MAIO). Both will be offered by The Chicago School of Professional Psychology (TCS) and both will be weekend programs that blend a reduced number of face-to-face sessions with a significant online component.

LLCC breaks ground for Workforce Careers Center

Lincoln Land Community College officials broke ground April 1st for a \$26.1 million Workforce Careers Center, one of two major construction projects in progress at the college's Springfield campus. "This facility will have far-reaching effects for our students, the community and our area economy," said Andy Ramage, chairman of the LLCC board. He said the vision for the building stemmed from the college's strategic plan, developed two years ago, which called for consolidation and expansion of Lincoln Land's career and workforce programs.

News from Higher Education

Obama reaffirms support for community colleges at signing of student-loan bill

(Chronicle of Higher Education)

President Obama signed legislation on Tuesday that ends the bank-based lending system for student loans and pours tens of billions of federal dollars into higher education.

Hispanic-serving grants?

(Inside Higher Ed)

Federal grants specifically for colleges that serve significant numbers of Hispanic students do not require the recipients

to show that the spending reaches Hispanic students or that it improves their academic outcomes – and a review of how the funds are used shows that many grantees do not even try to make that case.

[Strong backing for affirmative action](#)

(Inside Higher Ed)

The Obama administration has filed a brief with a federal appeals court offering strong backing to the University of Texas at Austin over its consideration of race and ethnicity in admissions decisions.

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