State shortfall causes UI leaders to seek financial solutions

By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

Early this month, the university began a voluntary separation incentive program for faculty members with at least 10 years of service and 50 percent of their current annual base salary. The program is open to all faculty members who volunteered to participate in the faculty separation incentive program for academic professionals and civil service employees.

By April, associate provost for human resources Elyne Cole said that 333 employees had applied for the retirement program and 263 employees had applied for the separation program. Cole said that 333 employees had applied for the retirement program.

For Faculty and Staff, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

By Craig Chamberlain
Social Sciences Editor

The University Office for Planning and Budgeting is providing monthly charts showing updates for state appropriation revenue bailed and collected. This chart shows that in the seventh month of fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010) the state has paid $132 million of the $583 million paid to the state by the UI. The total FY10 state general revenue appropriation to the university is $733.3 million.

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By Richard Wheeler
Assistant Provost

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By Robert McChesney
Communication professor

But with the rapid decline of commercial journalism, especially of the newspapers that publish most original reporting, it may be the only means left for maintaining the journalism that a healthy democracy needs, McChesney argues in “The Death and Life of American Journalism” (Nation Books), co-written with John Nichols, a political blogger and writer for The Nation magazine.

A new book co-written by Robert McChesney, a University of Illinois communication professor, makes the case for government support to save journalism.

By Professor Robert McChesney
Communication professor

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McChesney sees similar support for the idea of government subsidies in the example of other present-day democracies, among them England, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Crunching the numbers on those nations’ subsidies, the authors were struck to find several approaching the equivalent of $30 billion a year, if their per capita spending was applied to the U.S. population.

“The other thing that was striking to us was that the countries that did the heaviest press subsidies were the countries that even by conservative business groups’ calculations of the most democratic countries in the world … were always at the top of those lists, well ahead of the United States,” McChesney said. Rather than causing a problem for healthy democratic government or the independence of the press, these subsidies would appear to encourage them, he said.

McChesney also cites the example of the U.S. occupation of Germany and Japan following World War II, where he found that U.S. generals provided “almost a blank check” in supporting the creation of an independent press. McChesney claims that this example shows that government subsidies can be effective in supporting healthy, democratic journalism.

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**JOURNALISM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

The issue is repaid many times over in job-creating activity at all levels. During periods of economic recession, universities help set the stage for recovery through other economic engines: Iowa

Repealing military ban could boost gay-rights

By Jan Dennis

Blanton Law Editor

allowing gay rights to women in the military is a decades-old push to expand gay rights for same-sex couples, according to a UI expert on sexual orientation and the law. Law professor Sara Benson says scraping the military’s “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy could ultimately prove a turning point for gay rights, just as the 1948 integration of the armed services helped pave the way for the civil rights movement.

“Integrating the military changed the civil rights movement and this, too, could be the impetus for more rights,” she said.

“Maybe not same-sex marriage, because it’s such a contentious issue, but it might at least bring an end to employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.”

The presidents and chancellor of Illinois’ public universities write today to urge the state legislature to consider a bill to repeal the law.

“Don’t ask, don’t tell” could also aid a slow moving, state-by-state push for same-sex marriage and civil unions, but would likely have no effect on the rewriting of the one-man, one-woman provisions of the federal Defense of Marriage Act.

“I think it’s pretty clear that if we sit around and wait for the market to generate journalism, if we fail to think the market’s going to solve our problem, we simply won’t get it.”

Our universities write today to urge the state legislature to consider a bill to repeal the law. “Don’t ask, don’t tell” could aid a slow moving, state-by-state push for same-sex marriage and civil unions, but would likely have no effect on the rewriting of the one-man, one-woman provisions of the federal Defense of Marriage Act. It’s just not politically popular,” she said. California is a classic example that shows “bipartisan support for gay rights is too cheap” and wonac", "601x784"), "http://oc.illinois.edu/budget"

**ON THE WEB**

Budget information & links

Universitywide • www.illinois.edu/gr/financialupdate

Urbana campus • http://oc.illinois.edu/budget

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http://news.illinois.edu/II
Chris Mechling is no stranger to the restaurant business. Her family used to own Chris’ Candy Shop in downtown Champaign. Now, the food service administrator at the Beckman Café in the Beckman Institute talks about why working at UI is the best job she’s ever had.

What do you do?
“We feed some of the most brilliant people in the world, which is so cool,” Mechling said.

The café serves espresso drinks, coffee other beverages and a variety of lunch items including hot and cold soups, salads, and hot and cold sandwiches. The café is open 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Mechling comes in before the café opens to start making coffees and getting the café ready. “I help to make sure that lunch gets ready and I plan the menu. I do all the ordering; I supervise all the staff,” she said.

Mechling has yet to see a day when she’s bored.
“I’m so blessed to be here,” she said. “It’s such a beautiful facility. I can’t imagine working anywhere else. It’s such a fabulous place to work.”

