Town hall meeting: Wise talks about her vision for the future

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

Urbana Chancellor and UI Vice President Phyllis M. Wise outlined her vision for the future at a town hall meeting Dec. 6, painting a picture of an Urbana campus that de-cides from now on will look and act decidedly different than it does today.

Wise’s address to a general campus audience, at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, followed an initial two-month Listening and Learning Tour wherein the chancellor sought the observations of students, faculty members and employee groups.

“I think it was worthwhile to give you a progress report and my first impressions,” she said, adding she has decided to extend the listening tour to ensure all desiring an audience have that opportunity.

“It’s clear to me now that 100 days is nowhere near sufficient,” she said of the origin-al tour.

At most of Wise’s stops she’s done the listening and the audience has done the talking – an exercise designed to provide the new chancellor and his campus stakeholders a chance to hear from the people they are here to serve.

As for funding, Wise said the recent decline in the level of state support will not be reversed anytime soon – and may never be, given that the trend goes back 20 years. Federal funding too will continue to be limited, she said, and tuition increases can’t be “counted on as an endless source of revenue.”

Wise said the university must work toward creating a funding model that functions more like that of a private university, where alumni gifts, partnerships and commercial research applications provide an ongoing monetary base.

“We need to make friends and good relationships,” she said. “We will be counting on our friends more than ever before.”

She said she’s moving to better utilize those “close-to-home” funding sources and with developing partnerships, as evidenced in the university’s renowned Research Park, the Beckman Insti-tute and the Institute for Genomic Biology.

“If you imagine a galaxy being a disc, it’s one of the reasons I feel so confident about the future,” she said of the park and institutes, noting her short UI tenure already has taught her “the depth and breadth of the excellence here.”

But the future isn’t just about the revenue and partnership side, she said. It will also include much soul-searching and dis-cussion over the evolution of core curricula and of the excellence here.”

“We should be doing everything we’ve done in the past?” she asked, saying some unit structures will be reviewed, reconfig-ured and shut down if they don’t support the vision of the university’s future mission.

“Achieving a vision for the future...” she said. “This is not entirely surprising, but it is necessary.”

Looking to the future

By Liz Ahlberg
Physical Sciences Editor

Astronomers look to nearby galaxy for star formation insight

By Tony Wong
AAAS fellowship

Astronomers have mapped in detail the star-birth regions of the nearest star-forming galaxy to our own, a step toward understanding the con-ditions surrounding star creation.

Led by UI astronomy professor Tony Wong, the researchers published their findings in the December issue of the Astrophysical Journal Supplement Series.

The Large Magellanic Cloud is a pop-u-lar galaxy among astronomers both for its nearness to our Milky Way and for the spec-tacular view it provides, a big-pictures view impossible to capture of our own galaxy.

“If you imagine a galaxy being a disc, the LMC is tilted almost face-on so we can look down on it, which gives us a very nice view of what’s going on inside,” Wong said.

Although astronomers have a working theory of how individual stars form, they know very little about what triggers the process or the environmental conditions that are optimal for star birth. Wong’s team focused on areas called molecular clouds, which are dense patches of gas – primarily molecular hydrogen – where stars are born. By studying these molecular clouds and their relationship to new stars in the galaxy, the team hopes to learn more about the metamorphosis of gas clouds into stars.

“When we study star formation, an im-portant question is, what is the environment doing? How does the location of star forma-tion reflect the conditions of that environ-ment? There’s no better place to study the wider environment than the LMC.”

Using a 22-meter-diameter radio tele-scope in Australia, the astronomers mapped more than 100 molecular clouds in the LMC and estimated their sizes and masses, identifying regions with ample material for making stars. This seemingly simple task engendered a surprising find.

“Conventional wisdom states that most of the molecular gas mass in a galaxy is ap-portioned to a few large clouds. However, Wong’s team found many more low-mass clouds than they expected – so many, in fact, that a majority of the dense gas may be sprinkled across the galaxy in these small molecular clouds, rather than clumped to-gether in a few large blobs.

“We thought that the big clouds hog most of the mass,” Wong said, “but we found that in this galaxy, it appears that the playing field is more level. The low-mass clouds are quite numerous and they actually contribute a significant amount of the mass. This provides the first evidence that the common wisdom about molecular clouds may not apply here.”

The large numbers of these relatively low-mass clouds means that star-forming conditions in the LMC may be relatively widespread and easy to achieve. The finding raises some interesting questions about why some galaxies stopped their star for-mation while others have continued it.

To better understand the connection be-tween molecular clouds and star formation, the team compared their molecular cloud maps to maps of infrared radiation, which reveal where young stars are heating cosmic dust.

For the comparison, they exploited a carefully selected sample of new, heavy stars compiled by UI astronomy professor You-Ha Chu and resident scientist Robert Grandel, who also were co-authors of the paper. These stars are so young that they are still deeply embedded in cocoons of gas and dust.

“It turns out that there’s actually very nice correspondence between these young massive stars and molecular clouds,” Wong said. “That’s not entirely surprising, but it’s pretty exciting.”

Astronomers look to nearby galaxy for star formation insight

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Board approves infrastructure improvements, appointments

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

Easter retired in October after serving as interim chancellor of the Urbana campus and UI vice president in September. He was named dean emeritus of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and professor emeritus of animal sciences.

The board unanimously approved the appointments of Susan M. Kies as secretary of the UI Board of Trustees and of the UI board of Trustees and of the University effective Feb. 1. Dimitri T. Azar as the dean of the College of Medicine at the Chicago campus starting Dec. 16 and Bob Easter as the interim vice chancellor for research at Urbana starting Jan. 1.

A group of area legislators as well as Champaign Mayor Laurel Prussing pressed the UI Board of Trustees Dec. 2 to keep the Police Training Institute open.

Prussing, flanked by state Sen. Mike Frerichs, D-Champaign, and state Reps. Naomi Jakobson, D-Urbana, and Chapin Rose, R-Mahomet, said the institute provided a needed service to the state and is an economic benefit to the region.

