Flexible electronics Thin, soft stick-on patches that stretch and move with the skin incorporate commercial, off-the-shelf chip-based electronics for sophisticated wireless health monitoring.

Campus leaders discuss future during town hall meeting

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

Marchioness Phyllis M. Wise, during her first town hall address to campus in 2012, said it would take an era of action to prepare and position the U. of I. to face the challenges of the 21st century.

"If we believe we do not seize this window of opportunity, we will have wasted a very distinct moment in time," she said then.

On April 9, less than a year from her second town hall, the chancellor proclaimed the opportunity had been "seized" and praised campus efforts for making great progress in starting the implementation phase of the next campus Strategic Plan.

The town hall presentation was made to a packed Illini Union Ballroom by Wise and Lseans Adesida, the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs.

"A lot has happened since then," Wise said of their initial town hall address.

In that time the campus has released a three-year Strategic Plan and already boasts a substantial list of accomplishments tied to the goals outlined in the document.

"We want this to be a two-way conversation," she said, noting that more than 3,000 faculty and staff members had been consulted in the run-up to the plan’s adoption, which followed a year of consultation among various campus groups.

Wise said other avenues for providing suggestions to improve the university include consulting with the Academic Senate, its executive committee and through ongoing conversations being held by Adesida with faculty and staff representatives.

"These meetings demonstrate our appreciation for the importance of shared governance," she said.

As for progress on the Strategic Plan, she said, the campus already has met some projections in the four goals set out in the plan.

Adesida said the initiative to hire 500 faculty members in the next five to seven years, which soon will add cohorts of academic, cross-disciplinary clusters, has already started with 180 new faculty searches underway. He said there already have been several recruitment successes.

"This is how we are going to make news when it comes to faculty hiring," he said.

"We are going to find the best — those who bolster our traditional strengths and those who will form the core of new strategic centers of excellence." 

In addition, he said, funding for the Humanities and Arts Scholar Support Program was increased by 50 percent in the last year. The Targets of Opportunity Program funding, which promotes campus diversity recruitment, was increased by 35 percent. The Presidential Award Program, also promoting diversity, was enhanced with an additional $500,000 in funding. The graduate fellowship fund saw an increase of $250,000.

Adesida said outreach efforts also have been established in the past year, including a public relations campaign focused on Chicago alumni and a $1.5 million fund to increase the reach of U. of I. Extension.

Classroom investment, too, is being put on a faster track, with more than $82 million earmarked for renovations by 2018. So far, 92 classrooms have been renovated and more are slated for work.

Starting next spring the campus will establish the first stage of a separate, $80 million Facilities Matching Funds investment program to address the deferred maintenance backlog.

Resources also are being diverted to maintain and improve the campus’s technology infrastructure, which includes improvements to the wireless network.

Other areas of progress within the Strategic Plan include the opening of an office in China, the start of regular program reviews (seven are in progress); the adoption of principles guiding the hiring of specialized faculty members; the creation of the Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment; a Health Sciences initiative that could lead to the creation of a new, more expansive campus biomedical enterprise; and the creation of the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning.

Moving forward Chancellor Phyllis M. Wise, addressing a capacity crowd at her town hall address April 9, reported that many of the goals in the three-year Strategic Plan had either been met or are underway.

Stick-on electronic patches monitor health

By Liz Ahlberg
Physical Sciences Editor

Wearing a fitness tracker on your wrist or clipped to your belt is no longer just for the fitness-obsessed.

Engineers at the U. of I. and Northwestern University have demonstrated thin, soft stick-on patches that stretch and move with the skin and incorporate commercial, off-the-shelf chip-based electronics for sophisticated wireless health monitoring.

The patches stick to the skin like a temporary tattoo and incorporate a unique microfluidic construction with wires folded like origami to allow the patch to bend and flex without being constrained by the rigid electronics components. The patches could be used for everyday health tracking—wirelessly sending updates to your cell phone or computer—and could revolutionize clinical monitoring, such as EKG and EEG testing—no bulky wires, pads or tape needed.