Before coming to the UI, she sold food to hospitals, restaurants and schools. The last year she was at that job, she was caught in a big snowstorm.
“I decided I wasn’t going to do that one more year. When I came to campus, I started working at Palette Café at Krannert Art Museum,” she said.

One day, it started snowing, and in the café, she was looking out at the snow through big windows that surround the café.
“I had this stupid grin on my face,” she said.

Despite the current economic hardship the UI is facing, Mechling still wouldn’t trade her experience here for anything.
“Even with the financial situation being what it is right now, I can’t imagine working at a better place. I was raised in the restaurant business … I can’t say a bad thing about working at the UI.”

Where else has she worked?
Mechling’s family owned Chris’ Candy Shop, which had three locations over the years: 315 N. Neil St., 115 N. Neil St. and 115 N. Walnut St.

Chris’ Candy Shop specialized in homemade candies like caramel apples, crackerjack, peanut brittle, turtles and other delights. Chris’ great-uncle began the business and eventually brought Chris’ dad, Gus Chrisagis, into the business. Chris and her husband, Steve, who is a UI police officer, owned the shop at its last location.

Chris and Steve sold the store in 1982 and Chris went to work for the Urbana Chamber of Commerce as an operations coordinator. She worked for the food-service company for 7 1/2 years.

Steve eventually encouraged her to apply at the UI. She took tests for 18 months trying to land a position here.

She got a part-time position and filled in at the Palette Café and then got a full-time job for 2 1/2 years. She’s been at Beckman since 1998.

Chris also was able to get her bachelor’s and master’s degrees while working here.
“I probably never would have done that (otherwise),” she said.

Does she miss anything about the restaurant business?
She concedes she sometimes misses making treats.
“I used to hand-pour more than 2,000 pounds of chocolate cream ever year,” she said.

And she missed her usual customers and would still go into the restaurant every morning to have breakfast shortly after they sold the business. Chris has many fond memories of working alongside her dad, who emigrated from Greece. He still remembered the intricacies of turtle-making into the last years of his life.

What is something people might not know about Beckman Café?
“People call us the best-kept secret on campus,” she said.

Many people don’t realize the café is open to the public all day.
“We do wonderful salads, soups and sandwiches,” she said.

“It’s so cool to work in a facility like this. People here are as incredibly brilliant as they are and they’re so nice and so pleasant. It’s so wonderful to be around. I absolutely love being able to help in any way we can to help their day be better.”

— Interview by Anna K. Herkamp, Assistant Editor
Retreat, activities focus on collaborative teaching, innovation

By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

More than 200 faculty and staff members attended this year's faculty retreat Feb. 5 to learn more about a skill many are familiar with in research, but not as knowable for teaching: collaboration.

Keynote speaker Keith Sawyer, a professor of psychology and education at Washington University in St. Louis, presented his ideas on collaborative teaching and innovation. His research on the subject is outlined in his books "Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration" and "Explaining Creativity: The Science of Human Innovation."

Sawyer talked about why some methods organizations use to create ideas often fail.

One of the most common methods is brainstorming.

While its intentions are good, the process typically fails because of the way ideas come about. "The discussions often go in one direction, and not everyone's ideas are heard, he said.

These group discussions violate Sawyer's rules for collaborative innovation: seek out remote associations, share ideas broadly and avoid fixation on one idea.

Darin Eastburn, a professor of crop sciences, said he's always looking for new ways to fit the best teaching practices to the curriculum.

"I like the message of collaboration," he said. "There's a lot of emphasis on individual accomplishments in academia."

Collaborative teaching efforts are not as common, however. Agriculture professors don't often get the chance to work together for teaching he said, although sometimes they'll teach a course together.

The collaborative efforts Sawyer encourages lead to what is known as "problem-based learning," a method that emphasizes delving into topics or issues.

Eastburn said he uses problem-based methods for some classes, but not others.

For example, in his course "Plants, Pathogens and People," he uses writing projects in which students are assigned a problem and have to find experts to research solutions.

Other courses might be better taught lecture-style, he said, but professors always look for new ways to fit the best teaching practices to the curriculum.

Sandy Gross-Lucas, a retired professor of psychology who still teaches at Illinois, said she prefers problem-based teaching to traditional lecture-style methods.

Traditional formats don't lead to retention, she said. Research shows, she said, that students can study a subject and learn enough of it to pass tests, but they don't remember anything they learned just months later.

Instead of standing at the front of the classroom with bulleted lists of ideas for students to take notes on, she prefers to break her classes up into small groups so students can research a subject and present it to their classmates.

"They have unique insight," she said. "They think of things I hadn't thought of before.

In fact, she'll take it a step further by giving her students an addressed envelope on the last day of class.

When they discover real-world examples of what they learned in her class, they're supposed to write them down and send them to her.

"It gets you excited about teaching again," she said. "The theme of this year's retreat was "Crosscurrents of Creativity in Teaching," and was sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Office of Continuing Education.◆
A Minute With ...

