

The News-Gazette
May 13, 2011

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

THE WOOING OF WASHINGTON

Having President Obama's chief of staff as this weekend's commencement speaker is just one small part of officials' strategy to ensure that federal money keeps coming

By PAUL WOOD
pwood@news-gazette.com

As President Obama's chief of staff comes to Champaign for the University of Illinois graduation ceremonies, the UI is in turn stepping up its efforts in Washington.

William M. Daley will deliver the commencement address at the 140th commencement exercises on Sunday. He will speak at both the 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. campuswide ceremonies at the Assembly Hall.



DALEY

Getting Daley "is a great coup for the university," UI President Michael Hogan said.

Another member of a political dynasty, UI Board of Trustees Chairman Chris Kennedy, did the actual reaching out to Daley, said UI spokesman Tom Hardy.

Hogan said maintaining connections in Washington has never been more important to the UI.

"We get about \$800 million externally funded," he said. "A good chunk of that is (federal) National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation grant money."

With less coming from state coffers, that money becomes even dearer.

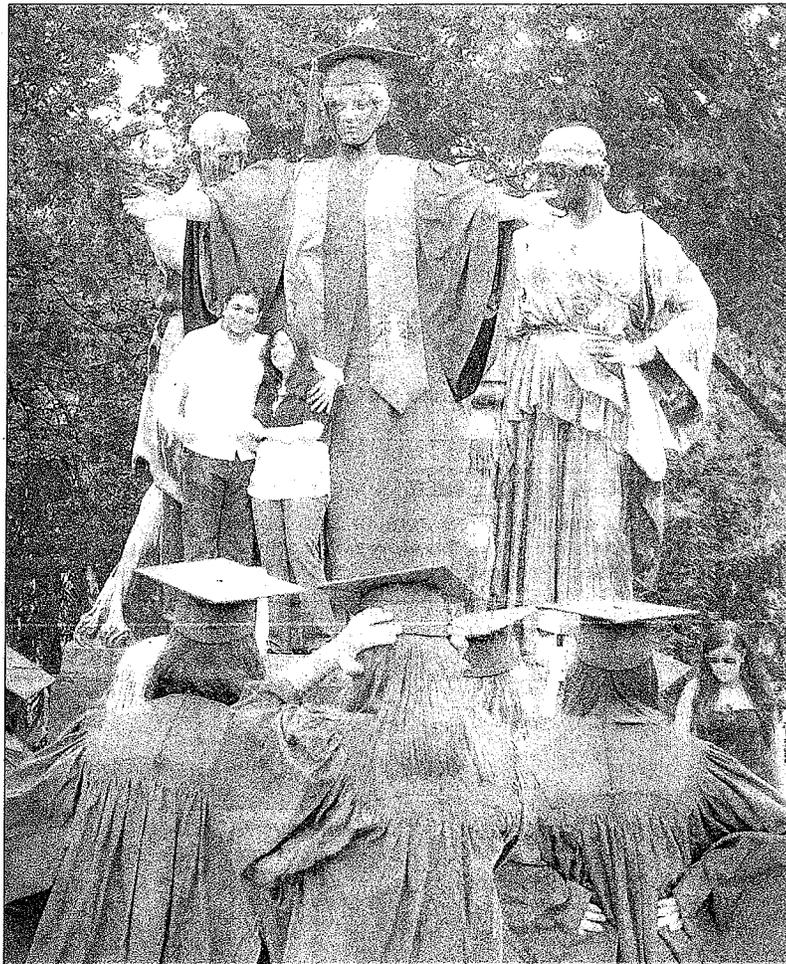
"It's very important to sustain and nourish those funding sources," Hogan said. "We need boots on the ground."

Attorney Jonathan Pyatt heads the UI's Capitol Hill operation from an office in the Hall of States. The office was not open for two years.

Hogan said Terry McLennan, the associate director of federal relations, will be Pyatt's "utility man" in Washington and Springfield.

Hogan will meet with legislators and alumni in Washington in June.

The Washington metro area is home to more than 8,000 alumni who hail from the UI's three campuses. The Illinois Alumni Club of Greater Washington, D.C., is the largest club in the United States outside of



John Dixon/The News-Gazette

Novi Roy, left, and Asma Siddiqi get their picture taken as they pose atop the pedestal of the Alma Mater statue Thursday at the corner of Wright and Green streets in Urbana, while many University of Illinois seniors wait their turn to do the same. Both Roy and Siddiqi are graduating with Masters of Business Administration degrees this weekend.

Illinois, UI spokesman Hardy said.

