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The University of Illinois is truly multidimensional with our three campuses, 70,000 students, one half million alumni and rich history in academics, art, culture and athletics.

We look to the future within and across disciplinary boundaries to address humankind’s most important challenges and create a better world. We understand the power of innovation and the importance of action. We must recommit ourselves to our institutional and student-centered values of accessibility, affordability and diversity. Our goal is to ensure that no other university achieves excellence and provides access as well as the University of Illinois.

The profound research excellence in Urbana that has led to 21 Nobel Prizes for our faculty and alumni continues. Our Chicago campus has the largest medical school in the nation and an engagement with its city that is deep and unique. In the state capital in Springfield, the newest member of the University makes its mark in helping both its students and the citizenry understand the content, processes and nuances of public affairs, policy and politics.

In the following pages, I hope you will view with pride some of what the multidimensional University of Illinois has achieved in the last year.

Join with me, our faculty and students on our University’s exciting journey that began 140 years ago and extends into the next year and beyond.

Sincerely,

B. Joseph White
The University of Illinois—
one university with a common
name, mission, governing
body and commitment to access
and excellence—is made up of
three distinctive institutions
in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago
and Springfield.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
the state’s land-grant university, continues its 140-year
mission of driving Illinois’ economy, doing a broad
range of basic and applied research and enriching the
lives of its graduates. The intellectual center of the
campus is the nation’s largest public university library
with 10 million volumes and 24 million total items.
Faculty in the arts, humanities and social sciences
transform the lives of succeeding generations of
students. The Urbana campus also has a world-class
reputation in agriculture, engineering, science and
technology. Researchers and their students—both
graduate and undergraduate—do boundary-pushing
multidisciplinary work every day at the Institute
for Genomic Biology and Beckman Institute for
Advanced Science and Technology. The University
of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is all that a public
research university should be—expansive, vibrant,
consequential and challenging.

www.uiuc.edu
The University of Illinois at Chicago started with the first Mayor Richard Daley’s dream of a university for the city and its citizens. Navy Pier opened in 1946 and classes moved inland to Chicago Circle Campus in 1965. The East Campus merged with the medical center, and East and West consolidated as UIC in 1982. Today, UIC is a full-fledged, fully engaged urban research university with an annual budget of $1.3 billion and an enrollment of more than 24,000 students. UIC educates more physicians than any other university in the nation and has joined the top 50 American universities in federal research funding, much of it health-care related. UIC faculty, staff and students work and learn with more than 1,100 Chicago agencies and organizations as part of UIC’s Great Cities Commitment. Under construction is the $525 million South Campus expansion that is adding new academic buildings, residence halls and “University Village” student apartments that are intermingled with retail stores and shops.

The University of Illinois at Springfield, the newest member of the University of Illinois, has been part of the U of I system since 1995. Formerly Sangamon State University, UIS is known for its political science, public affairs and journalism programs taught in small classes amid the political and policy buzz of the state capital. Many of the Springfield campus’ 4,700 students do internships at the state legislature, in state agencies and with media outlets. UIS has defined its mission as a public liberal arts university preparing its students to contribute to the 21st century global community, and its goal is to be one of the best universities of its kind.
As good as he can be

UIC English and creative writing professor Luis Alberto Urrea says his two “cataclysmic” books—one non-fiction, one novel—published in the last two years have turned his life upside down.

“The Devil’s Highway: A True Story,” a Pulitzer Prize finalist, lays out illegal Mexican immigration to the United States in human, cultural and economic terms. But as Urrea did his research, a funny thing happened to the Tijuana-born writer. “I went to the border as a bleeding-heart liberal Latino to tell the story of the humanity of the immigrants,” he says. “What I wasn’t prepared for was to like the Border Patrol. I had to acknowledge the humanity of the people policing the Arizona desert.”

Urrea’s novel, “The Hummingbird’s Daughter,” is based on his great aunt, a Yaqui Indian faith healer. He says it’s the biggest thing he’s written. “Hummingbird’ took me 20 years,” Urrea says. “It was like composing a symphony. I not only wanted to tell the story of my Aunt Teresita’s amazing life but also to represent the sound of late 19th-century Mexico and Northern Desert Spanish in English.”

Urrea teaches fiction workshops to UIC grad students and literature to undergrads. “My grad students are smart, dedicated, honest writers and talkers,” he says. “I believe being harsh and critical is a waste of energy, so I buck the writer’s workshop trend with kindness and respect.”

The undergrads are a different story. “They’re energetic, excited, like puppies. Unless I’ve got them arguing or laughing uproariously, I think something’s wrong. They don’t have the developed skills of the grad students, but their hearts and minds are there.”

What does Urrea see in his writerly future? “I want to be as good as I can be,” he says. “I started out as a poet, and I haven’t written any poetry in 10 years, so I want to rev that up. Writing is all of a piece, though. I’d like to write great novels that will stand forever. My next couple of novels could be really good.”

By Mike Lillich

URBANA CHICAGO

World Series special

Two U of I alumni—one from UIC and one of Coach Itch Jones’ Urbana boys—faced off in the 2006 World Series. Former Flame Curtis Granderson, Detroit centerfielder, was the first UIC graduate to play in the Fall Classic. Scott Spiezio, a former Fighting Illini, was a utilityman and pinch hitter extraordinaire for the world champion Cardinals. Spiezio, who stood out with his signature goatee, more precisely an “imperial,” dyed Cardinal red, now has a World Series ring for each hand. He was on the Anaheim Angels team that beat the San Francisco Giants in 2002 in seven games.
Art for sale

Pieces of Melmac, a brand of plastic dinnerware marketed in the 1950s, are now collectibles, fetching nice prices on e-Bay. Conrad Bakker, assistant professor of art and design in Urbana, puts a new twist on the plastic pieces: He hand carves replicas from wood, paints them and puts them up for auction. Bakker has carved out something of a niche for himself in the contemporary art world, where he’s become increasingly known for his own brand of conceptual art that draws attention to the 21st-century, postmodern consumer culture.

Interdisciplinary goes to the next level

Question: What do you get when you combine the nation’s top graduate library science school, the largest public university library and the computer science department whose graduates founded PayPal and YouTube? Answer: I3 — the Illinois Informatics Initiative. Informatics, coined from “information” and “automation,” is the science of information. Or, more properly, the metascience of information because it encompasses both human- and machine-based data/knowledge across a range of disciplines — medicine, business, the social and natural sciences and the arts. I3 will coordinate informatics research and educational activities across campus through the newly formed Institute for Advanced Computing Applications and Technologies.