"We designed this device to monitor human health 24/7, but without interfering with a person’s daily activity," said Yonggang Huang, the Northwestern University professor who co-led the work with Illinois professor John A. Rogers. "It is as soft as human skin and can move with your body, but at the same time it has many different monitoring functions. What is very important about this device is it is wirelessly powered and can send high-quality data about the human body to a computer, in real time.

The researchers did a side-by-side comparison with traditional EKG and EEG monitors and found the wireless patch performed equally well.

ROGERS, Page 10
The compensation review committee will review the campus’s salary and benefits levels for a variety of positions against a long list of peer universities, in.

...are ignoring the recommendation of the board of trustees. The recommendation is that there be a diligent search for a more knowledgeable, professional and experienced academic and professional, a time-consuming process that may prove beyond the university’s means to accomplish.

...and the state funding and the fact tuition as a source of income have reached 50 percent for students behind on loan payments.

...is the only debt that can’t be forgiven, according to Sandretto. By the time SB 1 is signed, the university’s $700 million deferred maintenance backlog will be nearly gone.

...a ‘short-term incentive to retire.”

...is solicited from all areas of the campus.

...in the university employee pension program. Changes include last year’s Illinois State Pension Act reorganization, which canceled the state’s defined benefit plan, and reduced life-time employee retirement benefits when it became law. He said a supplemented plan would need if the university is to stay competitive.

...and the board of directors, and reduced living adjustments.

...has been married to Gayle, for 24 years. They have two daughters, one in college and one in high school.

...are invited to attend.

...on which Holderfield focuses his attention. He cautioned, however, that these recommendations to the board of trustees.

...a “short-term incentive to retire.”

...in the workplace, according to the study of over 72,000 employees.

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Eight honored with distinguished staff award.

Laurie A. Macadam, an administrative clerk at the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, provides registration services to all nondegree online students across campus. She works closely with campus admissions contacts at the assistant and associate dean level to ensure that department and college needs are met. According to Daniel Fein, the center’s associate director, she “performs duties above and beyond what is normally expected.”

“Her consistently demonstrates exten- sive knowledge and competence in a wide array of registration and admissions topics,” he said. “Her extensive experience allows her to use her knowledge and expertise to quickly troubleshoot and solve problems.”

According to Fein, even during times of high volume, Albin handles a large workload in an extremely effective and timely fashion. She is self-directed and completes tasks with little direction or supervision. Albin was named a team leader, and some of the policies she implemented saved the team time and increased the quality of the service to the academic units. “Her positive attitude and work ethic were contagious and it soon defined the culture of her team,” Fein said.

When the office converted to a nearly all-digital environment, saving time and money, she took the project a step further and developed a digital filing system for her team.

Richard L. Burton, an assistant facilities manager in Albertson Park and Support Center, supervises the daily work of the maintenance staff in the performance of a variety of maintenance, repair and im- provement tasks, often involving special- ized skills.

“Richard routinely demonstrates ex- cellence in overall work performance,” said Derek Peterson, the associate direc- tor of part-time operations. “He is one of my most dependable employees. He always answers calls during and outside of work hours and is counted on to attend to emergencies at any time of day or night.”

Petersen said that Burton also manages his extensive workload in a professional and efficient manner. In the past few years, Burton’s staff has been reduced by 30 per- cent yet his team continues to perform the required tasks in a timely manner.

Burton works independently. Petersen said, addressing to each project with vigor and expertise and demands the same of his staff. He also promotes positive morale by displaying a vigorous, supportive attitude. In addition, he exhibits initiative and cre- ativity in improving operations at Albertson. He often will take classes or consult with other experts to improve operations or learn a new skill, such as recent training he completed on geothermal systems.

Clifford J. Galusha, an instrument mak- er in the departments of mechanical science and engineering in the College of Engineer- ing, develops and fabricates complicated, delicate or precise laboratory apparatus, messy process and problematic engi- neering or research specifications.

