EXCELLENCE + ACCESS
ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign • Chicago • Springfield
Higher education in the second decade of this century faces unprecedented challenges. Across the United States great public universities such as the University of Illinois have never been more important to the nation’s future. Whether through the students we serve, our programs of scholarship and research, or our service to society through our hospitals and clinics and in a myriad of other ways, what happens on our campuses matters greatly to the future of America.

The challenge faced by this University and others is one of maintaining the highest standards of quality while at the same time keeping access affordable. In many states, that challenge has become more daunting as a result of a weakened economy and the mounting financial crises facing state governments. As this report goes to press the University of Illinois is coping with an unprecedented delay in the payment of its appropriation from the state of Illinois, now over $400 million and threatening to go much higher before the end of the fiscal year.

The great public and Land-grant research universities across America have been and are the foundation of innovation and discovery. Chronicling all of the significant advances of the University of Illinois in the past year would be well beyond the scope of this report. Still, I hope this snapshot of 2009-2010 will give you some sense of the University’s breadth of engagement with the challenges and excitement of teaching, learning and research.

Ultimately the greatest contribution of the University of Illinois over its more than 140-year history is on the lives of the students who have come to our campuses, learned in our classrooms, talked with our faculty, studied in our libraries, worked in our laboratories and graduated to weave the fabric of our nation. They have done remarkable things — big and small. They help build our society, shape our culture, and fuel our economy. They are the engaged and informed citizens on whom our democracy depends.

In the pages of this annual report you’ll read about some of the outstanding faculty who make a difference in the lives of our students, who challenge them to look at problems from different perspectives and to apply their creativity and energy to look for new solutions. I hope you are inspired and committed, as I am, to the continued excellence of the extraordinary University of Illinois that we all know and love.

Stanley O. Ikenberry
President

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On the Cover:
Mary Jo LaDu, UIC associate professor of anatomy and cell biology, was awarded a federal grant of nearly $10 million to study Alzheimer’s disease.

Adhir Shroff, UIC assistant professor of cardiology, has inserted a tiny heart pump without surgery in high-risk patients to assist with blood flow while they undergo angioplasty.

Dana Thompson Dorsey, UIS assistant professor of educational leadership, focuses her research on education law and policy.

Darrel Good, Urbana professor of agricultural and consumer economics, is frequently quoted in the media about prices of agricultural commodities such as corn, soybeans and wheat.

On the Back Cover:
John Rogers, Urbana professor of materials science and engineering, was named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow in 2009.

Elvira de Mejia, Urbana professor of food science and human nutrition, found that a soy peptide currently discarded during processing might have important health benefits.

Stefano Longo, UIS assistant professor in environmental studies, conducts research on environmental sociology and political economy, concentrating on the global agri-food system.
University administration provides centralized administrative services that are vital to supporting the primary missions of the institution: instruction, research, public service and economic development. President Stanley O. Ikenberry and senior staff champion higher education in the state and help develop strategies and solutions to educational challenges that are best addressed across the University of Illinois campuses.

Staff convey to government, corporate and civic leaders as well as to alumni and other stakeholders the variety and excellence of research and academic endeavors at the University of Illinois.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees exercises final authority over the University. Trustees are responsible to the people of Illinois for the proper use of funds appropriated by the General Assembly and for the proper administration and governance of the University.

Nine trustees are appointed by the governor for six-year terms, and three student trustees (one from each campus) are elected for one-year terms. One student trustee is designated by the governor to have an official vote. The governor serves as an ex officio member of the board. The trustees all serve on a voluntary, non-remunerated basis. The current board chairman is Christopher G. Kennedy.

In addition to meeting every two months, trustees serve on various standing committees including the executive committee; academic and student affairs; audit, finance and facilities; governance, personnel and ethics; and hospital. The board’s three-member executive committee meets to transact urgent business that cannot be postponed to a regularly scheduled board meeting.

Trustees also serve on a number of external boards, including those of the University of Illinois Alumni Association and U of I Foundation; the Illinois Research Park; and IllinoisVENTURES LLC, which provides funding and business-development support for early-stage companies that commercialize technology, inventions and innovations, largely from University research.
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Researchers extend technological legacy

Since John Bardeen and his Bell Labs colleagues invented the transistor — the essential building block for the ongoing electronics-computer revolution — in 1947, the race has been on to build smaller, faster transistors.

Bardeen, the double Nobel laureate faculty member for whom the Urbana campus’ engineering quad is named, surely would appreciate the transistor improvements Xiuling Li, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering, and graduate research assistant Seth Fortuna are making.

They are “growing” nanowire channels “bottom-up” out of molecular components of gallium arsenide that assemble themselves chemically. The advantages to this technique, Li says, are that the nanowires “are compatible with existing circuit design” and “could be scaled up for manufacturing.”

The sub-microscopic nanowires have diameters of about 200 nanometers. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter. The size of a nanometer relative to a meter is comparable to that of a marble relative to the Earth.

For the average computer or electronic device user, it’s probably enough to know that at the nano-molecular level, materials have unusual properties that clever researchers like Li can manipulate to potentially power the next generation of electronics-computer technology.

