

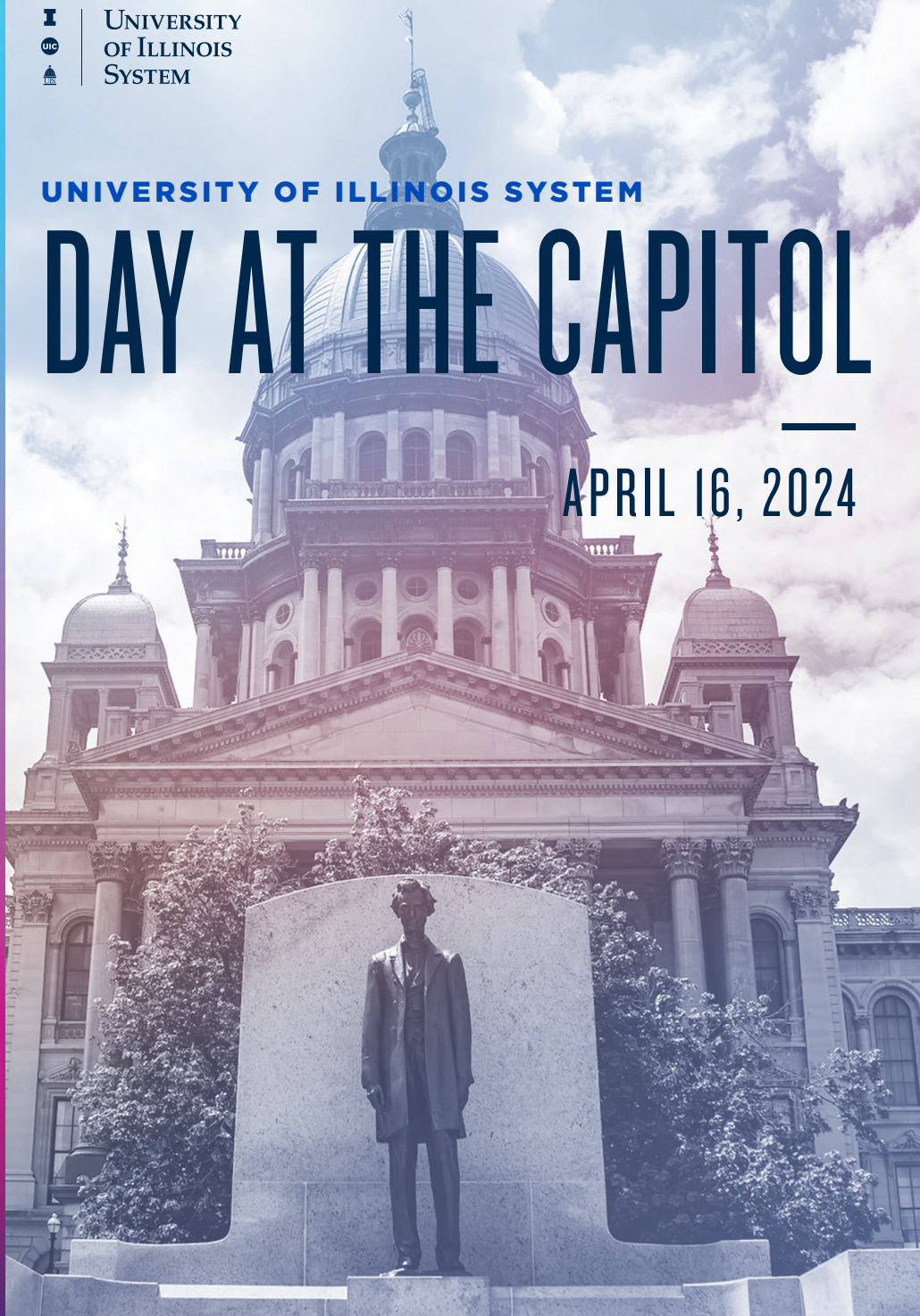


UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
SYSTEM

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

DAY AT THE CAPITOL

APRIL 16, 2024





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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.

As part of ERC, state relations and advocacy staff work closely with the Illinois General Assembly and local officials to promote the education, research, health, and economic development missions of the U of I System. Part of this engagement employs alumni, students, faculty, staff, and supporters to advocate for greater governmental support in coordination with governmental relations staff across the system, as well as the alumni networks for the three universities. Through the Illinois Connection legislative advocacy network, we rally these constituents to help increase awareness and understanding of the U of I System’s positive impact on the state, nation, and world and advocate on the system’s behalf to secure necessary resources and help ensure the system’s legacy and longevity.



MEETINGS WITH LEGISLATORS & STAFF

When you meet with a legislator

- **Be flexible.** Meetings are often affected by committee hearings and votes. Meetings may need to be relocated to accommodate the changing legislative schedule or the size of a group.
- **Have a prepared story.** Know what you're going to say before you meet. Tell your legislator about your experience with the U of I System and what your education means to you.
- **Try to incorporate the key messages outlined for the day.** Be brief and to the point. If the conversation veers off topic, try to gently steer it back to what you'd like to discuss while making sure to be responsive to any comments or questions.
- **Answer questions only if you are certain.** Legislators may ask you all kinds of questions about the policies you are advocating for, or about unrelated topics. It's okay to tell your legislator you don't know the answer, but will relay their questions to the U of I System government relations staff.
- **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.