Professor Michael Giardina on Olympics and advertising

Editor’s note: The Super Bowl of advertising is being held on February 18th, 2010, and the Olympics are not far behind. Advertisers are already planning their strategies for both events. What are some of the key differences between the two, and what motivates companies to advertise in each? Let’s talk to Michael Giardina, professor of advertising at the University of Illinois, to get his insights.

What motivates companies to advertise in the Super Bowl and the Olympics? What’s different about advertisers’ approach to each event and what they’re trying to accomplish?

Well, we’re obviously talking about two of the premier sporting events in the world, each of which generates massive media attention and interest that go beyond just sports fans. The 2008 and 2009 Super Bowls drew nearly 100 million viewers each, which in terms of viewership made them the second and third biggest events in U.S. television history. This year’s game was projected to draw a similar audience. Only the 1984 summer games in Los Angeles, which were award-winning, drew a larger audience than the Super Bowl.

The Olympics is a bit of a different animal, though, because you have to have a two-week period of intense, sustained coverage on an event that is widely celebrated as a beacon of excellence, international peace, and hope for the future. A lot of the major ads we will see, especially those from official Olympic Partners like Visa and Coca-Cola, explicitly reflect these themes, and show a clear articulation between the brand and the event.

When did corporate sponsorship become such a big part of the Olympic Games, and why?

That began with the 1984 summer games in Los Angeles, which were award-winning just two years after the 1976 games in Montreal. Those games had incurred more than a billion dollars in debt due to cost overruns in venue construction, infrastructure and security, and so potential host cities were wary of taking on that kind of financial burden. Rather than rely primarily on public financing to build new venues, Los Angeles used already existing stadia and turned to private financing and corporate sponsors such as McDonald’s to fund much of what, at the time, was the most commodified Olympics ever. In fact, because of the heavy commercial presence of McDonald’s, the ’84 games are often referred to as the “Hamburger Olympics.”

With the heavy corporate involvement, why are host communities usually still stuck with billions in debt?

In some respects, it’s an issue of heightened expectations and fantastic spending. The Olympics is a period of intense, sustained coverage on an event that is widely celebrated as a beacon of excellence, international peace, and hope for the future. A lot of the major ads we will see, especially those from official Olympic Partners like Visa and Coca-Cola, explicitly reflect these themes, and show a clear articulation between the brand and the event.

In other words, there’s a much more direct integration of a particular brand with the Olympics and its attendant themes.

What are some examples of how corporate sponsorship becomes such a big part of the Olympic Games?

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agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences

The Moms Association at the UI has selected Karen Chapman-Novakofski, a professor of food science and human nutrition, to receive the 2010 Medallion of Honor Award.

Chapman-Novakofski will be recognized for her contributions at the association’s annual board meeting April 17.

According to the selection committee, Chapman-Novakofski, who also is affiliated with Extension and the College of Medicine, is committed to being an exceptional educator and is dedicated to engaging her students through relevant, multidimensional educational experiences.

She has served as a mentor to middle school girls through the Girls in Engineering, Math and Science program and to high school and college students through Women in Math, Science and Engineering.

The award was created in 1966 to pay tribute to individuals who, by example and service, have used their talents to enrich the lives of others.

campus recreation

Campus Recreation marketing staff members were recently recognized by the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association. The association’s Creative Excellence Awards are designed to recognize the innovation and creativity of members and acknowledge their outstanding accomplishments in marketing recreational sports, fitness, facilities and programs.

The I-Cook television show placed first in the audiovisual category. The show, a collaboration between Campus Recreation and UI-7, is filmed once a month at the Instructional Kitchen at the Activities and Recreation Center. The program focuses on quick and healthy recipes and is broadcast weekly on UI-7. Team members: Executive producers Kate Brickman, UI-7 coordinator; Susan Kundrat, nutritionist in sports programming; and Erik Riha, lead assistant director of marketing at Campus Recreation; and producer Janet Kroenecke, assistant director of Campus Recreation.

In the comprehensive brochure category, Campus Recreation’s “2008-09 Campus Recreation Annual Report” placed third. Mark Stinson, assistant director of communications, designed the report; Riha was the writer/editor.

In the large-scale signage category, the “ARC Wintergarden Banners” placed third. Eunmi Moon, assistant director of communications, designed the banners; Riha served as project manager.

The Activities and Recreation Center has received an Outstanding Sports Facilities Award from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association and was named one of “America’s Best Renovated Sports Facilities” by Sports Event Magazine.

The NIRSA facilities awards are presented for creative, innovative designs of new, renovated or expanded collegiate recreational facilities. As one of the “Best Renovated” sports facilities, the ARC will be one of several facilities featured in a special edition of the magazine, which is one of the industry’s leaders in sports tourism and business publications specifically designed for generating exposure for communities that host collegiate, amateur and semi-pro sports events.

