

# UIS TODAY

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS | SPRINGFIELD

1970  2020

# 50

UIS



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD



Springfield, Illinois

# UIS TODAY

Editorial Director: Hugh M. Cook, '81 CBA, MBA '83  
hmcook@uillinois.edu

Editor: David Alan Scott  
davscott@uillinois.edu

Graphic Designer: Lindsey Feger

Contributing Writers: Cindy Kuzma;  
Stephanie Lahnum, MA '06 PAA;  
Kate Schott, MA '02 PAA; Mary Timmins;  
Angela Try; and Blake Wood, MA '04 LAS

## PRODUCED BY

The University of Illinois Springfield  
Karen Whitney, Interim Chancellor

## IN COLLABORATION WITH

The University of Illinois Alumni Association  
Jennifer Dillavou, '82 ED, President

## CONTACT INFORMATION

UIS:  
Website: uis.edu/advancement  
Email: advancement@uis.edu  
Reception: 217-206-6058

UIAA:  
Website: uiaa.org  
Email: uisalumni@uillinois.edu  
Alumni Service Center: 800-355-2586

## UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

### ALUMNI BOARD

#### CHAIR

**Rikeesha V. Phelon**, '99 PAA, MA '05 LAS

#### VICE CHAIR

**Carly A. Hawkins**, '05 PAA

#### SECRETARY

**John P. Lowder**, '94 PAA

#### IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

**Thom M. Serafin**, '73 LAS, MA '91 PAA

**Richard T. Berning**, MPA '75 PAA

**Brian M. Cross**, '95 PAA

**Priyanka N. Deo**, '10 PAA

**Tina Buck Harth**, '13 LAS

**Ronda Y. Guyton**, '04 PAA

**Nina M. Harris**, '91 CBM, MPA '98

**Karen E. Hasara**, '72 LAS, MA '92 PAA

**Jamaal E. Hollins**, '14 LAS

**Julie A. Kellner**, '86 CBM

**Matthew R. Mayer**, '98 PAA

**Joyce A. Nardulli**, '84 LAS

**Kyle L. Simpson**, '08 PAA

**Deborah K. Thompson**, '93 CBM, MA '98 LAS

**Randall F. Witter**, MPA '82 PAA

#### EX-OFFICIO

UIS Interim Chancellor, **Karen Whitney**

UIS Vice Chancellor for Advancement /  
UI Foundation Senior Vice President

**Jeff Lorber**

UIS Associate Vice Chancellor for Alumni

Relations **Charles J. Schrage**, MA '05 PAA

## On the Cover

Cover design: Chuck Anderson, NoPattern Studio.

Cover images: UIS Archives, UIS Public Relations;  
Darrell Hoemann; Clay Stalter

This issue would not have been possible without the considerable contributions of University Archivist Thomas J. Wood, MS '81 UIUC, MA '83 UIUC, and Archives graduate assistant Erin Williams, as well as Community Relations Director **Joan Sestak**, '89 LAS, Assistant Director of Advancement Engagement Maggie Owen, Marketing Associate **Kate Schott**, MA '02 PAA, and Senior Photographer Clay Stalter.

1970  2020  
**50**  
UIS



## The Ins and Outs of Innovation

How the University of Illinois Springfield achieved world-class status in public affairs by keeping true to Sangamon State University's populist origins.

**By David Scott**

## Bold Legacy Bright Future

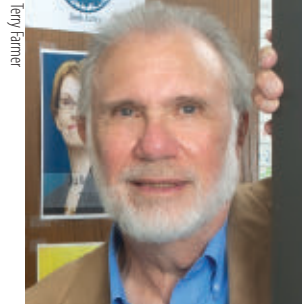
A time capsule of the people and events that shaped the history of SSU and UIS.

**By Mary Timmins**

Our 50th anniversary souvenir issue offers expanded coverage in our **News and Departments**

# **UIS TODAY**

Contents  
Volume 3, Number 1 • Fall 2020



# 14

## Lesson Plans

Professor Emeritus Larry Golden reflects on building a university from scratch and bringing justice to the wrongly convicted.

**As told to Mary Timmins**



# 38

## How We Shine!

UIS introduces A Galaxy of Prairie Stars—50 (plus) Alumni to Honor 50 Years.



# 41

## Gallery: That Was Then; This Is Now

A look inside the University's Archives offers treasures from the past.

- 2** From the President
- 3** From the Chancellors
- 4** Prairie Stars News
- 12** Government Affairs
- 16** Athletics

- 20** The Arts
- 22** Campaign Update
- 42** Alumni Relations
- 43** Class Profiles
- 48** Viewfinder



Timothy L. Killeen

## From the **President**

# Celebrating an Extraordinary Engine of Progress

The University builds on its best-in-class standing by never losing sight of the needs of both students and the public good

**For UIS,  
the road  
ahead  
is even  
brighter  
than its  
legacy.**

**I**t is remarkable to think about how much the University of Illinois Springfield has accomplished in its 50 years, a relative blink in a nation where higher education dates to the mid-1600s and more than a dozen colleges are older than America itself.

For well over a decade, UIS has ranked among the very best regional public universities—in Illinois *and* across all of the Midwest. It has been the springboard to success for more than 44,000 living alumni who are sharing their talents to lift not just their families, but also their communities. From its beginning as Sangamon State University, it has emerged as a leader in crucial fields such as public policy and online education, where its pioneering expertise earned a request from the state to help other colleges and K–12 schools transition to virtual learning when classrooms were shuttered last spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

And, I am proud that for half of its 50 years, UIS has been one of the three crown jewels of the University of Illinois System. Since 1995, the growing capital city campus has given our world-class enterprise a learning environment to meet the needs of literally every student—an intimate, liberal arts counterpart to our big-scale, Big Ten university in Urbana-Champaign and our urban campus in the shadows of Chicago’s skyline.

UIS has filled its role with excellence, and it continues to build on its best-in-class standing by never losing sight of the needs of both students and the public good. In recent years alone, new

programs have been added that are nurturing next-generation skills ranging from cybersecurity and data analytics to exercise science and nursing. New faculty include thought leaders of today and the rising stars of tomorrow. Athletics have moved up to NCAA Division II. And the campus’ well-known civic spirit has moved even deeper into the Springfield community, serving neighbors across the city it calls home.

The University has flourished through support that stretches far beyond its scenic, 750-acre campus. The generosity of donors and friends has helped fuel record fundraising for scholarships, programs, new initiatives and bricks-and-mortar projects such as the campus’ first-ever student union.

There is so much to be proud of and so many people to thank for a half-century of commitment and hard work that has produced this extraordinary engine of progress for our students, our state and our nation.

So take pause, take stock and take the lead of late social rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nelson Mandela, who said: “Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead.”

For UIS, the road ahead is even brighter than its legacy, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who has helped pave the way to the dreams of the future that we all share.

**Timothy L. Killeen**  
President, University of Illinois System

# From the Chancellors

## The Public Good

I am honored to provide this celebratory message to mark the 50th anniversary of the University of Illinois Springfield! One of the many characteristics that attracted me to UIS in 2011 was this young University's potential for growth in visibility and reputation, coupled with its potential to contribute to the public good of the Springfield community, the state of Illinois and beyond.



Susan J. Koch

I witnessed that potential come to life daily throughout my years as chancellor, and I'm so proud of the many contributions faculty, staff, students, donors and friends have made to make UIS the top regional public university in Illinois today and a point of pride for the Springfield community and the entire UI System.

Many of my treasured memories of UIS relate to student achievements such as academic presentations at the annual STARS Symposium and UIS Theatre performances. UIS Music ensembles have made memories with outstanding concerts for an ever-growing audience. Student athlete achievements include the baseball and softball teams that earned first-ever appearances at Division II NCAA championships. And best of all, I've had the privilege of

witnessing the graduation of more than 10,000 students—each their own personal triumph.

The UIS community has also shared many celebratory moments with the addition of the landmark Lincoln sculpture, the Shakespeare Garden and, of course, the Student Union. All were made possible, in part, by the generosity of supporters who believe so deeply in the importance of UIS. As chancellor emerita, I will always be one of those supporters.

Happy 50th anniversary, UIS!

**Susan J. Koch**  
**Chancellor Emerita**  
**UIS Chancellor 2011–20**

## Important to Our Region

I am so pleased to write this note, 10 years since retiring as chancellor, in celebration of 50 years of Prairie Stars in the state capital. UIS is special—it's Illinois' member of the national Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, for example.

