

Applegate's Update

It's a Good Time to Be a College Student or Educator – Here Is Why

One of the great joys of being a part of the higher education system is experiencing the energy and sense of hope and renewal that occurs each fall as students repopulate college campuses. They are an increasingly diverse bunch in terms of age, ethnicity, and life experience. A growing number of them aren't even on the campus but are connected virtually to their college courses. Despite the dark cloud of a state budget impasse hovering above us, this week's news stories about move in days and new beginnings remind us why we are committed to higher education.

Our work to educate students grows in importance with each passing year. A recent report, "[Jobs are Back: College Graduates are First in Line](#)," shows that since the recession the U.S. economy has created nearly 3 million high paying jobs, 44 percent of all the jobs created. Of those 2.9 million high paying jobs 2.8 million were filled by people with baccalaureate degrees. Opportunities are growing. The take away message from this report is optimistic: "Students take heart, work hard, and do your part." So much for the naysayers who claim we don't need all those college graduates. However, unless college educators strive to ensure that the students now showing up for college coursework graduate with quality degrees that prepare them for these good jobs, the door to a middle class life will be slammed in their faces. IBHE is leading a statewide effort to help ensure that Illinois' higher education system is focusing on college to career success.

Through the good work of our partners in the Illinois legislature the **Commission on the Future of the Illinois Workforce** was created. It is charged with better connecting college degrees with careers in each region of Illinois. IBHE is leading the work of the Commission. With private foundation funding we are convening state leaders today to mobilize support for the Commission. Within the next year the Commission will analyze current and projected workforce needs in each region of Illinois and work with postsecondary partners to ensure the system (public, private, two-, and four-year colleges) creates partnerships with employers and fellow postsecondary schools and colleges to develop and expand the programs needed to meet those needs with the right degrees and credentials. We also will track college graduates into the workforce to measure how well we are doing in ensuring a college degree launches them into successful careers. We all know college is not just about careers but that Illinois citizens across the state regions do rely on Illinois higher education to prepare them for a middle class life in a changing 21st century economy. The hard truth is that without college level learning and credentials, too many Illinoisans are working poor, living from paycheck to paycheck. So, let's not focus solely on state budget problems but instead draw energy from our returning students and use that energy to do the things we need to do to ensure their success. Their futures depend on that success now more than at any other time. College changes everything, and college degrees can change the course of people's lives.

A video version of this message is available at [IBHE's YouTube page](#).

The IBHE Online Complaint System is now live. The majority of postsecondary schools, colleges, and universities in Illinois are required to provide current and prospective students with contact information for filing complaints with the IBHE and accrediting bodies. Those so required include all institutions participating in Title IV by Federal regulation, as well as all degree-granting institutions and all private business and vocational schools under IBHE authority. [Illinois Administrative Rules governing degree-granting institutions](#) and [those governing PBVS institutions](#) require authorized institutions to provide the Board's mailing address and website link for reporting complaints. The website link must be on the institution's first webpage. Institutions can now direct individuals to the [IBHE online complaint system](#), which includes step-by-step instructions and key information about the complaint process.

Aspiring engineers will soon be able to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree in engineering from Northern Illinois University at the main campus of Rock Valley College through a new partnership beginning in fall 2016. Students with associate's degrees in engineering science can pursue one of three bachelor's degrees – electrical or mechanical engineering, or technology in applied manufacturing – from the NIU College of Engineering & Engineering Technology on the RVC campus. Students who already have a bachelor's degree in engineering can earn a master's degree. **NIU President Doug Baker** and **Rock Valley College President Mike Mastroianni** signed a letter of intent to cement the [Rockford engineering collaboration](#) that includes critical roles for local employers and the Rockford School District. Rockford aerospace giants UTC Aerospace Systems and Woodward have pledged to establish engineering

Increasing Affordability

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, University of Illinois at Chicago **Chancellor Michael Amiridis**, and City Colleges **Chancellor Cheryl Hyman** announced on August 25, a new tuition award that will enable Chicago Public Schools (CPS) graduates to pursue further education through eligibility for the [new UIC Star Scholar Award](#), a UIC-funded education award, for two years. This new program will allow at least 250 Star Scholars who transfer from CCC to UIC with an Associate Degree and a 3.0 GPA, to receive an Award of \$5,000 over two years two years support to access a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago following graduation from City Colleges.

The Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation will soon grant **approximately twenty-five \$2,000 scholarships** to deserving full-time undergraduate college students who are residents of Illinois and of Latino ancestry. Complete guidelines, instructions, and application materials may be found [here](#). The deadline for receipt of applications is October 1, 2015.

Upcoming Events

The **2015 Focus on Illinois Education Research Symposium** is scheduled for October 8-9, 2015. Registration information is at [IERC's website](#). Please register by September 14.

The Illinois Council of Community College Administrators (ICCCA) has announced the schedule for the **42nd Annual ICCCA Fall Conference** at the Marriot Bloomington-Normal in Normal, on November 19-20. Keynote speakers include William C. Kling, UIC School of Public Health instructor of policy and leadership courses; Dr. Elizabeth Purvis, Illinois Secretary of Education; and Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson, ICCB Executive Director. A full conference agenda and topics can be found [here](#).

People in the News

IBHE Board member and Danville Area Community College President Alice Marie Jacobs' career in higher education spans more than four decades and it all started with a secretarial job. Jacobs credits where she is now, as DACC's president for the last 16 years, to an early job as an executive secretary to the president of Kellogg Community College and its board of trustees in Battle Creek, Michigan. **Read more of Dr. Jacobs' recent profile [here](#).**

Western Illinois University Economics and Decision Sciences Professor **Steven M. Rock** has been chosen to fill an elected active-member seat on the State University Retirement System Board of Trustees. His term runs through July 15, 2018. Rock has been an economics professor at WIU since 1990 and served six years as chair of Faculty Senate. Prior to coming to Western, he was an associate professor at Northern Illinois University and the Illinois Institute of Technology. Rock began his career as a visiting assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Northwestern University. He is secretary of the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council and national vice president for finance for the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

The National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education announced that Oakton Community College Chief Diversity Officer and Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs **Michael D. Anthony** has been selected as one of two 2015-16 NADOHE fellows from a nationwide pool of nominees. The NADOHE Chief Diversity Officer Fellows Program is a professional leadership program of mentorship for new and early career Chief Diversity Officers and serves as the preeminent voice for diversity officers in higher education. For more information, visit [NADOHE's website](#).

Recent Rock Valley College graduate **Spencer Haydary** is receiving the 2015 Phi Theta Kappa Hites Transfer Scholarship to assist in the attainment of his baccalaureate degree. Scholarships of \$7,500 each have been awarded to ten 2015 Hites Scholars. Haydary served as the Student Trustee on Rock Valley College's Board of Trustees for the 2014-15 academic year and was also a member of the college's Student Government Association. He graduated from RVC in May 2015 and has transferred to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign this fall where he will major in Psychology.

Other News

Augustana College is the latest institution to be recognized by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) for achieving the ["Ready to Respond Campus" designation](#) after completing the program's rigorous campus safety criteria. The Ready to Respond Campus initiative is meant to enhance campus safety through a comprehensive, community-based preparedness and response effort, including public safety, campus administration, faculty and students. In order to achieve Ready to Respond designation, campuses must demonstrate their proficiency in dealing with several campus safety areas, and have safety and security plans in place. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Richland Community College and Parkland College also have received the Ready to Respond Campus designation, and numerous other campuses are working toward achieving the designation.