The ARC, one of the country’s largest on-campus recreation centers, opened in August 2008 after three years of renovation to the 1971-constructed Intramural Physical Education building (IMPE).

engineering

The College of Engineering is No. 1 on “The Most-Cited Institutions in Engineering, 1999-2009” list of institutions with their research papers published in Thomson Reuters-indexed engineering journals. This month, ScienceWatch.com highlighted the top 20 institutions worldwide as of the fifth bi-monthly update of Essential Science Indicators (Jan. 1, 1999-Oct. 31, 2009). According to ScienceWatch.com: “The top-ranked institution in this field is the University of Illinois, with 5.821 papers cited a total of 44,094 times. Diverse topics such as mechanism-based strain plasticity, microchannel flow studies, single-wall carbon nanotubes, face recognition, direct formic acid fuel cells, and technology for climate research are among the most-cited papers for this university.”

The Web site noted, “These institutions are the top 20 out of a pool of 1,084 institutions comprising the top 1 percent ranked by total citation count in this field.”

fine and applied arts

Tere O’Connor, a UI professor of dance, has been selected as a United States Artists Fellow. The annual fellowships are awarded in the form of $50,000 unrestricted grants to Fellows. The annual fellowships are awarded to artists in eight categories of creative disciplines, including architecture and design, crafts and traditional arts, and the visual arts. The fellows for this year’s awards were chosen from 348 applicants. Since the grants are unrestricted, the recipients may use them to fund their work, for philanthropy or even for personal use.

USA is a grant-making, artist-advocacy organization dedicated to supporting America’s finest artists in diverse disciplines.

The Smart Energy Design Assistance Center, managed by the School of Architecture, received the Inspiring Efficiency Education Award from the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance at the organization’s 2010 Midwest Energy Solutions Conference in January.

The award is presented to organizations that have developed and implemented a local campaign, program, strategy or idea to increase knowledge and action on energy efficiency.

SEDAC provides advice and analyses enabling private and public facilities in the state of Illinois to increase their economic viability through the efficient use of energy resources.

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant

Content from the “Nab the Aquatic Invader!” educational Web site about aquatic invasive species will be featured at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History as part of the Ocean Today Kiosk in the Sant Ocean Hall.

The Web site was created by Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant along with Sea Grant programs in Connecticut, Louisiana, New York and Oregon to provide the latest information about aquatic invasive species through colorful characters and a crime-solving theme. Since its inception, the project has expanded to include species from coastal regions around the country.

“In addition to being clever and fun, the site is rich with curriculum for teachers, ideas for stewardship projects and creative educational activities for students and other online audiences,” said Robin Goettel, associate director for education at Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant.

Kiosks also will be located at agrow-SERACHIEVEMENTS, PAGE 7

PAGE 6

Ad removed for online version

Ad removed for online version
**Achievements, continued from pg 6**

A national network of aquariums across the nation through the Coastal America’s Ecosystem Learning Centers, including one already installed at the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

**Liberal Arts and Sciences**

Matti Bunzl, a professor of anthropology, of history and of German, has been appointed associate artistic director for the Chicago Humanities Festival. Bunzl joins the festival staff through mid-November 2010, which will mark the conclusion of the 21st annual festival. He will work closely with the festival’s programming and artistic staff to develop ideas and reach out to speakers and performers for this year’s event.

**Library**

Paula T. Kaufman, the Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson dean of libraries and university librarian, has been named the 2010 winner of the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award. Named in honor of one of the pioneers of library automation, the award recognizes an academic librarian who has made significant contributions in the area of library automation or management and has made notable improvements in library services or research.

Kaufman will receive a cash award and citation during the joint Association of College and Research Libraries/Library Leadership and Management Association awards program in June at the American Library Association annual conference in Washington, D.C.

The award is jointly sponsored by four divisions of the American Library Association: ACRL, the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, Library Leadership and Management Association, and the Library and Information Technology Association.

**Public Affairs**

Public Affairs presented its second annual ACME awards (Awards for Communications and Marketing Excellence) for campus professionals at its annual Public Affairs seminar last semester.

Those recognized:

- Kirsten Ruby, director of marketing, University Housing, received the Media Relations Award.
- The Branding Leadership Award was presented to Renee Lyell, marketing and communications manager in the Center for Training and Professional Development (formerly known as T4B).
- The Team Player Award recognized a team of professional communicators at Facilities and Services: Andy Blacker, publicity and promotions specialist; Dee Dee Caneva, associate director of customer relations and communications; and Judy La Terrace, communication specialist.
- The Innovation in Marketing Award went to Brad Petersen, assistant director of marketing in the department of electrical and computer engineering. The Crisis Communications Award was presented to the University Relations Team: Tom Hardy, executive director; Ginny Hudak-David, associate director; and Melanie Kuehn, project coordinator.
- Todd Short, director of emergency planning for the Division of Public Safety, was presented with the Extra Mile award.
- The Communicator of the Year was presented to Trish Barker, senior public information specialist at NCSA.

