

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

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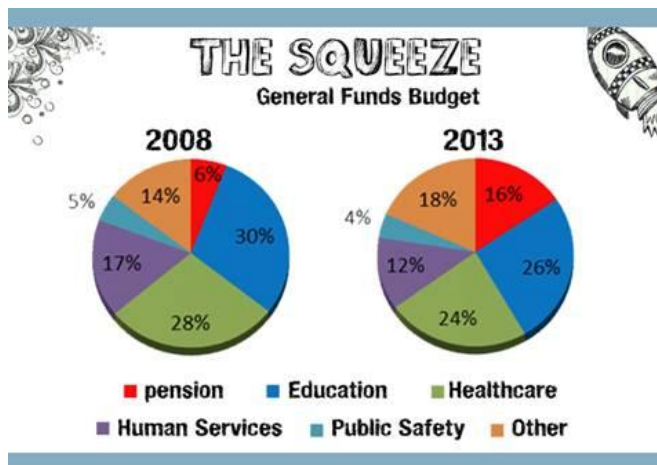
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November 30, 2012

[“This is My Illinois: Thanks in Advance” public education campaign about pensions gets underway](#)

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn is utilizing social media tools, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to share information about the public pension system and the funding issues that are impacting the state. Describing the current pension costs as “a squeeze on state resources,” the website provides information showing the significant impact on the state’s ability to fund education in Illinois.



On November 28, Governor Quinn’s web campaign to educate Illinoisans about the pension squeeze unveiled two videos, prepared by Salman Khan from the Khan Academy, to explain [pensions in general](#) and specifically lay out [the Illinois pension crisis](#). The Governor is urging Illinois citizens to participate in the “Thanks in Advance” campaign by visiting [ThisisMyIllinois.com](#) for ongoing updates and information to supplement the actions expected by the General Assembly to address Illinois’ pension benefits funding crisis during the lame-duck session in early January.

GYO Statewide Learning Network Conference held at National Louis University



On November 15, the Illinois Board of Higher Education sponsored the annual [Grow Your Own Teacher Initiative \(GYO\)](#) Statewide Learning Network Conference at National Louis University. Elaborating on the conference theme, “*Developing High Quality Teachers for Illinois High Need Schools*,” GYO teachers Rosa Drumgole, teaching at Wentworth Junior High School in Calumet City, and Sanela Sinanagic, teaching at Haugen Middle School in Chicago (pictured here with Teresa Ramos, GYO Consortium Director for Organization of the Northeast) shared with the group their personal challenges of becoming a teacher. Both expressed the overwhelming support they received from the GYO program during their journeys.

UPCOMING

DECEMBER

- 4-6 [Veto Session](#), Illinois General Assembly
- 4 [IBHE Board Meeting](#), Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago
- 7 [IBHE Faculty Advisory Council](#), Springfield

As the Conference's keynote speaker, State Rep. Bob Pritchard (R-70), minority spokesperson on the House Higher Education Committee, emphasized the importance and need for a program such as GYO to develop teachers to work in Illinois' high need districts. He also stressed the importance of all state programs, including GYO, to produce measurable results in order to justify state funding under the current fiscal restraints on the state budget. Miguel del Valle, Chairman of the Governor's P-20 Council, shared his support for the GYO program, describing it as one important means for creating a diverse pipeline of teachers of color for Illinois' schools.

Education practitioners, researchers and policymakers discuss the relationship of higher education programs to workforce needs

Legislators and higher education leaders of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact's (MHEC's) governing board joined additional education practitioners, researchers and policymakers in Cincinnati on November 19-20 to discuss the relationship of education programs to workforce needs. The annual MHEC policy summit focused on the renewed attention surrounding the purpose and role of higher education and how postsecondary institutions might align their academic programs with specific industry or workforce needs.

Graduation rate data

The U.S. Department of Education has released data detailing state four-year high school graduation rates in 2010-11. That school year was the first year for which all states used a common, rigorous measure. Previously, the varying methods used by states to report graduation rates made comparisons between states unreliable. The new, uniform rate calculation is also not comparable in absolute terms to previously reported rates. Therefore, while 24 states reported increased or unchanged rates and 26 states reported lower rates under the new metric, these changes should not be viewed as measures of progress but rather as a more accurate snapshot. Illinois' graduation rate for all students is listed at 84%.

The transition to a common, adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate reflects states' efforts to create greater uniformity and transparency in reporting high school graduation rate data, and it meets the requirements of October 2008 federal regulations. A key goal of the regulations was to develop a graduation rate that provides parents, educators, and community members with better information on their school's progress while allowing for meaningful comparisons of graduation rates across states and school districts. The new metric also accurately accounts for students who drop out or who do not earn a regular diploma.

People in the News

SPOTLIGHT: 2012 - 13 DFI Fellows

Thirty-nine new Diversifying Higher Education Faculty (DFI) in Illinois Program Fellows were recently awarded a Fellowship for the 2012-2013



academic year. The purpose of the DFI program is to increase the number of underrepresented faculty and staff in Illinois institutions of higher education. The complete

list of new and renewal Fellows by institution and program major can be viewed on the IBHE website at <http://www.ibhe.org/DFI/fellows.asp>. *The Friday Memo* will feature DFI Fellows throughout the year.