When I was offered the chancellorship, my wife and I made a quick "stealth" visit to UIS. We discovered 750 acres of prairie, with three "permanent" buildings and several "temporary" ones (that are still there!). We went into Sangamon Auditorium. "This is first class, beautiful—really extraordinary!" we said, in near synchronization. In our minds' eyes, we gained a preview to the promising future of an already lovely campus. Take a look at our campus now, from a world-class office/classroom building to the picturesque colonnade (my favorite!).

The stature in the University's first year of eligibility for the *U.S. News & World Report* college

rankings surprised even its chancellor! UIS was named fourth best masters-level state university in its large, 10-state Midwest region, and best in Illinois. Many



Richard D. Ringeisen

local businesses celebrated with us, even lighting up their outside signs with "UIS fourth best," recognizing the University's importance to its region.

Today UIS embraces the future with its first-rate academic programs, its highly regarded online opportunities and its rapidly developing, exciting athletic program.

Just like our two sister universities in the UI System, we stand among the very best of our peer institutions.

UIS indeed! Fifty years strong and still moving on up! Gooooo STARS!

**Richard D. Ringeisen**  
**Chancellor Emeritus**  
**UIS Chancellor 2001–10**

## Significant Contributions

It was a privilege to witness UIS' transition from Sangamon State as an upper division school to a four-year university to joining the University of Illinois system. It is the nature of a university to question, agree, and disagree, but in the end, the UIS

transformation was the result of a collaboration of faculty, staff, administration and community—and for that I am most grateful.

This called for adaptation and adjustment without abandoning its original mandate to serve the educational needs of our state capital. Its transformation into four-year status secured a strong liberal arts foundation and enabled the start of a doctorate program. Sangamon State University attracted an exceptionally creative faculty and staff. It was innovative in granting credit for community service and working with the community on issues of social justice. Its early faculty laid a foundation from which every generation of students continues to benefit.

UIS has a history of developing scholars who make significant contributions to their



Naomi B. Lynn

disciplines. Every year, UIS brings our nation's most distinguished Lincoln scholars to campus. As we embark on the next chapter of achievement, I am confident UIS will continue the excellence that catapulted us into an extraordinary university.

**Naomi B. Lynn**  
**Chancellor Emerita**  
**SSU President/UIS Chancellor**  
**1991–2001**



# Prairie Stars News



# Bird's Eye View

In 1969, the State of Illinois Board of Regents purchased the original 500 acres—the land of local farmer Thomas Strawbridge—to create Sangamon State University. As SSU became the University of Illinois Springfield, an additional 250 acres was acquired to complete the main campus.

This 2015 bird's eye view highlights the campus' encompassing circle drive, lined with the distinctive October Glory red maple trees that were planted in the 1970s. The original temporary-yet-still-in-use buildings ("Legacy Campus") are to the left; the central Quad that dominates this photo would take final shape in 2019 with the dedication of the Student Union.

As the ample parking shows, SSU was conceived as a commuter school. With a setting so lovely, however, students soon clamored for places to live on campus. The University added campus apartments, townhouses and, finally, residence halls. Those who have never visited this bucolic idyll may find it hard to believe that downtown Springfield is only minutes away.

Photo: Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations



## United in Safety

**While a slight dip in enrollment reflects pandemic jitters, UIS leads the way in testing and contact tracing—as well as innovative approaches to education and programming—in its “Return to the Prairie”**

“We are and will continue to be a place that provides a uniquely student-centered education experience,” says UIS Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney of the University’s current mix of safe in-class and maximized online learning.

**U**IS welcomed 4,146 students to campus in the uncertain times of Fall 2020, a 3.0 percent decrease from last year. The total number of credit hours taken by students remains at 43,130, down only 1.2 percent from last fall.

The numbers reflect the ongoing concerns over COVID-19. On the upside, students enrolled in online programs grew from 1,451 (Fall 2019) to 1,540 (Fall 2020), a 6 percent increase. (This number does not reflect the number of students taking hybrid and remote classes.) UIS online students reside in 82 Illinois counties, 46 states, one U.S. territory (Guam) and nine

foreign countries.

“With the concern of COVID-19 and some students talking about taking a gap year, these numbers are better than we had expected,” UIS Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney says. “We are and will continue to be a place that provides a uniquely student-centered educational experience both in and out of the physical classroom. We are national leaders in online learning, and we have once again proven this year that we can expertly provide classes in a remote-learning format. In fact, we’re teaching other schools how to teach more effectively online.”





Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



The University of Illinois developed the saliva-based Polymerase Chain Reaction test in use at all three UI System campuses. The test has the highest sensitivity level for COVID-19, and it can detect the virus in people who are asymptomatic and/or individuals who are early in the course of disease, which makes it an exceptional screening tool. The PCR test has less than a 0.3 percent false positive rate.

### COVID Prevention

Procedures to reduce congestion and assure physical distancing were implemented for students returning to campus during the Aug. 17–20 move-in days. Students and their guests also were required to check in at the Recreation and Athletic Center for initial temperature and virus screenings.

To monitor ongoing COVID-19 infection rates among students, faculty and staff, UIS has partnered with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to implement its saliva-based COVID-19 testing. UIS also consulted with the Sangamon County and Illinois Departments of Public Health to establish a protocol for mandated weekly testing of all students, faculty and staff who currently learn, live or work on the UIS

campus. Similarly, anyone needing to visit campus for any reason must report to the testing site on the day they come to campus, at least once per week. Testing is being conducted in the Public Affairs Center, lower level.

The UIUC–developed, saliva-based Polymerase Chain Reaction test has the highest sensitivity level for COVID-19, and it can detect the virus in people who are asymptomatic and/or individuals who are early in the course of the disease, which makes it an exceptional screening tool. The PCR test has less than a 0.3 percent false positive rate.

Those testing positive must isolate/quarantine themselves. A contact tracing program conducted by the UIS Testing Team and the Sangamon County Dept. of Public Health also is in place.

### The Student Experience

The pandemic also has altered the education process, resulting in students participating in their coursework via a series of online, in-class and blended-learning models, all designed for maximum safety and effectiveness.

Even extracurricular activities and community engagement have gotten a revamp. UIS’ popular Friday night Star Parties were held live on Zoom during September and October, and also recorded for “on-demand” viewing at a later date (visit [uis.edu/astronomy/about/starparties](http://uis.edu/astronomy/about/starparties)).

For parents, and others, the UIS Office of Continuing and Professional Education is hosting free webinars on “Supporting Your Student: A Parent’s Guide to Remote Learning.” Register for the free webinars at [www.uis.edu/](http://www.uis.edu/)

[cape/parent-webinar-series/](http://cape/parent-webinar-series/).

Music aficionados continue to enjoy the UIS Music Program through virtual concerts, lectures and a masterclass series at [www.uis.edu/music](http://www.uis.edu/music).

Updates about UIS and its COVID-19 response can be found at [www.uis.edu/covid-19](http://www.uis.edu/covid-19).

—David Scott, with reporting by UIS Campus Relations

**The University instituted a road map for safely coming back to campus: “UIS—United in Safety: Return to the Prairie.”**

**UIS**  
by the  
Numbers

**4,146**

Current total UIS enrollment

**3,243**

Number of Illinois residents attending UIS

**1,492**

Number of UIS graduate students

**255**

Number of UIS international students



# The Essence of Leadership

**Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney explains how pride, perseverance and grit will get UIS through transitions and tough times**

By David Scott

Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney spoke with *UIS Today* to share her past experience in higher education and her current plans for the University. In a memo to the campus community, she outlined her goals (see “Ten Goals for 2020” below), and she acknowledged that, because of the pandemic, this is a unique (perhaps even unprecedented) opportunity. “I’m committed to providing strong and steady leadership during this time of challenge and transition,” she noted. “As we move forward, please know supporting the important work of our talented students and dedicated faculty and staff is paramount.”

**Please share your first impressions of UIS.**

This is one of the most beautiful campuses I have ever been on in my entire career in higher education! The landscaping, the spaces, the environment—whether it’s the Shakespeare Garden or the pond or the attention to visual detail—are just *beautiful*! I’m also impressed by how accessible the campus is to the Springfield metro community.

Next, I met the hard-working, conscientious faculty and staff. I was impressed with the hundreds of faculty who stopped whatever plans they had for the summer and focused on re-engineering their courses to be able to offer—come what may—in-person, blended and/or online

“This is one of the most beautiful campuses I have ever been on in my entire career in higher education,” says Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney, who brings to UIS 40 years of academic experience.