**Ad removed for online version**
A new study found that, when given a choice of violent reading materials, people overwhelmingly opted to read true stories about the death and dismemberment of victims much like themselves. Men, however, were more likely to choose nonfiction books about war or gang violence than those in the “true crime” genre.

The study appears in Social Psychological and Personality Science.

“We found that women were more likely than men to choose the true crime book versus the war or the gang violence book and also that they expected to enjoy it more,” said Amanda Vicary, a graduate student who conducted the study with UI psychology professor R. Chris Fraley.

The research began with an analysis of reviews posted on the Web site Amazon.com by readers of books in the true crime and war genres. Coding in the gender for the books, the researchers found that women wrote 70 percent of the reviews of books about true crime, while men wrote 82 percent of the reviews of books on war. The gender of the author appeared to play no role in women’s preference for true crime books.

A second study gave participants summaries of two books and asked them to choose the book they would rather read. One summary was a “true account” of the murder of two women in Hawaii. It was paired with either a true story of two female soldiers who died in a Gulf War Army unit, or a true account of two female members of a Los Angeles gang who were killed.

Women overwhelmingly chose the true crime books over the books about war or gang violence, even when the main characters of all of the books were female. The men chose the true crime books about half the time when the other book was a war story and both books had female main characters. The men were somewhat more likely than the other book and the women chose the book with female characters over the gang book with female characters, but by a much smaller margin (57 percent) than the men (73 percent).

“Research that has been done in the past about sex and aggression has established pretty clearly that men are more likely to commit violent crimes,” Fraley said. “So these basic observations are extremely surprising to us. Why are women more drawn to the true crime genre than men are?” The researchers suspected that women prefer true crime stories in part because such stories provide information that the readers feel could help them avoid or escape from a potential attacker. Previous studies have shown that women are much more likely than men to fear becoming crime victims, and there may be an evolutionary benefit to learning from others’ negative experiences, Fraley said. Perhaps the fear of an attack and the desire to avoid becoming a victim drives many women to read true crime stories, he said.

To get at this question, the researchers conducted three more studies in which the summaries of the books included details that might help explain the choices women made. They found that when the main characters of all the books were female, the men chose the true crime books about half the time when the other book was a war story and both books had female main characters. The men were somewhat more likely to select the true crime book with female characters over the gang book with female characters, but by a much smaller margin (57 percent) than the women (73 percent).

“Women are much more likely than men to choose a book if it included a clever trick the would-be victim used to escape from an attacker, or a psychological profile of the attacker. And women, but not men, were much more interested in books with female victims. The male participants didn’t care either way,” Vicary said. “They were pretty evenly split, whereas the women wanted to find out about the women getting killed.”

The findings spur many more questions than they answer, the researchers said.

“Why are women differentially fascinated by understanding true crime?” Fraley said. “This study takes us one step toward trying to understand how the mind works, what it is that people prefer and why.”

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**Remembering Brown v. Board at 50**

By Diana Yates, Life Sciences Editor

When it comes to violent nonfiction, men are from Mars, the planet of war, but women are from Earth, the planet of serial killings and random murders.

A new book corner

By Craig Chamberlain

Social Sciences Editor

The 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s school desegregation decision of Brown v. Board of Education occurred in 2004, and the UI commemorated the historic case with a series of events during the 2003-04 academic year. The centerpiece was a three-day conference in April 2004.

Now the words of many of those who spoke at those events have been collected in "Remembering Brown at Fifty: The University of Illinois Commemorates Brown v. Board of Education." Published in December by the UI Press, the volume was edited by former UI history professor Orville Vernon Burton, now at Coastal Carolina University, and David O’Brien, a UI professor of art history.

Among the 32 contributors are well-known scholars, writers and activists such as Julian Bond, Joe R. Feagin, John Hope Franklin, Lani Guinier and Juan Williams — as well as numerous other UI faculty members and others with campus ties. In their papers and essays, they address the significance of the Brown decision in their lives or in their work in education and civil rights.

According to Burton and O’Brien’s introduction, the essays in the book assess Brown’s specific successes and failures.

Apart from that, however, they also look at a second generation of school desegregation litigation, challenges raised by school voucher and charter programs, prospects for parity in school funding, and challenges of integration today.

“Taken together, the essays in this volume demonstrate how much the issues and injustices at the root of the Brown decision are still unfortunately with us today,” the editors write. At the same time, however, “the heroic efforts of those who have fought for racial equality and the concrete successes that have come in the name of Brown are cause for celebration.”

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A new analysis of job markets in the state’s largest metropolitan areas raises more questions, said Hewings, the director of the IGPA’s Regional Economic Application Laboratories, which forecasts economic development based on analytical models.

The study found that metropolitan area employment growth has generally sagged even though the job mix varies by region, dominated by manufacturing in Rockford, government in Champaign-Urbana and Springfield, professional and business services in Bloomington-Normal, and trade, transportation and utilities in Chicago, Decatur, Kankakee, Peoria and the Quad Cities.