In September 2009, Li received a Young Faculty Award from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. In 2008, she received the National Science Foundation’s Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. Since 1996, 24 Urbana campus electrical and computer engineering faculty have won the prestigious NSF early-career awards.

Li received her BS from Peking University and her doctorate from UCLA. She did academic research at Caltech; gained industrial experience at EpiWorks Inc.; and joined the U of I in 2007. She’s an affiliate of the Nanoelectronics and Nanomaterials Group in the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology.

Reporting: James Kloeppel, Susan Kantor and Lauren Eichmann, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Robert A. Easter, long-time dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, is serving as interim chancellor and provost.

Madhu Viswanathan, associate professor of business, was named as the recipient of the India International Friendship Society’s Bharat Gaurav Award given annually to honor individuals whose work promotes India’s heritage and contributions at home and abroad.

Martin Burke, a professor of chemistry, and Maria Spies, a professor of biochemistry, were named Howard Hughes Medical Institute early career scientists.

Musicologist William Kinderman received the prestigious Humboldt Research Award that recognizes lifetime research achievements.
College of Pharmacy celebrates past, launches Rockford campus

The UIC College of Pharmacy celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary in 2009 and hosted a gala event with more than 650 students, faculty, staff and friends at the Field Museum in September.

Founded in 1859 as a private institution, the College of Pharmacy joined the U of I in 1896, making it the University’s oldest academic unit. Looking to the future, the college is establishing a regional campus in Rockford.

Dean Jerry L. Bauman describes the expansion as “one college, two campuses.” The driving force behind the expansion, he says, is a shortage of pharmacists in Illinois, especially in rural areas.

The new campus will welcome its first class of 50 students in fall 2010. They will have real-time web-based lectures from Chicago augmented by locally taught laboratories, recitations and electives. After three years of classes and laboratory work, Rockford pharmacy students will complete six internship rotations at sites in Rockford and other Illinois cities.

The pharmacy college will work with the UIC College of Medicine at Rockford’s National Center for Rural Health Professions. Pharmacy students with rural backgrounds will collaborate with medical students to address the health care needs of rural Illinois communities. This complements the Chicago campus’ urban emphasis.

Initially, the Rockford pharmacy program will share facilities with the medical school. However, a new pharmacy building will be completed in 2010. It will have 15-20 faculty, a dozen support staff and five to 10 teaching assistants. Pharmacy faculty member David Bartels will serve as the regional dean of the new campus.

Already in place is an affiliate program with Northern Illinois and Western Illinois universities that guarantees admission for selected NIU and WIU graduates. The College of Pharmacy is exploring partnerships with other universities.

Reporting: Sam Hostettler
Stephen Zeck, clinical assistant professor in the College of Dentistry, was one of 10 dental educators in the US to receive the American Dental Education Association’s presidential citation for entering the education field after three decades in private practice.

Geraldine Gorman, assistant professor of health systems science, was named the first-ever Nurse Hero by the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago.

Ruth Holst, based in the UIC Library of Health Sciences and associate director of the Midwest library in the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, is president-elect of the Medical Library Association.

Bette Bottoms, professor of psychology, was named dean of the Honors College and vice provost for undergraduate affairs in September 2009.

Joe G. N. Garcia began serving as vice chancellor for research and professor of medicine in early 2010. Before joining UIC, Garcia was on the faculty of the University of Chicago.
Michael Dobbs is just the kind of student UIS’s MBA program in Peoria is looking for. In fact, the Peoria resident was so perfect he was tapped for the FMC Technologies Inc. $9,000 fellowship for the 2009-10 school year. Dobbs earned a bachelor's degree in accountancy from UIS in Peoria in 2008. He now works as an accountant at the U of I College of Medicine at Peoria and will graduate with his MBA in May.

Dobbs and his MBA cohort take classes on weekends with UIS faculty. Springfield-based MBA students take classes at night and on the weekends in a more traditional program. James Hall, associate professor in management information systems, was named as the new MBA program director in July 2009.

Michael Dobbs will complete his degree in the new downtown location of the UIS Peoria Center. For 34 years, UIS’ Peoria Upper Division Center was located on the eastside outskirts of town. Now it is located in the Perley Building, an Illinois Central College facility that is down the block from Caterpillar’s world headquarters.

At the opening of the center in October, UIS Chancellor Richard Ringeisen said, “Peoria has been hungry for a public university presence. … That’s a good thing for us.”

Jana Wise, director of the UIS Peoria Center, said the center offers bachelor’s degrees in accountancy, management, criminal justice and three online business-completion degrees.

The FMC Educational Fund (formerly the Link-Belt Educational Fund) was established in 1963 by U of I alumnus Bert Gayman, who donated a large block of company stock to the U of I Foundation. Designed to provide education and research opportunities, the fund now gives more than $135,000 annually for U of I undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships.

Reporting: Blake Wood and Derek Schnapp
James Ermatinger was named dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences in May 2009.

Amanda Vinicky, WUIS/Illinois Public Radio statehouse reporter, spent a week in Germany learning about media and politics under the auspices of the German-American Fulbright Commission.

Biology major Christopher Crockett received an American Society for Microbiology undergraduate teaching fellowship for students interested in a career as a teacher.