Artistic narrative

Industrial design major Aaron Hughes left Urbana in 2004 for a 15-month tour of Kuwait and Iraq as a member of the Illinois National Guard. Three years later, Hughes has changed his major to painting and is chronicling his war-zone experience. He exhibited “Dust Memories,” a collection of his drawings, paintings and collages on campus. In his artist’s statement, Hughes said his works convey ambiguous and anxious moments he experienced to “deconstruct the nostalgic war epic — which informs so much of how war is interpreted by mass media — in order to convey the over-complex, monotonous anxieties of a personal war narrative.”

Music magic

Four rare instruments by Antonio Stradivari arrived in Urbana last fall in an executive jet. The cello, viola and two violins, on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, were accompanied on the flight by Urbana alumna Sheila Crump Johnson, co-founder of Black Entertainment Television and a former music education major. The decorated and matched Stradivarius stringed instruments, in Urbana for more than a month, were used for two concerts in November and were on display at the Krannert Art Museum. A skilled musician, Johnson has taught violin to students in the Washington, D.C., area where she lives.
U of I System

Central administration offices provide effective and responsible management of the three-campus University of Illinois System. President B. Joseph White oversees a team that champions higher education in the state and provides a leadership role in developing strategies and solutions to educational challenges that are best addressed across the three campuses.

System staff convey to policy leaders, governments, corporations and alumni the range of research and academic success stories that reflect the quality and depth of the University of Illinois.

The University of Illinois Press, established in 1918, publishes more than 100 scholarly books and more than 25 journals each year.

A seed- and early-stage technology investment firm, IllinoisVENTURES works with University researchers and others to develop products, intellectual property and entrepreneurial tools into breakthrough, high-growth companies.

Since 1949, the Institute of Government and Public Affairs is where public leaders turn for analysis and evaluation of critical policy issues facing the state, the Midwest and the nation. Kent Redfield, UIS professor of political studies and IGPA professor, is shown here with former Illinois Governor Jim Edgar, an IGPA distinguished fellow.

Campuses are working to reduce energy use and increase sustainability and recycling.
The leading public university in the state, the University of Illinois is governed by a 12-member Board of Trustees. Nine statewide members are appointed by the governor for six-year terms, and students from each of the three U of I campuses elect a student trustee for that campus. The governor is an ex officio member.

The Board of Trustees exercises final authority over the University and provides direction on matters of policy, planning and strategic initiatives and guidance on the larger issues of access, affordability, budgets, tuition and the growth and scope of academic programs and services. Trustees serve on a variety of committees ranging from academic affairs and athletics to finance and investments and technology and economic development.

Together with the President, the Board sets priorities for the University, evaluates and resolves specific issues facing the institution and approves future plans. Trustees frequently represent the University at events throughout the state.
Presidential award to Kachru

Yamuna Kachru, professor emerita of linguistics in Urbana, received the Presidential Award from the president of India last September. She traveled to New Delhi to receive her award from President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. The author of more than 50 research papers on aspects of Hindi grammatical structure, Kachru is considered a pioneer on the interface of language, society and discourse in Hindi.

Work that matters

Beth Richie calls herself an academic activist. It’s an apt description. For 30 years, Richie, professor of criminal justice, African-American studies and gender and women’s studies, has been working for better treatment of black women.

She was named the UIC Woman of the Year in 2006, an award given by the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Women to a UIC woman who has consistently studied women’s issues and serves as an exemplary role model. She is also a 2006 University Scholar.

Richie believes academic research should ultimately affect her community and society as a whole. She researches the relationships among race, class and violence against women. “We’re obligated to do work that matters and we care about,” she says. And research others weren’t doing. “There was a group of us who were frustrated that our perspectives were falling outside the view of the more dominant class,” she says. “White feminists did not really address race and class issues.”

That frustration led Richie and colleagues to form INCITE!, a group dedicated to ending violence against women of color through research and activism. More than 2,000 people attended the 2002 conference at UIC. The group just published an anthology of critical writings, “Color of Violence: the INCITE! Anthology.”

The significance of her research has been recognized with grants from the Ford Foundation, the National Institute of Corrections, the National Institute of Justice, the MacArthur Foundation and the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

Richie is a dedicated mentor to graduate students and junior faculty. “Mentoring is important to me because I’ve been mentored,” she notes. “There are people throughout my life who have taught me important lessons. I am deeply committed to urban public higher education and, to me, teaching at an institution like UIC is a privilege.”

Alinsky Group archives

The archives of the national association founded by community organizer Saul Alinsky are available for viewing at the Richard J. Daley Library at UIC. The collection of photographs, training materials, organizers’ field reports, campaign materials, correspondence, annual reports and newspaper clippings from 1952 through 2004 documents social movements around the United States that used Alinsky’s organizing tactics to improve housing, employment and education for lower-income people. It also contains information about redlining and blockbusting during the 1950s, segregation in the Chicago Public Schools, attempts to integrate Lake Michigan beaches, voter registration drives and fights against dishonest merchants, according to Julia Hendry, UIC assistant special collections librarian.
CHICAGO

Morphing to Venice
Can Chicago become the next Venice? That’s the vision of Sarah Dunn, assistant professor of architecture in Chicago. Dunn, a principal in UrbanLab, and colleague Martin Felsen won a regional prize in the History Channel’s “City of the Future” competition and were the overwhelming favorite in Internet voting for the national prize. The team envisions a Chicago where eco-boulevards encircling the city would move treated wastewater and storm runoff back to the Great Lakes Basin. The canals would become a city amenity to be enjoyed by residents and encourage residential development along the southern and western parts of the city.

URBANA

Documentary gets broad play
LeAnne Howe, an award-winning author, playwright and scholar, showcased her new documentary, “Indian Country Diaries: Spiral of Fire,” at various locations around the country and on public television in the fall of 2006. Howe, an enrolled citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma who teaches in Urbana’s American Indian Studies program and in the master’s-level creative writing program, served as the screenwriter and narrator for the documentary, the second in a two-part series.

CHICAGO

Encyclopedia of prejudice
Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies Richard Levy edited “Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution.” The two-volume set drew praise from an American Library Association reviewer for its “scrupulously objective information.” The encyclopedia has more than 600 entries written by more than 200 scholars from 21 countries, as well as a detailed index.

SPRINGFIELD

UIS music director wins Terkel award
Karl Scroggin, music director and on-air host for UIS public radio WUIS 91.9 FM, was named a recipient of the 2006 Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award presented by the Illinois Humanities Council. The award recognizes individuals who have made lasting contributions to the cultural lives of their communities. Scroggin is also the fine arts reporter for WUIS and has logged almost 200,000 hours on the air and serving the Springfield community. Pulitzer Prize winning author and Chicago legend Terkel hosted an eclectic music and interview program on Chicago public radio from 1952–97.