PTI is slated for closure following a two-year review of UI programs, an effort that has led to tens of millions of dollars in annual savings. PTI was funded by the state but still cost the UI nearly $1 million annually.

And despite historic shortfalls in the state budget, the legislators said they were “encouraged” by the 2018 state budget for funding the Police Training Institute, which included a special legislative session to keep the institute operating from the Urbana campus.

“The areas of improvement include lowering the hall’s floor and adding guest suites, new bowl seating and new restrooms. New lighting, air conditioning and electrical system also are planned, along with added concession space. Plans also will address design issues related to the Americas With Disabilities Act.

“This project will enhance amenities that will improve the experience for attendees and participants at events at the Assembly Hall,” the resolution said.

Final plans will include cost breakdowns of the upgrades.
On the Job

**Terri Hopper**

By Mike Helenthal

Assistant Editor

A

n any given day, more than 600 people could call Terri Hopper with a plea for help.

And Hopper, an administrative assistant at the Fire Service Institute, would cheerfully take every call. "Even if I don't know the answer, I'll find someone who does," she said. "It's easy to work with them. I've never had a desire to go anywhere else."

Hopper's mother died in May and family members were astounded at the number of Fire Service Institute employees who wanted to show their support and send flowers. Even Hopper had a hard time believing that so many had come out to support her during her hour of need.

"One of my family members told me, 'Now I think you're just making people feel good to group to work with - they support you in good times and bad.'" And Hopper said she works hard to return that goodwill through her job by supporting institute employees wherever she can.

Hopper's duties are wide-ranging, including everything from billing and travel vouchers to payroll - and just about anything other need in between. She is part of a 40-person office unit that keeps the institute humming. She works with faculty and staff members, many of whom in the field and need a higher degree of assistance with human resource issues.

"We have an automated system for pay roll and travel expenses," she said, "but there are a lot of questions about how to navigate it and even how to sign in."

She said the biggest obstacle to mastering her job was learning the language. While English is the choice of speakers within the institute, the vernacular used by firefighters is rife with terminology and acronyms rarely heard by most civilians.

"Understanding the lingo is one of the biggest learning curves," she said. "They talk that way all the time, but to me it was all new. I've just picked it up along the way."

Prior to signing on at the UI in 2000, where she started as a clerk/clerk/typist, Hopper worked in child-support enforcement for 15 years, both at the state and county level. She said the job was frustrating at times, but knowing she might help a child during the process made it worthwhile.

"I kept to see successes, but there weren't that many on the enforcement side," she said. "It's why I needed a change in my career. Some had just had bad luck, some didn't really care and some tried really hard to be a father or mother again," she said.

Hopper was raised on a farm in Hillsboro, a rural village east of Arcola in Douglas County, Ill. "Growing up, I spent most of my summers weeding beans," she said.

She still lives outside a small town - Collision in neighboring Vermilion County "because that's where I feel the most comfortable, where nature surrounds me."

She said she thinks that upbringing, and the old-fashioned values it held so tight, has helped her in her career.

"The thing about the farming community is everyone relies on each other," she said. "They have a great group of family and friends and the things that are really important. I've learned you can't get through life by yourself."

Hopper and her husband, Tim, who works at the UI as a water station sub-foreman to Abbott Plant, have two grown children and two grandchildren.

For fun, the couple rides motorcycles. Most rides are local, with Terri on the backseat, though the couple has taken out-of-state trips as well.

She said it beats taking a car any day. "I know how to drive but I'm usually just a passenger," she said. "It's nice because (on a motorcycle) you can just stop a lot and take your time. You can't smell all the smells in a car." •

On the Job features UI staff members. To nominate a civil service employee, email insidel@illinois.edu.

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Urbana Academic Senate

Recommendations on enrollment management plan approved

By Mike Helenthal

Assistant Editor

A

n Urbana Academic Senate task force debated what they were calling "objective, reasoned" recommendations for an enrollment management plan developed by university administrators.

Senators, acting as a committee of the whole in the Dec. 5 meeting, agreed to send the senate's recommendation to UI President Michael J. Hogan and his staff, despite the urging of some senators to take the recommendation to the UI Senate Academic Senates Conference in July, with a request to administration.

"The report they produced is a model of how the two other campuses and the secretary of the senate chairs of the senate's Conference chair, the senate chairs of the two other campuses and the secretary of the UI Board of Trustees, were directed to send copies of the report to Hogan, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Urbana Academic Senate draft report on enrollment management.

The task force report indicated that the Urbana Academic Senate draft report on enrollment management was ready, "They have failed to make any move to issue date."
Parents’ response to sexual abuse varies by age of victim

Parents are more likely to blame or doubt a child when the suspected perpetrator is an adolescent rather than an adult, according to a new study that examined child maltreatment cases in four states. The findings also suggest that, regardless of the age of the perpetrator, parental blame/doubt toward the victim significantly increases if the victim is an adolescent.

Co-written by scholars at the UI and the University of New Hampshire, the study is believed to be the first to examine whether parental response differs in accordance with the age of the perpetrator.

The study, which examined cases because adolescents commit a significant number—more than a third, by one estimate—of the sex offenses against minors reported to police. Generally, adolescent offenders know their victims, expounding family members in about 40 percent of cases. Parental support—believing the child when he or she discloses abuse, providing emotional support and taking protective actions—is critical to victims’ adjustment, according to a new study that examined child molestation cases in four states. The findings also suggest that, regardless of the age of the perpetrator, parental blame/doubt toward the victim significantly increases if the victim is an adolescent.

The sample was restricted to victims 5 years of age or older because parental blame/doubt was measured using an eight-item questionnaire, completed during interviews with 161 parents, which assessed the adult’s emotional reaction to the child’s disclosure of the abuse. Possible parental responses ranged from believing the victim completely to wondering if the abuse really occurred, as well as feeling angry, blame or resentment toward the victim.

Adolescent suspects ranged in age from 12–17, with an average age of 14. The majority were less than six years older than their victims and more than half were younger than 14. The study found that the victim could have done something to prevent or stop it.