Matthew Holden Jr., professor of political science, Karen Swan, professor of educational leadership, and Keith Miller, professor in computer science, were named UIS distinguished professors at an investiture ceremony in September 2009.
Alumni are a permanent part of the University of Illinois family, and their support of University of Illinois Alumni Association programs, services and events fosters participation and pride in the institution. The universal membership model expands the reach of the organization and its members.

A. UIAA helped UIS volunteer alumni leaders and campus unit coordinators with outreach efforts.
B. In Urbana, UIAA sponsors monthly graduate student mixers that are cross-campus networking opportunities.
C. A high-rise charity run supported UIC alumnus and baseball player Curtis Granderson’s foundation, which focuses on young children and education.

www.uiaa.org

The University of Illinois Foundation is the official fund raising and private gift-receiving arm of the University of Illinois and the three campuses. UIF staff work with alumni, friends, faculty, corporations and campus development staff to promote opportunities that benefit the University.

Brilliant Futures  
Goal: $2.25 Billion  

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(as of Dec. 2009)

A. The Helene Fuld Health Trust provides endowment and scholarship support for UIC College of Nursing students.
B. UIS Lincoln scholar Michael A. Burlingame is the Chancellor Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies, a chair funded by a gift from the Richard Vaden family.

www.uif.uillinois.edu
Building climate-change models by the numbers

A UIC researcher has received a $473,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to build a “diagnostic toolbox” to model climate change.

Rafail Abramov, associate professor of mathematics, statistics and computer science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, received the NSF’s Faculty Early Career Development Award, the most prestigious award for junior science and engineering faculty members.

Abramov stresses that he is not a geophysicist and cannot predict future climate changes. What he can do is use sophisticated, computer-driven mathematics to discern the extent to which “parameter changes,” such as temperature, greenhouse gases and solar energy will cause significant climate changes. His toolbox can also identify which changes will have large and small effects on weather in the future.

“Observed changes in climate parameters are small, usually around a few percent of their historical levels,” Abramov says. The trick is to translate accurately short-term changes into long-term effects.

Abramov says the goal is for his “math fluctuation dissipation theorem” — or diagnostic toolbox — “to estimate which parameter changes cause catastrophic climate change and which don’t cause anything.”

The mathematical tools that Abramov is developing for climate scientists will include a new set of algorithms, or sets of instructions, that will predict what conditions will have what measureable effects on the set of parameters that influence long-term weather patterns.

Abramov, who earned his doctorate at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2002, is developing his algorithms with Andrew Majda, a math-climate expert and professor at the Center for Atmospheric Ocean Science at New York University’s Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

Reporting: Paul Francuch

Student veteran serves as White House receptionist

Darienne Page is not on a first-name basis with President Barack Obama but she is important enough to him to merit a nickname: ROTUS or Receptionist of the United States. Page, a UIC student from 2005 to 2008, was offered the job at the White House after the end of her junior year. She describes her job as “running around like a madwoman” to coordinate meetings with high-profile foreign dignitaries and celebrities. Page served in the Army before college and spent 11 months in Iraq. She finished the core courses for a political science degree and petitioned UIC to finish her electives at a college in Maryland.

Veterinary Medicine works to engage practitioners, public

Have you ever watched your dog scratch or bite itself and wondered what you should do? Have you considered cleaning your dog’s teeth? Each year the Urbana-based College of Veterinary Medicine’s Office of Public Engagement tackles these questions and others during workshops in Urbana and Chicago as part of more than 100 hours of educational programming for veterinarians, students and the public. Licensed veterinarians can also take advantage of online courses through Veterinary Education Online to stay up-to-date on new developments in the field and meet continuing education requirements of state regulatory boards.

Insider view of pivotal labor conflict

More than a decade after workers at an Illinois corn-processing plant lost a bitter, three-year standoff with management, a new book says their innovative tactics remain a how-to guide for the evolving U.S. labor movement. The stalemate at Decatur’s A.E. Staley plant is among the most pivotal labor conflicts of the last 25 years, said author Steven K. Ashby, a clinical professor of labor and employment relations in Urbana.

“Staley: The Fight for a New American Labor Movement” is an on-the-ground history that couples first-hand experience with 75 worker interviews, media accounts and details on strategy debates culled from videotapes of every union meeting during the conflict. The book is published by the University of Illinois Press.

Speaker Series gives students, faculty, public a peek at life behind bars

What can inmates from a Kentucky prison learn from producing a Shakespeare play? Participants in UIS’ 2009 Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) Speakers Series learned the answer to that question isn’t clear cut. Theatre director Curt Tofteland visited Springfield as part of the series and hosted a discussion session about “Shakespeare Behind Bars,” a film that chronicles Tofteland’s work with prisoners at the Luther Luckett Correctional Complex. The ECCE Speakers Series hosts a series of lectures each semester that compliment UIS coursework designed to foster an appreciation of diversity and efforts to make a difference.
New certificate program in e-government

In the fall of 2009, UIC’s highly ranked public administration program began offering an online certificate program in e-government. James Thompson, head of public administration, said students will gain knowledge that allows them to apply existing and emerging information technologies to local, state and federal government. Students, many of whom are working professionals, can earn the certificate in as few as three semesters. The program consists of 12 credit hours in topics such as the Internet and web-based service delivery, data and project management, and geographic information systems (GIS).

