

Illinois Higher Ed  
*The Friday Memo*

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Executive Director G. W. Reid

ICCB  
Chairman Guy Alongi  
President/CEO Geoff Obrzut

ISAC  
Chairman Don McNeil  
Executive Director Andy Davis

April 1, 2011

**[Gov. Quinn announces Illinois's bid for national college completion challenge grant](#)**

In an effort to enhance state efforts to increase college completions and close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented students, Complete College America (CCA) has announced a Gates Foundation \$10 million grant opportunity. Illinois is a charter state member of CCA's alliance of 26 states. Ten states will be selected to receive \$1 million grants to implement significant improvements in college completion.

On March 16, Gov. Quinn announced Illinois' intention to apply for the Completion Innovation Challenge. He wrote to CCA president, Stan Jones, "This opportunity for funding and support as Illinois proceeds with its implementation of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success* will certainly enhance our state's efforts to meet Illinois' goal of 60% of all Illinois adults with a college degree or certificate by 2025." Illinois' team, led by Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon including Sen. Ed Maloney and Rep. Bob Pritchard, College of Lake County president Jerry Weber, SIU-C chancellor Rita Cheng, and Illinois Business Roundtable president, Jeff Mays, with staff leadership from ICCB, ISAC, and IBHE, is focusing on implementing performance funding for higher education, as well as transforming remedial education statewide.

**[Federal call to action to boost college graduation rates](#)**

Vice President Joe Biden has issued a call to action to boost college graduation rates across the country and help the nation meet President Obama's goal for the U.S. to have the best-educated workforce and the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020. In his role as chairman of the Middle Class Task Force, Biden called on governors to host state college completion summits, released [a college completion toolkit](#), and announced [a new grant competition focused on helping institutions of higher education \(IHEs\) increase completion rates](#).

"Today, we've got an education system that works like a funnel -- when we need it to work like a pipeline," stressed the Vice President. "We have to make the same commitment to getting students across the graduation stage that we did to getting them into the registrar's office. The skills of our college graduates will pave the way to a bright economic future for our nation."

**[IBHE Executive Director discusses major issues in WUIS interview](#)**

Dr. George W. Reid, IBHE executive director, sat down recently with Amanda Vinicky, statehouse bureau chief for WUIS Public Radio, for a discussion of performance funding, higher education budgets, and the cost of college.

**UPCOMING**

**April**

- 1** ISAC meeting, Charleston  
  
Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education Conference, Chicago
- 4** Common Core College & Career Readiness Standards Workshop, Carterville  
  
Disabilities Advisory Committee Meeting, IBHE
- 5** Common Core College & Career Readiness Standards Workshop, Belleville
- 7** Common Core College & Career Readiness Standards Workshop, Springfield
- 8** Common Core College & Career Readiness Standards Workshop, Champaign  
  
IBHE Faculty Advisory Council Meeting, NEIU
- 9** IBHE-Student Advisory Committee Meeting, NIU

### [Common core college readiness standards workshops](#)

Registration is now open for the eight regional workshops on the Common Core College Readiness Standards. See the schedule included above in the **Upcoming** section. Math and English college and university faculty members are encouraged to attend.

### [Illinois Student Assistance Commission announces Money Smart Week events](#)

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) will participate in 7 events throughout Illinois as part of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's Money Smart Week, April 2-9, which provides free financial classes to consumers throughout Chicago and the state. The week is highlighted by the day-long ISAC College Smart Fair April 6, presented by ATG Credit, LLC. "Now more than ever, it's important to be 'money smart' when it comes to saving for and paying for college," said ISAC Executive Director Andrew Davis. "Money Smart Week is an excellent opportunity to provide free and valuable information to students and families throughout the state."

### [ISAC FAFSA Challenge](#)

Completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as possible is the first step for students and families to obtain postsecondary education financial assistance. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission will update weekly the number of FAFSAs filed by Illinois high school students, keeping track of the increasing numbers to reach the Goal for 2011-12 college year of 800,000 applications. To date, **400,555** applications have been filed, over halfway to the Goal.



### [The Cutting Edge: Getting Faculty Engaged in Innovation](#)

Community colleges are facing tough challenges, and engaging faculty members - both full-time and adjunct - in the hard work of meeting these challenges is critical. Colleges can reap major benefits from meaningful engagement with faculty, yet many institutions find it difficult to do.

