

**DIVERSIFYING HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY IN ILLINOIS  
PROGRAM BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

**Submitted for:** Action.

**Summary:** This item recommends appointments to the Diversifying Higher Education Faculty (DFI) in Illinois Program Board to fill a current vacancy and to appoint a new chairperson.

In accordance with program statutes, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has responsibility to appoint the members of the DFI Program Board. The Program Board is responsible for administering the program and developing policies and strategies to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff at Illinois institutions of higher education.

**Action Requested:** That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the appointments to the DFI Program Board as presented in this item.



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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PROGRAM BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

On August 4, 2004, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed Public Act 93-0862 into law thereby creating the Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program (DFI). The purpose of the DFI Program is to encourage “minority students to enroll and complete academic programs at the post-baccalaureate level (masters/doctorate) and to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff of Illinois institutions of higher education.” The DFI Program provides financial assistance, based on demonstrated financial need, to students from traditionally underrepresented groups to pursue and complete graduate degrees at Illinois institutions of higher education.

This item proposes appointments to fill a current board member vacancy and recommends the appointment of a new chairperson of the Program Board.

**Program Board Composition**

The DFI Act calls for the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to appoint the members of the DFI Program Board. The Act specifies that the Program Board membership must include individuals in “*leadership positions in institutions of higher education, including community colleges*”, and individuals that represent “*Illinois institutions that grant doctoral degrees*.” The IBHE also is required to assure that the Program Board includes “*racial minorities who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education programs and activities*.”

The DFI Program Board is responsible to administer the program and develop policies and strategies to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff at Illinois institutions of higher education.

**Program Board Member Appointments**

There currently are two vacancies on the DFI Program Board. The IBHE proposes the appointment of Dr. Glenn W. “Max” McGee as a new member filling one of those vacancies. Dr. McGee currently serves as the President of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. During his career, Dr. McGee has demonstrated significant leadership in education at the local, state, and national levels. Dr. McGee will serve the remainder of the current two-year term, which expires December 31, 2008. He will continue to serve until he is reappointed or replaced.

The IBHE also proposes the appointment of Mr. Jerry Blakemore to serve as chairperson of the DFI Program Board, effective January 1, 2008, replacing the current chairperson, Dr. Seymour Bryson. Mr. Blakemore is a current member of the Program Board and serves as the General Counsel for Southern Illinois University. As the chairperson, Mr. Blakemore will preside over Program Board meetings, provide leadership in program administration, and serve as a member of the DFI Executive Committee.

The IBHE and its Staff wish to acknowledge the outstanding contribution and commitment of Dr. Seymour Bryson, the current DFI Board chairperson. Dr. Bryson serves as an original member and initial chair of the DFI Program Board. Under his leadership and guidance, the Program Board has been able to redirect program efforts to revise program selection criteria, strengthen program accountability and bring a renewed focus on placing program graduates in faculty and staff positions in the state of Illinois.

**Recommendation**

The following resolution is proposed for adoption:

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby approves the appointments of Dr. Max McGee to the DFI Program Board and Mr. Jerry Blakemore as the Chairperson of the DFI Program Board.*