“There’s nothing to show, for example, that economies with a higher reliance on manufacturing fared worse than their peers, to determine why sectors like financial services that were considered a competitive edge for Illinois have seen anemic growth,” he said.

He recommends surveying employers in targeted sectors to gauge their needs, why Illinois is falling short, and how the state could invest to improve its prospects.

“How is the problem with education, labor, skills and other sectors, how is that sector doing?” he said. “It needs to lead us on what the state could do. These are the answers when they haven’t diagnosed the problem.”

Without those answers, we can’t develop policies that will create jobs now and ensure they continue to grow 10 or 15 years from now. We need to do some serious analysis before we can start enacting legislation.”

 pagar in 2001 recession. Illinois has yet to regain its non-farm employment peak of November 2000, even though the nation climbed back to its peak in February 2005 after the 2001 recession.

Through the end of 2009, Illinois was 447,200 jobs below the 2000 peak, the study found. Factoring in population growth, underemployment and workers who have dropped out of the labor force, Hewings estimates the state is now a net 600,000 jobs short of the 2000 total.

Unless Illinois uncovers the roots of its employment slump, restoring those jobs could take another decade or more, based on historical data, he said. Since 2000, growth has topped 50,000 jobs a year only once, which would mean 12 more years to recover the jobs if annual gains match that high-water mark.

“We’ve muddled our way out of past recessions, this is in the same service sector, it is an economic service sector, so we need to dig deeper for explanations,” he said.

He recommends surveying employers in targeted sectors to gauge their needs, why Illinois is falling short, and how the state could invest to improve its prospects.

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More study needed to halt Illinois job slump, economist says

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“Our study provides an ‘uncontro- versible evidence’ that the volca- nic eruption of Toba on the island of Sumatra about 73,000 years ago deforested much of central India, we did the research.

The climactic effects of Toba have been a source of controversy for years, and its impact on human populations is also hotly debated.

In 1998, Ambrose proposed in the Jour- nal of Human Evolution that the effects of the Toba eruption and the ice age that fol- lowed could explain the apparent bottleneck in human populations that geneticists believe occurred between 50,000 and 100,000 years ago. The lack of genetic diversity among humans alive today suggests that during this time period humans came very close to becoming extinct.

To address the limited evidence of the terrestrial effects of Toba, Ambrose and his colleagues pursued two lines of inquiry: They analyzed pollen from a marine core in the Bay of Bengal that included a layer of ash from the Toba eruption, and they looked at carbon isotope ratios in fossil soil carbonates taken from directly above and below the Toba ash in three locations in central India. Carbon isotope reflect the type of vegetation that existed at a given locale and time. Heavily forested regions leave carbon isotope fingerprints that are distinct from those of grasses or grassy woodlands.

Both lines of evidence revealed a dis- tinct change in the type of vegetation in India immediately after the Toba eruption, the researchers report. The pollen analysis indicated a shift to a “more open vegetation cover and reduced representation of ferns, particularly in the first 5 to 7 centimeters above the Toba ash,” the researchers wrote in the jour- nal Palaearctic Geography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology.

The change in vegetation and the loss of ferns, which grow best in humid conditions, they wrote, “would suggest significantly drier conditions in this region for at least one thousand years after the Toba eruption.”

The dryness probably also indicates a drop in temperature, Ambrose said, “because when you turn down the temperature you also turn down the rainfall.”

The carbon isotope analysis was even more explicit. It showed that forests covered central India when the eruption occurred, but wooded to open grassland pre- dominated for at least 1,000 years after the eruption.

“This is unambiguous evidence that Toba caused deforestation in the tropics for a long time,” Ambrose said. This discovery may have forced the ancestors of modern humans to adopt new cooperative strategies for survival that eventually permitted them to replace neandertals and other archaic hu- man species, he said.
March 11-12

Biomass conversion is workshop focus

The “Biomass Conversion to Heat & Electricity Workshop: Molding Today’s Technology for Tomorrow’s Bioenergy Feedstock Supply Chain” will benchmark the existing solid biomass for fuel (heat and electricity) technologies and supply chain components. Participants also will identify the bottlenecks, challenges and opportunities for research and systems commercialization.

The workshop will be March 11-12 at Heartland Community College, Normal, Ill.

Searing is limited. Discounted registration is available through Feb. 19 for $80, and includes lunches and materials. The registration fee is $120 after Feb. 19. People may register online at http://bioenergy.illinois.edu/biomassworkshop or by phone at 309-268-8160.

For more information and an updated agenda, go to bioenergy.illinois.edu/news/biomassa.html or contact Natalie Bosceker, at natalieb@illinois.edu or 217-244-9273.

Sponsors for the event include UI’s Center for Advanced BioEnergy Research, Processor Technology Institute, UI Extension, Heartland Community College, URP and Agricultural Watershed Institute.