Aviation students take flight as freshmen

Thanks to Urbana’s Institute of Aviation more than 230 students are fulfilling a childhood dream: they’re learning to fly. Senior Nadia Kountoures, one of 14 women enrolled in the institute, is a certified flight instructor and co-president of the local chapter of Women in Aviation. The institute offers undergraduates two options, a B.S. in Aviation Human Factors or a professional pilot certification in conjunction with a degree from another program on campus. Students fly solo as early as their first semester. The flight-training curriculum is more rigorous than many private programs and addresses the role of human factors and crew resources in efforts to enhance safety.

Lab featured on Good Morning America

UIC’s Biomechanics Research Laboratories was featured on ABC’s Good Morning America last spring for its efforts to fight falls—the number one contributor to death for older Americans who have an accident. The study, led by kinesiology professors Mark Grabiner and Karen Troy, put women ages 62 and over through a battery of slip and trip tests. Researchers used data compiled from high-tech motion sensors and harnesses to monitor leg and arm movement and learn what helps keep seniors standing. The project is one of many that aim to improve older adults’ quality of life.

Business prof: Legalized gambling an all-around no-win game

An Urbana campus professor is arguably legalized gambling’s bête noire. John W. Kindt, a professor of business and legal policy in the College of Business, has written more than 70 articles exploring the economic impacts of legalized gambling in tax, antitrust, commercial, environmental and criminal law. His verdict? Gambling is a zero-sum game not only for individuals but also for society — from local communities to the international banking system.

“Money spent on gambling is not spent on cars, refrigerators, computers and other consumer products,” he says. That hurts not only businesses but also public finance because casinos undermine economic growth, Kindt explains. That lost revenue costs taxpayers at least $3 for each $1 in benefits as a result of increased crime, bankruptcies and gambling addictions.

Kindt’s credentials lend weight to his views. He earned advanced degrees in business and law, worked in state and federal government, and was a senior fellow at the London School of Economics.

Last year, Kindt served as author and contributing editor of a three-volume, almost 3,000 page United States International Gambling Report Series (William H. Heine & Co., Buffalo), which calls for a gambling ban. The series, with hundreds of academic and government reports on the consequences of the gaming industry, was compiled by Urbana doctoral researchers.

Still, Kindt and other gambling foes have a tough fight ahead because gambling seems like a painless way for lawmakers to balance state budgets. Kindt says that’s an illusion everywhere and especially in Illinois as the nation grapples with a recession.

He cites a UIS study that found Illinois’ gambling lobby is the strongest in the state.

That’s no excuse, Kindt says: “Any legislator who says he doesn’t see the downside [to legalized gambling] hasn’t done his homework.”
Gangs complicate perception and use of parks in urban areas

For most people parks elicit serene images of children playing on swings or adults enjoying a brisk run. But a recent study led by Urbana recreation, sport and tourism professor Kim Shinew found that for Latino residents of Chicago’s Little Village and East Side neighborhoods, parks conjure more ominous images as centers of gang activity.

Shinew’s study found that residents avoided local parks, attempted to dress in the “right colors,” or traveled to other parks by car when possible for recreation. The study was published in the Journal of Immigrant Studies and indicated that insufficient access to open space influenced residents’ perceptions about quality of life.

Conscientious mate good for your health

Some things you suspect. Some you know. And some you need a university researcher to suss out for you.

That’s certainly the case for Urbana psychology professor Brent Roberts who led a study that found that having a conscientious mate not only signified a happy relationship but also contributed to an individual’s better health.

Roberts, his colleagues at the U of I and the University of Michigan studied the personalities and self-reported good health of 2,000 couples who were more than 50 years old. The researchers found something they weren’t expecting: There was a significant health benefit for even very conscientious individuals married to conscientious spouses.

“It appears that even if you are highly conscientious, you can still benefit from a spouse’s conscientiousness,” Roberts says. “It makes sense that regardless of what your attributes are, if you have people in your social network who have resources, such as conscientiousness, that can always help.”

Roberts’ research describes conscientious individuals as organized, responsible rule-followers who control their impulses and fulfill their obligations. The unconscientious, on the other hand, tend to be risk takers. They often eat poorly, avoid exercise, smoke cigarettes and abuse drugs.

Then, the research takes an odd turn. It seems that women get an added health benefit when paired with someone who is not only highly conscientious but also highly neurotic. However, it does not improve a man’s health if his partner is highly conscientious and highly neurotic.

Roberts characterizes the women’s health improvement from neurotic male partners as a little larger than the well-known small effect of taking aspirin for heart health. He does not recommend that women seek out conscientious-neurotic partners in the name of better health.

Reporting: Diana Yates

Students given opportunity to study in South America

Have you ever dreamed of climbing Machu Picchu, navigating a lake located 12,500 feet above sea level or immersing yourself in the Spanish language by living with non-English speakers? For a dedicated group of students those dreams were realities during their study abroad experience in the summer of 2009. The trip, led by Spanish instructor Veronica Espina, marked the first time UIS sent a study abroad group to South America. Students kept a bilingual journal and reflected on Peru’s culture and other issues such as the environment and discussed their experiences on campus upon their return.
Scott Brady has assembled researchers from all over the world to advance understanding of what goes wrong at the cellular level in neurodegenerative diseases. Brady is professor and head of the College of Medicine's anatomy and cell biology department. In research that stretches back to his doctoral studies, he has sought to understand how neurological signals cease regulating the “molecular motors” in Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, Huntington’s and other adult-onset neurodegenerative diseases. There are currently no effective treatments or cures for these diseases.

