

Illinois Higher Ed  
*The Friday Memo*

IBHE  
Chairwoman Carrie J. Hightman  
Interim Exec. Director Harry J. Berman, Ph.D.

ICCB  
Chairman Alexi Giannoulis  
President/CEO Geoff Obrzut

ISAC  
Chair Kym M. Hubbard  
Executive Director Eric Zamikow

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**UPCOMING**

**97<sup>th</sup> Illinois General Assembly concludes veto session; returns for lame-duck session in early January**

Spending less than five days in Springfield to attend to bills passed during Spring session that were vetoed or amended by Governor Quinn, the 97<sup>th</sup> General Assembly did not act on pension issues, or reject the Governor's plans for facilities closures as cost saving measures.

Two bills of interest to higher education did pass and were sent to the Governor for his approval:

- [SB 3498](#) (Currie) extends grant funds and the existence of grant programs administered by state agencies until June 30, 2013. The General Assembly plans to review all such programs during the Fiscal Year 2014 appropriations process, as part of the Budgeting for Results process.
- [HB 1864](#) (Lilly-Maloney) makes changes to the equalization funding formula for community college districts.

On December 5, a bi-partisan group of House members announced the introduction of yet another pension reform bill [HB 6258](#) (Nekritz-Biss). At the press conference the sponsors explained their hopes of jump-starting stalled discussions during the lame-duck session for finding a solution to the growing pension fund obligation crisis. The Senate is scheduled to return January 2, and the House on January 3 for the lame-duck session. On January 9, the 98<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Inaugural will take place at Noon.

**Illinois Public University Presidents and Chancellors send message to General Assembly leaders on pension stabilization bills**

Responding to the prospect that the General Assembly will likely enact pension legislation soon, all 14 Illinois public university presidents and chancellors signed a letter on December 5 offering their "...collaboration in reaching a fair and durable conclusion" in addressing the pension crisis. Offering support for certain aspects of [SB 1673](#) (Raoul-Madigan), amendments are also suggested. The university leaders also reiterate the willingness of their institutions to "assume responsibility for paying a portion of the (State University Retirement Systems-SURS) normal cost on a phased-in basis."

**Governor Quinn invites Illinois college students to gather to discuss the importance of MAP funds for keeping college affordable.**

On Wednesday morning, December 12, college students from many of the nearby campuses around the Chicago Loop will take time out from studying for final exams to share their stories about the costs of going to college, how they are paying for it, and how MAP grants help. The discussion will also include ways to get more students involved in letting state lawmakers know how MAP funding has helped them stay in college pursuing a degree or postsecondary

**DECEMBER**

**12** MAP Roundtable for Students, DePaul University's Loop Campus

MAP Task Force meeting, Thompson Center, Chicago, and ICCB offices, Springfield

credential. Students are invited to come to DePaul University's Loop campus, at 1 E. Jackson, downtown Chicago (near the Jackson Red line) to join in for a roundtable discussion on future funding for MAP and higher education in Illinois. Students planning to attend should email [adam.weiner@illinois.gov](mailto:adam.weiner@illinois.gov).

Governor Quinn plans to be on hand to listen and encourage the students' efforts to preserve MAP in next year's state budget. As part of his recently launched social media campaign: <http://thisismyillinois.com/>, the Governor has included the MAP program as an example of a state program that is in jeopardy as funding for pensions rises and reduces funding for other state efforts.

### **IBHE Board discusses facilitating college completion for transfer students**

At the Illinois Board of Higher Education's meeting on December 4, higher education experts from all three sectors—community colleges, public universities, and private four year institutions—described successful efforts underway for Illinois' transfer students. Lois Bishop, Director of Community College Partnerships, DePaul University; Dena Lawrence, u.select Illinois Project Coordinator; Dr. Marilyn Marshall, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Illinois; and Agnes Szemborski, Transfer Information Specialist, Harper College provided examples of transfer programs between community colleges and public and private four-year institutions in Illinois. Their presentation specifically focused on two IBHE-supported transfer programs available to Illinois students:

- The [Illinois Articulation Initiative](#) (IAI): a statewide transfer agreement among more than 100 participating colleges and universities in Illinois. IAI works best for students who know *that* they are going to transfer but undecided on *where*.
- [u.select](#): a nation-wide, web-based transfer information system that provides students with fast and accurate course and transfer information on colleges around the country. Many Illinois institutions participate in u.select, and it is free for anyone to use.

These transfer programs directly support Goal 3 of the Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success and its recommendation to "*Improve transitions all along the education pipeline.*"

### **[AFT calls for teacher 'bar exam'; national board to oversee](#)**

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has unveiled an ambitious new initiative to raise entry standards for teacher-preparation programs-and to create a "universal assessment," analogous to the bar exam in law, that teachers should have to pass to show they are ready to take on their own classrooms.

### **People in the News**



After a career spanning 34 years at Illinois State, the last nine as the University's 17<sup>th</sup> president, [Al Bowman](#) announced on December 3 he will step down following the search for a new president, "Our administrative leadership is solid and, despite the most challenging economy in memory, Illinois State is in a financially enviable position," Bowman said. "Our belief in shared governance and commitment to shared decision making is a model for other universities to follow. I have no doubt that our faculty, staff, student body, administration and governing board will continue to steer Illinois State on its unique path of excellence."