URBANA

Extension extends helping hand
Extension educators in Macon County in Illinois adopted hard-hit Hancock County in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina struck the region in 2005. In the early days after the hurricane, the Macon staff sent cleaning kits, animal feed and hay, followed by small appliances, clothing and sundries during the holiday season. In 2006, the county extension agents collected almost 7,000 cookbooks to be distributed among Hancock residents who were pleased to discover treasured family recipes among the books.
Co-founders Jawed Karim and Steve Chen, computer science alumni, sold YouTube to Google for $1.65 billion. Karim returned to campus in October for lectures and discussions with students.

Illini volleyball standout, ace student with a 3.7 GPA and member of the Air Force ROTC program, Beth Vrdsky was selected for the Air Force pilot-training program.

The Chancellor's Academy for Teachers, a two-week professional-development seminar, is a collaboration between K-8 teachers in Champaign and Urbana and College of Education faculty.

Carl Woese, professor of microbiology and an active teacher, was elected to the Royal Academy, the world's oldest continuously active scientific academy.
Established in 1867, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is a premier public research university distinguished by the breadth and quality of its programs—from agriculture, architecture, veterinary medicine and engineering to law, business, communications, fine and applied arts, social work and education. The 785-acre campus located in east-central Illinois includes architectural gems from the 1800s, as well as 21st-century, high-tech buildings such as the Seibel Center and the Institute for Genomic Biology. Faculty conduct world-class interdisciplinary research and scholarship in an environment that enables creative thinking and promotes academic excellence. Urbana boasts Nobel Laureates, MacArthur Fellows and faculty whose research is among the most cited in their fields. More than 41,000 students call Urbana-Champaign home each year, and they enroll in an array of academic and extracurricular programs that strengthens their educational experiences and prepares them to be leaders in a global society.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is a recognized leader in teaching and scholarship and is known as an institution that creates knowledge and advances understanding.

www.uiuc.edu

Alumnus Rafael Correa MS ’99 PhD ’01 was elected president of Ecuador in late 2006.

Alumnus Ray Ozzie ’79 was named chief technical officer for Microsoft, the successor to founder Bill Gates.

The University of Illinois Symphony Orchestra performed a concert at Chicago’s historic Symphony Hall in November.
BP grant funds big science to solve big problems

Petroleum giant BP PLC announced a $500 million grant to the U of I’s Urbana campus, the University of California at Berkeley and Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory in a public-private partnership to unleash the promise of biotechnology to cure the nation’s addiction to oil. Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich joined California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Robert Malone, chairman and president of BP America, at a Berkeley news conference for the announcement that was also broadcast live on the Urbana campus on February 1.

The 10-year project will establish the Energy Bioscience Institute on both the Berkeley and Urbana campuses. The goal of the project is to find ways to produce new and cleaner energy, principally for road transport.

The U of I will contribute expertise in improving current biofuel production and growing and extracting biofuels from promising crops such as perennial herbaceous grasses. Previous support from the Illinois Council for Food and Agricultural Research enabled U of I scientists to pioneer research in the use of Miscanthus as a bioenergy crop. A portion of the $500 million will come to the U of I, which will devote 340 acres of farmland to the study and production of biofuel feedstock.

The U of I effort will be housed at the Institute for Genomic Biology and led by plant biology and crop sciences professor Stephen Long. “Doing big science to solve large social problems is something public universities do well,” said Richard Herman, Urbana chancellor. “We can and should be national leaders in alternative energy sources because we have both the natural resources and the human resources.”

Governor Blagojevich called the U of I “the jewel of our university system” and said the BP project “will do for biofuels what NASA did for space in the Kennedy era.”

Reporting by Diana Yates, Urbana News Bureau

CHICAGO
Reducing the risk of HIV
A study coordinated by UIC’s School of Public Health received worldwide attention when researchers announced that medical circumcision of men reduces their risk of acquiring HIV during heterosexual intercourse by 53 percent. The Kenya-based study offers evidence for donor and humanitarian agencies, such as the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, to actively promote circumcision along with other HIV prevention strategies, according to Robert Bailey, professor of epidemiology who directed the study.
Vision of the future
David Pepperberg has a vision for the future, and it includes restoring eyesight lost to macular degeneration. Pepperberg, Sears-Schenk Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences and principal investigator of a five-year, $6.3 million grant from the National Eye Institute, wants to bypass deteriorating photoreceptor cells and replace their functionality with other cells that are healthy and capable of signal processing. The project team will draw senior scientists from ophthalmology, medicinal chemistry, biochemistry, pharmacology, physics and bioengineering at UIC and other institutions.

Fishbone deforestation
Rural development projects in the Brazilian Amazon have resulted in the construction of road networks that have a unique fishbone pattern. Somnath Baidya Roy, an Urbana professor of atmospheric sciences, uses a high-resolution computer simulation model to study the effects of deforestation on climate and the effects that climate change has on the landscape, a process known as “feedback cycle.” Roy’s computer models show that the fishbone deforestation pattern results in increased precipitation. Whether there has been a change in the overall amount of precipitation has not been established, but data show a redistribution of precipitation.

Yeast model shows promise as Alzheimer’s test
A new research tool developed by Susan Liebman, distinguished university professor of biological sciences at UIC, may ultimately provide a means for treating the earliest stage of Alzheimer’s disease. Alzheimer’s, which is characterized by the formation of plaques in the brain largely composed of fibers made from a peptide called A-beta, has no cure. Liebman’s yeast model might help researchers screen small molecules to find those that inhibit the A-beta dependent aggregation. “One promising, emerging approach for treatment of Alzheimer’s disease is to prevent these smaller aggregates from forming,” said Liebman.

Red-winged blackbirds a bellwether?
The number of red-winged blackbirds has dropped by 50 percent in the last several decades, a decline that is likely linked to changes in climate and global warming. Patrick Weatherhead, a professor in Urbana’s Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, has been studying the birds in Ontario for 25 years. In addition to the drop in the population, the ratio of males to females has also changed from 50-50 to a predominance of females. Weatherhead calls these changes a “warning bell” about the ecological effects of global warming.

Hot news
The natural herb black cohosh is commonly used by women to treat menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, but the molecular mechanisms underlying its action eluded scientists. At least they did until late 2006 when Z. Jim Wang, UIC assistant professor of pharmacology and pharmaceutical sciences, discovered that black cohosh may act on human opiate receptors that play a role in regulating body temperature.
Fishing expedition
What’s 34 centimeters (13.39 inches) long, likes the cold and has an interorbital pit with two openings? The answer is Cryothenia amphitreta, a newly discovered Antarctic fish found by a member of a research team from the Urbana campus. Diver Kevin Hoefling (above) and research specialist Paul Cziko (left) discovered the purple-gold-colored fish in the Ross Sea region of Antarctica in late 2004 when the animal sciences team was searching for eggs of another fish for a different project.