Victims’ parents had significantly increased levels of blame and doubt when the suspects were adults than when the suspects were adolescents, even when the researchers controlled for other characteristics. "Many parents simply may have difficulty accepting the concept that adolescents can be sex offenders," Walsh said. "This be- lief persists in society, despite evi- dence to the contrary. Most people think that sex offenders are going to be older strangers rather than kids whom the victims know and trust and are closer to their age." When the suspect is an adolescent, especially one close to the victim’s age, some parents may be more prone to discount the vic- tim’s allegations, assuming that the sexual act was consensual or that the victim could have done something to prevent or stop it.

Parental blame and doubt in- creased significantly in correlation with the victim’s age, with 13– to 15-year-old victims less likely to receive parental support than younger children ages 5–9, the study found.

Cases with adolescent suspects were more likely to involve male victims (32 percent), same-sex abuse (39 percent) and slightly younger victims, with an average age of 9.6 versus 10.9 years for victims in cases with adult per- petrators. The data also indicated that race/ethnicity correlated with a lack of parental support, with blame and doubt increasing significantly when the victim was black non-Hispanic. However, the researchers were un- certain why that was the case and said additional studies with larger samples are needed.

Donations sought to keep employee emergency fund going

By Christian Gollayan

News Bureau Student Intern

T he Faculty/Staff Emergency Fund is in danger of running dry. Volunteers are asking employees to consider the spirit of the fund and step up to help fellow UI employees.

“Donations have fallen off even as the demand has increased,” said Karie Wolson, the director of the program. “The reality is, our fund is depleting; we’re giving out more grants than we’re taking in right now and at some point we’re going to run into dif- ficulty.”

She said there are concerns that the fund, used by UI employees facing a crisis, won’t be available in the future if donations do not soon increase.

Since its inception in 1992, the fund has helped more than 700 campus employees, assisting them during times of financial cri- sis with small grants for rent or mortgage payment, utility bills, medical bills, and food or clothing.

“I don’t know if we have the evidence to say this is directly related to the economy, because there are always peaks and valleys — but we have seen the demand increase,” she said.

Volunteers on the grassroots fundrais- ing committee are trying to get an annual contribution — no matter how much — from every university employee. There are no ad- ministrative costs associated with the fund drive, so all donations go directly into the fund through the UI Foundation.

Susan Fowler, a professor of special education, has been contributing for years through payroll deduction.

“I thought this was a great way to show support anonymously to staff who truly keep the university working,” she said. “I’ve known individuals faced with short-term emergencies, often medically related, who simply needed a helping hand to provide sta- bility for themselves or their families.”

Wolson said the program thrives on small donations, mostly through payroll deductions, though donors may also write a check to the fund.

“It doesn’t have to be a lot,” she said. “We’re thankful for every penny.”

Wolson said there’s still time to claim current donations on next year’s tax forms, though donors will have another opportu- nity to give during a planned fund drive in April.

A university employee does not have to contribute for an emergency. Faculty members, academic professionals and civil service staff members with at least a 50 per- cent appointment and who have completed at least six months of service at the univer- sity qualify to apply for the fund.

Eligible university employees can apply for emergency assistance at any time. Ap- plicants are screened through the Faculty/Staff Assistance Program and reviewed and approved by a separate confidential com- mittee. All contacts are confidential and as- sessments are free.

The contribution form can be found on line at http://fsap.illinois.edu/Contribution- Form.pdf. Checks should be made payable to UF/IFAS/UC Faculty and Staff Emergency Fund and mailed to the UI Foundation, 400 Harker Hall, MC-386. Donations also are accepted through payroll deduction. Dona- tions are tax deductible.

Payroll deduction or credit card dona- tions can now be set up securely online through the foundation website, www.giv- ing.illinois.edu More information about the fund is online or call 217-244-5312.
A Minute With …™ Nordic culture expert Anna Stenport

Larsson’s “Millennium” trilogy has sold more than 27 million copies worldwide. What makes it so popular?

First, it’s a captivating page-turner! It combines a traditional locked-room murder mystery with a corporate thriller and foregrounds a Swedish setting, which is both interesting and exotic to many in the world. Second, Lisbeth Salander is a compelling protagonist whose competing personality traits readers seem to identify with. She is strong and vulnerable, victim and perpetrator, smart and challenged, ruthless and passive. As many readers attest, both male and female, they want to be her. Third, the books interlace the private test, both male and female, they want to be her. Third, the books interlace the private world with the public. They investigate trust and betrayal in families and between sexual partners, and expose the underside of a rich, democratic welfare state, revealing its shortcomings. How do you think it ranks as literature? For example, how commonly are Larsson’s novels taught as college curriculum?

Crime writing is one of the most popular literary genres in the world. Yes, it is often formulaic and pulpy; on the other hand, it is an accessible literary form where critical issues on social and gender equality, human rights and political corruption, for example, can be directly addressed and reach large readerships. “The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo” has been a staple of book clubs around the world – it is probably one of the most readily available sources of information about 21st century Sweden today. This novel and others by Scandinavian crime writers such as Henning Mankell and Jo Nesboe are often taught in crime-writing college classes and are used in a Scandinavian studies curriculum for critical analyses of contemporary Swedish society. It’s usually a dicey problem to make a film from a beloved book. What have you heard about how American director David Fincher’s interpretation will compare to the novel, and to the Swedish film?

Fincher chose to spend a total of 14 weeks shooting in Sweden, even though it is expensive to film there. I think he wants to convey an authentic sense of location and maintain the socio-cultural specificity of the novel. The Hollywood version of the film seems to accent the distinctive-ness of the Swedish landscape. Sequences remind me of Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman’s dedication to the play of light and darkness characteristic of a northern location. Bergman’s films from the 1950s and ’60s also helped present the allure of Swedish (sexual) sin to the world. Trailers I have seen present two different stories – one a murder mystery where the relationship between Daniel Craig’s and Mara Rooney’s characters is foregrounded; another a dark and mysterious suspense film with the tag-line “the feel-bad movie of Christmas.” In combination with possible Bergman influences, I think it will be interesting.

How do Swedes feel about an American director taking on a story so grounded in Sweden?