Bowman joined Illinois State in 1978 as a faculty member in the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology (now Communication Sciences and Disorders). He was appointed chairperson of the department in 1994. In the 2002-2003 academic year, Bowman left the chair's position to serve as Illinois State's interim provost. He served as interim president of Illinois State from June 2003 until he was named president in March 2004.

Blackburn College has named [Dr. John Comerford](#) its 16th president, effective July 1, 2013. Dr. Comerford succeeds **Miriam Pride**, who has served as President of Blackburn for 22 years and is retiring. Dr. John Comerford currently serves as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Westminster College in Missouri. Comerford previously served as Vice President & Dean of Student Life at Westminster College, and was active in academic areas, teaching at Westminster and University of Missouri—Columbia.



[Rhiana Gunn-Wright](#), Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA) Class of 2007 graduate, was named a Rhodes scholar in November and will begin studying comparative social policy next fall at the University of Oxford in England. Gunn-Wright is the fourth IMSA graduate to be named a Rhodes Scholar.

During an interview with IMSA, Rhiana thanked the Academy for helping her to hone her academic talents and gifts, and using them for the benefit of mankind. "IMSA was an incredibly formative experience for me," said Gunn-Wright. "IMSA taught me to question, to analyze, and, most importantly, to work to change the things in the world that I thought were unjust," she added.

## Campus News

### [New Veterans Education Center at UIUC](#)

Governor Pat Quinn announced \$4 million in *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital funding to help build the Center for Wounded Veterans in Higher Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The new center will help returning veterans with disabilities readjust to civilian life and provide vital rehabilitative, counseling, academic and career services to support wounded warriors as they achieve higher education. The governor was joined by Assistant Secretary of the Army Thomas Lamont, philanthropist Ron Chez and university leaders including Provost Ilesanmi Adesida, and Lt. Col. Eric Stetson of University of Illinois ROTC.

The state-of-the-art Wounded Warrior Center will combine 24-hour comprehensive support to prepare severely wounded veterans to live independently and to successfully pursue their educational and career goals. The center will house offices for supporting programs, research spaces, a fitness center, residential units for up to 12 occupants, a teaching kitchen, a conference room, tutorial support spaces and a lounge. The facility will also be LEED Gold certified.

### [Governors State strives for civic engagement across the curriculum, across generations](#)

Starting in 2014, Governors State University (GSU) will accept its first class of first-year students as it transitions into a four-year university, adding a new general education curriculum and residence halls as part of the change. "Our overall goal is to be a model twenty-first-century university," GSU President Elaine Maimon says, "and a twenty-first-century university must have

both the very strong high quality pathway for transfer students, and a full four-year undergraduate program that provides and incorporates the best of what undergrads benefit from in a full liberal arts-infused setting.” A crucial element of GSU’s approach to the civic education is based on an “infusion model,” with civic learning integrated throughout the curriculum rather than housed in specific courses or activities. “It can’t be something apart, something discrete,” Maimon says. “It has to involve learning things in the curriculum and thinking about how that connects to your life as a citizen, to your employment, and having experiences that promote that connectivity.”

### [Governor Quinn announces capital funding for student success center at Richland Community College](#)

Governor Pat Quinn announced \$3.5 million in state support for the renovation and construction of an addition to the Student Success Center at Richland Community College. The project will expand space for learning at the center to allow student services to be consolidated into one location on the Decatur campus. Construction of this project will create about 65 jobs. “Community colleges are vital to the Illinois economy. They launch young people into the world of work and help older students make a fresh start,” Governor Quinn said. “This improved student center will strengthen Richland Community College and provide students with the helping hand they need to thrive in their classes.”

### [News from Higher Education](#)

#### [Dropouts: College's 37-million-person crisis—and how to solve it](#) (The Atlantic)

The biggest hindrance to completing college isn't financial preparedness, but academic preparedness. Half of the students in community colleges need high-school-level courses when they enroll.

#### [Iowa regents freeze tuition for in-state undergrads](#) (The Des Moines Register)

The Iowa Board of Regents broke more than 30 years of precedent Wednesday when it unanimously voted to freeze tuition for undergraduate resident students.

#### [Florida University leaders want to avoid tuition hike](#) (The Miami Herald)

The presidents of Florida’s state universities have an offer for the Legislature: Give us \$118 million and we won’t raise tuition.

#### [Providers of free MOOC's now charge employers for access to student data](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

Providers of free online courses are officially in the headhunting business, bringing in revenue by selling to employers information about high-performing students who might be a good fit for open jobs.

#### [More Illinois students leaving state for freshman year](#) (Chicago Tribune)

Take a walk around the University of Missouri and it won't take long before you meet someone from the Chicago area.

NOTE: There will be no ***The Friday Memo*** published on December 14 or 28.

Illinois Board of Higher Education  
431 East Adams, 2nd Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1404  
Phone: (217) 782-2551  
<http://www.ibhe.org>  
[FridayMemo@ibhe.org](mailto:FridayMemo@ibhe.org)

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