



UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
SYSTEM

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM DAY IN DC

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

52%

OF ALL STUDENTS ATTENDING ILLINOIS
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES ARE ENROLLED
IN U OF I SYSTEM UNIVERSITIES

1 IN 46

ILLINOIS JOBS CONNECTED TO
THE U OF I SYSTEM

76%

GRADUATION RATE FOR THE SYSTEM:
COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL
AVERAGE OF 64%

94,700

STUDENTS EDUCATED
ANNUALLY

\$19B+

YEARLY CONTRIBUTION TO
THE ILLINOIS ECONOMY

79%

OF UNDERGRADS
ARE ILLINOIS
RESIDENTS

32%

OF UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS IDENTIFY AS AN
UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY

\$1,000,000,000+

TOTAL RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

\$283M

ANNUAL INSTITUTIONAL
AID FOR UNDERGRADS



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ABOUT THE OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Office of External Relations and Communications (ERC) builds, broadens and protects the University of Illinois System's brand and reputation and advances its priorities, fostering broad-based understanding, engagement, support, advocacy, and investment to enable the transformative power of the system to grow and positively impact lives at scale.

ERC's federal relations team, through its offices in Washington, D.C. and Illinois, works closely with Congress, the Administration, and federal agencies to promote the system's education, research, health, and economic development missions. ERC also includes Illinois Connection, a grassroots advocacy network that brings together alumni, students, faculty and staff to support the system's legislative interests.

MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS

TOP LINE MESSAGES

THE U OF I SYSTEM IS:

- 1. Enhancing higher ed affordability and access;**
- 2. Pioneering new ideas and technologies to save lives, create jobs and advance innovation.**

We urge Congress to support these efforts by boosting funding for Pell Grants and research.

TALKING POINTS

- Thank you for being a champion of the U of I System!
- Across our system, we are providing the education, health care and economic opportunities that matter to your constituents. And we couldn't do it without support from Congress and federal agencies.
- Today, we want to talk about two things:
 - 1. Affordability and Access**
 - The U of I System is committed to providing Illinois students a best-in-class education at a reasonable cost.
 - We provide significant institutional aid, but nearly 21,000 U of I System students also rely on Pell Grants to pay for college.
 - We support doubling the maximum Pell award to \$13,000 and permanently indexing the award amount to inflation.
 - 2. Research and Innovation**
 - With over \$640 million a year in federal research expenditures, the U of I System is a research powerhouse. From a safer shingles vaccine to Mosaic—the first graphical Internet browser—the U of I System has transformed lives.
 - By increasing funding for the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health and other agencies that fund our researchers, Congress can promote innovation and national competitiveness.
 - Last Congress took important steps to boost research funding, particularly through enactment of the CHIPS and Science Act. This Congress should build on those efforts by providing the funding that was promised in the CHIPS law.
- Thank you again, and we hope you will join us this evening to celebrate the U of I System and our congressional champions!

BACKGROUND ON PELL GRANTS

The federal government plays a key role in enhancing college affordability and access. The Higher Education Act (HEA), enacted in 1965, authorizes federal financial aid programs for individuals pursuing a postsecondary education and programs that support institutions of higher education. Title IV of the HEA authorizes the federal government's major student financial aid programs, including need-based grants such as Pell and the federal student loan program. Nationwide, over seven million students, or about 40 percent of undergraduates, receive a Pell Grant each year, including more than 2.5 million students at public four-year institutions.

Pell Grants are the foundation of a student financial aid package at the U of I System. Pell eligibility can be a good indication of eligibility for additional state and institutional aid, depending on residency. In Academic Year 2022-2023, nearly 21,000 students across the system received \$109.2 million in Pell Grants. Our students also receive significant institutional aid. The U of I System has committed to providing \$283 million in undergraduate aid for the current year, an increase of 2.1 percent over last year, and a figure that has grown by \$108 million over the past 10 years.

Last year, Congress increased the maximum Pell award by \$500 to \$7,395 a year, the largest increase in a decade. The U of I System is actively participating in #DoublePell, a national campaign to double the maximum federal Pell Grant award to \$13,000. We also support extending the Pell Grant eligibility period by two semesters; extending Pell eligibility to graduate education and DACA participants; and making Pell Grant funding fully mandatory, so it is not subject to the annual appropriations process in Congress.

BACKGROUND ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Our faculty expend over \$640 million annually in federal research funding (research expenditures) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy (DOE), the Department of Defense (DOD), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and other federal agencies. University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign routinely leads the nation in NSF grant awards, and UIC is a top recipient of NIH funding.

The U of I System has launched two related initiatives to promote innovation and economic growth, and help train the workforce of the 21st century. The Discovery Partners Institute (DPI), based in Chicago, is focused on developing tech talent for high-demand jobs, applied R&D, and business building to foster equitable economic development. DPI is the anchor of the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN), a statewide network of 15 economic development hubs including all of Illinois' public universities. The IIN combines research, public-private partnerships, entrepreneurship and workforce training programs to spur inclusive economic development.

