

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

February 8, 2013

USDOE Under Secretary describes how higher education is opening doors to the American Dream



Dr. Elaine Maimon, president of Governors State University, listening to Under Secretary Kanter at IBHE board meeting.

Dr. Martha Kanter, [U.S. Under Secretary of Education](#), addressed the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), as the **Public Agenda Showcase**, at its Board meeting on February 5, describing the Department of Education's higher education initiatives for "[An America Built to Last](#)". Dr. Kanter's presentation highlighted several key programs to increase educational attainment and close the achievement gap. "We all must speak out about the American Dream," Kanter urged the Board and guests in attendance. She went on to describe how President Obama's goal of attaining a well educated workforce by the year 2020 is an investment in the American Dream. Support of P-20 education reform, affordability and quality in postsecondary education, and research and innovation at colleges and universities is needed in order for America to regain its first position as the most educated nation.

**[Underrepresented students progressing through to college graduation are on the rise](#)**

At the IBHE Board meeting, the **Public Agenda Update** featured the "[Underrepresented Groups in Illinois Higher Education Report](#)" presented by Dr. Arthur Sutton, deputy director, Diversity and Outreach, IBHE. In his introductory comments, Dr. Harry J. Berman, interim executive director, IBHE, noted that during the past year Illinois has seen significant progress in the participation of students from traditionally underrepresented groups in public higher education, with a 3.7% increase in enrollments and a 7% increase in degree completions. Additionally, last year's increase was not unique, but is part of a trend. "Over the past five years, enrollments of students from traditionally underrepresented groups have increased 19% and degree completions have increased 17%," Dr. Berman commented. "Although many challenges remain in providing needed support services for students from underrepresented groups, many of whom are first-generation students or from low-income families, it is important to recognize and celebrate progress."

**UPCOMING**

**FEBRUARY**

- 11 [ICCTA Board of Representatives Meeting](#), at Association of Community College Trustees' National Legislative Summit, Washington, DC
- 15 [IBHE-Faculty Advisory Council Meeting](#), Kaskaskia College, Centralia
- 22-23 [IBHE Student Advisory Committee Meeting](#), Roosevelt University & UIC, Chicago

## **IBHE Board adopts recommendations for fiscal year 2014 higher education budget**

[The Fiscal Year 2014 Higher Education Budget Recommendations: Operations, Grants, and Capital Improvements](#) budget plan was presented by IBHE staff to the Board at its meeting on February 5, and it was agreed upon to send the recommendations on to the Governor and General Assembly.

[The FY 2014 budget recommendations](#) maintain the investment level approach first implemented in FY 2009. The investment levels link to the goals of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success* and fulfill the recent mandate to incorporate performance funding into the higher education budget development process. The intent of these investment levels is to present well-reasoned options to policymakers that can be accommodated at various levels of funding given other state priorities and available resources. The decision as to the appropriate investment level for higher education is made ultimately by the General Assembly and the Governor.

- **Due to the fiscal constraints currently faced by the state, Step One reflects a level or flat budget for higher education operations and grants.** This level of funding would not restore any funding that was lost in FY 2013 and includes the same percentage allocation for performance funding as in FY 2013.
- **Step Two, is an overall increase of 2.5 percent over FY 2013.** Step Two includes support additional for public universities through the allocation of resources based on performance and for core institutional operating support. Step Two includes additional support for community colleges Base Operating Grants and Equalization Grants. Step Two also provides additional funding for Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants and new funds for ISAC program administration and outreach. Finally, in Step Two, funding is restored to FY 2012 levels for Cooperative Work Study and u.Select System while additional funding is provided to Grow Your Own.
- **Step Three is an overall increase of 4.5 percent over FY 2013.** Step Three provides additional funding based on performance at public universities and additional funding for core operating support. Step Three includes additional funds for community college Base Operating Grants and Equalization Grants. Step Three also provides funding for MAP to restore general funds support to the FY 2012 level of state support, as well as, additional funding directed towards maintaining the purchasing power of MAP grants. Step Three increases funding for Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois (DFI) program and Grow Your Own.
- **Step Four is considered a restoration level budget because it provides funding needed to bring higher education back to roughly the level of state support provided in FY 2012.** Step Four restores MAP funding to the total, all-funds level of support (combined state and federal funds) provided in FY 2012. Steps Two, Three and Four include additional support for Adult Education and Career and Technical Education (CTE), Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA), University Center of Lake County (UCLC) and higher education agency operations.