Swedes generally and the Swedish media in particular seem enthusiastic. I believe people are happy to know the film is shot extensively in Sweden. The film industry is global in so many ways these days, and Swedish actors and directors work extensively in Hollywood and elsewhere around the world. The sense of film as a national product, or as representative of one national culture, is diminishing. Fincher’s adaptation of the book and the design of the U.S. film is a further testament to those changes.

For Americans who may not have read any of the books, or seen the Swedish films, what do you hope this movie will show them?

Sweden is known as one of the richest, safest, least corrupt and most democratic and equitable of all countries in the world. Yet, in the novel “The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,” the state fails those who need its protection most – Salander included. Similarly, in this novel, none of the many atrocious crimes committed against women – trafficking, forced prostitution and murder – are ever brought to trial. Instead crimes are brushed up to protect corpora-
tions big and small, including a supposedly radical journal critical of the system. And this in a country that regularly lands a top spot on global gender equality lists and prides itself on impartiality in the mass media! I hope Fincher’s film preserves some of this critical edge and this irony.
Eight faculty members elected fellows of AAAS

By Liz Ahlberg
Physical Sciences Editor

Eight UI faculty members have been elected fellows in the American Association for the Advancement of Science: Fouad Abd-El-Khalick, Rashid Bashir, Debashish Dutta, K. Jimmy Hsia, Keith W. Kelley, Wilfred van der Donk, M. Christina White and James Whitfield.

The Illinois researchers are among 539 new fellows chosen by their peers for their efforts to advance scientific applications that are deemed scientifically or socially distinguished. The new fellows will be honored at the AAAS annual meeting in February.

“These faculty members embody the spirit of excellence that characterizes Illinois scholarship,” said Phyllis M. Wise, the chancellor of the Urbana campus and a vice president of the university. “Such commitment to quality inspires their colleagues and students, and advances Illinois as a leader in academics, research and innovation.”

Abd-El-Khalick, a professor and the head of curriculum and instruction, was elected for his outstanding research on science education and an associate provost, was recognized for interdisciplinary study and research in brittle materials and the role of mechanics in biological materials. He is the associate vice chancellor for research for new initiatives.

Bashir also directs the Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory and is affiliated with the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, the Institute for Genomic Biology and the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Lab.

Dutta, the dean of the Graduate College and an associate provost, was recognized for distinguished and sustained contributions to interdisciplinary graduate education. He is the Gutgsell Professor of Mechanical Science and Engineering and a professor of industrial and enterprise systems engineering.

Hsia, a professor of mechanical science and engineering and of bioengineering, was chosen for contributions to applied mechanics including the understanding of crack propagation in brittle materials and the role of mechanics in biological materials. He is the associate vice chancellor for research for new initiatives, and is affiliated with the Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory.

Kelley, a professor of immunophysicsology in the department of animal sciences, was selected for exceptional and scholarly contributions in brain, behavior and immunity by recognizing and advancing the physiology of immunology and its role in communicating with the brain. Kelley also is a professor of pathology, of nutritional sciences and of neuroscience.

Van der Donk, the Richard E. Heckert Endowed Chair in Chemistry, was recognized for pioneering contributions to the discovery of natural products and the elaboration of their biosynthesis. He is a Howard Hughes Medical Investigator and an affiliate of the Institute for Genomic Biology.

White, a professor of chemistry, was honored for discoveries of novel, highly useful catalytic methods for oxidative functionalization of aliphatic and allylic C-H bonds and delineation of predictable rules for reaction selectivities.

Whitfield, a professor of entomology, was chosen for groundbreaking contributions toward understanding the evolution, diversification and classification of the hyperdiverse parasitic Hymenoptera and their mutualistic polydnaviruses. Whitfield is affiliated with the Illinois Natural History Survey, a unit of the Prairie Research Institute at the UI.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science, the world’s largest general scientific society, was founded in 1848 and has chosen fellows since 1874.

ON THE WEB
www.aaas.org

TOWN HALL MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Some thought,” she cautioned.

She said interdisciplinary study and research will be as important as ever, and will continue to lead to the university in still-to-be-discovered academic directions that will continue to make it a leader.

She said interdisciplinary study was “part of the DNA of the U. of I.,” and that the university will continue to thrive as long as it has “big teams of people that bump into each other every day.”

A diverse campus lends not only to the “richer” research outcomes, she said, but to a more attractive community where staff and students are likely to stay longer — a value that has been a recurring theme among those addressing Wise along the tour.

All of these needs must be considered next, she said, or the UI’s academic influence will diminish over time.

“Reputation is critical,” she said. “We don’t do a very good job of talking about ourselves — we are almost too modest. We need to be proud, but not boastful.

“We change peoples’ lives for the better.”

ASTRONOMY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

pressuring. We assume that these stars have to form in molecular clouds, and it tells us that the molecular clouds do hang around long enough for us to see them associated with these massive young stars.”

Wong hopes to continue to study the relationship between molecular clouds and star formation in greater detail. If researchers can determine the relative ages of young stars, they can correlate these against molecular clouds to figure out which clouds have star formation, how long the clouds live and what eventually leads to their destruction. They also plan to use a newly constructed array of telescopes in Chile to see the cloud environment in higher resolution, pinpointing exactly where inside the molecular cloud star formation will occur.

“T his study provides us with our most detailed view of an entire population of clouds in another galaxy.” Wong said. “We can say with great confidence that these clouds are where the stars form, but we are still trying to figure out why they have the properties they do.”

The National Science Foundation and NASA supported this work.

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Expert: Mandate ‘FEMA premiums’ for disaster-prone areas

By Phil Cislora
Business and Law Editor

With seemingly more extreme weather on the horizon, should Uncle Sam have to foot the bill every time a natural disaster strikes? According to a UI expert in environmental economics, one way to limit the amount of money the federal government doles out to repair damage would be to mandate disaster-prone areas pay “FEMA premiums” to the federal government.

Tatyana Deryugina, a lecturer in finance in the College of Business, says since the government can’t completely walk away from its responsibilities after an act of God occurs, it needs to create the right incentives for states through area-based insurance.