Council of Academic Professionals

Self-nominations due March 8

Elections for open seats for the Council of Academic Professionals will take place the last week of March. Academic professionals interested in becoming involved in the council may nominate themselves by March 8.

For information on which districts have open seats and for an election timeline, go to www.cap.illinois.edu/ (Click on Election Information.)

The council is an elected body of members who serve as the chancellor’s advisory committee for academic professionals on the Urbana campus.

For academic professionals wanting to serve, send a self-nomination statement to sreynolds@illinois.edu.

Include your name, your CAP district (available online), your level of education, your institution statement and short biography not to exceed 250 words. Deadline is 5 p.m. March 8.

Center for Advanced BioEnergy Research

Bioenergy seminar series continues

The Center for Advanced BioEnergy Research is sponsoring a seminar series on bioenergy topics. This seminar series is one of the required classes for students pursuing a bioenergy professional science master’s degree, however the seminars are open to the public.

Seminars begin at 4 p.m. in the Monsanto Room of the ACES Library.

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For more information, call Shadwick at 217-333-7220 or http://bioenergy.illinois.edu. For more information, call Shadwick at 217-333-7220 or http://bioenergy.illinois.edu.
BRIEFS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

care of grandma’s quilt? Bring your small, hand-held items to Spurlock Museum or come with images of larger items and have your preservation questions answered by the presenting experts.

For further information, contact Jennifer Teper at 217-244-5689.

College of Veterinary Medicine

Common items can be deadly for pets

Did you know that macadamia nuts are toxic to animals? You might be surprised to learn that these tropical nuts and other foods and items can pose threats to your pets.

On March 8, Pet U will present “Common Household Toxins” taught by Dr. Maureen McMichael, a veterinarian who specializes in emergency and critical care at the UI Vet Teaching Hospital. The class will present common household items that are toxic to animals.

Register for this and other classes in the series online at http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petu/urbanainfo.html.

Graeme Trust and the Grameen Fund,” said UI President Stanley Ikenberry, who is serving in an interim capacity.

Auditorium on March 1.

Yunus serves on the board of directors of the United Nations Foundation. This event is sponsored by the Provost’s Gender Equity Council.

Civil service employee and dependents

Apply for scholarships by April 2

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Prehistoric ‘insects’ star in film festival

Prehistoric art Graduate students compete every year to design the logo for the Insect Film Festival. This year’s theme is prehistoric insects. Entries were submitted by Nils Cordes, Bob Mitchell (entry pictured) and Joseph Wong.

The presentation ceremony will begin at 7 p.m. Yunus will be available to sign copies in the BIF atrium from 4 to 6 p.m. Poster top-

The giant scorpions in the movie are scarier from a distance, when they snatch people and curl their stingers around to inject them with venom, Berenbaum said. The scorpions make “a shrill piping sound,” she said. And in close-ups, they drool.

The festival will begin at 6 p.m. Feb. 27 at Foellinger Auditorium. Early activities include an insect petting zoo, with living and fossil insects, as well as a “living fossil” – a horseshoe crab.

The petting zoo also will offer Bugscope (courtesy of the UI Beckman Institute’s Imaging Technology Center), which will provide a peek at various insects through a scanning electron microscope. T-shirts from 26 of the 27 years of the festi-

Val will be on sale.

The scientists in the movies refer to them as insects, though they argue that insects are ‘inferior animals,’” said Ikenberry.

Yunus serves on the board of directors of the United Na-

tions Foundation. The event is sponsored by the Provost’s Gender Equity Council.

The title of the lecture is “The Lives of Our Intelligences: The deep history of animal intelligence” and will be held at 7 p.m. March 11 in the Large Animal Clinic Auditorium of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

For more than 30 years Pepperberg has worked extensively with African grey parrots to determine the cognitive and communicative abilities of these birds. Pepperberg earned her Ph.D. in 1976 at Harvard University. She now serves as an adjunct professor at Brandeis University and a lecturer and research associate at Harvard.

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Opening remarks will begin at 7 p.m., with the announcement of the winner of the Prehistoric Insects art contest. A variety of movie trailers and clips from TV shows featuring prehistoric insects will begin at 7:30. “Black Scorpion” will begin at 7:40, “Ice Crawlers” at 9:15.

Scorpions are arachnids, more closely related to spiders, ticks and mites than to insects. And true scorpions are small, the largest about 7 inches long.

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Klezmer-funk dance party
Abraham Inc. performs at 7:30 p.m. March 2 in the Tregynon Festival Theatre at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Clarinet virtuoso David Krakauer collaborates with one of the great masters of funk, trombonist Fred Wesley (known for his work with James Brown, Bootsy Collins, Funkadelic) and best beat artist Soccalled. Add a three-piece horn section led by Wesley, members of Krakauer’s Klezmer Madness!, and rapper C-Rayz Walz, and the result is Abraham Inc. Krakauer said: “This is a band whose members interact with the highest level of mutual respect and understanding for each other’s masculinity, humanity, intelligence and rich cultural background. This is a group of highly unique individuals who come together and delight in each other’s diversity. That’s what Abraham Inc. is all about.”