## **[Governor Quinn's report on the State of the State: Our Illinois at a critical juncture](#)**

On February 6, Governor Quinn presented the annual State of the State to the General Assembly. Emphasizing that choices will have to be made about "... what we want our Illinois to look like," he discussed jobs, healthcare, public safety, embracing all people, protecting consumers, ethics, and education. Here is an excerpt on education:

*"We also share a vision of an Illinois where every child is prepared to succeed. That starts with education reform. Four years ago, Illinois was behind. But now we're setting the reform agenda for the nation. I signed into law education reforms that put the students of Illinois first. These reforms have improved school report cards, so that parents are empowered with more information about the schools that educate*

*their kids. These reforms also set clear benchmarks for teacher evaluation and put performance above tenure. In addition to these reforms, we've invested \$45 million to build early childhood education centers in high-need communities across Illinois, including in Carpentersville, Dolton, and Cahokia.*

*But there's much more work to do. That's why we are rededicating a new Lincoln Hall at the University of Illinois next week. And why we're building Phase 2 of a new campus for Western Illinois in the Quad Cities. And why we've just completed a new automotive aeronautics building at SIU in Carbondale.*

*In our Illinois, anything is possible...especially when it comes to educating our students. But let's be frank. The pension squeeze is draining our ability to teach our students. Our children are being shortchanged. And in the end, that shortchanges our economy, too. That's not our Illinois."*

### **[House Republican members of the 98<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Committees announced](#)**

While the chairpersons for the [House Higher Education](#) (Rep. Naomi Jakobsson) and [Higher Education – Appropriations](#) (Rep. Kenneth Dunkin) Committees have returned for another session, both committees have new minority spokespersons. [Rep. Chad Hays](#) (R-104) is minority spokesperson for House Higher Education Committee, replacing Rep. Bob Pritchard, who continues as a Committee member on both Higher Education and Higher Education- Appropriations. [Rep. Norine Hammond](#) (R-93) now serves as minority spokesperson for Higher Education – Appropriations, replacing Chapin Rose who was elected to the Senate, and is minority spokesperson there for both the Senate committees for [Higher Education](#) (chaired by Sen. Michael Frerichs) and [Appropriations II](#) (chaired by Sen. Dan Kotowski).

### **[The General Assembly establishes a new Dashboard on website](#)**

The "[Dashboard](#)" program on the General Assembly's home webpage provides information about scheduled hearings and includes on-line registration (by completing an electronic witness slip) for recording individual opinions on legislation pending for a legislative committee hearing. Additional features for this web-based system are planned.

### **Faculty and Staff Seminar on student support services for veterans planned for April 3**

The Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Illinois Community College Board, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Parkland College, are hosting a one-day training seminar for faculty and staff members from all institutions of higher education in Illinois in response to the increasing responsibilities of Illinois' colleges and universities for serving veteran students. Scheduled for **April 3, from 10:00 am until 4:30 pm, at Parkland College in Champaign (Room D-244)**, the seminar will offer practical strategies for developing faculty and staff awareness of student veterans' needs and closing the military-civilian gap on college campuses. Reservations can be made to Gailyn Draper at [draper@ibhe.org](mailto:draper@ibhe.org) or 217-557-7383 by **February 15**.

### **[IERC request for research presentations and fellowship](#)**

The 11th IERC Focus on Illinois Education Research Symposium will be held June 13-14, 2013, at the Hotel and Conference Center in Champaign, IL. A call for proposal submissions for a presentation or poster session has been issued by the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC). This unique forum provides education practitioners, policy makers and researchers with the opportunity to learn from one another about research that is being done on Illinois education from pre-kindergarten through higher education (P-20).

The Illinois Education Research Council has also announced its faculty research fellowship application for the 2013-14 academic year.

## [Illinois Dream Fund Scholarships](#)

The Illinois Dream Fund, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, will be awarding scholarships for college tuition to children of immigrants who possess at least a 2.5 GPA on a 4 point scale (GPA must be from high school, if an incoming freshman, or from college, if a current undergraduate), and who resided in Illinois while attending high school for at least three years. Undocumented students are encouraged to apply. Scholarship applications may be obtained at the Illinois Dream Fund website:

[illinoisdreamfund.org](http://illinoisdreamfund.org). The date for accepting applications has been extended from February 1 to **March 1, 2013**.

## People in the News



President and Chief Executive Officer of the Illinois Community College Board **Geoffrey Obrzut** has announced his plans to retire from that position on June 30, 2013. Obrzut was first appointed by the Board as President/CEO in January, 2004. The ICCB is the state coordinating board for community colleges. Illinois is home to 48 community colleges in 39 districts and has the third largest community college system enrollment in the nation.

“I am grateful for the time I have spent leading the Illinois community college system,” said Obrzut. “It has been a privilege to work with the excellent staff at the ICCB and I want to thank them for their professionalism and their dedication to the service they provide to the state and the community colleges.”

