

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

IBHE
Chair Lindsay Anderson
Executive Director Harry J. Berman, Ph.D.

ICCB
Chairman Alexi Giannoulis
Executive Director Karen Hunter Anderson, Ph.D.

ISAC
Chair Kym M. Hubbard
Executive Director Eric Zamikow

November 22, 2013

[Steps toward a more educated Illinois workforce](#)

Commentary by Dr. Harry Berman, IBHE executive director, published in the *Daily Herald* on Nov. 21.



"More than 140,000 high-skilled jobs are unfilled within the state of Illinois because workers lack the necessary skills. With declining numbers of high school students and increasing numbers of low-income young people who are the first in their family to pursue a college education, our colleges and universities have great challenges to make sure their students succeed.

The need is clear. We must create a pipeline of educated and skilled Illinois citizens to fill these jobs, and Illinois colleges should be ready to provide it.

We may not have to turn far for the answer to our challenges. Here in Illinois, individual college campuses have continued to innovate and implement new approaches to solving cost and completion problems in higher education.

Recognizing the success of such individual initiatives, Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon visited all 48 community colleges and 12 public university campuses in Illinois to examine best practices in college completion efforts with a focus on affordability.

She summarized her observations in a College Completion Playbook and recently hosted a two-day conference, "Scaling Up: Effective Practices in Higher Education," in Bloomington. The conference and playbook exposed Illinois' community colleges and universities to promising practices that can be implemented to increase student success at their own institutions.

Collaboration is critical to our success. Removing barriers and providing support systems for students requires an advanced level of cooperation and communication by all educators. For example, a partnership between Northern Illinois University and Waubensee Community College has resulted in a piloted reverse transfer credit program that promotes associate degree completion for Waubensee students and provides a seamless transfer credit process for students between the two institutions. All in all, the program is a win-win, with no cost to the students and minimal costs to the institutions to increase degree completions.

Illinois needs more student-focused and responsive programs like the City Colleges of Chicago's tutoring and mentorship summer program. The Level Up program is designed to prepare first-year students for college level work in math and English and reduce the need for remedial courses for CCC students. We need more innovations like the measures taken by Southern Illinois University to reduce "credit creep," the unnecessary credits students take on their road to attaining a degree.

Jamie Merisotis, president of the Lumina Foundation, had it right when he said at the conference that "we in education enjoy convenings, but it's in the commitment to innovate and the focus on student-centered implementation — that's where real change can occur." Now the real work begins.

Each institution was asked to leave the meeting with a plan to "scale up" the initiatives that best address their needs — taking these good practices to more campuses and more Illinois students. Real success means moving beyond the show and tell, beyond the discussion that the Lt. Governor has inspired, and turning meaningful conversation into meaningful action focused on the success of our college students.

There is no blanket solution to increasing the number of Illinoisans who obtain and benefit from a college degree, but Illinois institutions of higher education are proving that they are ready for the challenge by examining best practices and collaborating with their fellow institutions right in their own backyards. Illinois' future depends upon a well-educated and skilled workforce and Illinois higher education institutions are working together to get us there."

UPCOMING

NOVEMBER

28 Happy Thanksgiving!

DECEMBER

10 [IBHE Board Meeting](#),
Governors State University,
University Park

[Illinois Senator introduces affordable college textbook legislation](#)

U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Al Franken (D-MN) have introduced legislation designed to help students manage costs by making high quality textbooks easily accessible to students, professors and the public for free. This bill, known as the *Affordable College Textbook Act*, would create a competitive grant program for institutions of higher education, working with professors and other organizations, to create and expand the use of textbooks that can be made available online and licensed under terms that grant the public the right to freely access, customize and distribute the material, also known as “open textbooks.”

“My home state of Illinois provides an example of how the bill I am introducing with Senator Franken can be successful,” said Durbin. “Over three years ago, I worked to secure funding for the University of Illinois to complete an open textbook project. The University, working with faculty, identified sustainability as the topic for the project and an area of study in need of such open resources. Since 2012, the textbook that was produced from this effort – *Sustainability: A Comprehensive Foundation* – has been in regular use at the University of Illinois campuses. The book has been used in a Massive Open Online Course that has been sampled by at least 60,000 students. At least a dozen schools throughout the Country have either contacted the University of Illinois about the text or are using it. This bill can replicate and build on this success and help make the cost of attending college more affordable.”