## Ten Goals for 2020

**COVID-19:** Work with University and system leaders, faculty, staff, students, alumni and community leaders to ensure that UIS continues to provide high-quality teaching, learning, research and service during the pandemic.

**Anti-Racism and Social Justice:** Work with University and system leaders, faculty, staff, students, alumni and community leaders to build upon the University’s efforts that advance our values of integrity, civic engagement, diversity, strategic thinking and

accountability through our teaching, learning, research and service.

**Enrollment:** Work with the provost, the enrollment management team and the deans to enhance student recruitment efforts; implement the Common Application

platform; and increase both undergraduate and graduate student enrollments.

**Academic Affairs Reorganization:** Work with the provost, deans and faculty to finalize the college and department realignment

learning. Now I am meeting the students who, it's clear to me, are serious about pursuing a great college experience because they want a good life going forward for themselves and their families.

**How is your background and experience in sync with UIS?**

When President Killeen started talking with me about this position, I was immediately drawn to UIS' mission and vision—the motto of *Leadership lived*. I enjoyed a 40-year career as a president and a chancellor, and now I freelance as a consultant and coach for higher-education and organizational development. I believe that our society needs courageous, confident leaders. I take to heart the University's rich history as a regional public university that has preeminent programs in policy work and public administration. That's the essence of leadership.

**You've come to UIS at a critical time in its development and at a challenging time in all of our lives. What do you anticipate for the coming year?**

I'm optimistic. Something happened just last night that will tell you why. I'm living on-campus, with the students in student housing, and I was coming home from the grocery store. Driving onto campus, there were two people in front of the UIS sign. They'd gotten out of their car, and they were taking selfies with the sign behind them. I was just so happy to see that because *they* were so happy. I could tell they were new students, and they were having their Kodak moment—now that tells you how old I am! I just thought, "You know, the pandemic hasn't taken that from us." There are some things the pandemic definitely has taken, but it hasn't taken our pride, that spirit of perseverance and grit. We will get through the greatest health crisis the world has experienced in 100 years because of that spirit.

Here's another healthy indicator: UIS has attained more than 90 percent of its fundraising goal in the Reaching Stellar Campaign, which is incredible given the times we're living in. That speaks volumes to the good work the University has done for 50 years. It speaks volumes to the commitment of Chancellor Koch—and her team—as involved leaders in this community. And it is evidence that the community acknowledges the University's great work *and* believes we will do even more. The campaign is a great way to launch into the future and to see what more we can do to serve Springfield and Illinois.

In critical moments such as the pandemic, people look to institutions. A rural metaphor comes to mind. *People look to the pole in the pole barn.* What's holding up the barn? What's holding up our society? Universities are key to civic and business life. It doesn't surprise me that when the going gets tough, institutions such as UIS are appreciated even more.



Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations

Interim Chancellor Whitney—who is living in on-campus housing—enjoys meeting and interacting with the UIS student body.

She says that the University's motto, **Leadership lived**, resonates with her. Looking to Springfield's favorite son, Abraham Lincoln, she notes, "I believe that our society needs courageous, confident leaders."



**As someone coming in from the outside, what message do you have for our alumni and community?**

The next 50 years for UIS will be very bright as it continues to be a huge contributor to the lives and livelihoods of people in this region. Expect real excitement: What things will students learn that have yet to be imagined? We want to keep our alumni and friends informed about UIS so they, in turn, will keep talking with their friends and family about the good that we do. They should consider joining us as well; our volunteers and donors understand that a legacy of giving is a good investment. Together, we are preparing for the next 50 years and beyond.

and reorganization to optimize intellectual synergies and maximize realization of goals in the Strategic Compass.

**Labor Relations:** Work with the offices of the president and the provost, human resources, and faculty and staff leaders on various labor union contracts, including negotiation of a

successor agreement for the faculty bargaining unit.

**Organizational Improvements:** Work with all units of the University and the System's chief financial officer to continue identifying efficiencies to strengthen the University's budget model.

**Strategic Compass:** Work with administration, faculty, staff and students to continue implementation of the Strategic Compass.

**Community Outreach:** Work with University leaders to preserve and extend community outreach to the city of Springfield and the surrounding area.

**Reaching Stellar Campaign:** Work with the president, the University of Illinois Foundation, the Office of Advancement and UIS friends to complete the \$40 million Reaching Stellar Campaign.

# Prairie Stars News

Orion's "smize" (smiling eyes) shows he knows that UIS ranks as the top public regional university in Illinois for the second year in a row.



Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations

## U.S. News & World Report cites UIS as top regional university

**U**.S. News & World Report has ranked UIS as the top public regional university in Illinois and the fourth best public university in the Midwest regional category for a second year in a row in its 2021 Best Colleges rankings. The magazine also ranked UIS fifth best in the Midwest regional category when it comes to students graduating with the least amount of debt.

To determine rankings, *U.S. News* looks at retention and graduation rates, faculty resources (such as class size and faculty salary), academic reputation, financial resources available to students, how well students performed academically in high school (including ACT/SAT and high school percentile rank) and alumni giving.

Since 2006, UIS has been ranked consistently among the top 15 best public regional universities in the Midwest. The complete report is available at [usnews.com/best-colleges](https://usnews.com/best-colleges). —Blake Wood

UIS Campus Relations



## UIS names interim vice chancellor for student affairs

Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Van Vieregge is honored to continue the vision of predecessor Clarice Ford, who passed away unexpectedly in April. "We will provide an inclusive, diverse, safe and supportive experience."

**U**IS has appointed Dr. Van Vieregge interim vice chancellor for student affairs. Born and raised in Greenville, Ill., Vieregge has served as UIS executive director of auxiliary services since January 2012 and as assistant vice chancellor for student services since 2013. He earned undergraduate degrees from Kaskaskia College (Ill.) and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and holds an MBA from SIUE. He received his doctorate

in education from Saint Louis University.

A veteran educator, Vieregge has served a number of Illinois schools and institutions, including Greenville University (1997–2014), Lake Land College (2003–05), Blackburn College (1999–2002) and the Illinois Dept. of Transportation.

Vieregge assumes the responsibilities of Dr. Clarice Ford, who passed away unexpectedly in April. —B.W.

**SSU/  
UIS  
by the  
Numbers**

**457**

Number of graduates at SSU's first Commencement, 1972

**750**

Number of graduates at SSU's 10th Commencement, 1982

**1,069**

Number of graduates at UIS' first Commencement, 1996

**1,836**

Number of graduates at Commencement 2017, the University's largest to date

# UIS welcomes new faculty members

Eighteen new faculty have joined UIS. Four faculty members will teach in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, six in the College of Business and Management, four in the College of Education and Human Services and four in the College of Public Affairs and Administration.

**Hypatia “Tia” Bolivar**, psychology instructor, LAS, holds a doctorate in psychology/behavior analysis from the University of Florida. Her research interests include behavioral analysis and relapse.

**Salem Boumediene**, associate professor of accounting, economics and finance, CBM, earned a doctorate in business administration-accounting from the University of Tunis. His research interests include bringing accounting and decision-making research to practice.

**Michael Chuang**, MS ‘98 UIUC, PHD ‘05 UIUC, assistant professor of management information systems, CBM, holds a doctorate in business administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research interests include technology use for business, online learning, innovation and entrepreneurship.

**Tessica “Tess” Dooley**, assistant professor of legal studies, PAA, earned her law degree at the University of Arkansas. Her research and professional interests include employee benefits law.

**Sahar Farshadkhan**, assistant professor of management information systems, CBM, is expected to earn a doctorate in business administration and computer information systems from Louisiana Tech University this year. Her research interests include cybersecurity.

**Matthew Geras**, assistant professor of political science, PAA, is expected to earn a doctorate in political science from the University of Oklahoma this year. His research interests include U.S. election politics.

**Cathy Gunn**, visiting professor of teacher education, EHS, earned her doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Oregon. Her research interests include professional development, online learning, program assessment and strategic planning.

**Timothy Hakenewerth**, assistant professor of human development counseling, EHS, is expected to earn a doctorate in counselor education and counseling from Idaho State University this year. His research interests include counseling, leadership and professional networking.

**Amy Hewitt**, assistant professor of teacher education, EHS, is expected to earn a doctorate in educational studies/mathematics education from the University of North Carolina–Greensboro this year. Her research interests include elementary mathematics.