Brady explains that these diseases were once thought to be attributable to cell death. His research, however, suggests that the aging process triggers a decline in the strength of neurological signals to cells. So, if the transport can be restored, the cell can be saved and the disease defeated.

But there are still several mysteries to unravel. So Brady recruited an international group of researchers who are examining other aspects of adult-onset neurodegenerative diseases. In all, the department has undertaken 12 major studies supported by more than $25 million in funding, including almost $21 million from the National Institutes of Health.

Associate professor Mary Jo LaDu is researching triggers to Alzheimer’s. Israeli native and assistant professor Orly Lazarov is studying molecular mechanisms that are common to the production of healthy nerve cells and to Alzheimer’s.

Argentine native and assistant professor Ernesto Bongarzone is studying the causes of neuron damage in both childhood and adult diseases. Gerardo Morfini, another Argentinean and assistant professor, is researching how neurological pathways are affected by disease-producing proteins associated with Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig’s disease).

Brady says the department’s cluster of neurodegenerative disease researchers encourages a healthy exchange of ideas and information. Ultimately, the goal is to establish a neurodegenerative disease research center at UIC.

Reporting: Dan Liberty

$14 million pledge creates Brazilian studies institute

A $14 million gift will help the Urbana campus create one of the leading Brazilian studies programs in the nation. The Lemann Institute is the result of a donation from Brazilian businessman Jorge Paulo Lemann, a longtime supporter of the campus, and his family. Lemann said the gift — the largest ever from a non-alumnum — recognizes the University’s efforts to attract talented students who have had a positive impact on Brazilian society.

Ruth Watkins, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, said the donation will increase scholarly exchange and research between faculty and students in Urbana and their counterparts in Brazil.

Reporting: Craig Chamberlain

Organ donation: The rest of the story

Filling out the paperwork to become an organ donor is not at the top of most people’s to-do list.

Brian Quick, a communications professor at Urbana-Champaign campus, says at least part of the reason is that the public doesn’t know that more than 100,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a life-saving transplant every day. Seventeen of them die waiting every day.

Quick, his students and two other researchers decided to explore what people know about organ donation by reviewing TV network news coverage of organ donation. Studying newscasts from 1990-2005, they found 1,507, or about 100 per year, organ-donation stories. They characterized this as “modest coverage.”

More telling, says Quick, was what the stories did not cover. “We found that the networks didn’t spend a whole lot of time talking about the need for organ donation, and they didn’t spend a lot of time talking about how to register,” Quick said.

In fact, fewer than 15 percent of the stories included the long organ waiting list, and fewer than 5 percent covered the number who die waiting for transplants.

And fewer than 10 percent of the stories provided information on how to become an organ donor. Required are signing a donor card, talking to one’s family, or registering on a website.

The results of the study, published in the journal Health Communication, have implications for organ-donor advocates and campaigns to support organ donation.

Quick, whose father was the recipient of a donated kidney and pancreas, says that it is necessary to communicate the need for organ donors before people are motivated to sign up.

Reporting: Craig Chamberlain

Glaciers tell story of climate change

Urbana geologist William Shilts has spent nearly two decades chronicling the decline of glaciers on Bylot Island, an uninhabited land mass located about 300 miles southwest of Greenland. Shilts, executive director of the Institute of Natural Resource Sustainability, said aerial photos of the island taken since the 1940s to the present show a steady, rapid decline in several glaciers. He attributes the decline to a natural cycle of glacial retreat but also pointed to a human effect driven by higher carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution.
Start the presses! Comic books good for kids, promote literacy

An Urbana library and information science professor maintains that not only are comic books not harmful to children’s work ethic and morals, they are at least as sophisticated and beneficial as books for their literacy development.

What’s next? Candy before supper?

Carol L. Tilley says comic books have come a long way since 1955 when publishers enacted a restrictive editorial code in response to criticism of comic books and their influence on young people. Tilley explains that critics argued comics were lazy shortcuts for kids to glide over the words and get the story from the pictures. That may be true for some children, she concedes, but you could say the same about children’s picture books.

“If reading is to lead to any meaningful knowledge or comprehension, readers must approach a text with an understanding of the relevant social, linguistic and cultural conventions. And if you really consider how the pictures and words work together in consonance to tell a story, you can make the case that comics are just as complex as any other kind of literature.”

Indeed, she points out that comics began their public life in the newspaper, primarily an adult medium. Children gravitated to the new form in the early 20th century. Teachers at the time objected that the adult content wasn’t appropriate for children.

In the current era of the Internet and video games, comics are a tough sell to kids, Tilley says. “It’s mild, tame stuff with a strong tie-in to other media.”

These days, comics — reborn as graphic novels — have shifted back to an adult medium. Yet progressive teachers and experts like Tilley increasingly see comics as useful tools in early-literacy development efforts.

