

Applegate's Update

Some good news for a change and much appreciated inspiration!

In the midst of all the uncertainty on Illinois' budget, it is especially important to celebrate some good news and rejuvenate our work in higher education with a little inspiration from our students. First, I am happy to report [recently released information](#) on degree completions from 2014 compiled by the IBHE. Illinois public universities conferred nearly 50,000 degrees during that academic year. Relative to 2004, this equates to a substantial increase of 7.9% and relative to 2009 it equates to a modest, but notable increase of 1.6%. It is a slightly lower number than in 2013. Perhaps even more importantly, in key fields that are vital to the growth of the Illinois economy, such as STEM and the health occupations, Illinois' graduates at public universities have significantly increased. STEM degrees have increased by nearly 20% since 2004 and health degrees by more than 70%. In terms of the number of engineering degrees earned at the Illinois public universities, the current reporting year is a high water mark. The 3,647 engineering degrees awarded represent an increase of 11% relative to the last reporting year, and a 31% increase relative to 2004. Our performance funding system in Illinois focuses on increases in STEM and health care degrees as part of the formula. IBHE is working to further accelerate degree completions aligned with regional workforce needs through the launch of the legislatively created Commission on the Future of the Illinois Workforce. This data is encouraging and suggests our universities are moving very much in the right direction, and even more the Illinois workforce is receiving our best and brightest citizens prepared to contribute to the current economy.

On a truly inspirational note, I had the chance to serve on a panel with U.S. Secretary of Education Duncan and a panel of students with disabilities at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) as part of the Secretary's Back to School bus tour. Secretary Duncan visited UIUC because of its national leadership in supporting the college success of students with disabilities. It was truly a memorable morning for all in attendance, and for me personally, reminding me why we are working so hard to expand college opportunity to all students. "Impressive" in no way captures the accomplishments of these students as they pursue their undergraduate and graduate degrees regardless of their disabilities. Over the decades we have heard that college was not for certain groups. Some argued against the GI Bill because they felt the influx of veterans would damage the culture and quality of higher education. We know now that effort changed the nation for the better. U of I's pioneer leader Dr. Timothy Nugent told me that when he launched the work there for students with disabilities in 1948 there were those who thought college was not for these students. Hopefully we have learned the lesson that EVERY time we open the door for college success to students currently underrepresented on our campuses, those college educated citizens and the nation benefit enormously.

Later that day I participated in a leadership conference at Harper College at the invitation of President Ken Ender. At the end of the panel I was asked if I had any advice for those who had volunteered to participate because they wanted to be

leaders in fulfilling higher education's mission. Fresh from my time with the UIUC students, I told them that often in these jobs you are reminded of the old adage, "When you are up to your [belt] in alligators it is easy to forget your original mission was to drain the swamp." However, it is important to make sure as often as possible you allow yourself to focus on the passions that brought you to the academic profession, and find opportunities to be re-energized by events that remind you of those passions. I certainly had just had such a day.

60 x 2025

If you are interested in exploring **degree completion trends for any college or university within Illinois** (public or private), IBHE staff have just finished compiling the 2014 completions data. It is currently available for public use via the [IBHE Enrollments & Degrees web site](#) and the [IBHE Dynamic Data Book web site](#). The completions data are historical, going from 2014, all the way back to 1996. Also, [the system](#) provides completion information by degree type (bachelor's, master's, etc.), sector (public universities, community colleges, private not-for-profits, etc.), all the way down to a specific program at a single institution. In addition to completions, the system contains enrollment information, and both can be broken down by race/ethnicity/gender.

The Western Illinois University College of Business and Technology (CBT) accepted a significant donation to the Supply Chain Management (SCM) Program from Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM), one of the world's largest agricultural processing companies. Kim Ekena, vice president of the American River Transportation Company (ARTCO), a wholly-owned subsidiary of ADM, presented a \$90,000 check to the SCM Program to [advance recruiting efforts for veterans, community college and high school students](#) and for an SCM Case Competition, which helps students demonstrate their classroom knowledge in real-world business situations. WIU's Supply Chain Management Program was established in 2005 and is one of Western's Signature Academic Programs. The program is one of 39 programs nationally that is accredited by the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business).