Federal support is needed to ensure that institutions like the U of I System can continue to power our country's leadership in science and technology. By increasing funding for research, Congress can foster the groundbreaking innovation that will move America forward. The 117th Congress took important steps toward that goal by enacting the CHIPS and Science Act (CHIPS). The 118th Congress should build on those efforts by providing full funding in FY2025 for the major research initiatives and accounts that were authorized in CHIPS. That funding is essential to support investments in foundational basic research and research infrastructure. It will also help ensure that universities can continue to drive regional innovation with support from the NSF and Department of Commerce.



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HILL MEETING

1. **Be flexible.** Schedules change frequently on Capitol Hill, and members may be called away unexpectedly for committee business or floor votes. Meetings may need to be shortened, rescheduled, or relocated at the last minute.
2. **Be prepared.** Review the key messages and talking points in this booklet and think about how you want to put them in your own words. Plan as a team who will deliver which messages to keep the conversation running smoothly. Prepare a succinct version of your talking points in case the meeting gets cut short.
3. **Have a U of I System story ready.** You can amplify the impact of the key messages by incorporating a story from your own experience with the University of Illinois System. For example, consider talking about how your education has made a difference in your life, or how research benefits your community and the state.
4. **Know your audience and make connections.** Familiarize yourself with the elected official's policy views, and the demographics of their district. Look for things you may have in common, such as interests, hometowns, friends, and, of course, the U of I System universities. If you're meeting with your own local representative, make sure to mention that you're a constituent!
5. **Be sure the information you provide is accurate.** Legislators may ask you questions about the policies you are advocating for or about unrelated topics. Don't guess or overstate anything. It is okay to tell them you don't know the answer and you will relay their questions to ERC staff to follow up.
6. **Be courteous.** Sometimes a legislator may have a different opinion than you. Please remember to be respectful despite any disagreements, both in person and on social media. If the legislator is unavailable, remember that congressional staff play an important role in advising members on policy issues. Staff meetings can be just as useful as member meetings.

AFTER YOUR MEETING:

Debrief with your team about your conversation. The team lead will be responsible for submitting your feedback form for each meeting. Please make note of any promised actions, unanswered questions and responses to the items you discussed with the legislator or their staff.



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

ERC is executing a social media plan to promote our event on Twitter and Facebook. Follow the University of Illinois System page on [Facebook](#) and [@uofigovrelation](#) on [Twitter](#) to participate. Use **#UofISystemInDC** when posting about the event.

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER



CONTACT US [UILLINOIS.EDU/ERC](https://uillinois.edu/erc)

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LEGISLATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

| NAME | DIST. | ROOM | PARTY | COMMITTEES |
|--------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|---|
| Sen. Dick Durbin | IL | 711 Hart | D | Judiciary (Chairman); Appropriations; Agriculture |
| Sen. Tammy Duckworth | IL | 524 Hart | D | Armed Services; Commerce, Science, & Transportation; Small Business & Entrepreneurship; Foreign Relations |
| Rep. Jonathan Jackson | 01 | 1641 LHOB | D | Agriculture; Foreign Affairs |
| Rep. Robin Kelly | 02 | 2329 RHOB | D | Energy & Commerce |
| Rep. Delia Ramirez | 03 | 1523 LHOB | D | Homeland Security; Veterans' Affairs |
| ● Rep. Chuy Garcia | 04 | 1519 LHOB | D | Transportation & Infrastructure |
| Rep. Mike Quigley | 05 | 2083 RHOB | D | Appropriations |
| Rep. Sean Casten | 06 | 2440 RHOB | D | Science, Space, & Technology; Financial Services |
| Rep. Danny Davis | 07 | 2159 RHOB | D | Ways & Means |
| Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi | 08 | 2367 RHOB | D | Oversight & Accountability; Select Committee on Intelligence; Select Committee on China (Ranking Member) |
| ● Rep. Jan Schakowsky | 09 | 2408 RHOB | D | Energy & Commerce; Budget |
| Rep. Brad Schneider | 10 | 300 CHOB | D | Foreign Affairs; Ways & Means |
| Rep. Bill Foster | 11 | 2366 RHOB | D | Financial Services |
| ● Rep. Mike Bost | 12 | 352 CHOB | R | Agriculture; Transportation & Infrastructure; Veterans' Affairs (Chairman) |
| ● Rep. Nikki Budzinski | 13 | 1009 LHOB | D | Agriculture; Veterans' Affairs |
| Rep. Lauren Underwood | 14 | 1410 LHOB | D | Appropriations |
| Rep. Mary Miller | 15 | 1740 LHOB | R | Agriculture; Education & the Workforce |
| ● Rep. Darin LaHood | 16 | 1424 LHOB | D | Ways & Means; Select Committee on Intelligence; Select Committee on China |
| Rep. Eric Sorensen | 17 | 1205 LHOB | R | Science, Space, & Technology; Agriculture |
| ●● Rep. Larry Bucshon | IN-8 | 2313 RHOB | R | Energy & Commerce |
| ● Rep. Chuck Fleischmann | TN-3 | 2187 RHOB | R | Science, Space, & Technology; Appropriations |