**Xiang Huang**, assistant professor of computer science, LAS, is expected to earn a doctorate in computer science from Iowa State University this year. His research and professional interests include theoretical computer science, algorithmic information theory and analog computing.

**Jose Irizarry**, a doctoral dissertation fellow in public administration, PAA, is expected to earn a doctorate in public administration from Florida Atlantic University this year. His research interests include nonprofits, human resources, public policy and community engagement.

**Adam Larison**, instructor of music, LAS, earned a doctorate in musical arts with a focus on guitar performance and literature from the Eastman School of Music. His research interests include classical music history, history of hip hop and new music improvisation.

**Stephanie Maynard-Patrick**, visiting assistant professor of management, marketing and operations, CBM, earned her doctorate in business administration/management from New Mexico State University. Her research interests include human resources and organizational behavior.

**Trung Pham**, assistant professor of accounting, economics and finance, CBM, is expected to earn a doctorate in accounting from Kent State University this year. His research interests include the impact of governance on earnings management and earnings quality.

**Daniel Platt**, assistant professor of legal studies, PAA, earned a doctorate in American studies from Brown University. His research interests include legal history and political economy.

**Misty Sax**, assistant professor of athletic training, LAS, earned her doctorate in athletic training from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. Her research interests include clinical anatomy, concussion injuries and the impact of pandemic on student athletes.

**Lisa Vinson**, assistant professor of human services, EHS, is expected to earn a doctorate in counselor education and supervision from Northern Illinois University this year. Her research interests include American ethnicity.

**Yuan Wen**, assistant professor of management, marketing and operations, CBM, earned his doctorate in marketing from Washington State University. His research include marketing-finance interface and marketing strategy. —B.W.



Hypatia “Tia” Bolivar



Salem Boumediene



Michael Chuang



Tessica “Tess” Dooley



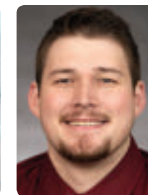
Sahar Farshadkhan



Matthew Geras



Cathy Gunn



Timothy Hakenewerth



Amy Hewitt



Xiang Huang



Jose Irizarry



Adam Larison



Stephanie Maynard-Patrick



Trung Pham



Daniel Platt



Misty Sax

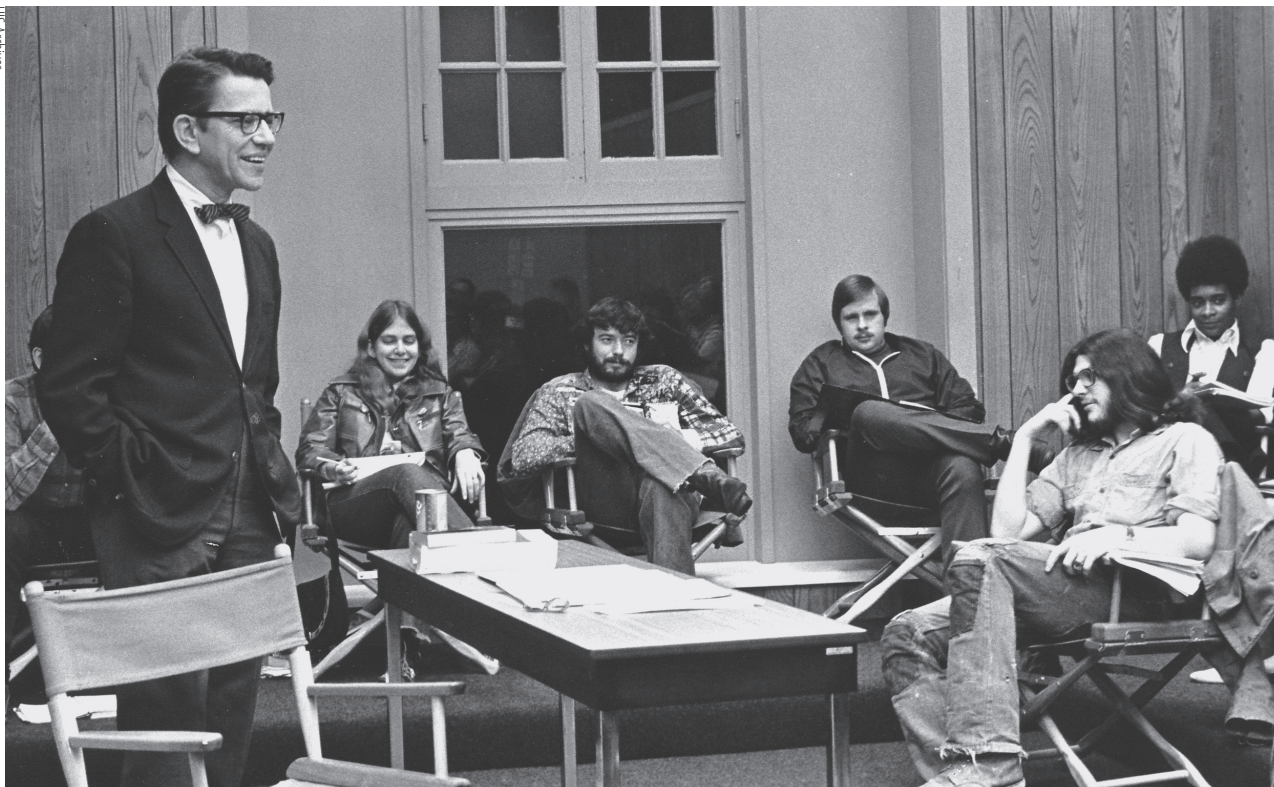


Lisa Vinson



Yuan Wen

UIS Archives



Former Illinois Lt. Gov. Paul Simon (left) envisioned a journalistic program that would train reporters to address the growing complexity of state issues. His students came to the program with backgrounds in print or broadcast journalism.

# Reporting for Duty

**The University's Public Affairs Reporting program creates topnotch journalists using a hands-on curriculum like no other**

by Stephanie Lahnum

For nearly 50 years, the Public Affairs Reporting program has trained students to cover the complex issues of Illinois government by allowing them to work as full-time reporters, positions technically classified as internships. Housed in the College of Public Affairs and Administration, PAR offers a hands-on curriculum like no other. Many of the 700 PAR alumni—three of whom are Pulitzer Prize winners—can be found working at media outlets in Washington, D.C., Chicago and major cities across the nation.

In Sangamon State University's earliest days, Illinois Lieutenant Governor and faculty member Paul Simon recognized opportunity for public benefit in a visionary idea: Link students' academic endeavors to real-world operations at the Illinois Statehouse. The former newspaper publisher envisioned a journalistic program that would fulfill a need for reporters who could address the growing complexity of then-current state issues such as school funding disparities and the expansion of criminal penalties. They would provide in-depth information to an

increasingly sophisticated base of constituents; and they would address the need for better public affairs reportage.

## Forward Thinkers

"The program was created at a very serendipitous time," says Charlie Wheeler, PAR director from 1993 to 2019. "The founding faculty had radical ideas and subscribed to a broader notion than the traditional book-learning style. The press corps was willing to provide opportunities to [student] reporters if the University provided credit for the program. So many forward thinkers for the time."

Public Affairs Reporting launched its one-year graduate program in the fall of 1972 with 12 students, all of whom had backgrounds in either print or broadcast journalism. Students would spend the fall semester learning about Illinois government and sharpening their reporting skills. The second semester would be a one-on-one internship with a mentor from the Statehouse press corps covering the Illinois General Assembly's spring session.

Simon left the program in 1974 to pursue politics on a national scale. He went on to serve Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, and he ran an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. His legacy has been preserved by a short list of long-



Darrell Heeman



With Capitol press conferences as their classrooms, PAR students quickly equipped themselves to provide in-depth information to an increasingly sophisticated constituent base.

"The program was created at a very serendipitous time," says Charlie Wheeler (right), PAR director from 1993 to 2019. "The press corps was willing to provide opportunities to [student] reporters if the University provided credit for the program."

serving directors. Bill Miller, an award-winning radio reporter for whom the PAR Hall of Fame is named, followed Simon and served as director for 19 years. Charlie Wheeler took the helm in 1993 after nearly 25 years covering state government for Chicago's *Sun-Times*. Wheeler, the only person to have met every PAR student in the program's history, served in the position until retirement last year. He was succeeded in 2019 by **Jason Piscia, MA '98 LAS**—a program alumnus and longtime reporter and editor at *The State Journal-Register*.

