

60 x 2025



The **Illinois Education Research Council** (IERC) has published a new report highlighting 4-year postsecondary institutions in Illinois that promote degree completion and job success with less debt for underrepresented minority students, first-generation students, and low-income students. [Cornerstones of Student Success: Institutions Yielding High Return on Investment for Underserved Students](#), led by SIUE

professor emeritus **Janet K. Holt**, analyzes publicly available institutional data on graduation rates, earnings, student loan debt, and loan default rates to rank 55 public, nonprofit private, and for-profit private institutions in Illinois in terms of their return on investment (ROI) for students.

Although public colleges made up only 20% of the institutions included in the analysis, the study finds that they represented three of Top 7* (43%) institutions that ranked highest on the ROI metric. This over-representation suggests that Illinois public universities are successfully fulfilling their missions of providing affordable educational options for students, including those traditionally underserved. The for-profit sector, on the other hand, had considerably worse outcomes as a whole and none ranked in the Top 7 by ROI. Coupled with the fact that the for-profit sector enrolled disproportionate numbers of underserved students enrolled, this indicates a mismatch between the type of institutions that best serve disadvantaged students and the type of institutions where they tend to enroll.

The study was motivated by the need to provide an equitable education for all students and meet 21st century employment needs during a time of changing demographics in the U.S. The report puts the focus on institutions that are admitting a fair number of underserved students and helping them graduate and gain employment with less debt. The study was also intended to help counselors, teachers, parents, students, and access organizations by summarizing college ranking formulas and helping them identify important factors when choosing a college.

The report concludes with recommendations for Illinois policy to ultimately improve the college outcomes for students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students, including:

1. Personalizing rankings for a good institutional match;
2. Identifying and recognizing institutions that support underserved students; and
3. Increasing college affordability.

**Top 7 Institutions: University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology, Elmhurst College, Saint Xavier University, Eastern Illinois University, DePaul University, and Western Illinois University.*

The **Southern Illinois University Edwardsville** School of Nursing (SIUE SON) and **Kaskaskia College** have announced [a new partnership](#). The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree track enables community college students to rapidly achieve their baccalaureate degree from the SIUE SON after attending Kaskaskia to complete an associate degree and the majority of their general education requirements. "Kaskaskia is the most recent among several community colleges seeking University partnerships to offer students a progressive track in achieving a baccalaureate degree in nursing," said SON Dean **Laura Bernaix**, PhD, RN. "This type of partnership will have a positive effect on the workforce by increasing the number of baccalaureate-prepared nurses at the bedside."

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville \(SIUE\)](#) is the first in the nation to implement the early childhood scenario in a [Virtual Learning Environment](#) with the goals of increasing early childhood workforce capacity and capital by providing teacher practice in classroom management, pedagogy and content.

A \$50,000 grant from **the McCormick Foundation** is supporting SIUE's pilot implementation and research of the scenario, under the direction of **Anni Reinking**, Ed.D., assistant professor in the School of Education, Health and Human Behavior's Department of Teaching and Learning. The project is in partnership with Illinois Action for Children.

"In many training programs, teacher candidates are placed with students in their first semester with minimal prior training," Reinking said. "However, using virtual learning environments is one way to provide more training before entering a real classroom. This is a great way to practice techniques in order to build confidence."

The **Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)** is recognizing **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month** throughout the month of February. [CTE Month](#) is a national public awareness campaign to celebrate the value of career and technical education by highlighting the exemplary

accomplishments of CTE programming and its champions. Throughout February, the ICCB will be featuring local community college CTE programming, initiatives, and events. Weekly email briefs, enclosed with resources, event information, and local spotlights, will be disseminated illuminating the following themes:



- CTE Engagement and Advocacy
- Partnerships for CTE Student Success
- Take a Hands-On Approach: Work-Based Learning
- Local Innovation, Real World Impact

Reducing Gaps for Underserved Students

The **Illinois Student Assistance Commission** is asking colleges and universities to remind students who may be [eligible](#) that they can still apply for the 2017-18 [Minority Teachers of Illinois \(MTI\) Scholarship Program](#). Although the priority application consideration date for this program was March 1, 2017, ISAC will continue to accept applications through (including) Thursday, February 15, 2018. Eligible students who receive funds for 2017-18 can use them as reimbursement for tuition, room and board and other school expenses.