URBANA

Excellence times two
Yoshitaka Ishii, UIC assistant professor of analytical chemistry whose work may help in the treatment of Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases, was named a 2006 recipient of a Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award. The award recognizes research accomplishments as well as teaching excellence. Ishii has set up a unique undergraduate laboratory at UIC featuring two-dimensional nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR). He plans to use the five-year, $75,000 unrestricted research grant to develop new methods of solid-state NMR spectroscopy to analyze structures of materials that have been difficult to probe using other techniques.

SPRINGFIELD

Star bright
The superior resolution of the Hubble Space Telescope gave UIS assistant professor of astronomy and physics John Martin the opportunity to observe a significant increase in a star’s brightness. Martin and his fellow researchers study Eta Carinae, shrouded in a cocoon-like nebula. The team believes that Eta Carinae’s accelerating brightness heralds a significant change—the ionization of the nebula that will make the star visible to the naked eye.
Busy as bees in a hive

The Urbana campus was all abuzz with bee news throughout the fall semester. Entomology professor Gene Robinson, quoted in The Washington Post, said that the honeybee industry is at a critical juncture. “The time for action is now.”

A National Research Council study found that long-term population trends for some critical North American pollinators are not favorable, with an estimated 30 percent decline over 20 years in American honeybees. That’s economically serious because bees pollinate more than 90 commercial crops in the U.S. with an annual value of $10-20 billion.

While bats, butterflies and the wind contribute to pollination, bees are the wings-down pollination champs. The California almond crop, for example, requires 1.2 million bee hives to pollinate the 15 billion-pound annual crop. That’s 80 percent of the world’s almond supply, with a yearly value of $2.5 billion.

Robinson is the G. William Arends Professor of Integrative Biology and director of Urbana’s bee research facility. He’s not just concerned with big-crop, big-money bee issues. He’s also co-leader of a group of scientists at other institutions who are sequencing the bee genome. Their work will shine new light in disciplines as disparate as human biology, neuroscience and gerontology.

Robinson has plenty of company right on the Urbana campus in the bee biz. Fellow U of I entomologist Hugh Robertson is working on a genome-sequencing project and identified the family of honeybee chemoreceptors that deals with smell and taste.

Chemistry professor Jonathan Sweedler is studying neuropeptides in bee brain cells to better understand how the human brain works. Sweedler, a Lycan Professor of Chemistry and the director of the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center, has identified 36 genes and 100 neuropeptides in honeybee brains.

Computer scientist Saurabh Sinha is studying the social behavior of bees. Sinha, an affiliate of the Institute for Genomic Biology, led a team that searched the honeybee genome for clues for social cues, a form of bee pressure that can cause bees to change jobs in response to needs of the hive. The interdisciplinary buzz is getting louder.

Reporting by James E. Kloeppel, Urbana News Bureau
Former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani was the keynote speaker at the 2006 Richard J. Daley Urban Forum. The forum examined globalization as a process of transition for cities.

UIC and Northwestern University are collaborating on a National Institutes of Health study that will collect data about health and disease in Hispanic populations. The $9.6 million study will provide screening and medical examinations for more than 4,000 Chicago-area residents. Co-principal investigator Aida Giachello, associate professor of social work, will collaborate with Rosemary Sokas (above), professor of environmental and occupational health sciences, and Victoria Persky, professor of epidemiology and biostatistics.

Brenda Russell, professor of physiology and biophysics, is UIC’s liaison to the consortium.

UIC is one of three members of the Chicago Biomedical Consortium that received $25 million in grant funding from The Searle Funds. With Northwestern and the University of Chicago, UIC will foster innovative multi-institutional collaborations to help Chicago become a leader in the biomedical sciences. Brenda Russell, professor of physiology and biophysics, is UIC’s liaison to the consortium.

The team of Caralynn Nowinski and Chirag Patel had two first-place showings at international business competitions in 2006. The students at the Liautaud Graduate School of Business amassed a total $45,000 in four competitions.

Among the guests at the 2006 forum were Mayor Richard Daley, Maggie Daley and Chancellor Sylvia Manning.
The University of Illinois at Chicago is an urban university intimately connected to its home in one of the nation’s largest and most diverse cities. A noted research center, particularly in urban affairs, medicine and the health sciences, UIC is committed to creating and disseminating new knowledge. UIC is a vital partner in the educational, technological and cultural fabric of the Chicago metropolitan area. From health initiatives to business internships to education practicums, UIC students benefit from the campus’ deep commitment to its community. More than 400 faculty and staff participate in UIC’s Great Cities Commitment, a multidisciplinary project that includes more than 500 programs working in Chicago to find model solutions to challenges facing urban areas throughout the world. The campus operates the state’s major public medical center and is a principal educator of Illinois’ physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and other health-care professionals. With branches in Peoria, Rockford and Urbana, the College of Medicine educates more physicians than any other university in the nation.

www.uic.edu
Eye surgery restores vision in ‘hopeless’ cases

Ophthalmologists at the University of Illinois Medical Center at Chicago have performed four cornea replacements using a newly redesigned artificial cornea, restoring sight in patients who had exhausted all other options. Dr. Dimitri Azar, Field Chair of Ophthalmologic Research and professor and head of ophthalmology and visual sciences at UIC, led the team that performed the operations. He was assisted by Dr. Jose de la Cruz, a fellow in cornea and refractive surgery. Azar and de la Cruz both worked with Dr. Claes Dohlman at Harvard who developed the artificial cornea.

In artificial cornea replacement, called keratoprosthesis, a plastic cornea is anchored to a hole in a donated cornea, the clear, strong surface area that allows light into the eye. The artificial cornea is necessary when standard cornea transplants have failed, causing the implanted cornea to become opaque or invaded by blood vessels. “Patients whose corneas are damaged by infection or injuries like chemical burns often have poor outcomes,” de la Cruz said. “Many times, their physicians continue to attempt new transplants or give up entirely on restoring their vision, simply because there has been no other option.”

L.C. Phillips, 53, of Chicago, one of the first two patients to receive the artificial cornea at UIC, had lost almost all vision in his left eye after an infection two years ago. Phillips had already had two failed cornea transplants. “Because it was very likely that transplants would continue to fail, the keratoprosthesis was his only hope for restored vision,” de la Cruz said.

“Since the December surgery, Phillips’ vision has been restored to 20/50, and we expect it to continue to improve,” Azar said. Phillips wears a special contact lens, which will need to be replaced every few months. “It’s a blessing to be able to see again,” Phillips said.