“As an instrument maker, Cliff demonstr- ates the highest degree of skill, solving exceedingly complex and intricate ma- chining problems for faculty, staff and stu- dents,” said Robert K. Parish, the research lab supervisor for mechanical science and engineering. “Cliff is regarded as the utmost authority in the electrical discharge machining process, which is a special- ized machine tool that only a few shops are able to offer. Staff members from other de- partments often seek his advice for solving complex problems.”

Galusha also provides excellent customer service to students considering the size of the room and the number of people. He also helps guests with last-minute changes.

“McAdams’ personal skills and work- ethic and his positive attitude have a positive impact on all those with whom he interacts,” Diehl said. “He is accessible to all. Her focus on the details does not preclude genuine warmth. Her door is always, quite literally, open, and students and faculty know that they can come talk to her at any time about issues related to the graduate program, university procurement and a host of other matters. Once they leave her office, she will work tirelessly to help find the answer to their question or solve their problem.”

Mary J. Strum is the office manager for the department of communication in the Col- lege of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She provides support to the director of the unit’s graduate studies and to the department head as well as for faculty members and students.

“Her organizational skills, work ethic, flexibility and friendly disposition have touched everyone in our department,” wrote Barbara I. Hall, an academic adviser in the department, in nominating Strum. “We certainly are much stronger for all she does.”

“Sherr is marked by exceptional service to our students, and faculty and staff members ev- ery day,” Hall said. “Both when the flow of work is predictable and when she is hit with sudden obstacles or demands, she responds with easy confidence and competence.”

Hall noted that it was Sherr’s work and dedication to the success of her students contributed to the positive evalua- tion of the graduate program in the recent Graduate College review of campus doc- toral programs, which noted high levels of student satisfaction and a high success rate in job acquisition for new graduates.

In addition, Sherr will always step in when needed to keep the department running smoothly. She has taken on extra re- sponsibility to cover during times of tran- sition and always does so with calmness and good humor.

Douglas L. Reis is a building service- foreman for Facilities and Services. He cleans and maintains the Student Dining and Residence- ful Program Building for University Housing. His job responsibilities include setting up all meeting and event space through- out the 377,000-square-foot facility, clean- ing the restrooms and public spaces, assis- ting in cleaning the dining area, removing snow and running work orders.

There are a plethora of public meeting spaces available for groups to use in that building and Reis treats each event as if a VIP is coming to clean the restrooms and public spaces, assis- ting in cleaning the dining area, removing snow and running work orders.

“Reis also assists in determining the appropriate setup considering the size of the room and the number of people. He also helps guests with last minute changes,” Hall said. “Her door is always, quite literally, open, and students and faculty know that they can come talk to her at any time about issues related to the graduate program, university procurement and a host of other matters. Once they leave her office, she will work tirelessly to help find the answer to their question or solve their problem.”

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In more than 30 years with ISGS she has served the industry and the public as an expert regarding Illinois petroleum geology through her research and teaching. Crockett and students who have had the opportunity to work with her over the years have learned many different techniques to consider only physical aspects and outcomes of design by integrating societal, political and economic processes and their human factors into discussions about design and the built environment. Crockett challenges students and professionals to recognize and respond to the connections between the physical environment and other dimensions of society.

Upon arrival at the U. of I. in 2002, Deerborn sought opportunities to utilize her service learning through the East St. Louis Action Research Project. Since her initial efforts in East St. Louis, Deerborn has engaged renovators and community organizations in the Metro East area, Rockford, Peoria and Chicago/Urbana. In addition, Deerborn has worked in southern Michigan and in the Tulsa area and Phoenix.

Her public engagement activities have enabled her to work on numerous sustainable efforts supporting her own research and design expertise, as well as the developing expertise of her students through service-learning strate- gies and community-based research seminars. Deerborn's impact can be seen on both the communities served and the students who have been involved in her efforts. She remains committed to sustained local, national and interna- tional public engagement. During the past three years, she has been in- volved in the College of Fine Arts and Applied Art's development of service-learning opportunities in the local community through Action Research Illinois. She has initiated four-year undergraduate seminars with Urbana's Martin Luther King School, Champaign's Prosperity Guides and the Don Meyer Boys and Girls Club, among others. She is a tireless advocate and an outstanding representative of excellence in public engagement.