What attracts students to PAR from across the nation is the same thing that makes the program unique. PAR interns do not get coffee, hunt down supplemental information for other reporters or produce stories for a journalism school's media organization. Instead, they function independently as full-time reporters for statewide media organizations such as *The Sun-Times*, *Capitol News Illinois*, National Public Radio and Illinois Nexstar TV Stations, with their bylines and news reports often seen and heard across the state.

"Information is key," says Wheeler. They're "dedicated, talented reporters [who] are trained to explain complex issues to their audience" allowing the latter to be involved in public policy and make better decisions when it's time to vote.


### Current with the Times

Through the course of a half century, PAR students have stood at the forefront of national news and historic moments ranging from Barack Obama's presidential announcement in Springfield to the arrest and impeachment of

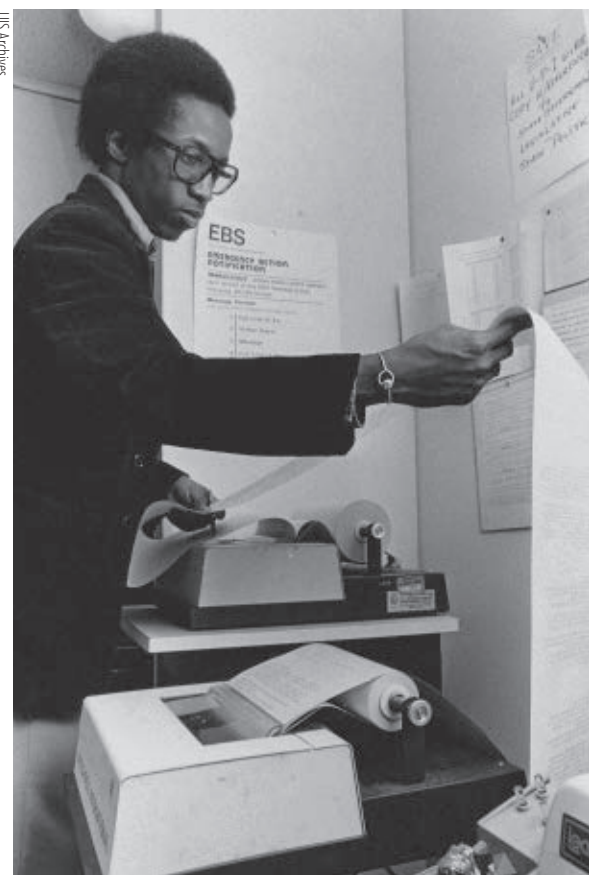
sitting Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich. But prestigious as PAR is, it's not immune to the effects of shrinking newsrooms and budget cuts impacting journalists across the U.S. At the program's peak in 2005, 22 students were enrolled; by 2019, the number of students had declined to seven.

Current program director Piscia recognizes the need to adapt. "We need to do something to take control of our own fate," he says. To that end, he's organized remote internships for outlets that no longer have full-time statehouse reporters. "Previously all interns worked side-by-side with a professional journalist. But when news outlets close their bureaus, we lose those student internship spots. So we worked out an agreement with some outlets where they would have a remote intern at the Capitol and make a commitment to mentorship every day."

A remote internship with *The Sun-Times* worked well with the class of 2019–20. As a result, Piscia plans to build on that model to ensure the PAR program becomes stronger in the years to come. Eleven students are enrolled in the program this fall.

"I hope to build the program back to what it was before," Piscia says. "We are injecting a population of highly trained reporters into newsrooms around Illinois and the country. Students are doing important stories about topics that the community needs to know about. Meaningful issues—how much people are taxed, what the government is doing about COVID-19 and the debate on pensions. Providing our communities and state with this kind of information is a service we can't afford to lose." 

UIS Archives



The program's founders recognized opportunity for public benefit in a visionary idea—link students' academic endeavors to real-world operations at the Illinois Statehouse.

## Gold Standard

Professor Emeritus Larry Golden—who has been with SSU/UIS from the start—reflects on building a university from scratch and bringing justice to the wrongly convicted

I was the youngest faculty member hired when Sangamon State University opened in 1970. I am the last of the founding faculty members who is still here in a formal role. The 50th anniversary of the University is also my 50th anniversary of teaching here.

Most of my work has focused on the law and issues of racial, economic and gender inequality. The late 1990s were the beginning of a movement to investigate cases of people who had been convicted and sentenced to death, but who might be innocent. This was primarily prompted by the advent of DNA research. It was the first time the existing evidence in these cases could be tested and used to prove innocence, and perhaps lead to the actual perpetrator.

That was the beginning of the Innocence Movement, which today is one of the most significant movements in American history with regard to the criminal justice process. It feeds

directly into what our country is facing right now with the current unrest over police misconduct. Innocence cases throughout the last 25 years have exposed systemic misconduct by police, prosecutors and even judges, misconduct that has resulted in innocent people being convicted for major crimes and put in prison for the rest of their lives.

In 2001, we began to teach a class in the legal studies department with our senior students, asking them to work with lawyers on cases that might result in a finding of innocence. We continue to offer a class every semester on wrongful conviction.

We are the only undergraduate university in the country that hosts an Innocence Project. Students from disciplines across the University participate in our work. We put great faith in our undergraduates to help the lawyers as they are doing their job. The amount of research that goes into any of these cases is immense—the gathering and reading of transcripts, the identification of evidence. That's the primary work that students—as interns, volunteers and workers—do after staff members screen cases. We get approximately one request a day for help—around 340–350 requests a year. Since 2011, we've been able to help 14 people get released from prison because they were innocent.

The first case I spent time working on involved Julie Ray of Lawrenceville, Ill., who was convicted of killing her 10-year-old son. Other than the fact that she was in the house with him at 3 a.m. when he was brutally killed, there was no evidence at all that would pin the crime on her. Eventually, it was shown that a serial killer who had been traveling through the area was responsible. In 2006, Julie had a new trial and was found

innocent. But it really ruined her life.

Because of the way the criminal justice process is set up, once a person is wrongly found guilty, it takes years to reverse that finding. Even with good evidence, it takes a long time. The presumption is that these people are guilty, not innocent. Our cases are rarely solved. The average case takes three to four years from the time we start work.

Getting someone who is innocent out of prison—it's almost impossible to describe what that means, to be able to give back some part of an individual's life. I'm not a terribly religious person, but the only word I've been able to come up with to describe it is "blessing."

The founding of the University has been incredibly important in my life. I wouldn't give up those few years for anything. When I came here in 1970, the campus was a mud hole. There were no departments. There was no policy. There was no curriculum. We all were just arriving and starting to develop classes. It was an exciting group of faculty—folks coming out of the 1960s, many of whom were socially active in a variety of ways and most of whom had a vision of helping to build a university that would be important for us, for the nation, for the state. Very few people have had that kind of opportunity, to build a university from scratch. Literally. We had to put together a curriculum; we had to put together policy. At that time, we had no tenure. It was just a wing and a prayer and we were off. —*as told to Mary Timmins*

Edited and condensed from an interview conducted on July 28, 2020, with Larry Golden, professor emeritus of political studies and legal studies, and founding director of the Innocence Project at UIS





# I STAND with the INNOCENT

#WrongfulConvictionDay



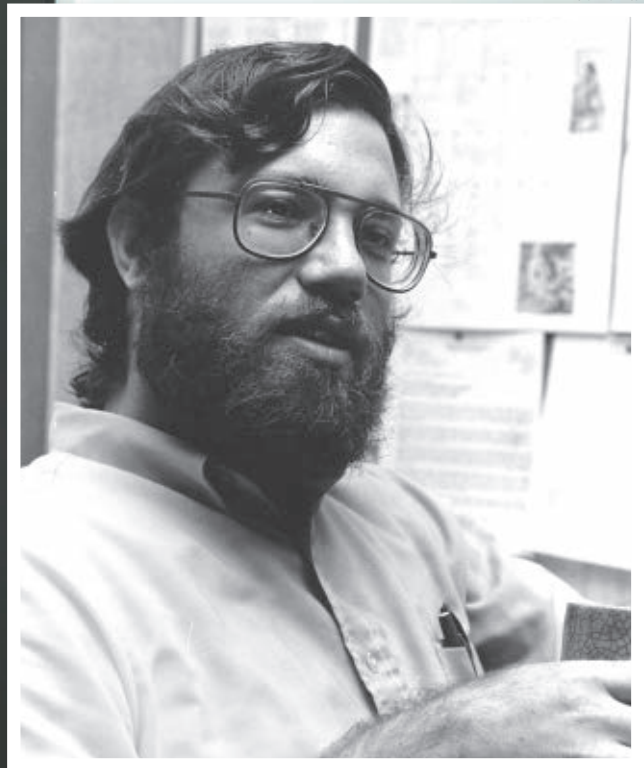
#iip



## 429

### ILLINOIS INNOCENCE PROJEC

UIS Archives



Professor Larry Golden (today, main photo; in 1970, inset) has been with SSU/UIS from its inception.