Emupen: Restoration of an Ancient Site in Chile and Spain
Tharman, Nakash Alfred, and the Conservation and Development in Bangladesh.

Daniel Party, Saint Mary’s College, Indiana: “Capitalizing on Evolutionary Change in an Invasive Species to Improve Restoration Success.”


Rick Lankas, Illinois Natural History Survey: “Capitalizing on Evolutionary Change in an Invasive Species to Improve Restoration Success.”

“Interpreting Technoscience: Explorations in Identity, Culture and Democracy.”

PhD and Postdoctoral Fellows in the 2012-2013 Academic Year.

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CALENDAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

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A new study analyzing the impact of hand-held cell phone legislation on driving safety concludes that usage-ban laws had more of an impact in densely populated urban areas than in rural areas. This evidence is supported by a UI researcher.

The study, conducted by Sheldon H. Jacobson, a professor of computer science and the director of the simulation and optimization laboratory at Illinois, analyzed the relationship between pre- and post-law automobile accident rates using public data from 62 counties in New York state and projecting it onto the nation at large.

“Driver distraction is thought to be the cause of nearly 80 percent of automobile accidents in the U.S., resulting in about 2,600 deaths, 330,000 injuries and 1.5 million instances of property damage annually,” Jacobson said. “Although a ban on hand-held cell phone use while driving in rural areas has less of an impact than in sparsely populated areas of upstate New York, it is worth noting that usage-ban laws had more of an impact in densely populated urban areas than in rural areas. This evidence is supported by a UI researcher.”


The team found that after banning hand-held cell phone use while driving, 46 counties in New York experienced lower fatal accident rates, 10 of which did so at a statistically significant level, while all 62 counties experienced lower personal injury accident rates.

“Observations like these have a higher density of licensed drivers rather than in sparsely populated areas of upstate New York,” Jacobson said. “Nobody’s done a study like this before,” he said. “Everything prior to this is a micro-analysis of reaction time in laboratories by researchers.”

The challenge, Jacobson said, was getting the right data to analyze. “The best state that had the data to analyze was New York,” he said. “They’ve had the hand-held cell phone ban in place since 2001. So we had a lot of data, relatively speaking, that we had a before-and-after snapshot of accident rates.”

Jacobson said one of the limitations of the study is extrapolating the data from New York state and projecting it onto the nation at large.

“Most places that had the data to analyze were in the top 10 percent of accidents in the state,” Jacobson said. “We couldn’t account for the data in the bottom 90 percent of accidents.”

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Jacobson said one of the limitations of the study is extrapolating the data from New York state and projecting it onto the nation at large. “That’s fraught with problems, but these are limitations we acknowledge,” he said. “Every state is unique, but the overall conclusions still stand to reason.”

Jacobson, who also holds appointments as a professor of industrial and enterprise systems engineering, of civil and environmental engineering, and of pediatrics at Illinois, says the holy grail of data sets to analyze would be the property damage data collected by insurance companies. Jacobsen says the difference between his study and one recently published by the Highway Loss Data Institute, an affiliate of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, is that he used publicly available data and the number of licensed drivers as a proxy for accident prediction.

“The insurance industry-backed report studied pre- and post-ban insurance claims from accidents in California, Connecticut, New York and Washington, D.C. It contends that state laws banning the use of cell phones while driving didn’t reduce the number of vehicle crashes. If the property damage data were available to Jacobson and his co-researchers, “We could come up with a more definitive statement,” he said. “But even with this, we still saw some very compelling trends that would support the legislative push at the state and federal level for distracted-driver legislation. It’s certainly a topical problem.”

Another challenge for Jacobson and his team was how to standardize accident data across the counties. Their solution was to use the number of licensed drivers and compare the statistical inferences to licensed-driver density.

“Measuring the throughput of cars is very difficult,” Jacobson said. “As a result, using the number of licensed drivers is a reasonable way to standardize, and licensed-driver density provided an interesting measure to compare the counties.”

The measures of traffic safety considered in the study are the number of fatal automobile accidents per 100,000 licensed drivers per year and the number of personal injury accidents per 1,000 licensed drivers per year. Jacobson said. “This was more pronounced for personal-injury rates than it was for fatality rates.”

Jacobson acknowledges that other factors also could influence accident rates. “There could be education programs that are bringing these numbers down, or a particular area had a series of bad winter storms or multi-year road construction projects, which would inflate the numbers,” he said.

Despite the exponential growth in cell phone subscribers, Jacobsen says that all the evidence suggests that hand-held cell phone bans while driving are worthwhile. “All the evidence suggests hand-held cell phone bans while driving are a good thing, and this is more evidence to that effect,” he said. “But it doesn’t establish it definitively. There’s still more work to be done, but this helps to further clarify the picture.”

Cell-phone ban while driving affects dense, urban areas more

By Phil Ciciora
News Editor

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