There are at least 45 alumni who work on the Hill, Hardy said.

There are 25 known alumni who were appointed to the Obama administration, includ-

ing Tom Lamont, an assistant secretary at the Department of Defense; Gordon Hed-dell, inspector general for the Department of Defense; and a handful in the White House (including a White House fel-low).

Hardy said some are on national advisory councils for Obama, such as HIV/AIDS and environmental and technology policy.

Hogan said he had met

Please see UI, A-6

Continued on next page

UI

Continued from A-1

Daley, the son and brother of two Chicago mayors, three or four times in Chicago before he joined Obama's team.

Interim Chancellor Robert Easter led the search for a potential commencement speaker.

Hogan said he and Easter "batted it around a little bit, and in the end we decided on Mr. Daley."

"He's well-known in Illinois

and Chicagoland," Hogan said. "What we liked about him in particular, besides being a son of Illinois, is his vast experience in politics and business."

Previously, Daley served as chairman of the Midwest Region, and head of the Office of Corporate Responsibility for JPMorgan Chase & Co. He served as president of SBC Communications from 2001 to 2004.

He was the campaign chairman for Al Gore's presidential run in 2000.

Before that, he served as U.S. secretary of commerce

from 1997 to 2000, overseeing a department of more than 40,000 people.

He also served as special counsel to President Clinton in 1993, focusing on international trade issues.

Hogan met Obama, who has no UI connection himself, when the former was president of the University of Connecticut. UConn won the national women's basketball championship, and Hogan spoke briefly with Obama.

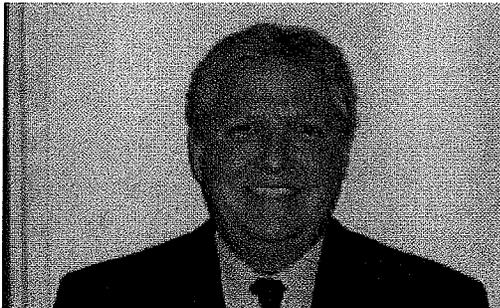
"I also watched him shoot baskets in the backyard," he said.



More discussion on possible cuts to **University of Illinois** Extension budget

By: [Carrie Muehling](#) | 4 hours ago

University of Illinois Extension funding is at risk again, says Brian Basting, member of the Extension State Advisory Council. (Photo courtesy of Brian Basting)



Supporters of the University of Illinois Extension were surprised last week by the possibility that county board match funding could be discontinued by the State of Illinois if the Senate version of the budget bill stands.

“We are concerned that the Senate version of the budget for 2012 would not fund Extension at the levels needed to support the programs,” said Brian Basting, a member of the Extension State Advisory Council. “We

are pleased that the past year the Extension program has done a tremendous job of reorganizing the entire state to trim budget needs and are just in the process of completing that and looking forward to implementing that,” Basting continued.

Locally, the tri-county unit of Livingston, McLean and Woodford counties is a part of that reorganization. Basting said he is more encouraged by the House version of the budget, which offers more support for Extension. University of Illinois Extension programming encompasses 4-H, Master Gardeners and many other programs. Basting encouraged people to voice their support to their state senators and representatives.

“We want to have the opportunity to see the program proceed after it has been reorganized. We were caught off guard by the possibility of county board match being zeroed out,” said Basting.

Over the past several years, 85 counties throughout the state have made a commitment to Extension by passing a tax referendum at the county level, which currently is eligible for a match at some level by the state. McLean County passed its referendum in 2001. “I think that’s a strong voice of support from the constituents of the legislature that this is a program that is valued and supported locally and state-wide,” Basting said.

Basting hopes people will reach out to state senators and representatives directly via phone call, e-mail, or stop in the local office voice support for Extension programming. “Particularly in the wake of the effort Extension has made over the last year to reorganize, they certainly deserve the opportunity to execute that new plan in the coming year, and in order to do that, they will need that funding in 2012,” Basting said.

To hear the interview with Brian Basting, click here:

<http://wjbc.com/more-discussion-on-possible-cuts-to-university-of-illinois-extension-budget/>

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Does Willard need new pilot?

Campus officials plan to order study of other ways to operate the airport, saying it's not their 'core proficiency'

By **DON DODSON**

dodson@news-gazette.com

CHAMPAIGN — The search is on for a new governance structure for Willard Airport in Savoy.

The airport has been owned and operated by the **University of Illinois** since 1946, when the UI established the Insti-

tute of Aviation there.

Now, with the university's blessing, the Champaign County Economic Development Corp. plans to commission a study of what forms of governance are used at other airports — and which might be practical for Willard.