Cord blood stem cells put to work

Jasti Rao, professor and head of cancer biology and pharmacology at the UIC College of Medicine at Peoria, will direct a multi-disciplinary pilot project to determine the behavior of cord blood stem cells in cancer and spinal cord injury. Rao received $1.1 million for his research, the largest grant made by the Illinois Regenerative Medicine Institute, in August of last year. UIC’s Sara Becker-Catania received $400,000 for a multiple sclerosis research project, and Dengping Yin was awarded $750,000 for work to facilitate islet cell transplantation in diabetes patients. In Urbana, Lawrence Schook, professor of animal sciences, received $1 million for his research and to evaluate new technologies, Matthew Stewart, assistant professor of veterinary clinical medicine, received $250,000 for clinical regeneration of musculoskeletal tissues and Fei Wang, assistant professor of cell and structural biology, received $400,000 to study molecular mechanisms in stem cells.

Chicago honors College of Dentistry

The College of Dentistry received a 2006 Annual Human Relations Award from the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations for its efforts to bring dental care to poor, racial and ethnic minorities and to people who lack dental insurance. Dental students provide care in minority communities and in community-based clinics that serve HIV/AIDS populations. Bruce Graham, dean of the dental school, said the College is committed to helping underserved populations as well as working to increase the number of minority dentists.

Shining a light on breast cancer

Stephen Boppart, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, bioengineering and medicine in Urbana, is leading research to develop a new technique that could have a significant impact on the way doctors detect, diagnose and treat breast cancer. It’s called near-infrared imaging, which uses beams like those in CD players. The light beams can guide needle biopsies and identify tumor margins during surgery.
UIS launches new certificate programs

Students at UIS now can take courses for one of three new master’s-level certificate programs in community health education, epidemiology and environmental health. The course schedules for the 16- or 20-hour programs are designed to accommodate working professionals who are interested in obtaining advanced credentials. Coursework may also be credited to a UIS master’s degree in public health.

Dipstick test for cocaine and other drugs

Urbana researchers have developed a simple “dipstick” test for detecting cocaine and other drugs in saliva, urine and blood serum. Colorimetric sensors that mimic litmus-paper tests give a quick estimate of how much of a targeted molecule is present in a solution. The test is based on DNA-gold nanoparticle technology and can be packaged in user-friendly kits similar to those used for home pregnancy tests. Chemistry professor and Beckman Institute researcher Yi Lu, postdoctoral researcher Juwen Liu and graduate student Debapriya Mazumdar collaborated on the project.

Pain management for sickle cell patients

UIC researchers Diana Wilkie and Shiping Zong are using high-tech tools to study how individuals with sickle cell disease can manage the sometimes excruciating episodic pain associated with the inherited blood disorder. The first phase of the $2.9 million, four-year study funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute will give sickle cell patients a pen tablet computer with a touchscreen to show their physician exactly where their pain is located and to rate the pain numerically. In the second phase, half of the patients will receive care based on the computer-based information, half without it.

Exercise helpful at any age

Exercise is beneficial to younger brains, according to Charles Hillman, Urbana professor of kinesiology and of community health, and his colleagues in the Netherlands. The link between exercise and improved brain function in older adults is well documented, but Hillman’s research suggests similar improvements among younger populations as well. Hillman cannot yet say whether physical activity protects against cognitive loss during younger periods of the lifespan or if it promotes better cognitive function.

Hope for Diabetics

A collaboration of top scientists from UIC and around the world, dubbed the Chicago Project, is committed to helping diabetics worldwide by developing a cell-based cure for diabetes in the next five years. The team will also conduct research and develop ways to improve cell-isolation techniques, cellular viability and functioning, and shipping procedures for islet cells, according to Dr. José Oberholzer, UIC principal investigator and director of cell and pancreas transplantation. UIC has been named a National Institutes of Health Islet Cell Resource Center and awarded a three-year $3.25 million grant.

Flu shot on the run(way)

Most travelers don’t think about getting a flu shot while they are away from home or the office. But at UIC’s O’Hare Medical Clinic, the process was so easy and the locations so convenient that travelers were lining up for their shots. This year, clinic staff set up a series of kiosks at O’Hare Airport and saw a jump from 350 shots a week in 2005 to more than 2,400 shots a week in 2006.
Videoconferencing’s next generation

You can’t get much higher tech than Klara Nahrstedt’s research on 3-D video distributed over Internet2. The Urbana-based computer scientist is working with Ruzena Bajcsy, a University of California, Berkeley, computer scientist on videoconferencing’s next generation. It’s called TEEVE, or Tele-immersive Environments for EVErybody.

Technically, TEEVE is a distributed, multi-tier application that uses 3-D cameras to capture images and send them over Internet2, a network reserved for the highest of high-tech academic, research and corporate users. TEEVE’s surprising zinger is that the researchers are putting together big, 3-D, over-the-Internet video, and it’s inexpensive. That’s because TEEVE relies on COTS, or commercial off-the-shelf equipment.

“TEEVE is a great technology because it allows for more cost-effective cyberspace communication of people in their full body size,” Nahrstedt says. “The system is especially well suited for learning new activities, training and meeting in cyberspace if a physical activity is to be performed.”

Nahrstedt and her Berkeley colleague set the video bar high in their tech tests, synchronizing the steps and spins of two dancers from the two campuses in cyberspace. That’s a big technological step up from today’s slightly jerky, talking-head, video-over-the-Internet exchanges. But, more important than improved video quality, Nahrstedt says, are the new applications that could truly improve people’s lives.

Some examples include telemedicine, instruction in sports and other physical activities and entertainment. The latter is ideally suited as a use for the new system. “With TEEVE, we want to allow distributed artists such as dancers to train, design new choreography and experiment with different movements in the cyberspace,” she says.

The next research steps are to integrate better technology into TEEVE and at the same time make the user-technology interface less complex than programming a VCR. Nahrstedt says in five to six years users should be able to tune in.
Closing in on a terahertz
Milton Feng, the Holonyak Chair Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and graduate student William Snodgrass took the transistor to a new range of high-speed operation, bringing the “Holy Grail” of a terahertz transistor finally within reach. The Urbana scientists broke their own speed record for the world’s fastest transistor in December 2006. With a frequency of 845 gigahertz, their latest device is approximately 300 gigahertz faster than transistors built by other research groups. Faster transistors translate into faster computers, more flexible and secure wireless communications systems and more effective combat systems.