Read the online profile of any 50-year-old, and you'll eventually get to the phrase "It's complicated." Why shouldn't it be true for the SSU/UIS athletics program? Intercollegiate sports at the University officially began in 1977 with a soccer team. And yet, there's evidence of a baseball team for this era (inset).

The players had uniforms. They had a coach. They played a few games here and there. They didn't just emerge from the cornfield as the 2015 Prairie Stars did in this *Field of Dreams*-inspired PR shot. What can we say? It was 1971.... Times were different.... We were young.... It's complicated.... —David Scott

## Victors Emerge

From a scrappy start on a soccer field to an NCAA Division II program that now fields 17 teams, the Prairie Stars have grown into champs

By Cindy Kuzma

In Hollywood's *Field of Dreams*, Kevin Costner's Ray Kinsella turns a cornfield into a playing field and summons champions out of the past. In Springfield, the cornfields are every bit as scenic, but the dreams depend on hard work and hustle, not magical realism. And the champions are right out of today.

So it was on Sept. 3, 1977, a crowd of 1,600 gathered to cheer the newly formed, recently named Prairie Stars men's soccer team to a victory over Bradley University. The crowds continued to grow as the team finished its season with a respectable 13–8 record.

It was a remarkable start for a university that, in its first seven years, hadn't developed

an intercollegiate athletics program. Today, the field has expanded to become a topnotch Recreation and Athletic Center (TRAC), the teams regularly make conference and national championships, and many players go on to professional sports careers.

What motivated the school to start playing? For starters, a community passion for high school sports laid the groundwork, then an administration saw big opportunities and harnessed the passion of local leaders.

Perhaps the most prominent pioneer was **Aydin Gonulsen, MA '76 LAS**, a former All-American soccer player at Warren Wilson College near Asheville, N.C. After graduating, he moved to Springfield, where he promoted the sport as executive director of the College and University Area YMCA, which was based on the SSU campus.

"Soccer is a beautiful sport—it's cheap, and relatively safe. Anybody can play; size doesn't matter. I always wondered why it was not a big sport in the U.S.," Gonulsen says, especially when compared to his native Turkey.

After witnessing the success of his youth and club teams, the school recruited Gonulsen to field an official SSU soccer team. In the fall of 1977, SSU began competing in matches sanctioned by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

Gonulsen and University officials also began fundraising to build a soccer field. Thanks to the local Kiwanis club and generous donors such as local businessman Harold Christofilakos, Kiwanis Stadium was ready for play when the team was.

### Welcome to the Show

Gonulsen—who also served as the school's athletic director from 1977 to 2002—worked hard to court the community. He invited local youth for free and partnered with Hardee's and Coca-Cola to offer refreshments. A feel for spectacle led to drum and bugle corps playing during pre-game and halftime and parachuters leaping from planes. Top that? Sure! Gonulsen brought both the famous San Diego Chicken mascot and the 1979 NAIA National Soccer Tournament to Kiwanis Stadium.

His global connections also lured players from around the world to Springfield. This included standout **Elias Shehadi, '79 LAS**, from Israel. (See "Instant Replay," pg. 17.) Shehadi holds a top spot in the school's record books for points and goals scored to this day.

They joined talented local players and quickly, the team's success built on itself. In 1986, the men finished the season with a 20–8–1 record, claimed the school's first NAIA National Championship (SSU would repeat in 1988 and 1993), and defeated UCLA to place second at the World Collegiate Cup.

### Tennis, Anyone?

When tennis began in 1979, women were the first student athletes to pick up rackets. Men followed in 1981. That year, both teams finished in the top 10 in the NAIA national tournament in Kansas City. "We've done it," Gonulsen told the *SSU Journal* at the time. "This proves we operate class programs, and that's the way we'll

do it as we add programs.”

In 1984, the man whose name would become nearly synonymous with the school’s tennis program, Manny Velasco, ’90 UIUC, came on as the men’s coach. For the next 30 years, he coached athletes to more than 400 victories. In 1991, Dominic Giacomini took over the women’s team, leading his players to eight NAIA national tournaments.

Two of the most successful were **Carla Jimenez Mills, ’06 LAS**, who was ranked as high as 20th nationally and graduated with a 45–1 singles record, and **Dorothy Walsh Ripka, ’97 LAS**, who transferred from Springfield College and was undefeated in both singles and doubles from 1995 to 1997.

As the decade came to a close in 1989, volleyball spiked onto the scene. Coach Patricia Tucker led the team to nine victories its first season; by 1999, the team was nationally ranked. More recently, the program has soared to success again, with stars such as **Alyssa Hasler, ’19 LAS**, and **Alli Splitt, ’20 LAS**, leading the charge.

## Up from the Minors

The 1990s brought many changes to the school—most notably, 1995’s state legislation merging SSU with the University of Illinois System. “People who grew up in the area knew what a great school it was both athletically and academically,” Ripka says. “But this gave [the school] more credence, more clout.” She had considered UIUC, but it felt too big; UIS would be the best of both worlds.

That same year, women’s basketball brought the University’s long-held hoop dreams to life—and the program into compliance with equal access under Title IX. Springfield native and former Women’s Professional Basketball League player Juli Stiles-Krohe coached the school’s first winter sport.

Men would take the court in 2002, under the guidance of Head Coach **Kevin Gamble, ’10 LAS**, who had played for the Iowa Hawkeyes and the Boston Celtics. “The sky is the limit when

you start something from the ground up,” he said at the time, and he reached for it, leading his team to the NAIA Division I Men’s Basketball Tournament in 2006 and 2007.

Softball was next, taking to the field in 2003. Then, in 2007, came golf. **Frank Marsaglia, ms ’03 LAS**, now the University’s longest-serving coach, has been leading the men’s team since 2009; he took over the women’s team four years later. The decade finished back where athletics began—with soccer, adding a women’s team in 2008.

Then, in another significant shift, UIS announced it would join the Great Lakes Valley Conference and compete in the NCAA Division II beginning in the 2009–10 academic year. The NAIA was the perfect place for the University to start, but “it’s a lesser level of play. You’re not on the big stage,” says Jim Ruppert, sports editor of *The State Journal-Register* from 1991 to 2016.

## More Fields, Bigger Dreams

Getting in the door of a prestigious conference like the GLVC is one thing—becoming competitive is another. That often takes years. But true to their nature, the Prairie Stars have begun to shine.

The first UIS program to make an NCAA Division II tournament was softball, in 2012. Volleyball and golf also have fared well. The women’s golf team has made four NCAA regional appearances as a team, and two players—junior Jennifer Queller, and **Talon Supak, ’17 CBM**, on the men’s side—have advanced to the NCAA Division II National Championships.

Some of the University’s newer sports also have taken off. The baseball team stepped up to the plate in 2011; in the past two years, the team has earned national rankings and won the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional Tournament. Several alumni have signed with Major League Baseball, including **Andrew Dean, ’19 LAS**. The San Diego Padres selected Dean 18th in the 2019 MLB Draft.

UIS Archives



The members of SSU’s 1979 women’s tennis team were the University’s first female athletes. By 1981, they finished in the top 10 at the NAIA national tournament.

Track and cross country began racing in 2015, and have already sent two athletes—juniors Taryn Christy and Blake Jones—to the NCAA National Championships. Head Coach **Tyler Pence, MA ’18 EHS**, believes he will take a team there within the next few years, and Ruppert agrees.

This year, the COVID-19 pandemic put a temporary glitch in collegiate sports. However, the department continues to lead. Staff and coaches were among the first back on campus, helping establish safety protocols, according to Athletics Director Peyton Deterding.