Reporting: Phil Ciciora
On the lookout for parakeets

Emily Minor, UIC assistant professor of biological sciences, is among a trio of Chicago scientists who launched the Chicago Parakeet Project, an online survey to involve the public in tracking monk parakeets. The medium-sized birds are natives of South America but have invaded urban areas around the world in recent decades by escaping or being released by pet owners. The project hopes to learn why the birds are drawn to the Second City. Monk parakeets have a diverse diet that aids their survival. The birds are considered agricultural pests in Argentina although they have not yet damaged Illinois crops.

NEH grant doubles Hull-House exhibit space

UIC received a $350,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to expand the exhibition space at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum located on campus.

Hull-House Museum director Lisa Yun Lee called the grant “a wonderful acknowledgment of the importance of the Hull-House, Jane Addams and other social reformers who lived and worked here.”

Addams, an Illinois native and 1931 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, was a founder of the settlement house movement to respond to the social ills and dislocations brought about by urbanization, industrialization and immigration in the late 19th and early 20th century. Chicago’s near west side was home to successive waves of immigrants: Italians, Irish, Greek, Russian, Polish and, later, blacks and Mexicans. Addams championed them all.

Lee said the Hull-House Museum honors and continues Addams’ legacy by sponsoring exhibits and events that make it “a center of social engagement, where diverse people from Chicago and around the world can stake a claim to their history in Chicago.”

The grant will open Addams’ previously closed second-floor bedroom, complete with the pioneering urban social reformer’s childhood rocking chair and her desk, where she wrote her letters, books, essays and telegrams protesting injustice whenever and wherever she learned of it.

The grant will enable the museum at 800 S. Halstead St. to mount more ambitious exhibitions. The new space will open late in 2010.

Hull-House, located administratively in UIC’s College of Architecture and the Arts, is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and is a Chicago Landmark. The museum is open free to the public Tuesday through Sunday.

Reporting: Anne Brooks Ranallo

Massive dirt mound helps researchers study erosion control practices

Have you noticed an enormous mound of dirt located south of the Urbana campus? The 300 feet long, 13 feet high dirt berm isn’t there by accident. It was constructed on the U of I research farm last summer with a $450,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation. Prasanta Kalita, professor of agricultural and biological engineering, said researchers and students will use the berm to test 10 to 15 varieties of grass to gauge their ability to control erosion. IDOT will use the site to train engineers and technicians as they develop storm water management plans for Illinois roads.

Nuclear waste storage gets serious

The Achilles heel of the nuclear power industry has always been dealing with spent radioactive fuel. The quandary has gained urgency in discussions about nuclear power as a major contributor to the clean energy movement. The conclusions will have major consequences for Illinois, the nation’s top producer of nuclear energy — and waste.

Clifford Singer, professor of nuclear engineering and political science in Urbana, is one of three authors of a report by the campus’ Program in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security. He supports dry cask storage at active nuclear power plants, a decision reached by eliminating other options based on technical, political and cost considerations.

Reporting: Anne Brooks Ranallo
Business students deliver pitch for Olympics in front of Mayor Daley

Olympic fever gripped Chicago for several months in 2009, and although the city was not selected to host the 2016 games, several UIC business students shared in the spotlight. Mayor Richard M. Daley sat a few feet away as seven managerial studies students pitched Chicago as an ideal Olympic host city to instructor Michael Miller, a clinical assistant professor, and their classmates.

During his visit Daley touted his late father’s role in bringing the campus to Chicago and UIC’s efforts to mold leaders with the skills to improve Chicago and other cities worldwide.

 UIS biology professor researches brain-cell development

A young UIS biology professor received a grant to study brain-cell development and several weeks later showcased her research to the University’s Board of Trustees in a new Japanese presentation format.

Rebecca Landsberg, assistant professor of biology, was awarded a $215,000 grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Institute of Child Health and Human Development, part of the Department of Health and Human Services, to continue her research into the brain stem, which regulates sleep, breathing and coordination.

Landsberg, who earned a doctorate in biology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2003, is studying how brain-stem neurons arise during embryonic development. Their adult function is understood.

She explains this is important because “during human gestation this region of the brain is susceptible to environmental influences of alcohol and retinoic acid (a common ingredient in face cream).”

Researchers discover that the right diet may ward off disease

Gregory Freund, head of the pathology department, and his colleagues are discovering that the aphorism, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away,” may actually be true. Freund studies cytokines, the small proteins released by immune cells that play a significant role in the symptoms associated with everything from common colds to chronic illnesses. His team believes the soluble fiber found in foods such as apples and oats may play a role in correcting cytokine imbalances, which cause obesity, a leading risk factor for heart disease, diabetes and other diseases.

The College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign is one of three regional branches of the College of Medicine, a unit of the University of Illinois at Chicago.
Translating basic scientific research into patient health

UIUC’s Center for Clinical and Translational Science received a five-year, $20 million grant from the National Institutes of Health. The grant is the largest in UIUC’s history.

The center’s director and the NIH grant’s principal investigator is Dr. Theodore Mazzone, a medical professor and chief of endocrinology. Mazzone conducts research on atherosclerosis, or arterial disease, diabetes and obesity.

Translational research closes the gap between the traditional categories of basic and applied research. Multidisciplinary and collaborative, its goal is to move new knowledge “from lab bench to bedside” as quickly as practicable to benefit the greatest number of patients.