URBANA
Mona Lisa
83 percent happy
Thomas Huang’s emotion-recognition software garnered worldwide attention when a colleague applied the technology to an image of the Mona Lisa to answer the long-burning question of whether she is happy or sad. Conclusion? She is 83 percent happy. Using applications such as emotion- and voice-recognition software developed by Huang and his group, the Beckman Institute researcher and professor of electrical and computer engineering is trying to improve the quality and depth of users’ interactions with computers. His work could help develop computers that sense a user’s emotions and public displays that “read” customers’ faces and display information catered to that customer.

URBANA
Wiring the washing machine
The Urbana campus is a top 10 wired campus according to PC Magazine and The Princeton Review. Saying that “not all campuses are created equal,” PC Magazine searched for the “most connected, plugged-in and high-tech campuses in the country.” Urbana was cited for its rich history in computing, extensive wireless connectivity and 600MB of free online storage for each student. Junior Gordon Yang noted campus wiredness has updated and made more user-friendly such formerly mundane activities as online course registration, health center appointments and event calendaring. Even doing laundry is made easier with the laundry update that gives the availability of dorm washing machines.

URBANA
Network security expertise
Students at UIC learning to secure computer networks against hackers now qualify for a special certificate of expertise sanctioned by the federal government’s National Security Agency. Undergraduate and graduate students who successfully complete a series of computer science and math courses can receive UIC-issued certificates in information systems security. The course sequence is designed to give students a broad understanding of what to consider when designing and maintaining network security systems and prepares them to be information systems security professionals.

URBANA
Lincoln fires up supercomputer
The new Institute for Advanced Computing Applications and Technologies in Urbana will be home to a supercomputer called “Lincoln,” funded by the state of Illinois, that will eventually be capable of more than 100 trillion mathematical calculations per second. Part of the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA), the institute is integrating emerging high-performance computing technologies, applications and approaches around a collection of research themes that will be announced this year. New faculty will work with existing NCSA technology specialists and Urbana faculty to exploit the technology in areas of strategic importance.

CHICAGO
Wireless hospitals improve care, business
The University of Illinois Medical Center at Chicago has been named among the top 100 “Most Wired Hospitals” for 2006 by Hospitals & Health Networks magazine. Hospitals were surveyed on their use of information technology to improve quality, customer service and patient care. The hospitals are recognized for using information technology to streamline business and clinical practices, reduce medical errors and improve clinical outcomes. The Medical Center was also recognized as one of the top 25 “Most Wireless” organizations for its widespread deployment of wireless systems throughout the hospital.
Senior Christine McGraw is working with Keith Burton on a project that might determine the nature of emotion, a study that has inspired her to apply to graduate school.

The Emiquon Field Station flood plain restoration project along the Illinois River gives UIS students research opportunities in biology, ecology, anthropology, public policy and archeology.

Biology major Sara Paver won a prestigious American Society of Microbiology undergraduate research fellowship that funded a summer of inquiry on campus.
Students who attend the University of Illinois at Springfield seek the outstanding liberal arts education offered by the newest campus in the University of Illinois in the state capital where public policy and politics are the order of almost every day. By pairing academic excellence with small class size, high-quality programs and internships in public affairs, journalism and government, UIS offers a unique educational experience. Faculty and students enrich the life of the city of Springfield, and graduates assume leadership positions in government, media and communications.

Each undergraduate’s life is enriched by participating in programs that open doors to the world beyond the borders of the campus. Faculty, staff, students and alumni engage in activities and programs in business, natural sciences, social sciences, education and the humanities. Making a difference in the world is a central tenet of the UIS educational philosophy.

Charles N. “Charlie” Wheeler III is a third-generation Chicago and Illinois journalist. His grandfather is in the 1907 photo of the press corps at the Illinois Statehouse.

The current holder of the Wheeler franchise worked as a political reporter in Springfield on staff at the Chicago Sun-Times for 24 years before he arrived at UIS in 1993 to direct the Public Affairs Reporting program. This Wheeler brings an old-time newsman’s attitude to the graduate program that includes an internship covering Illinois capital politics under the tutelage of the statehouse press corps including such venerable papers as the Tribune and Sun-Times among others as well as TV broadcasts and NPR radio.

“We don’t teach any communication theory,” Wheeler says. “We help our students understand what they need to know to inform their communities about issues. I’m talking about property taxes, public budgeting, school finance, the things reporters deal with on a daily basis.”

Wheeler doesn’t buy the death knells for journalism. “Journalism’s presentation is in transformation,” Wheeler says. “But whether it’s the Internet, text messaging or podcasting, there will always be a need to gather the information in the first place, separate the wheat from the chaff and tell the audience what they need to know. Maybe it won’t be delivered on dead trees, but you can’t replace veracity, trust or integrity.”

Wheeler still writes a column for Illinois Issues magazine with the newsman’s straightforward, unadorned style. Every once in a while, though, he’ll slip in a 50-cent word—not for its own sake but because it’s the only word that will completely carry his meaning.

Last fall, Wheeler was inducted into the Lincoln League of Journalists of the Illinois Associated Press Editors Association. “I was very grateful and accepted humbly,” he said. “It’s an award for service, and I look at it as a tribute to the UIS Public Affairs Reporting program.”

By Mike Lillich

SPRINGFIELD

Lincoln, then and now

“Lincoln and America’s Faith” was the theme of the 2006 Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series at UIS. Each year the series brings nationally renowned scholars to campus to present lectures on public policy issues that are of contemporary interest and that also engaged Abraham Lincoln and the citizens of his era. Speakers focus on the topic’s modern form as well as how Lincoln addressed it. Notre Dame scholar Mark Noll and professor emeritus at San Francisco Theological Seminary Ronald White were the 2006 speakers.

SPRINGFIELD URBANA

Lincoln goes high tech

Abraham Lincoln surely never envisioned a world where news traveled around the globe via satellite or the Internet. But soon Lincoln scholars worldwide will have access to a life’s worth of writings by America’s 16th president, thanks to the state of Illinois, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the University of Illinois at Springfield and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications in Urbana. The undertaking consists of three series: Lincoln’s legal papers, his pre-presidential personal and political correspondence and his presidential papers. Soon readers will be able to view images of the original documents or search the text of the transcripts and annotations using a sophisticated search engine.

CHICAGO

Chicago a public affairs “laboratory”

A new bachelor’s degree program in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at UIC in 2007 will use metropolitan Chicago as a laboratory as part of the Great Cities Commitment. The new degree program in urban and public affairs will apply a multidisciplinary approach to learning, exposing students to the changing dynamics and the social, political and economic challenges of the modern city. Organizers say students in the program will serve as interns throughout Chicago.
Customer-centered education

As a UIC psychology major, Olga Reyes had a very specific idea of her career path. “I had romantic notions of becoming a psychologist and hanging a shingle, getting a leather couch and charging people megabucks per hour,” says Reyes, now a UIC associate professor of psychology. That plan eventually faded. What remained was a sincere interest in human behavior, listening to people’s stories and trying to help them. Graduate school increased her interest in research and teaching.