Jesse Miller is a teaching labora- tory specialist in the department of chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He also is the di- rector of REACT (Reaching and Edu- cating America's Chemists of Tomor- row), a multifaceted outreach/public engagement program. Miller began his work with REACT as the co-director of REACT for five years and has been the sole director of the program for the past three years. The program within REACT organizes teams of three to five University of Illinois student volunteers to visit local schools and fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms and conduct hands-on chemistry experiments, introduc- ing children to chemistry in a fun and excit- ing way. The university student volunteers also benefit through direct classroom experience. This program reaches about 100 classrooms each year, involving about 5,000 student volun- teers and more than 3,000 elementary school children. Other programs within REACT include family nights in which student volunteers conduct hands-on chemistry experiments such as making ice cream with liquid nitrogen at area school “science nights,” which reach about 2,000 students.

During her regular one-on-one meet- ing show for television station WICD-FM in the United States, Miller is a multifaceted outreach/public engagement program leader. In addition to her service on state and national committees, she is a regular on-air member of WCEX-Radio and the National Public Radio program “Science Friday.” Miller is a member of the University of Illinois Center for Excellence in Public Engagement. She is an active member of the Illinois State Geological Survey, which is part of the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club, Champaign's Prosperity Garden and the local community. Participants are able to learn, grow, develop skills and better understand their cultural and environmental surroundings. Through yearly mentor- ing relationships, the university students become more knowledgeable about the community for which they are developing leadership skills as active roles in providing positive youth self-development. When assistant professor, Miller has been involved in over the course of many a de- cade. Each mentor builds a one-on-one relationship with a student who needs help, encourages them to continue their studies and enjoy spending time with them once a week.

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Communicating the relevance of one's scientific research to general audiences is a key aspect of educational outreach programs, especially when it comes to the research of university professors and researchers. Grant writing and evaluating research with nonscientists are important skills that are critical to the career success of college students and faculty mentors. And during the course, students learned about designing outreach programs and submitting proposals for learning on NSF review panels that evaluated research. Acting as an NSF-style review panel, the class evaluated the proposals, ultimately selecting six to fund and develop as a part of a biodiversity day that the course hosted at the Orpheum Children’s Science Museum in Champaign.

“Learning how to set up and develop a short lesson for children that could be repeated—such as evaluating the educational effectiveness was extremely valuable,” said Lauren Stein, a doctoral student in animal biology whose project proposal on kangaroos and the impact of extinction was developed for the biodiversity event. “There were also things to keep in mind that I hadn’t considered before, such as looking at schools’ curricula to see what they’re teaching and what kids of a certain age are expected to know.”

Both Lane and Heath were heavily involved in outreach before the course through the Graduate in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology program on campus, said Christine Silliman, a professor of plant biology who mentored the students in these broader impacts, providing opportunities to learn directly from experts in science communication, curriculum development, and grant writing.

The course, co-developed by plant science professor Katy Heath and graduate students such as communications about their research with nonscientists and developing educational outreach programs. Part of the Amplify the Signal course graduate students from left, front row, Cassandra Wesseln, Jennifer Han and Miranda Haus; back row, Rhiannon Peery, Christina Silliman and Heath. The course title refers to the importance of instruction in the College of Education. Silliman’s experiences in the course inspired her to obtain a grant from the Midwest Graeme Morris Environmental Foundation to fund development of educational curricula for primary and secondary school students and teach it at the schools that she attended while growing up near Grand Rapids, Mich.

Since then, Silliman has designed several other science units and projects for other grants to support her work. Silliman and graduate student Katherine Dunn also obtained a grant from the Tavloran Foundation of America to develop a workshop and symposium on the topic of broader impacts, which they presented at the society’s national meeting, held last November in Austin, Texas.