Reducing Gaps for Underserved Students

Illinois has been awarded a technical assistance grant from [Complete College America](#) and is one of eight states selected to participate in their Fall 2015 cohort for the National Scaling Corequisite Initiative. This award is a result of a joint application between IBHE and ICCB, as well as the involvement of the Mathematics departments of the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University and the commitment of several community colleges. With this initiative, the Illinois state team plans to begin collecting baseline data across math corequisite remedial programs, and to implement or scale across the systems corequisite remedial programs in both math and English Language Arts.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Secretary of State Jesse White, and the State Library's Literacy office along with the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association (IACEA) announced the celebration recognizing September 21-26, 2015, as [National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week](#). Adult Education and Literacy programs serve adult students who need to improve their basic skills, learn English, obtain a high school equivalency, and transition to postsecondary education/training and employment. This observance of 49 years of Adult Education services is intended to underscore the value of programs and services that serve this population. The passage of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) in July

2014 has placed a strong emphasis on acceleration of instruction to move individuals into postsecondary education/training and employment.

“Connecting adult learners to postsecondary education and training will have a tremendous effect on their future earning potential,” said Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson, ICCB Executive Director. “Illinois has taken the lead in creating partnerships that coordinate services between education and workforce to ensure a seamless pathway for students that leads to high skilled and high demand employment opportunities.”

IBHE Staff News

IBHE celebrated Patricia “Trish” Fenton’s 35 years of service this month. Trish is a well-respected member of our support staff and a vital part of our Grants division. Her quick responses, helpful advice, and cheerful attitude have made her a favorite among colleagues, grant applicants, grantees, and anyone who works with her. Trish continually proves her versatility and expertise with supporting others. Other milestone anniversaries at IBHE include Nina Tangman, Associate Director for PBVS, 15 years; Carol Mullen, Assistant Budget Officer, 15 years; Charles Bowden, Clerk, 15 years; and Dr. Arthur Sutton, Deputy Director for Diversity & Outreach, 10 years.



For the third straight year, IBHE received the Exceptional Giving Award for participation in the State and University Employees Combined Appeal (SECA) campaign. SECA is a voluntary charity payroll deduction program for State of Illinois employees. Since it was established in 1983, state employees have donated more than \$73 million to nearly 2,000 local, state, and international organizations. The charities receive 100% of contributions at no cost or benefit to the state. Our thanks to Carol Mullen, Assistant Budget Officer and SECA Ambassador.

R: Trish Fenton with her anniversary plaque; L: Carol Mullen with IBHE’s SECA Exceptional Giving Award.

People in the News



The Illinois Wesleyan University Board of Trustees has announced that [Eric R. Jensen](#) of Hamline University has been selected to serve as the University’s 19th president. Jensen was named following a national search, which began in February. He succeeds Richard F. Wilson, who announced his retirement in December 2014 and will step down at the end of October. Jensen served as Hamline’s provost from 2012 to 2015. Previously, Jensen served as a professor of economics and public policy at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA. From 2004 to 2012, Jensen also served as director of William and Mary’s Thomas Jefferson Program in Public Policy.

Other News

The Great Central U.S. ShakeOut earthquake drill is a great opportunity for Illinois college campuses to learn, get prepared, and practice what to do during earthquakes ("Drop, Cover, and Hold On!"). More than 2.4 million people participated last October. All colleges and universities are encouraged to participate in ShakeOut on **October 15, at 10:15 a.m.** This Shakeout will be part of an international ShakeOut involving millions of participants from more than 40 states and territories and several other countries.

Currently, there are only 13 colleges in Illinois registered to participate in the ShakeOut. If [your school is not listed](#), please register today at [ShakeOut.org](#).

The Illinois Liquor Control Commission's 7th Annual College Town Summit (CTS15) on college-age alcohol use will be held on **November 18, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm**. The event is sponsored in conjunction with Southern Illinois University and Eastern Illinois University and hosted at both campuses. All college town stakeholders – including state/local elected officials, school administrators, prevention professionals, hospitality industry employees, and law enforcement personnel – are invited to attend this FREE summit.

For more information or to register, visit [DontBeSorry.org](#).

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