“I became more excited about the potential of research to have much more of a wide-reaching impact,” says Reyes, who studies high-risk behaviors among urban minorities, particularly urban Latino youth at risk for dropping out of school.

Considered one of the most demanding teachers in the psychology department, Reyes hasn’t lost her perspective from the other side of the lectern. As an undergraduate she was reluctant to say, “I have no idea what you are talking about.” “I try to make it easy for students to say that,” she says. “At the same time, I hold them to standards that a lot of them don’t like.”

Reyes offers her students support in and out of the classroom and extra-credit opportunities that always include writing assignments and essay exams. “One of the greatest skills you can possibly walk away with is knowing how to write and knowing how to communicate your ideas on paper,” she says.

Reyes believes it’s important for students to offer feedback and act like consumers. “Their course with me is a purchase that they and their parents are making. They are entitled to be satisfied with the purchase for whatever use they want.”

CHICAGO

Low-wage jobs cost Illinois taxpayers

Low-wage jobs cost Illinois taxpayers more than $2 billion a year for programs that help working families meet basic household expenses. The study by Nik Theodore, director of the UIC Center for Urban Economic Development, documents the public cost of low-wage jobs held by year-round Illinois workers. Some employers, even in large, profitable sectors, take advantage of the earned income tax credit, food stamps, Medicaid and child-care subsidies. Assistance to working families makes up 37 percent of all Illinois public benefits spending. Theodore says the public needs to understand the hidden costs of low-wage work when evaluating economic development efforts.

CHICAGO

Preparing for the next Katrina

Updating and clarifying the rights and responsibilities of civilian workers in times of national emergencies would improve homeland security, says an Urbana faculty member. Research by Michael LeRoy, professor of law and labor and industrial relations, reveals that officials have limited power to require workers to perform critical jobs during events such as a terrorist attack or destructive acts of nature like Hurricane Katrina. LeRoy recommends Congress clarify legal questions involving civilians, including emergency doctors, nurses, police and others, working under conditions that expose them to life-threatening hazards.

CHICAGO

Marketing the Navy

Students in an upper-level marketing course at UIC started a working advertising agency to create, implement and evaluate a recruiting campaign for the U.S. Navy. The students designed an interactive campaign to increase awareness of career opportunities with the Navy as well as encouraging enlistments. The undergraduates applied skills learned in other classes to the project and honed their presentation, teamwork and communications skills. UIC was one of seven universities participating in the experiential program sponsored by the Navy.
Outlaw advertising?

It's hard to imagine a world without advertising. But that's the story Inger Stole, a professor in the Institute of Communications Research in Urbana, tells in her 2006 book, “Advertising on Trial: Consumer Activism and Corporate Public Relations in the 1930s” (University of Illinois Press).

As the nation's population grew in the 1930s and the first seeds of consumer culture began to sprout, a nascent truth-in-advertising movement arose in the United States. Stole writes that these early reformers saw advertising as “flawed” and “undemocratic” because of its dependence on emotion instead of factual product information. But the fight between reformers and advertisers was never really fair in the first place because those profiting from advertising bought their ink by the barrel and owned the new radio broadcasting airwaves to boot.

“The media basically did not write or say much about the issue,” Stole says. “Thus, most people were unaware of the issues at stake.” The advertisers, publishers and broadcasters didn't take any chances, though. They used new-fangled corporate relations tools and even charged the reformers with being communists to defeat the do-gooders.

In 1938, Congress passed the watered-down Wheeler-Lea Amendment, and Stole writes: “Advertising never again faced a direct challenge to its legitimacy.” Stole says it didn't have to be that way then, and it doesn't have to be that way today. In her view the reformers had a good point because commercial speech does not merit Constitutional free-speech status.

“In our self-governing society, the role and nature of advertising and commercialism should be determined by the citizenry,” she writes. “If we want, we have the power to regulate it back to a way we find more suitable to the way we want to govern society.” In that brave new world, “Cut to commercial” would be replaced by “Cut the commercial.”

Awarding literary talent

Tyehimba Jess, an assistant professor of English, was one of 10 U.S. writers to win the 2006 Whiting Writers’ Award, a prestigious literary honor given annually to writers of exceptional talent and promise. Jess is a prolific writer of fiction and poetry. He won the 2004 National Poetry Series award for his first book, “Leadbelly,” published in 2005.

Ultrasonic communication

High-pitched, bird-like calls from a frog? Rare, concave-eared torrent frogs also hear and respond to sounds, the first documented case of amphibians communicating like bats, whales and dolphins. The frogs studied live in Huangshan Hot Springs, a scenic mountainous area west of Shanghai that is alive with noisy waterfalls and wildlife. Albert Feng, a professor of molecular and integrative physiology who also has an appointment at the Beckman Institute, and his colleague Kraig Adler at Cornell University believe that the frogs have evolved to compensate for the background noise. Feng’s work, which was featured in the journal Nature, received worldwide attention.

Nine books and counting

A book mentoring project coordinated by WILL radio gets preschool children excited by reading and puts books in their homes. Volunteers from community organizations visit classrooms once a month to read a book and do a related activity with the children. Each boy and girl gets a copy of the featured book, building a personal home library of nine familiar volumes. Repetition helps children realize that print has meaning. The Young Learners Initiative involves Head Start kids in Urbana, Savoy and Rantoul.
From the flat Nebraska night to the critical care unit’s whitescape, from an ancient bird migration site to the folds and fissures of the human brain, place figures prominently in Richard Powers’ latest novel, “The Echo Maker.”

Remarkably to some, Powers, the 2006 National Book Award winner, author of nine novels and winner of a MacArthur “genius award,” nests in Urbana-Champaign, where he earned his degrees, served as writer-in-residence and now holds the Swanlund Endowed Chair of English. Born near Chicago, Powers spent five teen years in Bangkok and has lived in Boston and Holland. Friends and critics rib him for hanging around the rural Midwest. Wouldn’t a big city be more appropriate for a writer a “New Yorker” reviewer described as “one of our most lavishly gifted writers”?

The writer counters that he has to live in the heartland: “It keeps me attached to the themes that infuse all of my books. This place gives me the whole world in a nutshell. This combination of simple and complex, of rural pragmatism and international excitement, is great for a writer. It keeps me stimulated without being overwhelmed, supported without being sequestered.”