“The center will capitalize on mature conceptual and technological resources at UIUC to foster collaboration and innovation,” Mazzone said. “Our goal is to facilitate the work of translational investigators, to make it easier and more attractive for them to think beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries.”

Established in 2007, UIUC’s translational research center provides both geographic and web-based access for translational researchers to identify promising collaborations. It is part of a national consortium of 39 centers in 23 states launched by the NIH in 2006. The center offers six core services: statistical design and analysis, clinical interface, biomedical informatics, regulatory support and advocacy, community engagement and research, and translational technologies and resources.

Some of the collaborations sponsored by the center include research programs in asthma and allergic diseases, an immunotherapy approach to treating infections in patients with compromised immune systems and a multidisciplinary program to improve cancer care in rural communities. The collaborations could include all of the UIUC colleges, the College of Medicine campuses in Rockford and Peoria, and the Urbana campus. The center also sponsors programs to educate the next generation of translational researchers.

Reporting: Jeanne Galatzer-Levy

Grant helps fund new center to eliminate health disparities

The lives of thousands of low-income and minority South Side residents could be spared thanks to UIUC’s efforts to prepare a pipeline of researchers interested in health disparities. The Center of Excellence in Eliminating Health Disparities is the result of a five-year, $7.2 million grant from the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities. Elizabeth Calhoun, associate professor of health policy and administration, directs the new center.

Researchers will primarily examine disparities in prostate and colorectal cancer. Their main goals include developing a comprehensive strategy to incorporate research, education, policy changes and community partnerships to reduce health disparities in Chicago and beyond.

Engineering student wins Gates Cambridge Scholarship

Lucas Edelman, an Urbana bioengineering student, was one of 37 U.S. students to receive the merit-based 2009 Gates Cambridge Scholarship from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Edelman, of Glenview, Ill., will use the award to pursue a doctorate in molecular biology at Cambridge University’s Babraham Institute. He earned a 4.0 grade point average and led the Biomedical Engineering Society while an undergraduate. He is the eighth U of I student to earn the award since 2001. The four-year award is valued at about $50,000 annually and covers the full cost of studies in England as well as travel and living expenses.

Engineer works to improve tiny sensors

Ashfaq Khokhar, UIUC professor of electrical and computer engineering, is part of a team of Chicago-area engineers who received a five-year, $2 million National Science Foundation grant to develop solutions that allow sensors to exchange information while conserving battery power.

The team will develop algorithms that instruct sensors used in small static and mobile settings to extract specific information that can be networked and analyzed for public safety purposes. The project aims to develop sensors that help ensure security in the event of disasters such as forest fires or the release of toxic bio-agents.

Reporting: Jeanne Galatzer-Levy

An online connection with employers

The UIS Career Development Center is helping students and employers connect in the virtual world through skills matching and social networking sites. The center is using sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to help students find jobs and for staff to offer them tips on internships and employment. Employers are encouraged to communicate directly with students, answering questions, arranging job-shadowing opportunities, and coordinating mentoring experiences. Center director Tammy Craig hopes the program leads to internships and employment opportunities.

Reporting: Jeanne Galatzer-Levy
Visitors flock to campus observatory for Star Parties

Since 1980, UIS' Friday Night Star Parties have attracted more than 120,000 people to the campus observatory atop Bookens Library. John Martin, assistant professor of astronomy and physics and host of the 2009 Star Parties, said the UIS Observatory's three telescopes were used to view Jupiter, the Moon, the Ring Nebula and other stars and star clusters. Visitors with disabilities were able to take advantage the world's first fixed-focal point telescope — developed at UIS — that stationary observers can point in any direction without moving.

Researchers study link between body fat and prostate cancer

UIC's Institute for Health Research and Policy was awarded a five-year, $3 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to study the link between body fat and prostate cancer progression.

Improving science and math education

Donald Wink, a UIC chemistry professor and science education expert, took on a challenging task in 2009. He began working with experts at four other Chicago universities to motivate a cohort of 20 Chicago Public Schools science and math teachers to develop innovative curriculums that prepare urban students for college. The effort, known as the Chicago Transformation Teacher Institutes (CTTI), attracted the attention of the federal government and a $5 million, five-year National Science Foundation grant. CTTI professors will work with about 160 of Chicago's best high school science and math teachers through the summer of 2014.

Spurlock Museum accreditation: A 'major milestone'

The William R. and Clarice V. Spurlock Museum on the Urbana campus has received accreditation from the American Association of Museums.

Museum director Wayne Pitard calls the accreditation a “major milestone” that recognizes across-the-board excellence in governance, collections, public programs, finances, professional standards and continued improvement. Only 775 of the nation’s 17,500 museums, fewer than 5 percent, have earned AAM accreditation.

Pitard, a U of I religion professor, says accreditation is not only recognition of past achievement but it is also important to the museum’s future in terms of attracting higher-quality visiting exhibits and credibility within the national museum community.

The Spurlock Museum will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2011. For the first 91 years of its existence, it was located with three other museums on the fourth floor of Lincoln Hall. The new 53,000 square-foot building opened in 2002 on Gregory Street in Urbana and includes five feature galleries. It was made possible by a gift from William and Clarice Spurlock of Indianapolis. William Spurlock is a 1924 graduate of the College of Business.