“Obviously, it would be very hard for the government to say that if a disaster occurs, we’re not going to pay for it,” she said. “But what the government can say is you have to pay these premiums.”

Deryugina says the implicit promise of federal aid may actually encourage some people to live in high-risk areas.

“It’s not bad to have people living in risky areas per se, but it’s also not good to have people living in areas where they wouldn’t normally live if they had to pay the actuarially fair price of the insurance themselves,” she said. “If they’re choosing to live there because they’re not internalizing the full risk, or if they’re betting the government will bail them out afterward, then that’s problematic.”

Between 1983 and 2008, the U.S. spent a little more than $80 billion (in 2008 dollars) on disaster aid, an average of $3 billion per year. While spending on defense and entitlements dwarfs that number, not only is the distribution of those funds unequal, it’s also money that could probably be better spent elsewhere, Deryugina says.

“In 2008 dollars, the disaster aid received between 1983 and 2008 ranged from $74 per capita in Washington, D.C., to about $217,000 per capita in Louisiana, for a person who lived there for the entire 25 years,” she said. “Clearly, there is a difference in the amount of money going to different states and locations, and a lot of disasters are so unpredictable that you can’t make states account for them in advance.

Disaster aid also is notable in that states don’t usually bear the full financial burden of compensating victims. States are responsible for what this is costing the federal government of bailing you out is lower. Deryugina says that every dollar invested mitigates about $15 in damage," Deryugina says. “There are a lot of distortions in that market, with a lot of states trying to regulate the insurance companies while also capping the rates they can charge to homeowners," she said. “Consequently, many insurance companies have been pulling out of disaster-prone areas because they’re not allowed to charge the rates they would like.”

A reliance on the federal government for disaster-relief funds also discourages individuals and municipalities from implementing preventive measures that could reduce the amount of damage in the event of a natural disaster.

“Although it’s somewhat difficult to measure how much damage preventive measures actually prevent, one estimate we have says that every dollar invested mitigates about $15 in damage,” Deryugina said. “That’s a huge return on investment, which suggests that the government needs to do more to incentivize cities to build levees, get people to install hurricane shutters and construct buildings that can withstand earthquakes and high winds.

“You can deduct damages from your taxes, but you can’t deduct insurance premiums. That’s another example of a perverse incentive where the incentive to get insurance is reduced.”

Natural disasters are costing state and federal governments much more money than they might think, Deryugina says.

“It’s not only spending by FEMA that’s affected by extreme weather events, it’s also all these other social safety net programs that we don’t immediately think of when we think disaster,” she said. “For example, both Medicaid and unemployment insurance payments go up, and stay high, following a hurricane. So when we account for what this is costing the federal government, it’s not just the disaster-specific aid that’s being disbursed. It’s also other programs that are triggered by the occurrence of these events.”

The big question is how such a disaster-aid premium system could work. The answer, according to Deryugina, is to make it similar to unemployment insurance.

“With unemployment benefits, the premiums are paid by companies based on their payroll history, so the more people you lay off, the higher the premiums you have to pay,” she said. “You could think of the same thing applying to cities: The more disaster-prone you are, the more in premiums you pay per resident.”

Deryugina says the benefits of such a system are that the state, county or municipality could think of the best way to implement a tax to pay for the premiums.

“If you’re a tourist town, you could make the out-of-towners pay for it, or if you want to attract more tourists, you could implement a sales tax or a city-based income tax,” she said. “It wouldn’t probably be a huge tax, given the rarity of catastrophic events, and if one is worried about distributional effects, you could certainly make it progressive.

“You could find other creative ways to reduce the amount of premiums paid, such as buying insurance or implementing other preventative measures, so the expected cost to the government of bailing you out is lower.

“If the government wants to help cities, they could pay part of the premium for each citizen below the poverty line. But the important thing to do in that situation would be to grandfather that payment, because otherwise you would create incentives for more poor people to live in disaster-prone areas.”
The 3-year-old Illinois Professional Science Master’s program got its start at Illinois during a recession, but most of its 2010 graduates are already pursuing careers in the fields they chose. It took most a few months to find work, although at least two of the 2011 graduating class – were offered jobs while still in school.

The Illinois PSM combines a traditional (but thesis-free) science master’s degree with a suite of business courses, and is geared to students “who know they want to work somewhere at that intersection of science and business,” said PSM director Kevin Sightler.

In addition to their labora
tory work and class work, the students do internships and get a lot of guidance in professional development and strategic career planning, he said.

The international PSM initiative got its start in 1997 with a series of grants from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to 14 institutions to support master’s programs in natural sciences, mathematics and bioinformatics. Today there are 244 PSM programs at 144 institutions in 31 states, Washington, D.C., Canada, and Australia. The program got its start at Illinois in 2009.

The Illinois program draws on the university’s agricultural roots, Sightler said. Students choose from one of five PSM degree programs: agricultural production, bioenergy, food science and human nutrition, plant biology, and technical systems management.

“Our programs were the first in agriculture, said Sightler. “I wouldn’t say employers are clamoring for these students,” he said. “But part of what we’re doing with PSM here and at other institutions is we’re creating pro-
grams that we know are in demand.”

Although some of the graduates are starting out in traditional science careers in research, Sightler said he expects their career paths to eventually depart from the norm. They may start out at the laboratory bench, he said, but “they’re going to come up and take management and money and markets,” he said. And the students’ internships are as varied as their interests.

“The internships could be in anything from an architectural firm in a clean energy practice to the mainline agricultural companies like ADM (Archer Daniels Midland), Monsanto and Beck’s Hybrids, to students who re
tally want to do research and are working in a university research lab,” he said.

One of the 2010 graduates did an internship as a marketing analyst at Illinois Ven
tures, Sightler said. The gradu
eate is now “a new ventures” analyst at a bioenergy startup company in Spain. Another student interned at the University of Sao Paulo and now is a manager at an Illinois-based energy consulting firm. One student interned at the Illi
gois Green Business Association (GFA), Sightler said, and now works as a new ventures analyst at Fonterra, a multinational dairy company.

The early successes probably have something to do with how the program was designed, and how it interacts with industry, Sightler said.