Sometimes Powers bikes in a few blocks to the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, where he is a member of the cognitive neuroscience group and keeps a fold-up cot hanging on the wall of his office. Lying on that cot, nearly flat as the land around him, Powers dictates his work into his tablet PC and edits it with voice and stylus.

“I love working near the laboratory activity at the Beckman, the chance to meet researchers or walk around eavesdropping on all kinds of scientific work. Life here is like having a home in the city and one in the country—the best of both worlds.”

By Andrea Lynn, Urbana News Bureau
Making the past present

While UIS’ Lynn Fisher is fascinated by what happened archaeologically 10,000 years ago, she also wants her students to apply the experience of the distant past to the present. “For example, we can look at how past societies affected their environments when they plowed their fields or dug their basements,” says the associate professor of sociology/anthropology. “Archeology teaches us how day-to-day life in the past affected the land over long periods.”

To bring this home to her iPod-toting students, she likes to literally get them out into the field locally in Illinois where she says, “there’s plenty of fascinating archeology.” Her academic research also takes her to Southern Germany, where she’s investigating the transition from ancient hunter-gatherer societies to the first farmers. She’s taken UIS students there twice on month-long digs and will be part of a big multi-university National Science Foundation-funded project there next summer, a project that Fisher calls a “doozie.”

“Doing international research is a good way to get your assumptions questioned,” she says, talking about both herself and her students. “And doing archeology is a fabulous way to travel. Students live and work in one place and see things tourists and even study-abroad students don’t. This is most of our students’ first international experience. They’re doing fieldwork and lab work, learning some German, getting their complacencies overturned and having new ideas.”

She balances her students’ fieldwork with lots of writing. “I have my students formulate and write about questions that interest them, such as their hometown’s archeological history.”

Last fall, Fisher was named a University Scholar, one of 16 from the U of I’s three campuses. “That was tremendous and so pleasing because you’re nominated by your peers,” she says of the award. It comes with $30,000 of research support over three years from the U of I Foundation.

By Mike Lillich
Marketing course wins innovation prize

From product development all the way through to prototyping and marketing, an award-winning interdisciplinary course teaches UIC students best practices in product integration. UIC instructors Albert Page, Stephen Melamed and Michael Scott, professors in business, art and design and mechanical engineering, respectively, and the College of Business Administration won the 2006 Innovation in Business Education Award at an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business regional conference this year.

Saving wildlife

Urbana veterinary students gain practical, hands-on experience working as part of a medical team making diagnoses and developing treatment plans. Some 100 students staffed the College of Veterinary Medicine's Wildlife Medical Clinic that in 2006 saw more than 2,000 ill or injured wildlife, including a pelican, bald eagle and peregrine falcons. The students also give more than 50 community talks each year to educate the public about native species.

Winning the most important races

Eight-time Boston Marathon wheelchair race champion and Olympian Jean Driscoll (below right) was the speaker at the kickoff of Disabilities Awareness Month on campus in April 2006. The two-degree Urbana graduate, who is now a campus development officer, won seven varsity athletic letters — four in basketball and three in track. And she's just one of the many inspiring stories since Professor Timothy Nugent (right) in 1948 led the U of I to become the first university to provide a support system for students with disabilities and established what is now the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services. Early on, competitive sports were part of the program.

The number of U of I firsts in accessibility and athletics is stunning:

1949: Organized National Wheelchair Basketball Association and held first national wheelchair basketball tournament.
1950: First university to introduce wheelchair curb cuts.
1952: First buses equipped with wheelchair lifts.
1961: First architectural accessibility standards, which later became national standards.
1965: First study-abroad program for disabled students.
1977: First university to award varsity letters to disabled athletes.
1980: First university to select a wheelchair athlete as its Athlete of the Year.

So the U of I was prepared for the arrival of Driscoll and the other “Rollin’ Illini” in the 1980s when other universities were just getting into the disabled student access game. The U of I athletes — first men and, by Driscoll’s time, women — were way ahead of the competitive games, too.

When Driscoll, who was born with spinal bifida, gives speeches, she tells audiences that disabilities aren’t principles that define a human being, but rather characteristics like hair and eye color. Over the last six decades, she and thousands of other disabled students have come to the U of I, competed, won, lost, learned, graduated, succeeded … just like other students.

By Mike Lillich
Keeping alumni informed and connected and fostering University of Illinois pride across the campuses. That’s the role of the University of Illinois Alumni Association (UIAA).

With staff in Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, UIAA is in a unique position to offer local programming that develops and maintains alumni connections with the University.

The Alice Campbell Alumni Center in Urbana is the site of alumni and student events throughout the year. UIAA opened a facility in UIC’s Student Center East in 2006 and has had an office in UIS’s Spencer House since the mid-1990s.

UIAA members receive an array of services for their modest membership fee, including a magazine, a travel program, a credit union, and an online alumni directory. A recently introduced membership benefit is online access to thousands of periodicals and newspapers.

UIAA’s collegiate program provides complimentary membership to seniors and graduate students so they can experience the benefits of membership.

“From Pier to Here” celebrated the 60th anniversary of Navy Pier, the founding location of UIC following World War II.

More than 300 UIS graduates have volunteered for the Sage Society that works to increase engagement with the Springfield campus.

President B. Joseph White, Alice Campbell and UIAA President Loren Taylor celebrate the opening of the new alumni center.

The grand opening of Alice Campbell Alumni Hall was attended by hundreds of alumni.
The University of Illinois Foundation (UIF) develops fundraising programs and serves as the steward of gifts and bequests from alumni and friends.

UIF staff provide the margin of excellence for the private support that is essential for enhancing research, increasing scholarship funding for deserving students and meeting unanticipated needs.

A multitude of individuals committed to U of I educational and research excellence—alumni, friends, corporations, foundations, faculty and campus development staff members—all work together to achieve the common goal of support for the University of Illinois.

The Pampered Chef Family Resiliency Program in Urbana was made possible through the generosity of alumna Doris Kelley Christopher (third from left). The Christopher Family Foundation also made a $1 million gift this spring to UIC researcher Jose Oberholzer’s Chicago Project, an international consortium seeking a functional cure for diabetes.
The total 2006-07 operating budget for the University of Illinois is $3.68 billion*.

Where does the money come from?

* Includes $388.6 million in payments on “behalf of” (for employee benefits) and $7.4 million for Academic Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment.

Voluntary Support

Fiscal year 2006: $184.4 million

In FY06, 133,747 separate gifts were made to the University of Illinois. During the five years ended in June 2006, the University and the University of Illinois Foundation received more than $898 million in gift income.
The Office for University Relations thanks the public affairs and news bureau staffs and college and unit communications staff on the three University of Illinois campuses for their collaboration and expertise.

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