Mr. Martin Torres  
Deputy Governor of Education  
Office of the Governor  
(Welcome and Introductions)

Martin Torres is the Deputy Governor for Education in the Office of Illinois Governor JB Pritzker. Martin served as Deputy Policy Director for the governor’s first campaign for office and then in the administration as a Senior Policy Advisor and later First Assistant Deputy Governor for Education. He oversees four state agencies (OSBE, IBHE, ICCB, and ISAC), chairs the P-20 Council and the Illinois Early Learning Council, and leads the appointment process for all education-related state boards and commissions. Prior to his work in state government, Martin served as associate director of the Latino Policy Forum, where he guided the organization’s legislative and administrative advocacy with a focus on education, immigrant integration, and fiscal policy. He also spent seven years in Washington DC working at the Alliance for Excellent Education and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. Martin has a Bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a master’s degree in Public Policy from the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Public Policy.

Mr. John Atkinson  
Chair  
Illinois Board of Higher Education  
(Welcome & Introductions, Session I)

John Atkinson is responsible for leading Marah’s Senior Living & LTC Industry Practice for the US and Canada. In this role John collaborates in leading the most innovative and experienced teams in the fields of sales, marketing, and human capital, focusing on unique risk and talent management solutions. John leads business development and community case development activity for the firm’s senior living and community care businesses.

Ms. Ginger Ostro  
Executive Director  
Illinois Board of Higher Education  
(Session I & II)

Ginger joined IBHE in February 2020, and six weeks later, everything was shut down due to COVID-19. Since then, she has led the agency’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading the development of guidance for the higher education system; worked with other agencies and stakeholders to develop an equity-centered strategic plan for Illinois higher education; is Triumph Illinois; and is currently working on multiple new initiatives, including the Commission on Equitable Public University Funding and the Early Childhood Access Convening for Equity.

Dr. Javier Reyes  
Interim Chancellor  
University of Illinois Chicago  
(Session II)

Dr. Javier Reyes serves as Interim Chancellor of the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), an urban public research university located in the heart of Chicago’s Near South Side neighborhood. Prior to his appointment as Interim Chancellor, Dr. Reyes was Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UIC on August 19, 2021. In this role, Dr. Reyes served as UIC’s chief academic officer overseeing matters of academic policy, strategic direction, enrollment management and academic resource planning.

As Provost, Dr. Reyes initiated an overhaul of UIC’s budget model while also restructuring teaching environments to position UIC for success in a new era of innovative and accessible education. He also led efforts to attract exceptional candidates for leadership roles including the Dean of the UIC School of Law, the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, the College of Business Administration, and others. Committed to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, he also outlined a bold vision to address gaps in racial equity across the institution, with a specific focus on increasing Black student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates, which will catalyze transformation in support of a more equitable future at every level of the campus.

Dr. Gloria Gibson  
President  
Northeastern Illinois University  
(Session II)

Dr. Gloria Gibson is the President of Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). She joined NEIU in January 2014 after serving as Provost of California State University, Los Angeles. Prior to her appointment as Provost, Dr. Gibson served as Executive Vice President and Provost of California State University, Long Beach. Under her leadership, CSULB became a model of excellence in addressing the needs and aspirations of traditional and non-traditional students as it becomes one of the largest and most diverse undergraduate institutions in the nation.

From the day she became President of Northeastern, Dr. Gibson has maintained her strong dedication to the areas of access / opportunity and student success. She has not only been able to stop declines in new student recruitment but has grown graduate enrollment rates, re-established the University in the areas of marketing, student engagement, fundraising and government and community relations.

Dr. Austin Lane  
Chancellor  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
(Session II)

Dr. Austin Lane is the Chancellor of Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC). A native of New Jersey, Dr. Lane graduated from Hackensack High School and attended Odessa Junior College in West Texas on a basketball scholarship. He holds a B.A. in psychology from Langston University, M.A. in human relations from the University of Oklahoma and Ed.D. in higher education administration from the University of Alabama.

Before joining SIU Carbondale, Dr. Lane’s career in higher education was marked by a variety of successive leadership roles and professional achievements. A more than 25-year higher education administrator and faculty member, Lane served as president of Texas Southern University, executive vice chancellor of academic and student affairs at Lone Star College System, president of Lone Star College-Montgomery, vice president for student affairs at Tyler Junior College, and dean of students at the University of Texas at Arlington.

During his time at SIU Carbondale, Dr. Lane has overseen the launch and implementation of the university’s strategic plan, Imagine 2030, which rests on five equally important strategic pillars: student success and engagement; diversity, equity and inclusion; branding and partnerships; research and innovation, and sustainability. Enrollment of new freshmen has grown significantly, even during the pandemic; and more students from the Southern Illinois region are choosing to earn their undergraduate and graduate degrees at Southern Illinois University.

Dr. Reyes received his bachelor’s degree in economics from the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey and his doctorate in economics from Texas A&M University.
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<td>Mr. John Alsterda  &lt;br&gt; Campus Legal Counsel &lt;br&gt; University of Illinois Chicago  &lt;br&gt; (Session III)</td>
<td>John Alsterda began working in the Office of University Counsel in 2007 and was appointed Campus Legal Counsel UIC in 2016. His responsibilities include management of in-house attorneys and professional staff at the Chicago office and supporting oversight of outside counsel retained for all legal matters arising at the University of Illinois Chicago. John is responsible for the delivery of all legal services at UIC and to its off-site locations, including the University’s healthcare system. John earned his law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law, and received his undergraduate degree from Colorado College.</td>
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<td>Dr. Jimmy Clarke  &lt;br&gt; Senior Advisor  &lt;br&gt; HCM Strategists, LLC and Trustee for the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors  &lt;br&gt; (Session IV)</td>
<td>Jimmy Clarke currently serves as a Senior Adviser at HCM Strategists, a public policy and advocacy consulting firm committed to working with clients that share a passion for reducing disparities and lifting lives through education and training opportunities. He also serves as Vice Chair of the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors. The board is the management body of nine, public universities with a collective enrollment of more than 90,000 students. Jimmy spent twenty years at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where he served in a variety of capacities including dean of student personnel and dean of enrollment management. He also served on the staff of the Louisiana Board of Regents for eight years, a portion of which he served in a dual capacity as acting chancellor of the statewide, 42-campus Louisiana Technical College. In these roles, Jimmy developed a deep understanding for policy issues affecting every stakeholder in higher education. A people person at heart, Jimmy views his role as a builder of relationships and trust in an effort to foster collaboration among state policymakers with mutual student success goals. Known for his problem-solving abilities and can-do spirit, Jimmy was tapped to be chief of staff to Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco directly following Hurricane Katrina. He remained in this post throughout the rest of the Governor’s term, answering the call to duty during a time of crisis and rebuilding. Jimmy received his bachelor’s degree in history from the University of California at Santa Barbara and later earned his master’s degree and a Ph.D. in education administration from Louisiana State University’s College of Education. He lives with his wife Sandra in Lafayette, Louisiana, and has two children and five grandchildren.</td>
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<td>Ms. Ja’Neane Minor  &lt;br&gt; Chief of Staff  &lt;br&gt; Illinois Board of Higher Education  &lt;br&gt; (Conference MC)</td>
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