“Basically everything that I’ve been doing I learned in or was inspired by taking Amplify the Signal,” said Silliman. “I really enjoyed that class. It was definitely transformative for me. It was inspiring that I could also use what I learned in the course to get grants to do outreach on my own.”

In the post-course evaluations, “100 percent of the students who took Amplify the Signal said they would tell their friends to take it,” Heath said, and attributed the course’s success to its interdisciplinary content and panel of experts.

Heath expects to offer the course every two or three years, with the next offering likely to be during the fall semester 2015. A paper about the course, co-written by Heath and the students who took the course, appeared recently in the journal BioScience.

More information about the course and students’ essays are available online.
New computer model can help breed better soybean crops

By Liz Ahlberg

InsideIllinois April 17, 2014

New methods of simulating crop plants are appearing in the journal Global Change Biology. The National Science Foundation is providing a method for trying many more experiments than would be possible with devices that are currently available.

"This kind of numerical approach — using realistic models of plant canopies — can provide a method for trying many more experiments than would be possible with devices that are currently available," Drewry said.

"The application of stretchable electronics to medicine has a lot of potential," said Rogers. "Our epidermal devices have been worn on wrists, hands, and heads, and we can see how the technology could be applied to fabricate personalized electronics for the human body. We're trying to develop platforms that could be used to produce new devices that can be used to monitor and manage disease in the body.

"We are doing tooth trims and managements of indoor rabbits on a regular basis," Mitchy峡 said. "We know that vitamin D is important to tooth health, and we've been able to show that vitamin D can be used to treat dental disease in indoor rabbits. Vitamin D is essential for bone health, and we've been able to show that it can be used to treat dental disease in indoor rabbits.

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Alma Mater is right back where she belongs … and ready for Commencement

T

he Alma Mater sculpture returned to her base at the center of Wright and Green streets on April 9. The area was blocked off to accommodate the semitruck and trailer that carried the Alma Mater sculpture from green and st.jpg

much anticipated. The return of the Alma Mater sculpture, green for restoration work since August 2012, was met with great campus interest as onlookers packed the streets on April 9. The streets were blocked off to accommodate Alma Mater at Spurlock Museum; Andrzej Dajnowski, the director of Conservation of Sculptures and Objects Studio, where Alma was restored, moves the sculpture is perfectly aligned before locking her in place.

The Alma Mater Webcam is still working and plans are to leave it operating at least through the planned dedication ceremony on June 6. ◆

photo by L. Brian Stauffer

Easy does it. Above, the Alma Mater sculpture makes a soft landing on her pedestal at Green and Wright streets after more than a year of restoration work. The sculpture arrived on campus atop a flatbed truck following a slow, careful drive from the Chicago-area conservatory. A crane was used to lift the sculpture from the truck and onto the pedestal. Below, there’s strength in numbers as workers move her into place.

photo by Sean Scheid

Real relief. Above, the transformation of the Alma Mater sculpture from green and st.jpg

photo by Ben Woloszyn

Time capsule sends greetings to the future

By Mike Helenthal

Ultra-innovative LEDs that are injected deep into the brain to illuminate the mysteries of neuroscience

Three-dimensional printed roots fabricated by the School of Architecture in March.

Current copy of “Ninth Letter,” a semianual literary arts journal published by the M.F.A. in Creative Writing Program in collaboration with the School of Art and Design.

Commemorative ticket from the Assembly Hall’s 50th anniversary, March 2, 2013, Illinois vs. Nebraska basketball game.

Promotional guitar pick from Elton John Guitar Festival held at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

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“Save the date” postcard for the dedication of Maudelle Turner Brown Assembly Hall, which opened in 2013. Beardfield was the first African-American woman to graduate from the university.

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The two monopolies are then left to barb
ingly use the ‘labor exemption’ in antitrust
or the labor exemption in antitrust laws that represents college athletes – bicker
lies – one that represents a league, and one
that represents the NCAA eligibility rule
“distorts the ‘price’ of labor in the college
football labor market to the detriment of
players.”

