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News Release

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(Note to journalists: A publication-quality photograph of James Winters is available at www.uillinois.edu/our/images/. Winters can be reached at (443) 994-5748 or j.a.winters@gmail.com)

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UIC student trustee named official voting member of U of I Board of Trustees

CHICAGO, Ill. — University of Illinois at Chicago student trustee James A. Winters has been designated by Gov. Rod Blagojevich as the official student voting member of the University's Board of Trustees.

Winters, from Alton, Ill., is a senior majoring in urban and public affairs at UIC's College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs. In the 2007-08 school year, he participated in the UIC Student Senate and was elected chairman of the Campus Facilities Committee of Undergraduate Student Government.

Winters said he views being named as the student trustee with the official vote on the University of Illinois Board of Trustees as an honor and a responsibility.

"The University of Illinois has a long tradition of excellence, across all three campuses, and I will certainly do everything I can to maintain that tradition," he said. "The largest issue that has affected students the most and will continue to affect them is the constant struggle for funding.

"The continuing decline in our public funding threatens the way we teach, the people who teach, and what I consider to be the most important — the students who seek teaching," Winters said. "Unfortunately, I believe that the current financial crisis will only make the financial burden of a college education harder on students and families."

The two other students on the University's board are D. Craig McFarland from the Springfield campus and Paul D. Schmitt from the Urbana campus. One student trustee is designated to have an official, binding vote, and the remaining two student trustees have advisory votes. All three student trustees, elected by the students on their respective campuses, began their one-year terms on July 1.

"The student trustees provide an essential link for the Board to the more than 70,000 students enrolled on the three U. of I. campuses," said Board Chair Lawrence C. Eppley of Palatine. "James is a thoughtful, engaged trustee who will carry out his responsibilities with the best interest of the University of Illinois system in mind."

Winters has served as vice president of the Chicago Circle Players, a student organization that stages student-directed plays at UIC. He is the recipient of the TCF Bank Scholarship for students dedicated to public service.

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees, the official policy-making body of the University, consists of 13 members, 11 who have official votes. Nine are appointed by the governor for six-year terms, and they can be reappointed. One student trustee is designated by the governor as the voting member. The governor serves as an ex officio member of the board.

The president of the university is appointed by the Board of Trustees and serves as the official adviser and executive agent of the board. Chancellors, the chief executive officers of the three campuses, report to the president.

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The University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, the largest educational institution in the state with more than 70,000 students, 24,000 faculty and staff, and campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. The U. of I. awards nearly 18,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees annually.