

Illinois Higher Ed  
*The Friday Memo*

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**March 2, 2012**

**Higher education legislation progresses in General Assembly**

This week both Senate and House Higher Education and Higher Ed Appropriations Committees met. Next Friday, March 9, is the deadline for substantive bills to be reported out of committee. Hearings scheduled for next week will consider bills, passing out those for consideration on the House and Senate floors in the weeks to come. (See **Upcoming** Box for details on right.)

In the House, two bills dealing with tuition waivers have been sent from Committees:

[HB 3810](#) (Rep. Crespo) passed out of State Administration Committee on February 22. The bill amends the School Code so that after June 1, 2012, persons may not be nominated for General Assembly scholarships. In FY 2011, the value of the waivers totaled approximately [\\$13.5 million](#).

[HB 5531](#) (Rep. Arroyo) was released from the House Executive Committee on February 29, although Arroyo agreed to consider possible changes to the bill before it comes to the House floor. As passed, the bill eliminates the public university employee tuition waiver program. In FY 2011, 2,234 children of employees received 50 percent tuition waivers, totaling slightly more than [\\$8.1 million](#). Employees are eligible for the waiver for their children under 25 years of age after seven years of employment at public universities. The committee discussed including a salary limitation for the waiver, or considering the benefit as taxable income. Both ideas would require an amendment to the current bill.

In the Senate, the Education Committee passed out two bills addressing high school college and career readiness, although both bills will not be advanced until further discussions with education groups occur:

[SB 3244](#) (Sen. Frerichs) requires an additional year of math in high school for pupils entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the upcoming school year and after.

[SB 3259](#) (Sen. Lightford) increases the compulsory school attendance age from 17 to 18 years of age.

**[GAO issues report on financial trends in public and private nonprofit colleges](#)**

From 1999-2009, both public and private nonprofit schools increased their reliance on revenues derived from student tuition and fees. The U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) analysis of postsecondary education data for fiscal years 1999 through 2009, the most recent data available, found that the portion of revenues attributed to net tuition and fees—revenues received after subtracting institutional aid provided to students—increased from 16 to 22 percent of total revenue at public schools, and from 29 to 40 percent at private nonprofit schools. By the end of the period, the growth in tuition and fee revenue outpaced that of all other types of revenues.

**UPCOMING**

**March**

**6**     [Senate Higher Education Committee](#), 409 Capitol, Springfield

**7**     [House Higher Education Committee](#), 115 Capitol, Springfield

[Senate Appropriations II Committee](#), 212 Capitol, Springfield

**8**     [House Higher Education Appropriations Committee](#), C-1 Stratton Bldg., Springfield

**12-13**     [ICBHE Conference](#), Statehouse Inn, Springfield

**23**     [ILACHE Conference](#), DePaul University, Chicago

### [60% of Americans have positive views of colleges](#)

A recent poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press found that 60 percent of Americans generally think that colleges and universities have a positive impact on the Country, and an overwhelming majority of college graduates say higher education is worth the investment. However, conservative Republicans are skeptical of colleges' effects on the Country, even though most who have completed college view the experience as personally beneficial. Among the population as a whole, the 60 percent approval rating for colleges was relatively high: more saw positive effects from colleges than from churches (57 percent), the news media (26 percent) or Congress (15 percent). Of the list of 12 institutions and industries, only small businesses (75%) and technology companies (70%) were viewed more positively.

### [Digital Accessibility Expo call for poster sessions](#)

The 4th Annual Digital Accessibility Expo (DAE) will be held on April 20, 8:45 am - 4:15 pm, at the UIC Forum, in Chicago. A call for poster sessions has been issued. The Expo is sponsored by the UIC Office of the Chancellor, the UIC Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, the Great Lakes ADA Center, the UIC Office for Access and Equity, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE).

### [People in the News.](#)

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The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) announced on February 29, the appointment of Executive Director [Eric Zarnikow](#). Selected through a search led by Chairman Kym Hubbard, and approved by the Commission, Zarnikow is a former Associate Administrator at the U.S. Small Business Administration, responsible for agency programs and operations concerning financial assistance to small business. He was previously Senior Vice President, Chief Risk Officer, and Treasurer of The ServiceMaster Company and began his career as a CPA at Deloitte.

"There is no job more important than helping Illinois students fulfill their academic aspirations," said Zarnikow. "I look forward to working with the ISAC team of financial aid and outreach professionals in support of Governor Quinn's 60x25 goal – that 60 percent of Illinois adults have a meaningful career certificate or degree by 2025." He steps in to replace John Sinsheimer, who served as interim Executive Director.

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



**Jamie M. Kilpatrick, *Lincoln College***, is a senior from Normal, Illinois, majoring in Health Care Administration.



**Margaret A. Meza, *Loyola University***, is a senior from Plano, Illinois, majoring in Political Science and International Studies.



**Emily L. Rademaker, North Central College**, is a senior from Cary, Illinois, majoring in German and Classical Civilization with a minor in Sociology.

**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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### [Team at U of I aims to make sugarcane, sorghum into oil-producing crops](#)

With the support of a \$3.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign researchers will take the first steps toward engineering two new oil-rich crops. They aim to boost the natural, oil-producing capabilities of sugarcane and sorghum, increase the crops' photosynthetic power and – in the case of sugarcane – enhance the plant's cold tolerance so that it can grow in more northerly climes.

### [Illinois State University launches a ride board for the social media age](#)

Illinois State University is offering students a new way to share rides via Facebook and Twitter. "Our recent transit survey results confirmed that many people are interested in carpooling or creating vanpools. We are excited to offer a program that will allow our community to easily find and share rides," said Illinois State's Director of Parking and Transportation Julie North.

## News from Higher Education

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### [Higher ed chiefs worry about pension shift](#) (Journal Gazette & Times-Courier)

SPRINGFIELD – University presidents are raising red flags over a plan brewing in the Capitol to shift pension costs from the state to the universities.

### [Multiple factors fuel growth in transfers to 2-year colleges](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

One in three students transfer at least once, a study reported, and half of those who leave four-year institutions end up at community colleges.

### [Colleges misassign many to remedial classes, studies find](#) (The New York Times)

Two new studies from the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College have found that community colleges unnecessarily place tens of thousands of entering students in remedial classes — and that their placement decisions would be just as good if they relied on high school grade-point averages instead of standardized placement tests.

[Study: Pell grant makes difference for students of color](#) (Diverse Issues in Higher Education)

African American and Hispanic students who receive a federal Pell Grant are more likely to finish college and pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) majors, says a new report that argues for a renewed commitment to the grant program.

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