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Ultimately, whether the recent ruling by
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But the unionization effort will likely not
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Thank you for all that you do.

TO OUR SUPPORT STAFF:

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Janet Abrahamson
Erika Anzo
Abigail Drewes
Kathy Dysart
Amy Frederick
Amy Hiles
Lynn Nguyen
Rachelle Nickey
Brianna Rossbach
Antoinette Sellers
Cheryl Street

We couldn’t do it without you!

To our outstanding staff

THE COLLEGE OF ACES gratefully acknowledges your dedication, achievements and many contributions.

Thank you!

To OUR SUPPORT STAFF:

Thank you for all that you do.

Gail Barkley • Vicki Halbersadt • Pam Joop • Beth McKown • Amber Moore • Judy Olson
Patty Roth • Jean Soliday • Deanna Spivey • Susan Vinton

A BIG THANKS TO THE DEDICATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SUPERCOMPUTING APPLICATIONS.

Thank you

The full text content is too large to display here. It includes various thank you messages to different groups of staff members from various departments and colleges at the University of Illinois. The content expresses gratitude for the contributions and efforts of these professionals. The messages are signed by various individuals, indicating their appreciation for the work done by their colleagues. The overall theme is a celebration of the support staff’s dedication and hard work.
To all University Library staff:
Thank you for everything you do to make this a truly extraordinary Library.
— John Wilkin
University Librarian and Dean of Libraries

Our thanks.

To the dedicated administrative members of our Institute, we deeply appreciate your efforts in all that you do.

Penny Ames
Ryan Dubnick
Solly Eakin
Candy Edwards
Lila Evans
Susan Hamon
Christine Hopper
Molly McMahan
Kathy Painter
Julie Smith

The Graduate School of Library and Information Science would like to express our gratitude to all of our exceptional administrative professionals. Your dedication and support play a vital role in the success of our school.

Thank you for helping to make GSLIS an outstanding place to learn, study, and work.

The Institute for Grounded Theory

Thank you to the administrative professionals of the Prairie Research Institute for your hard work, creativity, and dedication to science and service.

Thank you for helping tomorrow’s doctors realize their dreams.

Thank you.

On behalf of those who benefit from your dedicated service, the College of Applied Health Sciences extends our sincere thanks to you, our extraordinary administrative professional staff members!

To Our Dedicated Staff

In our day-to-day operations at the Illini Union, your work is a key to our success and a special reason you are truly appreciated.

Thank you for all you do!

The College of Fine + Applied Arts thanks our administrative professionals for their creativity, support, and dedication in helping FAA advance our mission.

We are
Problem Solvers + Creative Thinkers

To the dedicated administrative members of our Institute, we deeply appreciate your efforts in all that you do.

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Global Studies summer workshop

High school students can enroll now

Enrollment is open for Sustainable Futures Global Studies Summer Workshop, a summer program for high school students June 15-20. The U of I offers programs on the Urbana campus. Students live on campus, interact with faculty members, and engage in research and make team presentations. Students earn one credit from the University of Iowa. The program is taught by an associate director of the School of Earth, Society and the Global Environment, and organized by the Center for the Performing Arts.

Sheng will be on campus to discuss his experience and impact with this subject from 7:30 p.m. April 17 in the ARC auditorium. The exhibition and presentation is open to the public. The event is free to the public, and open to the public, and will be held in the Lectures are the part of the Beckman Institute Director's Seminar.

Fawcett will present his research in a discussion at the symposium on June 2-3. He will also discuss the potential of the technique for medical applications, such as imaging and drug delivery.

The fair features practical health activities and resources, such as do-it-yourself planting.

The workshop will provide practical strategies and hands-on experience for creating gardens and communities in urban environments.

The symposium will feature talks and discussions on the latest research in the field of elastography, with a focus on its applications in medical imaging and tissue characterization.