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Final report submitted for Biology Steering Committee

R

chard P. Wheeler, the interim vice chancellor for academic af

irs and provost, has announced that the Biology Steering Com

mittee has submitted its final report. The report was in response to the Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois Biology Education and Research Team Report.

The report is online at http://oc.illinois.

The report, the steering committee recommeded that the campus establish a standing committee to act as a coordinat

ing and advocacy body for the campus’s expanded biological sciences enterprise. “I have adopted this recommendation and a Biology Coordinating Committee has been charged outside of the Stewarding Exce

lence Process,” Wheeler wrote. His announcement also indicated the committee has been directed to:

■ Develop a strong and compelling de

cription of “Biology@Illinois” and a vi

sion for the future of the biological sciences on the Urbana campus.

■ Improve coordination of curriculum across campus.

■ Contribute to strategic hiring in the biological sciences.

■ Further explore the possibility of, and appropriate mechanisms and parameters for, a bio-literate undergraduate program.

The committee’s membership and the full charge may be viewed at http://provost.illinois.

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Full charges may be viewed at http://provost.illinois.edu/com/committee/biology_coordination.html.

First PSM graduates are finding jobs

By Diana Yates

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rticle by L. Grace Ostrander

First PSM graduates are finding jobs

Final report submitted for Biology Steering Committee

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Hogan said he also was thankful for restoration of the Monetary Award Program student aid money, cut by lawmakers over the summer, and for changes in state procurement rules that offer waivers to the university for entertainment, library and other special-case venues.

"Legislators stepped up," Hogan said of their support on university-related issues. "I wouldn’t say it was everything we wanted, but it was 95 percent. We’re extremely grateful for our friends in Springfield."

Walter Knorr, vice president and chief financial officer, said the receipt of state-owed funding was "substantially better" than last year. Last year at this time, the state was behind paying the UI nearly $400 million in funding. This year payments have been sent on a more timely basis and the total owed has been reduced by nearly $90 million.

Tuition Timetable

Hogan told trustees that the university is working on a number of measures aimed at improving student recruitment and increasing financial aid levels.

"We don’t have a big enough financial aid pot of funding," he said. "We will have some recommendations on how to improve. We need to up our game."

Despite a "big push" by university officials to increase supplemental aid from $14 million to $54 million in the last decade, more needs to be done, Hogan said. As it stands, less than 15 percent of the university’s funds are earmarked for aid, a number he’d like to see increase.

Meanwhile, trustees on Dec. 2 discussed moving up the date in which the following year’s tuition rate is announced.

Knorr said the UI had traditionally released the information in the spring, which he said was "fairly late in the game" and sometimes after new students had already been asked to make a commitment to attend the UI.

"We’d like to move it up to January because we’d like to give families time to plan," he said, noting the university also would benefit in recruitment and budgeting. "There’s probably nothing we could do to be more helpful."

Last year, the board approved a policy that seeks to hold increases to the rate of inflation, addressing affordability while retaining the university’s purchasing power. It also enables the board to set tuition earlier, giving students and their families adequate time to arrange college finances. Under the state’s guaranteed tuition law, those rates are then locked in for four years to give students and families a realistic expectation of costs to attend the UI.

This year Knorr may announce the recommended tuition rate as early as the Jan. 18 meeting in Chicago.

Hogan said cost-cutting conversations will continue to be initiated across all campuses as a method for freeing up finances. He said the Administrative Review and Restructuring process would continue into the next year, focusing on institutes, centers and doctoral programs.

"We’ll be pinching our pennies and real-locating," he said.

Kennedy said he’d like to see more emphasis on helping lower-income families afford a UI education.

"We need to find a way to address that population," he said.

Dashboard Indicators

A new "dashboard indicators" report developed this year is expected to help administrators and trustees target a multitude of improvement categories, including tuition, financial aid, student access and student outcomes.

Delivered every six months, the report will be used to make statistical comparisons to other universities and help officials track specific institutional goals.

"Now we have a way of systematically updating that data," said Avijit Ghosh, a special assistant to the president. "There are a variety of different metrics and a variety of information. It allows us to look at how we’re performing on those priorities. We can look at those trends and take corrective action."

Information in the dashboard report already has been used to compile and assess enrollment data, he said.

Hogan said efforts also are being made to better tune comparative data to best represent each of the UI’s three campuses. In addition to peer comparisons, the university also would develop an "aspiration" group of institutions.

"The hardest one (for finding comparisons) has always been our Chicago campus," he said, because of its size and the medical center.

MAFBE Report

Officials reported participation in the university’s Minority and Female Business Enterprise program had significantly improved and could improve further without costing more money.

As it stands, last year about 10 percent of the university’s expenditures went to MAFBE-participating firms, representing an increase of $11 million and a total of nearly $32 million. Last year the number of MAFBE firms rose 24 percent on the Urbana campus and 75 percent at UIC.

The Bronner Group is the university’s MAFBE consultant and is recommending it follow a second phase of advice to increase participation. The second phase includes adopting a vendor policy and strategies to better attract diverse vendors.

Trustee Timothy Koritz said he valued diversity but worried about the university’s financial situation.

"These costs are basically being paid with tuition dollars," he said.

Gila Bronner, the company’s president, said the university also would benefit from changes in the state’s hard-to-follow procurement law.

She said the university can achieve diversity goals without spending more money.

"I think it’s more a message from the top," she said. "I don’t think it has to be a greater cost, but it does have to be a strong commitment."

Kennedy said he is hopeful the university’s recent success in seeking relief from the state’s procurement legislation could carry over to other unfunded mandates.

"Let’s learn from that experience," he said. "We can play a leadership role. If we confront (unfunded mandates), maybe others will join us."

Kennedy said, despite associated costs, "the educational experience is enriched by diversity."

Hogan agreed, saying spending some money on diversity efforts is inevitable.