The economic development

group on Thursday agreed to allocate up to \$15,000 for the study, which would examine the costs and benefits of various governance structures.

Separately, the university plans to commission a separate "leakage" study to determine how much business Willard is losing to other airports — and why. The UI would foot the bill for that study.

Bruce Walden, a UI administrator whose responsibilities include the airport, said it's "very unusual" for a universi-

ty to own and operate a commercial airport.

"Frankly, operating an airport is not a core proficiency" for the university, he said.

"Certainly, it's not a familiar structure to the airlines when we deal with them," he said. "They're not familiar with how universities do business and how long it takes to get things done."

The UI hopes the study "might lead to creating a structure that's more sustainable and inclusive of commu-

nity interests," he said.

Walden said airports can be managed by municipalities, airport authorities, mass transit districts or by intergovernmental agreement. Some airports, such as Decatur's, are overseen by a park district.

In other cases, private contractors have been hired to manage airports.

Walden said Willard Airport is important to the university because it helps maintain the

Please see **WILLARD, B-2**

WILLARD

Continued from B-1

research prominence of the Urbana campus.

But it's also important to the community because "local air service is a key driver in economic development, job creation and recruitment," he said.

Recommendations for the two studies came from a committee co-chaired by Seamus Reilly of Parkland College and Bill Gianetti of Flightstar Corp.

Also on the committee were Lori Patterson of OJC Technologies and Walden, the UI's director of real estate planning and services.

Cameron Moore, vice chairman of the economic development group, asked Walden if it was fair to characterize a letter from UI President Michael Hogan as saying the university "is open to the idea of getting out of the business of managing the airport."

Walden said Moore's characterization was "probably right."

The UI owns about 1,400 acres at the airport, according to Walden.

"I don't think under any scenario, the university would divest ownership of the land, but it could lease it or make other agreements" concerning use of it, he said.

The university has about 20 full-time-equivalent employees on the airport's staff, including crash rescue, maintenance and administrative personnel, Walden said. Steve Wanzek has been the acting airport manager since 2004.

Two other examples of university-owned airports are associated with Penn State and Texas A&M.

University Park Airport in State College, Pa., is owned and operated by Penn State. The university owns the land, runways and general aviation terminal, while the Centre County Airport Authority owns and operates the passenger terminal and general public parking.

Easterwood Airport in College Station, Texas, is owned and managed by Texas A&M. But it is self-supporting as an auxiliary enterprise of the university. It receives no state money for day-to-day operations and maintenance.

As for the "leakage" study the UI plans to do, it wouldn't be the first time such a study has been done for Willard.

In a 2006 interview, former UI administrator Gene Barton — whose responsibilities included the airport — said consultants studying a six-county area around Champaign-Urbana found Willard got about 18 percent of the air travelers.

The Indianapolis airport attracted about 28 percent of

travelers, and roughly 11 percent each went to St. Louis, Bloomington and the two Chicago airports, O'Hare and Midway, he said.

However, travel patterns have changed since then, with new airlines serving Central Illinois Regional Airport in Bloomington and a new terminal opening in Indianapolis.

Delta Air Lines and Northwest AirlinK no longer serve Willard, having scrapped their routes to Atlanta and Detroit, respectively.

Now American Eagle is the only airline flying from Willard, with flights to both Chicago and Dallas-Fort Worth.

"The world has changed dramatically since then," Walden said.



Expert: Be aware of possible bias in child welfare

Kay Luna | Posted: Thursday, May 12, 2011 10:34 pm

To those who deal with reports of possible child abuse through the child welfare system: Be aware of your potential biases, and remember to have empathy for others.

That's the advice of Alan Dettlaff, keynote speaker at St. Ambrose University's 13th annual social justice conference, called "Disentangling Disproportionality: Race, Poverty and the Over-representation of Children of Color in the Child Welfare System," held Thursday at the Davenport campus.

Presented by the School of Social Work, the conference was intended for social workers, social service providers, attorneys, criminal justice personnel, clergy and health-care professionals, who filled a room at the Rogalski Center.

Dettlaff, assistant professor of social work at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the **University of Illinois, Chicago**, said research shows a larger proportion of African-American and other minority children are involved in the child welfare system than white children. That comes from a study of the percentage of those races represented in the population compared to the percentage represented in the system, he said.

Called "disproportionality," this is a concern on the state and national level, he said. For example, 5 percent of Iowa's population is African-American, but make up 14 percent of the children in foster care in the state.