Douglas Brewer, the former director, and his staff decided that with a new building accreditation was possible. The first step was a multi-year self-study requiring “hundreds and hundreds of pages of documentation,” Pitard said. Then, peer reviewers visited campus to tour the facility and interview staff, the board and guild and University leaders.

The good news came over three weeks in August 2009, first in a phone call that was followed by a formal letter and then a news release.

Pitard credits the staff, past and present, and a supportive administration, for the successful recognition of the museum’s first hundred years and its promising future.

Reporting: Craig Chamberlain
Students win several awards at Model United Nations conference

Students in UIS’ inaugural Model United Nations course earned several group and individual awards at the organization’s annual national conference in New York during the spring of 2009. The conference simulated a real UN meeting and included groups from more than 300 schools. UIS represented Croatia. Adriana Crocker, the UIS professor of political science who taught the class, said it was exceptional for her group to earn the Distinguished Delegation Award since the team was smaller than most others who attended. Two UIS students, Priyanka Deo (above) and Kelsey Quinn, were chosen to attend a conference in Switzerland based on their performance in New York.

New undergraduate social work degree offered

The School of Social Work in Urbana will begin offering undergraduate course work during the fall of 2010. Brenda Lindsey, clinical associate professor of social work, will direct the new bachelor of social work program, which is grounded in a liberal arts tradition. The BSW Program will prepare students for general social work careers in communities with culturally diverse populations, graduate social work programs and graduate education, or career opportunities in fields such as education, health care, human resources and non-profit management.

Social work program wins national grant for child welfare trainee project

The UIC Jane Addams College of Social Work was one of nine social work programs nationwide to earn a five-year $538,000 grant from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute to launch a New Child Welfare Traineeship Project. Alan Dettlaff, assistant professor and principal investigator, said the project will help ensure that social work students are prepared for child welfare work and increase retention by creating a five-year trainee program. Students accepted into the program will work within state agencies, Jane Addams Hull-House Association, and ChildServ to gain the skills necessary to address the complex needs of children in Illinois’ child welfare system.

Asking audiences tough questions

Deborah Stratman describes herself as a “Chicago-based artist and filmmaker,” whose films and videos are described as “avant-garde,” “experimental” and “postmodern.”

The assistant professor in the moving image department in the UIC College of Architecture and the Arts’ School of Art and Design has won Fulbright and Guggenheim fellowships. Stratman’s work visually asks questions about freedom, technology, violence, fear, war, life after 9/11 and nature — both serene and destructive. She teaches several courses including time-based visual arts and advanced moving image.

Stratman describes her undergraduate students as “richly diverse”: blacks, Latinos, recent European immigrants, Muslims, first-generation students and those who balance work and class. She says she wants first-year students to think analytically or to “keep questioning and be less convinced of truth.”

Her graduate students come not just from her department but also from performing arts, architecture, sculpture, photography and even physics. They do “a ton of reading and writing,” and small art projects to “move beyond surfaces.”

Stratman’s most recent film, “O’er the Land” premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2009. The 52-minute film tells the harrowing story of Marine pilot Lt. Col. William Rankin, who in 1959 bailed out of his jet — ejected at an altitude of 47,000 feet into minus 70 degree air. Rankin descended cartwheeling into a thunderstorm. After 40 minutes in the storm’s drafts, his parachute caught the tops of the trees and he landed on the ground. He later wrote a book, The Man Who Rode the Thunder.

Stratman focused on angry clouds as an actor reads Rankin’s horrific description of his wild ride against an aural backdrop of eerie sci-fi hum. Before and after are scenes of French and Indian War reenactors; men shooting automatic weapons; high school football; placid forests, raging rivers … “slices,” she calls them.

Or questions.
The total operating budget* for the University of Illinois is $4.66 billion.

**WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>State Revenues</td>
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*Includes $679.2 million in payments made on behalf of the University for employee benefits and $30.8 million for the Academic Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

Campus locations: Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, Springfield. Branches of the UIC College of Medicine are located in Peoria, Rockford and Urbana. Branches of the UIC College of Nursing are located in Moline, Peoria, Rockford and Urbana.

Total on-campus enrollment (Fall 2009) 71,459

Full-time equivalent employees
- Faculty 5,778
- Administrative and professional 8,782
- Support staff 10,314
- Graduate assistants (headcount) 9,929

Degrees awarded 18,516

Operating budget* (2009-10) $4.66 billion

Separately funded research (2009-10) $727.2 million

Living alumni (all members of the Alumni Association) 607,825

Student organizations 1,221

* Operating budget includes $679.2 million in payments made on behalf of the University for employee benefits and $30.8 million for the Academic Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment (AFMFA).

More than 800 buildings with a replacement cost of $7.9 billion.

The three campuses encompass 2,558 acres, with additional holdings totaling 10,850 acres (including an airport, agriculture experiment fields, Allerton Park, research sites and natural areas).

To learn more about the topics included in this report, check these websites:
- Urbana News Bureau www.news.illinois.edu
- UIC News Bureau www.uic.edu and click on More News
- UIS News Bureau www.uis.edu/newsbureau

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**FINANCIALS**

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