

## Applegate's Update

### **It's the Economy, Stupid: Developing smart, data-based, strategies for economic growth**

As we roll downhill toward the abyss and the 10th month of the budget impasse we are, as I told the Illinois Senate Appropriations Committee last week, close to dismantling the Illinois higher education system: a system that directly accounts for 110,000 good jobs and \$10 billion in direct contributions to Illinois economy. The ROI for all the students we graduate runs to the tens of billions of dollars. The damage being done now will take several years to repair. As I noted in my last update, this is particularly tragic since Illinois' system, while in need of improvement as we know, on many dimensions is among the best performing in the nation according to a recent national study: [Completing College: A State Level View of Student Attainment Rates](#). Nevertheless, we continue toiling in these turbulent seas to make what progress where we can to keep the ship afloat and moving forward. We are developing actionable data that can inform strategies to improve higher education's ability to fill talent gaps in our workforce. For example, in 2014-15, 54% of the advertised jobs in Illinois required a bachelor's degree while only 19% of our workforce over the age of 25 has one. So four-fifths of our workforce cannot even apply for half the jobs advertised. We must close that gap if we are to keep companies with good jobs and attract more.

IBHE has prioritized improving our data systems and, specifically, as part of the larger Illinois Longitudinal Data System launch, connecting to workforce data to address these gaps. Working with our partners at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) who hold Illinois' workforce data, we are making real progress in being able to track college graduates into the workforce to assess the impact of their degrees on employment and salary and ultimately improve the college to career transition.

Only this week our data work with our partners at the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) to make our Higher Education Information System (HEIS) a best in class resource for driving smart higher education policy was recognized nationally. The IBHE/ISAC effort has been nominated for the State Scoop Awards in the State IT program of the year category. The State Scoop Awards annually honor the best and the brightest who make state and local government more efficient and effective through their positive impact in the government IT community and in public service.

The new HEIS will allow IBHE and other interested parties to more accurately track the state's progress towards reaching the 60% by 2025 goal and add to the state's efficiency by helping to reduce some of the reporting requirements placed upon the colleges and universities. The winner in each category is selected by voting. If you have the chance, [please vote for us at IBHE LDS Portal](#).

All of this will increase our capacity to work with state agencies and regional networks across Illinois to implement the recommendations of the IBHE-led [Commission on the Future of the Workforce](#). The Commission was created to address regional gaps in college credential production and workforce needs in every region of Illinois. We recently have been informed that [IBHE has successfully competed for private foundation funding](#) to support implementation of those recommendations. While this

will enable us to push forward, obviously a state budget to leverage this investment would make all the difference in our success in ensuring adults and traditional students are able to obtain the college degrees they need to fill the jobs that are coming (more than 2/3s of which will require a college credential).

All of this work is intended to promote a smart, data-based conversation about the most efficient and effective ways to align Illinois higher education and workforce outcomes at every level: from one year certificates to graduate degrees. Illinois' economy is a diverse, globally connected system that requires talent at all of these levels. Right now we are swimming toward that goal and our 60 X 2025 goal with a concrete block tied around our ankle. Hopefully, that cord can be cut soon and we can resume making progress at a rate that makes all this possible.

**60 x 2025**



**COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING<sup>®</sup>**

Reminder: Proposals Due **March 31**  
for the **CCE Conference**

You can play an active role in shaping the **2016 College Changes Everything (CCE)** conference – **Aligning Attainment with Employer Engagement and Economic Growth** – by submitting a proposal. The [2016 CCE conference](#) takes place on July 21, 2016 at the Tinley Park Convention Center. Share your insights, experiences, and creative solutions by submitting an interest session proposal showcasing programs, resources, and partnerships impacting student success. Please complete the session proposal form which is available on the [conference web page](#). Completed session proposal forms must be submitted [by email to the Conference Planning Committee](#) by **March 31, 2016**.

The **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign** received the approval of the IBHE at its March 1 meeting for an innovative new approach to medical school education, establishing its first new college in many decades. UIUC **Provost Edward Fesser** describe to the Board several unique factors about the [Carle Illinois College of Medicine](#):

- No state funds will be used. Rather than state funds, the new college is supported by an innovative partnership with a hospital and other private funds.
- This is a small college, not intended to educate a large number of students. Rather, its work will be tightly focused on integrating a college of medicine with world-class engineering scholarship.
- This is a highly innovative small-scale example of how Illinois can still lead by institutions building on their strengths and partnering with private entities and raising funds in the private sector. This means the institution can stay relevant, but should not imply that state resources are unnecessary for continuing the excellence of public higher education in Illinois.