After your meeting

Debrief with your group about your conversation. Each group 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.

BY THE NUMBERS

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



SUPPORT FOR INCREASED INVESTMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

Education, workforce development, research and more depend on state budget

The U of I System is advocating for an increase to its existing state appropriations. This proposed incremental funding boost aims to empower the university system to further bolster its contributions to the Illinois economy and its residents.

BACKGROUND

Despite experiencing budget increases in the past two years, the state appropriation for university funding in Illinois remains below the levels seen in 2002 when adjusted for inflation.

The U of I System serves as a pivotal institution in shaping the future workforce and fostering innovation. Its universities are already actively engaged in preparing the next generation of professionals and innovators. However, with additional support from the state government, they have the potential to significantly amplify their impact on the state's economic landscape and overall development. The collaboration between the U of I System and the state government is essential for propelling Illinois toward an even more promising future.

The U of I System delivers an affordable education that relies on public funding support. Recent national polling suggests Americans want additional funding for education to help bring down costs even further and create and sustain programs that provide support for retention and graduation. The state investment will allow the U of I System to remain affordable and accessible.

RECOMMENDATION: Increase operating funding for all universities based on the number of students and services provided.

The time has come for the state and the Illinois General Assembly to invest in the U of I System for the third year in a row. The U of I System is where we educate a diverse workforce from all walks of life to be ready for what is next. This is where we grow local economies as anchors in our communities, where everything from new technologies to small businesses are developed and prosper. This is also where we make sure Illinois keeps the next generation here, in Illinois, to strengthen the economic base and grow vibrant local communities. Public universities are at the heart of securing our future.

RECOMMENDATION: Funding Deferred Maintenance Programs for Universities

The state must allocate funds towards deferred maintenance programs for U of I System to ensure the longevity and functionality of their physical facilities. The physical infrastructure of our academic institutions is a vital component supporting instructional, research, and service activities. Most university facilities were constructed to "institutional standards," allowing for nearly infinite lifespans with proper maintenance and timely renovation of aging components.

By investing in deferred maintenance programs, the state can not only preserve the integrity of university infrastructure but also free up operating funds that would otherwise be spent on emergency repairs. This proactive approach will ensure that academic institutions can continue to provide a conducive environment for learning, research, and innovation without facing unnecessary financial burdens due to neglected maintenance issues.

CONCLUSION

The U of I System should be recognized for its significance as the most potent economic investment that the state government can undertake. By investing in these universities, Illinois can foster innovation, drive economic growth, and cultivate a skilled workforce essential for long-term prosperity. The achievements and contributions of the U of I System should instill a sense of pride among Illinoisians, reflecting the invaluable impact these institutions have on shaping the state's future success and development.

UI SYSTEM FAST FACTS

- **U of I System universities educate more than half of all students enrolled in Illinois' public universities.** System universities enrolled more than 94,746 students in fall 2023. In-state undergraduate enrollment, a priority for the U of I System, remains strong at 47,526 students – 79 percent of all system undergraduates.
- **The U of I System pumps \$19 billion into the Illinois economy annually.** The system supports 164,000 Illinois jobs, one of every 46 jobs across the state. Through spending by its universities, employees and students, and the increased earning power of its graduates, the U of I System accounts for 2.1 percent of Illinois' gross state product.
- **The U of I System consistently ranks in the top 30 universities worldwide for number of U.S. patents.** Our universities are among the most innovative in the world and together receive more National Science Foundation funding than any other research institution. The work doesn't stop after the research is done; we also transform the research into sustainable businesses and global solutions.
- **When students graduate from U of I System universities, they stay in Illinois.** The U of I System produces the state's workforce of tomorrow, with nearly 76 percent of our students staying in Illinois after graduating.

CONTACT US

Jennifer Creasey

*Assistant Vice President
State and Local Relations*

jcreasey@uillinois.edu | 217.333.1086

Theresa Thomas

*Advocacy and Community
Relations Coordinator*

tthomas36@uillinois.edu | 217.244.6436

Nolan Drea

Associate Director, State Relations

ndrea2@uillinois.edu | 217.300.9499

Kathy Sullivan

Assistant Director of Advocacy

sulliva@uillinois.edu | 217.300.2365

Marissa Brewer

Director of Advocacy

mccord3@uillinois.edu | 217.333.1648

SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION

11:00 – 11:30 AM

Atrium- Illinois State Library Gwendolyn Brooks Building

The entrance to the State Library is through the first floor north door (Monroe Street Entrance). ERC staff and members of the Student Advocacy Coalition will greet you upon entering. Check in for your name tag, group assignment, lobbying materials and briefing materials.

LUNCH WITH PRESIDENT KILLEEN & ADVOCACY PREP

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Atrium- Illinois State Library Gwendolyn Brooks Building

Hear from U of I System leadership about the importance of alumni and student advocacy. Receive a briefing on talking points and best practices for lobbying.

12:45 PM

GROUP PHOTO ON EAST CAPITOL STEPS

LEGISLATOR MEETINGS

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Illinois State Capitol

Advocates will break into their legislative groups and meet with their state legislators. Assigned group leads will help guide you through the Capitol building and coordinate your team's strategy for the meetings.



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