From the storied soccer program onward to a robust athletics that today fields 17 teams, the Prairie Stars have a legacy that Deterding is proud to continue. “I’m extremely excited about the groundwork laid here by previous administrations and coaches and athletes, and we’re going to build on that,” he says. ■

## Instant Replay

UIS Archives



Elias Shehadi

**THEN:** 1977—Four years after a car accident in his native Israel gave him a “5 percent chance to live” according to doctors, **Elias Shehadi, ’79 LAS**, was on the pitch establishing the brand-new Sangamon State University men’s soccer program as a national force. An All-American at Dupage College, Shehadi transferred to SSU and showed his skills from the start. “My favorite memory is my first game, against

Bradley,” Shehadi said. “We were losing 2–0 and the crowd started leaving. I scored four goals in 10 minutes, and the people that stayed went crazy, jumping up and down. The next game the crowd came back and filled the stadium.” Shehadi was a two-time NAIA District 20 First Team selection in 1977 and 1978, the latter year highlighted by SSU’s win against top-ranked Alabama A&M in which Shehadi had two

goals and two assists. His 61 career goals and 143 points remain near the top of the SSU/UIS record book.

**TODAY:** Shehadi graduated with a degree in recreation administration and management before embarking on a brief professional soccer career in the U.S. and Israel. After time coaching in the youth ranks and working in real estate, Shehadi founded Sports Page in 1988. The world-

renowned soccer store based in California brings in customers (including celebrities) from across the globe. A member of the inaugural UIS Hall of Fame in 2014, Shehadi fondly recalls the family feeling in Springfield and remembers “emptying the tank” every time he took the field for Sangamon State. “I always gave everything I had,” Shehadi says of his collegiate career. —*John Jaramillo*



“I took pride in being the first person to get to practice and the last to leave,” Kelvin Johnson says of the role he played leading the men’s basketball team from 2005 to 2009. “It’s not often that you have a freshman come in and be a captain of the team like I was.”

# Old and New School

Hoops star Kelvin Johnson—who led UIS men’s basketball in 2005–09—and women’s soccer up-and-comer Sierra Cenek—who scored a goal in her first-ever collegiate soccer match last season—trade tales of defending the Prairie

**Kelvin Johnson, '09 CBM**, led the Prairie Stars men’s basketball team from 2005 to 2009, and still holds the school record for the most points scored with 1,457. The Maywood, Ill., native now lives in Oak Park where he has worked in management at Enterprise Rent-A-Car and is starting his own insurance business. Soccer player **Sierra Cenek** is currently a sophomore. The Peoria, Ill., native scored in her first collegiate match, and was third on the team in shots last year. The pair got together by Zoom late this summer to swap stories.

## **Kelvin, what was your proudest accomplishment at UIS?**

**Kelvin:** The year before I came, the team’s record was 8–20 for the season. My freshman year, we not only won the conference, but we also had a winning record. It changed the culture. To see where UIS is now and where it was before we got there is pretty impressive.

## **Sierra, how did your first year go?**

**Sierra:** It was a lot of fun, a great opportunity. College is a very different game than high school or club, so I wasn’t sure what to expect. But the team was welcoming and I got to play a lot, which was awesome.

## **What drew you to UIS?**

**Kelvin:** I really connected with **Kevin Gamble, '10 LAS**, the coach at the time. He followed me the last few years of my high school career. I came down there and put my career in his hands. Being close to home mattered, too. My pops is my biggest supporter, and he got to see me play.

**Sierra:** Same thing as Kelvin, actually. I learned about UIS from women’s soccer Head Coach **Erin Egolf, '13 CBM, MBA '15**. I was invited to visit and meet the team. The minute I stepped on campus, I knew this was where I wanted to spend my four years of college.

## **What has being an athlete added to your life?**

**Sierra:** I’ve played sports pretty much my whole life, so my life is very structured. You go to school; you go to practice; you get your homework done. I rely on being organized and prepared, and sports has helped me develop those skills.

**Kelvin:** As a hiring manager, those qualities—leadership, organizational skills, time management—are what we’re looking for. Basketball gave me a lot of confidence to be able to stand in front of a room of other professionals.



*“College is a very different game than high school or club, so I wasn’t sure what to expect,” Sierra Cenek says of her first year as a Prairie Star. “But the team was welcoming and I got to play a lot, which was awesome.”*

#### **Kelvin, what’s changed on campus since you’ve been there?**

**Kelvin:** A lot. The biggest thing from a sports perspective is being NCAA Division II in one of the most competitive conferences, the GLVC. That’s huge. Enrollment is much bigger, and it’s more diverse. But the Recreation and Athletics Center, that’s the same. I was part of the first team to play there my junior and senior years. It was a big upgrade from where we started—a tiny gym with only one side of bleachers. But I have a lot of good memories from it.

#### **What are, or were, your favorite parts of campus?**

**Sierra:** I love most aspects of the campus. Last year, many of my teammates and I would hang out at the Student Union and do homework together. I also enjoy being in the locker room. Maybe it’s kind of cliché, but I feel like it’s an escape from all the schoolwork and people. You can just be with your team and the game.

**Kelvin:** The Public Affairs Center was the hangout spot when I was there. They had a sandwich station where we always got our food after practice. My junior year, we moved into a brand-new townhouse, which was cool. I’d seen the living arrangements of guys who were playing at other schools and, I was like, yeah, we got you beat on that.

**Sierra:** I live in a townhouse too! Last year I lived in a dorm. It’s nice to have a kitchen and a little living room. It feels like home.

#### **What about friendships with your teammates?**

**Sierra:** Coming in, our freshman class was 11 girls, so there were a lot of us. I’ve definitely connected with three of them. We live together now, and we’ve been close since the beginning. When you’re running with your team and you have early morning practices, you build friendships that are so strong. Even though it’s only been a year, I feel like I’ve known them forever.

**Kelvin:** Similar to Sierra, we had a basketball townhouse. Two of my best friends, **Curtis Collins, ’06 PAA**, and **Richard Oruche, ’10 CBM**, were on the team. They were a part of my wedding. Relationships you build those first couple years in college, they go a long way.

#### **Sierra, have you talked to many alumni? If so, what would you tell them about supporting today’s athletes?**

**Sierra:** I personally haven’t had a lot of interactions with them in the year that I’ve been here, but I think it is really cool to have someone like Kelvin to look up to. It’s great to hear how Kelvin is still good friends with people he went to school with. I think it’s important to hear their wisdom and what we can take away from things that they’ve learned.

#### **Kelvin, what other words of wisdom do you have to share?**

**Kelvin:** Most importantly, take advantage of the opportunity that you have in front of you. Few people get to play athletics on a collegiate level, and the real world comes fast. Make sure you enjoy the time you have, but stay dedicated to your craft. I took pride in being the first person to get to practice and the last to leave. It’s not often that you have a freshman come in and be a captain of the team like I was. So I tried to keep that with me throughout my whole four years, to never lose that position. As a leader, you always have eyes on you, whether that’s on the field or off the field. Continue to set the right example and I guarantee you, your teammates are going to follow you. —Cindy Kuzma

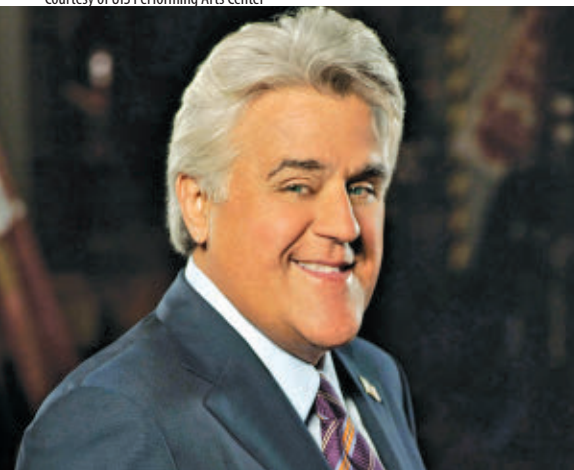
Getty Images



Courtesy of UIS Performing Arts Center



Courtesy of UIS Performing Arts Center



## The “Know” Business of Show Business

Over the course of four decades and 1,025 events, the Sangamon Auditorium/UIS Performing Arts Center has brought the world to Springfield

By David Scott

“**W**e want our rights and we don’t care how/We want a revolution now.”

These oft-quoted lines from Peter Weiss’ avant-garde play *Marat/Sade* rang freely from a makeshift stage constructed for SSU’s initial theater production in November 1971.

It was a fitting start for a University conceived to shake up the stagnate academy by stoking the flames of academic freedom and serving the interests of the people. Subsequent campus visits by science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke (1971), architect/author/inventor Buckminster Fuller (1973) and *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry (1974) marked SSU as welcome territory for pop futurists. All of these events spoke to the University’s interest in catering more to “know” business than show business.