The [Final Report](#) of the **Illinois School Leadership Advisory Council (ISLAC)** has been released. It was jointly commissioned in 2014 by ISBE and IBHE and funded by the **Wallace and McCormick Foundations**. The report lays out a concrete implementation plan for Illinois to achieve its stated policy goals in school leader improvement. The report is timely, in that Illinois is the only state to be ranked in the top two for school leader development policy in two national studies [Developing Excellent School Principals report](#) by the Wallace Foundation and a [Policy Makers Guide](#) by the University Council for Education Administration. Also, the reauthorization of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** (the **Every Student Succeeds Act** or ESSA, formerly No Child Left Behind), has created a new focus on school leadership support, in part by authorizing new resources for principal development. This ISLAC report provides information for effective use of new federal resources.

Staff at **Western Illinois University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions** are expecting to see [more students transferring to the institution from community colleges](#) in downstate Illinois for fall 2016. Applications from transfer students south of I-80 are up 17 percent (+93), and accepted new transfer students are up 22 percent (+93). "With everything happening with the state budget right now, we are encouraged to see the seeds we've sown two years ago with transfer students are starting to yield for us," said **Admissions Director Andy Borst**. "Since most of our transfer students come to us from a shorter driving radius than new freshmen, it is great news that our numbers from local students have nearly doubled. It shows our efforts to develop new partnerships with community colleges and communicate with potential transfer students were effective."

According to Borst, the largest increases in accepted transfer students come from **John Wood Community College** in Quincy (+81 percent; +21), **Illinois Central College** in Peoria (+50 percent; +17) and **Carl Sandburg College** in Galesburg, (+27 percent; +10). Transfer numbers from the Chicagoland area continue to lag behind, down 12 percent (-28) in accepted new transfers.

## Reducing Gaps for Underserved Students

IBHE's **Administrative rules for Dual Credit** have been developed and are now in effect. To assist independent, out-of-state, and public universities with the new process to follow in order to become compliant, IBHE has developed a [dual credit compliance and authorization website](#). Questions can be referred to [IBHE dual credit staff](#)

## Increasing Adult Degree Completion

[The University Center of Lake County](#) will hold a [free Open House](#) on March 31 at the University Center's Grayslake facility (1200 University Center Drive). It will showcase the more than 125 academic options available in Lake County from 20 Illinois institutions for adults who wish to complete a bachelor's degree, earn a graduate degree or pursue professional certificates. It will also offer three half-hour workshops for students contemplating a return to college who may have concerns about balancing school, work, and family life:

- **For Adults Only: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Earning a Bachelor's Degree**, Carrie Johnson, Director of the BA in General Studies, Eastern Illinois University;
- **Back to School Balancing Act**, Tim Panfil, Director, Enrollment Management, School of Professional Studies, Elmhurst College; and
- **It's Time to Get a Graduate Degree – Making the Decision to Start**, Wes Lindahl, Dean of School for Business & Nonprofit Management, North Park University.

## Increasing Affordability



**Free college access and financial aid text messaging service offers students quick and accurate answers.**

The **Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)** recently launched [ISAC College Q&A](#), a free text messaging service for students. Students can connect with ISAC's college mentors to get their college planning and financial aid questions answered and receive important information about college planning events and deadlines – all via text. Students need only text their first and last name to one of the ISAC College Q&A phone numbers in their area code. ISAC has also set up a special phone number for returning adult students: 872- 395-GRAD (4723).

## Reminder to Students: File your 2016-17 FAFSA!

There's still time to access federal and even some institutional aid for college by filing a **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. The biggest barrier to going – and staying – in college is financial. This is even more true of low income college students, who attend college at only half the rate of their higher income peers. So although ISAC recently announced this year's "[cut-off date](#)" for FY17 **Monetary Award Program (MAP)** awards (students who file FAFSAs on or after March 10 will not be eligible for MAP unless ISAC determines there will be additional funds to distribute later in the year), **federal Pell dollars and other financial aid** continue to be available to Illinois students. Indeed, last year alone Illinois students filing FAFSAs were eligible for about \$2 billion in federal Pell grants.

