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A few good sponsors wanted for this fall's UIS homecoming

By **CHRIS DETTRO**

THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

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Want your company's name on the official University of Illinois Springfield 2010 Homecoming T-shirt? It's there for \$500.

For just \$100, your name can be on one of the banners that stick to the side of cars carrying VIPs in the homecoming parade.

UIS marks its 40th anniversary this year, and the special theme for Homecoming Week activities Oct. 4-9 is "Where Stars Are Born."

Letters went out last week asking businesses to participate in the 2010 homecoming celebration and to consider sponsoring some events to have their business' name reach hundreds of alumni, students and faculty.

UIS solicited sponsors for last year's homecoming for the first time and got only a lukewarm response, said Cynthia Thompson, director of student life at UIS.

"We went out late last year, and it really felt like more of a save-the-date thing," she said. "It wasn't on a lot of people's radar, and there wasn't a lot of interest."

She said a sponsor did pay for the shirts worn by teams in the student vs. alumni/faculty/staff basketball game and got its logo on the shirts.

"We're on the radar screen this year," she said. "We've had quite a bit of response already."

She said if all the offered sponsoring opportunities sell out — which would bring in \$24,500 — it could pay the entire homecoming tab.

"That's not our intention," Thompson said. "We've budgeted as if we will receive nothing."

She said sponsorship money could be used to beef up homecoming activities or to redirect funds to other areas of student life.

"It would be very exciting if all elements got funded," she said. "If we got half of the six items, I'd be happy."

In addition to the six sponsorship and partnership opportunities listed in the letter, Thompson said she's open to other sponsorship suggestions.

Thompson said UIS had its first homecoming date when it was still Sangamon State University and has had three homecomings as UIS prior to 2002.

Since 2002, we've had a lot of new events that have become homecoming traditions, and that's very exciting," she said. The parade, for example, is just three years old.

"We have some new things in the works for this year, and we're strengthening the events we have," Thompson said. "We're working on broadening our base to invite more people to our events."

Chris Dettro can be reached at 788-1510.

Tentative schedule

Oct. 4: Pep rally, 9:30 p.m.

Oct. 5: Lunchtime games — mashed potato sculpting, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; make your own spirit wear, 9:30 p.m.

Oct. 6: Wacky Wednesday/lunchtime games, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oct. 7: Lunchtime games, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; homecoming dance with DJ, 9:30 p.m.

Oct. 8: Brookens Library book sale, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Mercy House service event, 1 to 4 p.m.; UIS women's soccer vs. St. Joseph, 5 p.m.; Pack the Field student cookout, 6:30 p.m.; UIS men's soccer vs. Bellarmine, 7:30 p.m.; fireworks following.

Oct. 9: 5K run/walk, 9 a.m.; educational technology showcase, 10:30 a.m.; "Through the Decades" brunch, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; UIS homecoming parade and pet parade, 5 p.m.; UIS homecoming barbecue and lawn party, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.; UIS students vs. alumni/faculty/staff basketball game, 7 p.m.

UIS Homecoming sponsorships

* Entire week of homecoming, including all event costs, meals, giveaways, decorations, etc. Sponsor recognition on all printed

materials, in radio advertising and on the sleeves of T-shirts as well as announced at the events. \$15,000

* Fireworks that will take place after the men's and women's soccer games Oct. 8. Sponsor recognition in printed materials for the day of, as well as a special announcement recognizing the sponsors. Need \$2,500 in \$500 increments.

* Homecoming T-shirts handed out at events to more than 500 students and worn throughout the week and beyond. Sponsor logo on sleeve. Deadline is Friday. Need \$3,000 in \$500 increments.

* Homecoming barbecue held shortly after the parade Oct. 9 before the students vs. alumni/faculty/staff basketball game. About 400 people expected. Recognition depends on level of sponsorship. Need \$2,500 in \$500 increments or in-kind services.

* Stick-on banners for cars carrying VIPs in parade. Recognition on the individual banners. Need is \$1,000 in \$100 increments.

* Basketball game T-shirts for the students vs. alumni/faculty/staff basketball game following the barbecue. T-shirts worn by the players, with sponsor logo on shirt. Expected attendance of 200. Need \$500 or in-kind contribution.

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