"It’s not always a cost-benefit analysis," he said. "Diversity is not just a value in its own right. Sometimes achieving that value has a premium and a price. It makes a difference to students walking around the campus."
The new version of the Campus Profile has been released by the Division of Management Information and can be found online at http://www.surs.org/cpi. The profile is a compilation of up to 10 years of data for every university department and administrative unit. Information includes staff funding, tuition budget, expenditures and faculty headcount for each department. The profile also can select units and items to create a custom report. For participating units, a “strategic profile” displays data and graphs for metrics showing progress toward unit and campus goals.

This year, the site has added freshman and transfer admissions statistics by college and campus. In addition, FTE and enrollment terms and are either appointed by the governor or elected by their peers. Two of the three seats available will be filled by the system’s participants. The third member will be a student elected from among college students.

Several colleges have not uploaded their data for their own strategic measures but those data are expected to be entered in the next few weeks. For more information, contact Carol J. Livingstone, the director of the Division of Management Information, at livngstn@illinois.edu.

The State Universities Retirement System is conducting elections due Dec. 31. The State Universities Retirement System is conducting an election to fill three seats on its board of trustees. Members are encouraged to participate. Applications are due Dec. 31. Election ballots will be mailed to qualified members on March 30. Winners will be announced on May 2. Two of the three seats available will be filled by the system’s participants. The third member will be a student elected from among college students.

Application packets including petitions are available at www.grad.illinois.edu/intersect. Completed proposals and postdoctoral students. This year’s workshop, “The De- liberate Mentoring: Performing the Role(s) With Thought and Purpose,” will take place from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Jan. 10 in Illini Union Room A. (Coffee and sign-in begin at 8:30 a.m.)

Mentoring graduate and postdoctoral students requires a faculty mentor to assume multiple roles, including evaluator, advocate, research guide and professional coach. As challenging as this may be, mentoring plays a key role in the success of graduate and postdoctoral students, as evi- dent by the frequency with which mentoring appears in doctoral program assessments on this campus and nation- ally.

The workshop is free. Advance registration is required; space is limited. For program details and to register, visit http://www.grad.illinois.edu/events/mentoring/2012.

For questions, contact the Graduate College at grad@ illinois.edu or 333-4610.

**Ozzie to receive honorary degree**

Raymond Ozzie, former chief software architect for Micro- soft Corp., has been chosen to receive an honorary doc- tor of engineering degree at the 2 p.m. campuswide Com- mencement ceremony May 13 at the Assembly Hall.

In the early 1990s, his creation, Lotus Notes, was the first networked groupware application for the personal computer, revolutionizing business computing. In 1994, he was named one of seven “Windows Pioneers” by Microsoft because of the impact he and Lotus Notes had on the develop- ment of the Windows operating system.

In 1995, Ozzie was named “Person of the Year” by PC Magazine. Two years later, the UI College of Engineering honored Ozzie with its alumni award for distinguished ser- vices. Ozzie earned a bachelor’s degree in computer science at Illinois in 1979.

In 2000, Ozzie was awarded the IEEE Computer Soci- ety’s W. W. McDowell Award for his “vision, determina- tion and programming skill in the development of Lotus Notes, a program that enables groups of people to collabora- te over computer networks.”

Ozzie is a member of the National Academy of Engi- neering and is a fellow in the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

**Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant**

Groups to focus on medical disposal

Improperly discarded over-the-counter and prescription medicines endanger pets, children and the environment.

The National Sea Grant College Program and the Amer- ican Veterinary Association have forged a formal partner- ship to raise awareness about the need for proper storage and disposal of unused medicines.

“Medicine disposal has become an emerging issue as numerous studies have found pharmaceuticals in drinking water and in lakes and rivers,” said Laura Kammin, a pol- lution prevention specialist with the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant. “The long-term impacts are not known, but it’s clear that flushing medicines is throwing them in the trash con- tributes to the problem.”

For the past six years, ISG has worked with com- munities to develop local medicine collection programs. Through workshops and the ISG toolkit, the program pro- vides information and support so that these efforts are safe and successful.

Now, alongside the AVMA, the information campaign can grow to encompass new audiences, including animal

**Illinois**

**Indiana**

**Commercialization**

Established in 1980, the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Illinois’ Division of Agricultural Extension and the Indiana University Northwest. ISG promotes awareness of the impacts of human activities on the coastal and Great Lakes environments through research, education and outreach.

**Graduate College**

Mentoring workshop will be Jan. 10

The Graduate College will host its annual mentoring workshop for faculty members who work with graduate

and postdoctoral students. This year’s workshop, “The De- liberate Mentor: Performing the Role(s) With Thought and Purpose,” will take place from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Jan. 10 in Illini Union Room A. (Coffee and sign-in begin at 8:30 a.m.)

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BRIEFS. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10
owners who, along with many in the general public, may need to dispose of unused and expired medicine.

The Dads Association, founded in 1922, supports programs, services and activities that advance the health, safety and well-being of the university community and serves as the parent liaison to campus.

ENGINEERING

On Nov. 17, Stephen Boppart, a professor of electrical and computer engineering and bioengineering, took part in a congressional briefing convened by the Optical Society of America. The briefing was under the auspices of the Advisory Committee for the Congressional Research and Development Caucus.

Boppart discussed the future of health care with optical biomedical imaging.

Two UI faculty members have been named 2011 fellows of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Brian Cunningham, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, was recognized for his contributions to photonic crystal-based biosensors and detection instrumentation.

Cunningham leads the Nano Sensors Group in the UI’s Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory, a group that focuses on cell biology, computer simulation, instrumentation, interfacial fabrication, nanotechnology and molecular biology.

Michael Insana, the head and a professor of engineering, was recognized for his contributions to ultrasound imaging methods, particularly elastography.

Insana’s research focuses on the development of ultrasonic instrumentation and methods for imaging soft-tissue microstructure, viscoelasticity and blood flow in order to understand basic mechanisms of cancerous lesion formation, metastatic progression, responses to therapy and sources of image contrast.

Floccs are chosen for their outstanding record of accomplishments in any of the institute’s fields of interest.

The institute is an international professional association dedicated to advancing technology for humanity with 385,000 members in 163 countries.

Laura H. Greene, a Swanlund Professor of Physics, was elected by the General Assembly of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics as the U.S. representative to the assembly’s Commission on the Structure and Dynamics of Condensed Matter. Greene is appointed for three-year terms and only one representative from the U.S. may be elected to a commission.