In addition to connecting with their school's financial aid office, students who have questions about completing the FAFSA can also contact the [ISACorps](#) member in their area, and can text their questions directly to college and financial aid mentors through ISAC's free text messaging service, [ISAC College Q&A](#).

[Carl Sandburg College](#) has received a \$2.5 million donation left by a recently passed away community business leader. The donation from **Ann Asplund** (pictured right) is the largest single gift the school's foundation has ever received. The proceeds of the gift will go towards "helping students realize their dreams of achieving a college education." "Ann could clearly see the importance of a college education, and the way to make Galesburg a more viable community was through an educated workforce. Ann was a woman ahead of her time. She was a trailblazer," **President Lori Sundberg** said. The **Carl Sandburg College Foundation** that will receive the gift is a non-profit that contributions to it go towards expanding and enhancing the school's "programs, support students through scholarships and crisis loans and grants."



## Upcoming Events



IBHE is partnering with education and veterans groups to host a **Student Veterans Leadership Day Tuesday**, April 5, 2016, at the Capital City Training Center (130 W. Mason Street, Springfield) and the State Capitol.

During the Student Veterans Leadership Day, student veteran leaders attending Illinois colleges and universities will engage with state leaders' tasked with developing higher education/veterans policy and collaborate with student veteran

leaders from across the state. [Click here to register](#).

Other partners include the **Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs**, **Illinois Joining Forces**, the **Illinois Community College Board**, **ISAC**, **Student Veterans of America**, and **Illinois Campus Compact**.

## People in the News

**Daniel Allen**, chief investment officer of the **State Universities Retirement System of Illinois (SURS)**, has announced plans to retire later this year. Allen has served the SURS Board of Trustees as CIO since 2005. He joined SURS in 2000 as deputy chief investment officer. Allen is only the third CIO in SURS 75-year history. The SURS Board of Trustees will work with Heidrick & Struggles, a Chicago-based executive search firm, over the next few months to conduct a nationwide search for qualified candidates. "I am honored and privileged to have served the board over the years," said Allen. "The opportunities, challenges and fun of leading the investment team have been very fulfilling. It has been a unique experience that I will always cherish. I am looking forward to my next adventure in life as a SURS annuitant."

Former **University of Illinois President Robert Easter** was honored this week as one of 100 leaders nationwide who are "changing rural communities and agriculture for the better." The **Farm Credit 100 Fresh Perspectives** honorees were unveiled on National Ag Day at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Easter was among six Illinoisans honored, according to the *News-Gazette*. Easter has remained active in agricultural issues, serving as the chairman of the Food and Agriculture RoadMap (FARM) Illinois, created to develop a plan for how the state can remain a regional, national and global hub for innovation and address food insecurity. Said Easter: "I believe that production of food, fiber and fuel through agriculture is an honorable profession fundamental to human existence and that meeting the needs of the expanding global population is essential to survival and prosperity of our human species."



## IBHE Student Art Exhibition

**Tramaine King, Westwood College**



**Mona 2015 Vermillion**

**Jamie Feramisco,  
John Wood Community College**



**The Oku**

**Joshua Hale, SIU Carbondale**



**Unlimited**

## Student Laureates

In each issue of *The Bulletin*, we will feature student laureates recognized by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois.

Governors State University



**Jerry Davis El**  
Richton Park, IL  
Major: Social Work

Greenville College



**Nathan Kriebel**  
Brookston, IN  
Major: Worship Arts

Illinois College



**Kavita Ketan Patel**  
Princeton, IL  
Major: Biology Minor: Chemistry

## In Case You Missed It

A few articles and updates worth the read:

[The Herald-Review](#): Public university leaders tell lawmakers crisis is at hand, March 11, 2016

[The State Journal-Register](#): Drown Illinois higher ed, drown the state's future, March 12, 2016

[WRSP-TV](#): Higher education making gains despite budget impasse, March 17, 2016

[The Herald-Review](#): 'Performance-based funding' proposed for higher education, March 17, 2016

# IBHE

1 North Old State Capitol Plaza • Suite 333 • Springfield, Illinois 62701  
217-782-2551 TTY 888-261-2881