The MTI Scholarship Program encourages academically talented minority students to pursue careers as teachers at nonprofit Illinois preschool, elementary, and secondary schools. The program also aims to provide minority children with access to a greater number of positive minority role models. Qualified students may receive up to \$5,000 per academic year for a maximum of 8 semesters or 12 quarters of assistance. *Please note:* as outlined in the [Teaching Agreement/Promissory Note/ Terms and Conditions](#), MTI Scholarship recipients must agree to teach in Illinois. *If this teaching commitment is not fulfilled, the scholarship converts to a loan that must be repaid in full, plus interest.*

In order to notify students as quickly as possible, it may be beneficial to share this information with the College of Education at your institution and ask them to help spread the word to potentially eligible students.

Questions regarding the MTI Scholarship Program or the application process? Contact the ISAC Call Center (toll free at 800.899.4722, or via e-mail at isac.studentservices@illinois.gov).

Increasing Adult Completion



The **Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)** joined by lawmakers outlined strategies for proactively responding to a future of work that will demand advanced skills and training at a press conference on February 7. These strategies are embedded within the newly released [Strategic Plan for Adult Education and Literacy](#) that focuses on

advancing models that combine basic skills and workforce training, leading to a credential and meeting employers' needs. The strategies developed in the newly released plan will guide Illinois' adult education system over the next five years to ensure all adult learners have access to and success across the services that are cohesive, coordinated, and innovative.

"Over the past six months, the Statewide Task Force on the Future of Adult Education and Literacy has been engaged in a strategic planning process focused on expanding and scaling comprehensive career pathways and integrated education and training programs that have been successfully implemented across the state to produce a trained workforce and improve wages," said **Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson**, ICCB executive director and chair of the task force.

"Adult education can no longer be viewed as an end point or final state in the transition to work," added **Jennifer Foster**, ICCB Deputy Director for Adult Education and Workforce. "Instead, adult education is the foundation of Illinois' career pathway system."

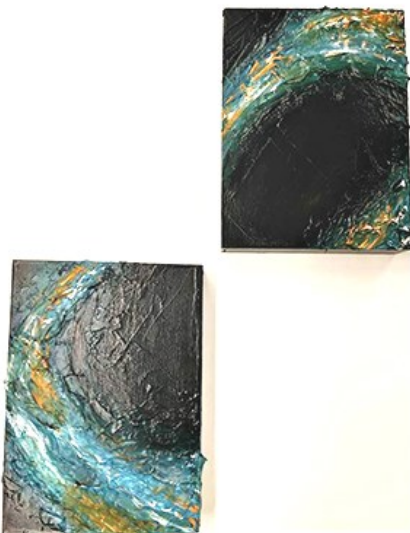
Other News

The [Illinois Student Assistance Commission \(ISAC\)](#) is recruiting recent college graduates to join their 2018-19 Corps. Corp members work with middle and high school students and their parents as they navigate the college going process. For more information, click [here](#).



IBHE Student Art Exhibition

Kassi Apel, Northern Illinois University



Tidal Wave



Nebula

Alexis Alvarado, Eastern Illinois University



Student Laureates

**East-West
University**



Kisha Johnson

**Eureka
College**



**Bailey Martin-
Giacalone**

**Governors
State University**



Rachel Smith

**Greenville
College**



Justin Smith

**Illinois
College**



Mandy Pennington

Photo not available: Monica Mazurek, Elmhurst College

In Case You Missed It

[Inside Higher Ed](#): Rethinking remediation, January 24, 2018.

[Crain's Chicago Business](#): How UIC is defying the odds and actually growing, January 26, 2018.

[Illinois Times](#): Unwelcoming U.S. tone may add to UIS enrollment woes, February 1, 2018.

[Chronicle of Higher Education](#): Why students are leaving Illinois in droves — and why it matters, February 2, 2018.

[Bloomington Pantagraph](#): Universities struggle with enrollment as students leave state, February 5, 2018.

[WUIS-91.9/NPR Illinois](#): Higher ed board makes a 'modest' request, February 7, 2018.



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