Another issue altogether is "disparity," which refers to the differences between how reports of abuse of African-American or other minority children might be dealt with compared to others, Dettlaff said.

"This can occur at every point in the child welfare system," he said. "Disparities in the way a child enters and exits the system contribute to the proportionality."

Although many factors play a role in the issue, a National Incident Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect report issued in 2010 found for the first time that rates of maltreatment of African-American children were significantly higher than those for white or Hispanic children in several categories, Dettlaff said.

Further research points to higher instances of poverty — and all the challenges and stresses that go with it — in this racial community as affecting the statistics, he said.

"But there is still racial bias in child welfare systems, and that further contributes to the disproportionality," Dettlaff said.

When a report of possible child abuse comes in about a family living in a middle- or upper-class neighborhood, the response of child welfare caseworkers sometimes is far different from when a report comes in about a family in a low-income area, he said.

What can child welfare caseworkers do to help correct this? Dettlaff offered this list:

Acknowledge the possibility of bias.

Have empathy.

Recognize strengths.

Recognize the importance of race and culture.

Increase connections in the community.

"Everyone working in the community," he said, "they all need to be invested in protecting children and reducing bias."

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

SIU fees, tuition going up by 6.9%

CARBONDALE (AP) — Tuition and fees will cost more at Southern Illinois University.

WSIU-FM radio reported on Thursday that the university's board of trustees has approved a 6.9 percent increase in tuition for the next academic year.

Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard says the increase is 3 percent less than was first proposed.

Poshard says the school will have to continue budget management practices.

The tuition increase will apply to incoming students, and the fee increase will apply to all students.



Advertisement

News

Stanford Adds Alumni Interviews

May 13, 2011

Alumni interviews have for decades been part of the admissions process at elite private colleges. Their role has sometimes frustrated applicants, and left them guessing about strategies. Over the years, the process has also annoyed many alumni. A 2002 article in The New York Times quoted a Cornell University alumnus talking about how all of the candidates seem the same: "If I see another valedictorian, I may throw up." And Cornell doesn't even call the sessions "interviews," preferring the term "contact meeting" to stress that the alumni aren't deciding who gets in.

Still, alumni interviews are the norm at elite colleges -- with a more common complaint of alumni of late, as documented recently by Bloomberg, being that they don't have enough influence to make the interviews worth their time.

Historically, the most prominent outlier has been Stanford University, which hasn't had alumni interviews. On Thursday, however, Stanford announced that a three-year test of alumni interviews in 12 geographic areas had been a success and that the university would start expanding its alumni network so that within about three years, all applicants could be offered an (optional) alumni interview.

So why does a university with no shortage of applicants (more than 34,000 this year, resulting in a 7 percent admit rate) make such a change?

Richard Shaw, dean of undergraduate admission and financial aid, said in an interview Thursday that the pilot program showed that the alumni interviews "add texture" to the applicants' portfolios. In about 10 percent of the cases, he said, the report of the alumni interviewer influenced the decision one way or another.

Given the size of its applicant pool, Stanford admissions staff members do not interview applicants. As a result, Shaw said that "the human dynamic" can be lost in an application -- and alumni reports can add that.

Alumni interviews have been criticized for favoring wealthier applicants, who may move in the social circles of alumni of elite colleges. The Stanford Daily last week editorialized against alumni interviews, making just that argument. "Regardless of correction protocols that the admissions office may try to build into alumni training, interviewers will either overcompensate or disadvantage underprivileged applicants, in both cases yielding tainted information," wrote the student newspaper.

But Shaw said that the university tracked the impact of alumni interviews on the candidacies of applicants from different demographic groups. He said that students from disadvantaged backgrounds, or whose parents didn't attend college, were as likely as wealthy applicants to be helped by an alumni interview.

Further, he said that many of the wealthier applicants didn't do themselves any favors in the way they presented themselves. Many of them came in "overly packaged," Shaw said, and that turned off the alumni, who were looking "for honesty," and not for presentations that came "from consulting services."

Shaw said that the university viewed the alumni interviews both as providing more information to the admissions committee, and as building a connection with the prospective applicants.

He stressed that Stanford has heard all of the complaints about alumni interview programs, and said that may be an advantage. "We're able to take into account what we've heard," he said. In particular, he said that it is important to select alumni with care, and then provide them with significant training. "You can't do this with mismatched interviewers," he said.

In the end, when the results of the pilot program were presented to faculty members and others, Shaw said, "people were moved by how much they saw added" to the understanding of applicants.

— Scott Jaschik

© Copyright 2011 Inside Higher Ed