Vanessa Segundo is completing her second year in the M.S.Ed. in Adult and Higher Education program at Northern Illinois University (NIU). She earned a B.A. in Political Science with a minor in History at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her academic interests in social movements in education, diversity in higher education, and critical race theory are apparent through her work and research.

Vanessa Segundo recently joined the University Honors Program at NIU as the Assistant Director of Programming and Communication. In this role, she is responsible for assisting in the development of programs, policies, and objectives related to academic and engaged learning opportunities. In her previous role as the Research and Project Specialist at NIU's Latino Resource Center, Vanessa launched a number of exciting new programs and student-centered initiatives, including the Adela de la Torre Honor Society and the first university resource guide in the state of Illinois for assisting undocumented students.

Vanessa has given presentations at various conferences and community events where she has covered topics on college access and success, language and cultural sensitivity, and parent engagement. Vanessa's other previous employment includes serving as an Ambassador for the KnowHow2Go Campaign (Washington, D.C.), College Adviser for the Illinois College Advising Corps, and Instructional Assistant for Educational Talent Search. Committed to the value of community, Vanessa, a recipient of the 2012-2013 Graduate Student Mentored Proposal or Pilot Grant, provided by the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Language and Cultural Sensitivity at NIU, is currently working on a research on the Latino Parent University, an initiative Vanessa coordinated in District 131. Her research is being used as part of a grant submission for future funding and expansion of similar programming in Illinois.



Illinois College has announced that [**Dr. Barbara A. Edwards Farley**](#) will become the college's 14th president. Farley is currently vice president of academic affairs and dean of the college at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn. Prior to her current role at Augsburg, Farley was also academic dean/associate dean and associate professor of business administration at the college. She also served as academic dean and chief academic officer at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Penn. Farley holds a Ph.D. and an M.B.A from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the College of Saint Benedict. She will succeed President Axel D. Steuer, who announced his retirement from Illinois College effective at the end of this academic year (May 2013).

Campus News

[Lt. Governor Sheila Simon visits Governors State University, discusses challenges in higher education with students, faculty, staff, and administrators](#)



Affordability, retention, and college completion – all key components of Governors State University’s commitment to students – took the spotlight November 13 during Lt. Governor Sheila Simon’s visit to the university. During her two-and-a-half hour visit, Simon met with GSU students, faculty, staff, and administrators. She called on federal, state and higher education officials to work together to keep college affordable so thousands of Illinois students can earn the credentials needed for good-paying jobs.

Lt. Governor Sheila Simon and GSU President Elaine P. Maimon with Dual Degree Program students (from left) Kayla Randolph-Clark, of Manhattan; Cecilia Diaz, of Chicago Ridge; and April Grammer, of Flossmoor

[Lt. Governor Sheila Simon visits Chicago State University to discuss affordability in higher education](#)

On November 15, Lt. Governor Sheila Simon met with students and toured Chicago State University’s (CSU) state of the art physics lab. During Simon’s visit, she met with campus administrators to discuss MAP grants, student aid, College Choice Reports and CSU’s goals for student completion. Further, Simon met with faculty and deans to hear more about academic programs, had lunch with CSU presidential scholars and student government leaders, and Student Trustee, Stephanie Sanchez. Student leaders were eager to share their experiences with the Lt. Governor, including their needs for more financial aid.

[UIS part of national study exploring credit-worthiness for massive open online courses](#)

The University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) is part of a nationwide study that will examine the academic potential of massive open online courses (MOOCs). MOOCs are free online courses offered to very large numbers of students, mostly not for college credit. The research is being coordinated by the American Council on Education (ACE) with financial support provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

“MOOCs have the potential to make a huge difference in providing access to learning worldwide, so it is very important that we identify the best practices and approaches in effectively teaching students enrolled in this new way,” said research coordinator Ray Schroeder, UIS associate vice chancellor for online learning.

[Loyola Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry receives largest donation in history](#)

Loyola University Chicago’s Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry has received its largest single donation from the late Robert R. Otremba (BS ‘49, MS ‘63), a Chicagoan and Loyola alumnus. Mr. Otremba donated more than \$2.5 million for the Robert R. Otremba Scholarship Fund, which was officially received by the department in early fall 2012. The scholarship is for undergraduate and graduate students majoring in chemistry and in need of financial assistance.

[Moviegoers learn the value of an ECC education](#)

Elgin Community College (ECC) is using a commercial to stress the value of education. The commercial, titled "Prestigious University ... Genius," has debuted on screens in theatres in and around Community College District 509. The spot was conceived, created, and produced by ECC's Marketing Department. Three ECC students were cast in roles for the commercial and two professional actors also were used. The college also used Ravenheart Coffee in downtown Elgin, a business within Community College District 509, to film the commercial.

[News from Higher Education](#)

[Americans are proud of U.S. colleges but not of their direction](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

Amid recession-era challenges in higher education and concerns about the nation's competitiveness, Americans are simultaneously proud of colleges in the United States and critical of the direction in which they're heading, according to the results of a national opinion poll released by Northeastern University.

[If there's a way, there's a will to regulate tuition](#) (The Texas Tribune)

The 2013 legislative session will mark the 10th anniversary of a decision by Texas lawmakers to deregulate college tuition, giving the authority to set tuition at public universities to the institutions.

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