Elastography is a rapidly growing field in investigating the structure, function, and health of tissues through mechanical properties. The beamformer for the US Department of Energy's Advanced Photonics Research Center provided the main focus of the symposium.

Elastography is a technique that measures the elastic properties of tissues by using ultrasound imaging to create images of the internal structure of an object. The technique is based on the principle that materials with different elastic properties will appear differently in an ultrasound image.

The workshop is designed to teach participants how to perform elastography experiments and to understand the underlying physics of the technique.

The workshop will cover topics such as the fundamentals of elastography, how to perform experiments, and how to analyze the results.

The event is open to the public and will be held at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology. Faculty and students interested in biology, medicine, and engineering are encouraged to attend.

Different types of elastography exist, such as point-spread function elastography, which measures the elastic properties of a small region of tissue, and full-field elastography, which measures the elastic properties of the entire field of view.

In addition to the workshop, there will be a poster session where participants can present their research and network with other experts in the field.

The workshop will be held on April 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology. It is open to the public and will be free of charge.

In addition to the workshop, there will be a poster session where participants can present their research and network with other experts in the field.

The workshop will also feature a keynote speech by a leading expert in the field, as well as breaks for refreshments and socializing.

The workshop is free and open to the public, with limited space available for participants. Registration is required by April 16 to secure a spot.

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A labor dispute serves the NCAA's interests better than an antitrust lawsuit, which could potentially cost the governing body for college athletes millions of dollars in monetary damages, says a University of Illinois expert in labor relations and collective bargaining in athletics.

According to Michael LeRoy, a professor of labor and employment relations, the success of a collective bargaining process – “to engage in hard bargaining, where their bargaining strength is pitted against the vastly inferior bargaining power of college athletes.”

If the NCAA is worried about its public image, about coming off too heavy-handed when engaging in hard bargaining with student-athletes, it might consider how the public views player unions,” he said. “The fact is, the public already believes the NCAA is too powerful. But they’re not too crazy about player unions, either.”

Although critics of the NCAA are legion, they tend to assume that a union will improve conditions for players, LeRoy said. “To the contrary, the NFL experience shows that a professional league has much more bargaining power than a mere group of players whose average job-tenure is about 3 1/2 years, which is roughly comparable to NCAA eligibility for college athletes,” LeRoy said. “It’s wholly appropriate to condemn college football for exploiting players without paying them. But even in good times, both professional and collegiate football players have very little job security.”

Once a league figures out how to bargain hard, players seem to regret that they formed a union and eventually fold their hand,” LeRoy said. “People forget that NFL players decertified their union not once, but twice, in 1989 and again in 2011.”

According to LeRoy, from 1993-2011, NFL players negotiated a series of antitrust “stipulation and settlement agreements” that were proxies for collective bargaining agreements under the National Labor Relations Act. “Ironically, to achieve that success, the players had to decertify their union first, so that they could avoid the duty to bargain under the NLRA,” he said. “During that time, there was no legal relevance as to whether NFL players were ‘employees’ under federal labor law – all that mattered was that the league had imposed restrictions and constraints that restricted their mobility and caused monetary damages.”

Many of the current positions and arguments on either side of the player-union question are uninformed by a broader understanding of how collective bargaining has disappointed professional athletes and become an unlikely refuge for wealthy owners, LeRoy says.

“Just think back to 2011, when NFL players disbanded their union hours before their collective bargaining agreement expired, in order to posture as class action plaintiffs in a Sherman Act lawsuit,” he said. “Concurrently, you had NFL owners petitioning the NLRB with a charge that the players committed an unfair labor practice by not negotiating monetary concessions in good faith.”

LeRoy notes that critics of the player-union concept worry that paying college football players would take money away from non-revenue sports, especially those for female athletes. In addition, they also worry that paying college football players would complete the de facto transformation of the Division I game into a professional sport, create income tax liability for colleges and universities, or open the door to unionizing other college sports.

As varied as these scenarios are, LeRoy says they ignore the antitrust alternative to the player-union question.