

Contact: Tom Hardy  
Office: (312) 996-3772  
Cell: (312) 543-7476  
Email: hardyt@uillinois.edu

*(Note to journalists: Publication-quality photographs of Board of Trustees Chairman Niranjan S. Shah and former Chairman Lawrence C. Eppley are available at [www.uillinois.edu/our/images/](http://www.uillinois.edu/our/images/).)*

January 15, 2009

**Trustee Niranjan S. Shah elected Board chairman**  
*University officers re-elected*

CHICAGO, Ill. — Trustee Niranjan S. Shah was elected chairman of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees at its annual organizational meeting today, at which other university officers were re-elected and the Board's executive committee was seated.

Shah, chairman and chief executive of a Chicago-based engineering firm, was the unanimous choice of trustees for Board chair. He is the first Asian-American to hold the office. Shah succeeds Trustee Lawrence C. Eppley, who after six consecutive one-year terms as Board chairman chose not to seek re-election. A U. of I. trustee since 2003, Shah will start a second term on the Board beginning Jan. 19.

"I am deeply honored to have the support of my colleagues on the Board and I look forward to continuing our strong collaboration in providing the governance that will advance our university system as one of the very best in the nation," Shah said. "We face many challenges in maintaining the high quality, accessibility and affordability of our university; a shared vision and team work will enable us to achieve our goals.

"Larry Eppley is to be commended for his service as Board chair. He provided a steady hand on the helm as the Board set university policy on a multitude of issues, and the U. of I. is on the right track as a result," said Shah, a resident of Oak Brook.

Eppley said he cherished his service as Board chairman and welcomed the opportunity for another colleague to serve in that role.

"University of Illinois trustees are smart, experienced decision makers who labor out of love for the university and a dedication to maintaining it as the state's biggest asset and as the best that American higher education has to offer. It was a privilege for me to serve as chairman of the Board for six years and it is a privilege I wanted to share with my colleagues," he said.

The Board of Trustees is the governing board for the University of Illinois system, which enrolls more than 70,000 on three campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield.

Shah, 64, earned a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Mississippi in 1971 and three years later founded Globetrotters Engineering Corp., an architectural, engineering and facilities management firm. Shah has served for six years as the U. of I. Board's chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, where his 35 years of experience in architecture, engineering, construction and energy management are utilized on behalf of the university. He also has been a member of the Board's executive committee.

Active in civic and economic development organizations in Illinois and the Chicago area, Shah also has served on public and private education governing boards during the past two decades. He was a member of the state Board of Regents, which provided governance for Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University and the former Sangamon State University (now the U. of I. at Springfield) until it was reorganized in 1995. He served as a trustee of Northeastern Illinois University and as a member of the board for the Laboratory Schools of the University of Chicago from 1991 to 1995.

Shah served for five years beginning in 1995 on the Goldwater Foundation for Excellence in Education, an appointment by then-President Bill Clinton confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

In accepting the U. of I. Board chairmanship, Shah said that among the trustees' primary concerns in the year ahead will be vigilant stewardship of the university's assets and resources in a period of economic stress; continued recruitment and retention of high quality faculty and corresponding support with state-of-the-art research facilities; and the means to expand financial assistance for students and their families.

"The Board has a fiduciary responsibility for the financial well being of the university and must not flinch from careful review of how precious resources are utilized. Given the state's current fiscal situation, it will require innovative governance and administration on our part to manage," Shah said. Shah said he would strengthen partnerships with the University of Illinois Alumni Association and University of Illinois Foundation to help address the resources issue.

Shah also voiced support for the university's energy policy that calls for programs to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and provides for incentives to conserve energy.

Shah's family includes his wife, Pratima, and two children, Smita Shah DeJeu and Ajay Shah.

Eppley, a Chicago corporate attorney and a resident of Palatine who holds three U. of I. degrees, has been a U. of I. trustee since 2001 and is serving his second term. As chairman, Eppley led the Board in a period that saw the selection of a new university president and new chancellors of the Urbana-Champaign and Chicago campuses; launch of the \$2.25 billion, "Brilliant Futures" fundraising campaign; expansion of the university's technology and

economic development mission; and adoption of new policies and best practice initiatives for Board governance, including creation of the Committee on Access.

During Eppley's service as chairman, significant capital improvements to the campuses included, in Urbana, the Institute for Genomic Biology, the renovation of Memorial Stadium, the iHotel and Conference Center in the Research Park, the Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory, the Business Instructional Facility, the Activities and Recreation Center and the groundbreaking for the Petascale Computing Facility; in Chicago, the College of Medicine Research Building, the Student Recreation Facility, the James Stukel Towers residence hall, UIC South Campus development, UIC Forum, renovations to Grant Hall and the opening of UIC College Prep high school; and in Springfield, University Hall, the Recreation and Athletic Center, Founders Hall residence hall and bookstore and the Emiquon Field Station.

As part of the Board's annual organizational meeting, Trustees Frances G. Carroll of Chicago and Robert F. Vickrey of Peru were elected to the Executive Committee, which meets as needed to transact urgent business that cannot be postponed to a regularly scheduled board meeting. Board chairman Shah also chairs the Executive Committee.

The Board of Trustees has 13 trustees, 11 of whom have official votes. Nine are appointed by the Governor for staggered six-year terms, and three student trustees (one from each campus) are elected by the student bodies on their respective campuses for one-year terms. One of these student trustees is designated by the Governor to have an official vote. The other two student trustees have advisory votes. The Governor serves as an *ex officio* member of the board. The trustees all serve on a voluntary, non-remunerated basis.

In addition to Shah, Carroll, Vickrey and Eppley, the other members of the Board of Trustees are Devon C. Bruce, Chicago; David V. Dorris, LeRoy; James D. Montgomery, Chicago; and Robert Y. Sperling, Glencoe.

Student trustees for the 2008-09 academic year are D. Craig McFarland, Springfield; Paul D. Schmitt, Urbana-Champaign; and James A. Winters, Chicago. Winters was designated as having the official student vote.

The trustees, with the advice and counsel of the President B. Joseph White, re-elected the secretary of the University, the University counsel and the comptroller to one-year terms at their January meeting. The treasurer is elected to a two-year term. Michele M. Thompson continues as secretary of the University. Thomas R. Barrows continues as University counsel. Walter K. Knorr continues as comptroller. Lester H. McKeever Jr. was re-elected treasurer.

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The University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, the largest educational institution in the state with almost 70,000 students, 24,000 faculty and staff, and campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. The U. of I. awards more than 18,500 undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees annually.