Two UI students were recognized by the National Academy of Sciences.

Greene’s research covers experimental condensed matter physics, focusing on highly correlated electron systems and novel materials.

The IUPAP, established in 1922, is dedicated to promoting international cooperation in physics. Sixty nations are members of the organization.

F&S

The Facilities and Services Retrocommissioning Team received the 2011 Illinois Governor’s Sustainability Award at a ceremony Oct. 27. Established in 1987, this award has been presented to public and private organizations that have achieved significant progress on projects designed to protect the environment and improve sustainability within the state.

The retrocommissioning group analyzes and evaluates HVAC systems in UI buildings. Because of budgetary constraints and deferred maintenance, many of these systems were significantly inefficient and not operating at optimal levels. Assessing each building and system with a focus on efficiency, sustainability and comfort, the group has completed projects in 30 buildings, covered more than 4 million square feet of space and reduced energy consumption by an average of 27 percent. In the 4 1/2 years since the program began on campus, the cumulative utility cost avoidance resulting from the efforts is more than $10 million.

The award is presented by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, which is part of the Prairie Research Institute.

GENOMIC BIOLOGY

Jian Ma, a professor of bioengineering and a faculty member in the Institute for Genomic Biology, was featured in the Sixth Annual Young Investigators article in the magazine Genome Technology.

Ma’s research focuses on the presence and effects of large-scale genomic alterations across mammalian species and within human populations, translating the reading of raw sequencing into practical knowledge.

Department of Religion

Master’s in religion is first in the state

The UI department of religion is now offering the only master’s degree program in religion at any public university in the state of Illinois.

Students must complete 32 credit hours of graduate credit (usually eight courses) from a diverse and interdisciplinary curriculum.

Each student also will have a primary field of interest – such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam or Judaism – and will complete a degree with either a thesis or by submitting two revised research papers in the primary field of study.

The new degree program offers strong ties to other programs and departments on campus, including American Indian Studies, East Asian Studies, Jewish Studies, South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and others.

Funding opportunities are available to qualified students.

“Many students have commented that they were excited about the idea of offering a new degree program,” said David H. Price, the head of the department of religion. “Our extraordinarily diverse faculty can offer a wide array of courses that will give our students a solid grounding for their studies and a broad understanding of the critical role of religion in history and society.”

The deadline for application is Jan. 15. For more information, or to speak with a member of the faculty, contact Rajeshwar Pandharipande, the director of graduate studies in the department of religion, at rajpan@illinois.edu.

For information on degree requirements, research and teaching interests of department faculty, and the application process, visit: www.religion.illinois.edu.

IPS

Karen M. Hewitt, the outreach coordinator for International Programs and Studies, received the Seven Seals Award from the U.S. Department of Defense for her contributions to the training program for the Illinois-National Guard Reserves. Hewitt was recognized Dec. 13 at a reception in Springfield, Ill., commemorating the guard’s 375th anniversary.

The award was presented for “meritorious leadership and initiative in support of the men and women who serve America in the National Guard and Reserve.”

OSUS

Martin B. Wolske, a senior research scientist at the School of Library and Information Science, received the 2011 LIJ Teaching Award from Library Journal. The award, sponsored by ProQuest, recognizes excellence in educating the next generation of librarians. This annual award honors the teacher with an article in the journal, a $5,000 prize and a reception at the 2012 American Library Association mid-winter meeting.

The feature article on Wolske, who teaches Networked Information Systems, is online at http://go.illinois.edu/LIJAward_Wolske.

RESEARCH PARK

The UI Research Park was named the 2011 Outstanding Research Park. The award was presented by the Association of University Research Parks at its international anniversary Dec. 1 in New Orleans.

The award recognizes parks that excel in promoting economic growth through bringing technology from the laboratory to viable business activities.

“Over the last 10 years, the Research Park has had a significant impact on its community and in fueling new growth, attracting large corporations to the region and creating jobs,” said Harold Strong, the association’s president.

ADS REMOVED FOR ONLINE VERSION
Some quarrels between family members can go on for years, with the same arguments or tensions repeated over and over again. Why do these disputes never get resolved or put to rest?

Serial arguments occur when individuals have ongoing conflict about the same issue over time. The issue tends to be thorny and volatile, such as situations in which one person violates another person’s expectations, when people have different expectations for their relationship, or when they hold divergent values.

No matter what the topic, serial arguments usually have a systematic pattern: An individual pressures another person to change his or her behavior without taking into account that person’s goals, the person gets defensive and withdraws from the episode, so the initiator decides to re-engage the issue later with even more pressure, which only leads that person to withdraw further. Over time, people find themselves locked into a dysfunctional pattern of mutual hostility.

Not surprisingly, serial arguments can have harmful effects on people’s personal well-being and the health of their relationships. Serial arguments are especially damaging when they are confrontational, explosive and abrasive.

When people disagree about sensitive topics such as politics and religion, it may seem as though they are arguing about abstract concepts, but in fact, they are questioning each other’s views of the world. Sometimes the very best way to preserve family harmony is to agree to disagree. If both parties have heard each other out, worked hard to understand each other’s point of view and brainstormed creative ways to address the issue, but still have not been able to reach a satisfactory solution, then it’s probably better to table the issue. Just make sure that everyone involved is willing to make the topic off-limits, and then agree to disagree.

The holidays and family conflict

A Minute With …™ UI expert Leanne Knobloch

Editor’s note: It’s all supposed to be joyful when families reunite for the holidays, but many find plenty of conflict – from disputes dating back to childhood to disagreements over politics. Do we have to fight the same battles every time, or is there a way to ease the tension? Leanne Knobloch, a professor of communication, teaches courses on interpersonal and family communication, as well as conflict resolution. Her current research looks at the challenges military families face when service members return from deployment. Knobloch was interviewed by News Bureau social sciences editor Craig Chamberlain.

A Minute With …™ is provided by the UI News Bureau. To view archived interviews, go to illinois.edu/goto/aminutewith.