“I also want to convey my heartfelt gratitude for the support I have received over the years from the Board and from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association and the Presidents Council,” said Obrzut. “It has been crucial to maintaining a strong and united system. No state surpasses the quality of education and the dedication to students and their communities that we find with Illinois community colleges.”

Under Obrzut's leadership, the ICCB has undertaken a Homeland Security and Campus Safety Initiative, advocated for additional resources for adult education and family literacy, and completed comprehensive reports on textbook costs, baccalaureate degree access, and funding of Illinois Veterans and National Guard grants.

“Geoff has been a true public servant and champion for the Illinois community colleges and the Illinois Community College Board. His passion, commitment and leadership will truly be missed,” said ICCB Chair Alexi Giannoulas. “Geoff is a good friend and I am sad to see him go, but am excited to see what the future holds for him.”

“Geoff has served the Illinois Community College System with integrity and has led the system in some of the most financial and political turbulent times in Illinois history,” said former ICCB Chair Guy Alongi. “I wish Geoff well in his retirement and will always consider him a dear and personal friend.”

Obrzut has served the citizens of the State of Illinois in government for more than 30 years. His background includes serving as a State Representative for the 52nd District in the Illinois General Assembly, where he represented both Triton College and Oakton Community College in his district. He had been elected to the Triton College Board of Trustees in River Grove and served on the board from 1981-1987.

Obrzut's achievements include his service as a past officer and Chairman of the State Relations Committee of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. He was awarded the Illinois Community College Trustees Association "Outstanding Alumnus of the Year" award in 1986 and the Illinois Student Association "Outstanding Service Award" in 1992. Obrzut also served as Chairman of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

Obrzut also initiated the formation of the ICCB Latino Advisory Committee in March 2008. The committee, composed of statewide advocates on Latino educational issues, members of our community colleges, and representatives from partner agencies, has helped inform the Illinois community college system on student needs, educational best practices, and legislation that affects the Latino student population.

Prior to coming to the Illinois Community College Board, Obrzut was the Director of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities. Obrzut received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Springfield in Political Science and graduated from Triton College in River Grove.

"This is a true retirement and I plan to spend a lot of time fishing at my cabin in northeast Wisconsin and golfing in South Carolina," Obrzut said.



#### **SPOTLIGHT: 2012 - 13 DFI Fellows**

Thirty-nine new Diversifying Higher Education Faculty (DFI) in Illinois Program Fellows were 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.



**Nikiah Barnes** is a third year graduate student completing her master of arts in Counseling with a concentration in College Student Development at DePaul University. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Human Services also from DePaul University. Nikiah is a Graduate Assistant in the Office of Multicultural Student Success at DePaul. She provides resources for academic success, scholarship acquisition, graduate school transition and career exploration for first generation, low income, and students of color. Nikiah is also a Graduate Intern in the Department of Residential Education at DePaul.

During the first year of her assistantship, Nikiah was inspired to create a holistic graduate experience for students in her graduate program. As a result she founded and currently serves as President of the Student Affairs Graduate Student Organization (SAGSO). SAGSO provides graduate students desiring to become future student affairs practitioners with academic, social, and professional support to complement their academic coursework. Under her leadership SAGSO is establishing a substantive connection between the DePaul Division of Student Affairs and the Counseling College Student Development program as well as cultivating relationships with student affairs staff at DePaul, local, and regional institutions. This March, Nikiah will present a poster at the NASPA 2013 Annual Conference. Having presented at a number of conferences, this will be her first time on the national stage.

With graduation less than six months away, she hopes to secure a position in a student affairs office whose mission and programming supports the advocacy, retention, and empowerment of students.

## News from Higher Education

### [MOOCs take a step toward college credit](#) (The Washington Post)

A major provider of free online courses from elite colleges announced that students in a handful of classes who pay a modest fee to have their work verified will be eligible for an official recommendation to help them obtain credit toward a degree.

### [Americans value higher education but question its quality, national survey finds](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

Americans overwhelmingly view a higher education as essential to landing a good job and achieving financial security, but they have doubts about its quality and affordability, according to a new report from the Lumina Foundation and Gallup.

### [Education Secretary, college chiefs urge gun laws](#) (Diverse Issues in Higher Education)

The nation's schools chief says more needs to be done to make sure children live long enough to attend college. He is joining more than 350 university presidents in urging Congress to take action to protect students from gun violence.

### [Immigration-reform plans offer a path for students](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

President Obama and a bipartisan group of senators announced separate but similar immigration-reform plans that would ease the path to citizenship for students who are in the United States illegally, and would make it easier for some foreign graduates of American universities to remain in the country to work.

### [New legislation proposes giving veterans in-state tuition at all public universities](#) (U.S. News University)

The GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013 (H.R. 357) would require state-supported schools to charge veterans in-state rates regardless of residency.

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)

[Sign up](#) to Friday Memo mailing list