Call for Proposals - Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board, Illinois State Board of Education, The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning, and the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, in conjunction with the Illinois Early Learning Council’s subcommittee on Higher Education Learning and Professional Development, are collaborating to offer the ***Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant***. **Through this grant, higher education institutions have the opportunity to apply for up to \$50,000 in grant funds to be used in 2014, to support program innovation and partnerships for early childhood educator preparation.** The eligible applicants are consortia of two- and four-year institutions of higher education. The four-year institution must be the fiscal agent and, accordingly, must be accredited with a currently approved early childhood educator preparation program. The [cover memo](#) and [application form](#) include the complete details. **Applications are due to IBHE by December 18, 2013.**

The GED® Test is changing

The Illinois Community College Board has prepared a [Fact Sheet](#) describing the major changes in the GED® Test beginning on January 2, 2014. The paper test is being replaced by a computer-based test. The test is also being changed to align with Common Core and College Readiness standards. Illinois community colleges.

[People in the News](#)



Eastern Illinois University’s [Jeffrey Boshart](#) has been named the 2013 Illinois Professor of the Year by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The U.S. Professors of the Year program salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the Country – those who excel in teaching and positively influence the lives and careers of students. It is the only national program to recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching and mentoring. “I am pleased and honored to represent Illinois and, specifically, Eastern Illinois University as the CASE Illinois Professor of the Year,” Boshart said. “I have spent my career striving to become a better teacher, mentor, and student-centered activist, asking myself, ‘How can I help my students engage their profession, achieve better results, and find success in their chosen field sooner? It has been a challenging goal but one that has never left me without options, and the exploration of those possibilities has made the struggle worth every dime I’ve spent and every hour I’ve devoted to the quest.” Boshart joined the EIU Department of Art in 1988.



[Suzanne Morris](#) has been elected vice chair of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC). Pictured here with Larry Isaak, MHEC president, Morris is currently vice president of the Illinois Community College Board. MHEC is a non-profit regional organization, established by compact statute, to assist Midwestern states in advancing higher education through interstate cooperation and resource sharing. Representative Naomi Jakobsson, chair of the House Higher Education Committee, and Addison Woodward, IBHE board member, also serve as Illinois' representatives on the MHEC executive committee.

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) recognized [Dr. James C. Underwood](#), the President of Kaskaskia College, a U.S. Army veteran, distinguished veteran leader, and an accomplished educator as the Illinois Veteran of the Month for November 2013, during a ceremony at Kaskaskia College. "Dr. Underwood's proven leadership, volunteer service and dedication to the veteran community are very impressive," said Erica Borggren, Army veteran and Director, IDVA. "Starting with his service in Vietnam in the 1960's and continuing through his service as an educator, he has made a positive impact on countless individuals. Dr. Underwood is a great example of what our veterans are capable of accomplishing – and of contributing to our communities and colleges."

Chicago State University Dean of the School of Pharmacy, [Dr. Miriam Mobley Smith](#) was honored as the 2013 Illinois Pharmacist Association "Pharmacist of the Year." The Pharmacist of the Year Award is the Illinois Pharmacists Association's (IPhA) oldest continuing honor, having had its initial presentation in 1950. It recognizes an Illinois pharmacist who has made outstanding contributions to pharmacy practice, the profession, and the Illinois Pharmacists Association.

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



Kolten Postin from **Lake Land College** has been selected as the 2013 Lincoln Academy of Illinois Student Laureate award winner for the community college system. Kolten has been extremely active on campus, in his community, at the state level and study abroad opportunities. He has achieved many accomplishments academically as well as through his extracurricular and community involvement. Lake Land College stated in his nomination, "Kolten serves as an excellent role model for students of all ages. His love for learning and his desire to contribute to the world and make a difference for others is contagious! He is an outstanding leader and representative for all community college students throughout the state of Illinois."

Kolten was honored on November 2, at the 2013 Student Laureate Award ceremony and on November 15, at the Illinois Community College Board meeting, both in Springfield.

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.

College-completion rates remain at last year's pace (Chronicle of Higher Education)

Despite aggressive efforts to push more students through to the finish line, college-completion rates remained unchanged this year, with 54 percent of those entering college for the first time in 2007 earning a degree or certificate within six years, the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center reported on November 21.

Staking out positions (Inside Higher Ed)

WASHINGTON -- As Education Department officials fan out across the country to hear feedback on the administration's proposed college rating system, the associations that represent colleges are starting to stake out firmer stances against some parts of the plan.

Making a list? Checking it twice? A CCE t-Shirt would be nice!



Help support the [College Changes Everything](#) movement by purchasing our new CCE t-shirts! These are the same shirts you may have seen at outreach events in your communities and now you can purchase your very own for. Order your shirt and bring the conversation to your communities!

The Friday Memo returns on December 6.

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

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