Public Agenda has been examining this challenge - how best to enlist and involve faculty in increasing student success - for several years now, in partnership with [Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count](#). The organization has developed core principles and promising practices for engaging faculty in changing institutions and closing student achievement gaps.

A new paper, called "Engaging Adjunct and Full-Time Faculty in Student Success Innovation," builds on existing work in faculty engagement but is also based on fresh research with higher education experts and community college faculty.

## From the Chronicle of Higher Education



### [The \(No Big Deal\) Gay President](#)

By Robin Wilson

Charles Middleton, the head of Roosevelt University, says his homosexuality has become a "ho-hum" issue.



### [Say Something: An 'All-American' Student Leader's Search for Identity](#)

A Roosevelt sophomore shares what it's like to be gay, conservative, biracial, and the student-body president.

*Ari Stroyer  
Roosevelt University  
Chair, IBHE Student  
Advisory Council*

## [People in the News](#)

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Northern Illinois University has named [Jeffrey Chown, John Hartmann and Gerald Jensen](#) as its 2011 Board of Trustees Professors—an honor that recognizes international prominence in research as well as excellence in all facets of teaching. Chown is a professor and documentary filmmaker in the Department of Communication. Hartmann is a professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures specializing in Thai language and culture. And Jensen is a professor in the Department of Finance who is highly regarded for his expertise in the business and academic worlds.

Eureka College has welcomed former Caterpillar Chairman and CEO [James Owens](#) as its first Executive in Residence. Owens will present a lecture and lead small-group discussions on topics related to corporate management and business strategies and will visit classes to discuss career development.

A scholarship to honor the late [Rep. Rich Myers](#) has been established by his family and friends at Western Illinois University. The first scholarship will be awarded in the Fall 2011 to a McDonough County agriculture major involved in community service or university activities. Myers was an activist for all the residents of the 94th legislative district, for Western Illinois University and for farmers across the state and nation.

### [Lincoln Academy of Illinois' Student Laureates honored](#)



[Evan Jackson](#), **Blackburn College**, is a senior from Bethalto, Illinois, and is majoring in Sports Management. Evan spends his free time working the college library.



[Ashlee Pinto](#), **DePaul University**, is a senior from Orland Park, Illinois. Ashlee is majoring in Political Science and plans to enter law school in the fall.



[Justin Gross](#), **Eastern Illinois University**, is a senior from Elmhurst, Illinois. Justin is an Education major and devotes much of his free time to fundraising for Special Olympics.

***Editor's note: In the upcoming issues of The Friday Memo, the Illinois Student Laureates from Illinois' colleges and universities will be featured in "People in the News." The award recognizes outstanding academic achievement, campus leadership and extracurricular activities among Illinois College and university seniors.***

## Campus News

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### [UIS receives major National Science Foundation grant to study ethics in computer science](#)

The National Science Foundation has awarded the University of Illinois Springfield a \$183,603 grant over two years to study ethical implications in computer science education. Researchers will use the grant to explore whether college students can benefit from learning ethics early on in introductory computer science classes. At issue is whether early exposure to ethics not only leads to a better ethical understanding, but improves overall technical skills.

### [SXU School of Nursing receives \\$100,000 donation](#)

Saint Xavier University has accepted a \$100,000 gift to its School of Nursing, which will be used to start a new scholarship endowment and name an older adult care simulation room. The donation comes from Charles E. Schmidt, widower of Mary Kay Millea Schmidt '44. Mary Kay, an SXU School of Nursing alumna.

## News from Higher Education

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### [The 'Last Lecture' at WIU](#) (McDonough County, The Voice)

As retiring Western Illinois University President Al Goldfarb prepared for his final lecture as the school's leader, he said a variety of emotions came to him.

['Master Plan' envisions cost-saving collaboration among colleges across the Midwest](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

A new report from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs calls for greater collaboration among colleges and universities across the region, which could decrease their reliance on state financial support.

[State's top educator tries to keep focus on kids](#) (Chicago Tribune)

Living in a trailer with no running water, the New Hampshire mountains surrounding him, Christopher Koch knew he was outnumbered. He and two other workers taught, fed and kept safe more than 100 teenage boys who saw the outdoor education program as a last resort to jail.

[U.S. universities encourage young Chinese to 'think critically, to challenge authority'](#) (Belleville News-Democrat)

HONG KONG — This year's announcement that Shanghai students had outperformed the rest of the world in math, science and reading sparked a surprising reaction in parts of this region: criticism of China's education system.

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