Which is not to say that SSU was all work and no play; singer and emerging Mayor of Margaritaville Jimmy Buffet performed early in his career in the University’s cafeteria on March 1 and 2, 1974.

This tradition of mixing education and entertainment came to natural fruition in February 1981 when the stage of the Public Affairs Center’s newly opened, 2,000-seat Sangamon Auditorium was graced by Mark Twain. Not the long-dead comic master of American letters; rather it was actor Hal Holbrook who played Twain in a long-

Hal Holbrook as Mark Twain (top) may have opened Sangamon Auditorium in 1981, but it was comedian Jerry Seinfeld (center) who nearly brought down the house with his comic musings during the 2017–18 season. Funny guy Jay Leno (bottom) was on hand in 2019 when Sangamon Auditorium became part of the UIS Performing Arts Center.

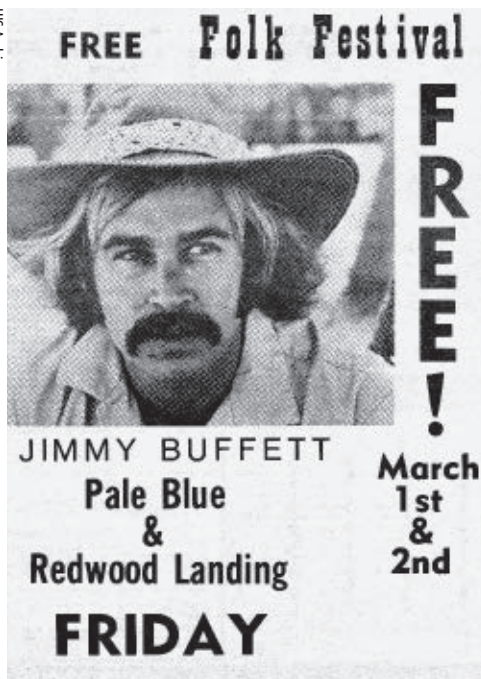
running and highly popular production of his one-person play, *Mark Twain Tonight*. So popular, in fact, that Holbrook brought Twain to the Sangamon Auditorium stage six times between 1981 and 2008. Twain was an ideal opener for a venue that would soon rise to prominence for its programming that mixed enlightenment and enjoyment.

Throughout the space’s next 39 seasons, Twain would be joined by a host of cultural luminaries. Pat Carroll recreated modernist writer Gertrude Stein (1981). Robert Morse embodied author and bon vivant Truman Capote (the ’92–93 season). Cloris Leachman displayed the colors of primitive painter Grandma Moses (’93–94). James Whitmore breathed life into Will Rogers (’94–95). And impressionist Rich Little found himself alone in a most impressive crowd of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Clinton, both Bushes and Obama in his one-person show *The Presidents* (’02–03). And let’s not forget Academy Award–winner Martin Landau, who scared the daylights out of everyone as Dracula (’84–85).

### The Prefab Four...and More!

The Beatles—or, at least, their enduring music—hit the stage no fewer than six times between 1982 and 2019 in three recreations: *Beatlemania!*, 1964...as the Beatles, and RAIN. For those who like their performers a little less ersatz, real rockers have stormed the stage as well, including metal-lite glam duo Nelson (’91), Jethro Tull (’07–08), Beach Boy Brian Wilson (’09–10), ZZ Top (’13–14) and the Moody Blues (’14–15).

Country fans have welcomed several of their favorite acts over the years, perhaps none more iconic than the First Lady of Country



It wasn't The Beatles—but a reasonable facsimile (the group RAIN, below, as well as the cast of *Beatlemania!* and another troupe of “Fab”ulists calling themselves 1964)—who graced the stage of Sangamon Auditorium six times between 1982 and 2019. It was, however, the real live Jimmy Buffett (left) who stopped by SSU in 1974 on his way to Margaritaville.

Music, Tammy Wynette ('81–82); the Man in Black, Johnny Cash ('94–95); and the Red Headed Stranger, Willie Nelson ('14–15). Jazzbos flipped their lids for Billy Taylor ('81), Ray Charles ('81–82), the Preservation Hall Jazz Band ('81–82), Count Basie with Cab Calloway ('83–84), Sarah Vaughn with the Ramsey Lewis Trio ('84–85) and Tony Bennett ('16–17).

Over the years the classics have captured rapt audiences as well; numerous regional and international orchestras and ensembles—including the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra ('81), the Westminster Choir ('81–82), the Vienna Boys Choir ('81–82), the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra ('81–82), the Juilliard String Quartet ('83–84), the Texas Opera Theatre ('82–83) and the Peking Opera ('97–98)—have graced the stage. Dance troupes spanning the globe stopped by as well, coming from as far away as Los Angeles and Montreal, and such far-flung locales as Senegal and Siberia.

### Clowder Power

There's a good chance that if you've been near the PAC stage door late in the evening, you might have seen what looked like a human/feline hybrid pussyfooting about. No, you didn't hit the nip too hard; it was a touring production of *CATS* (Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical setting of T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*), which has stopped by the Auditorium no fewer than five times between 1987 and 2008. It nearly doubles the track record for Webber and Tim Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which has risen to the occasion only thrice. The area's musical fans

have thrilled to multiple tours of *A Chorus Line* ('83–84, '97–98), *Evita* ('83–84, '07–08), *Les Miserables* ('90–91, '96–97), *Grease!* ('96–97, '98–99), *RENT* ('99–00, '06–07, '18–19) and *Hairspray* ('07–08, '08–09).

Fans of dramatic theater turned out for *Morning's at Seven* ('81), *Children of a Lesser God* ('82–83), *Oleanna* ('94–95) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* ('03–04), as well as numerous productions of Shakespeare, fully staged or adapted.

And let's not forget the intrepid stand-up comedians who command the stage with only their wits about them. The Auditorium could start its own comedy club as it has hosted four of the industry's giants: Arsenio Hall (who opened for the Pointer Sisters in 1981), Bob Newhart ('90–91), Jerry Seinfeld ('17–18) and Jay Leno ('18–19). Paula Poundstone made three appearances between 1992 and 2001, topping Carrot Top ('99–00, '02–03) by one.

### The Corners of the Globe, Just Across the Way

The Auditorium has served as the city's ambassador for 1,025 events in four decades, welcoming the world to Springfield. Shows introduce UIS students and Springfield audiences to cultures and folkways that reflect the full diversity of our experience just as they combine heritages, traditions and even media into an exciting multicultural mix. Here are a few: *Kabuki Macbeth* ('87–88), *Muntu African Dance* ('88–89), American Indian Dance Theatre ('89–90), Soviet Acrobatic Revue ('90–91), Ballet Folklórico de México ('91–92, '09–10), Taiko Dojo Drums of Japan

('94–95), the Klezmer Conservatory Band ('00–01), Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company ('10–11) and Tango Bueno Aries ('10–11).

And because the UIS Performing Arts Center has a strong regional draw, the Auditorium has been no stranger to performers from the school, the city and the region. It is the performance home of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, the Springfield Ballet Company, the UIS Theatre and Music programs and numerous educational series that serve the region's school kids. Illinoisans who have tread the boards at the Auditorium and the Studio Theatre include attendee Bobby McFerrin ('94–95), Chicago City Ballet ('83–84), *This American Life's* Ira Glass ('90–91), Tom Irwin's *Sangamon Songs: A Musical Play* ('19–20), the UIS Theatre production of *God of Carnage* ('19–20), the Eastern Illinois Jazz Ensemble with the Shirelles ('96–97), and Handel's *Messiah* with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Illinois Wesleyan Collegiate Choir and the Springfield Messiah Chorus ('84–85).

This is only a few of the University's performance highlights. No doubt fans of adventurous theater are asking “Where the @#&! is *Avenue Q* ('09–10)?” just as aficionados of kitsch are wondering “What? No mention of Weird Al Yankovic ('00–01)?” Be it pop or high culture, the UIS Performing Arts Center listens to its community, then strives to both challenge its audiences and give the people what they want. And if you can't always get what you want, when you try, sometime you just might find you get what you need. 🎭

# Campaign Update

Diane M. Smalley



Jeff Lorber

## The Road to Reaching Stellar

Campaign success has helped UIS become the stellar university it is today

Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



UIS publicly launched its *Reaching Stellar* fundraising campaign in October 2017. To date, the University has raised more than 92 percent of its \$40 million goal.

Support from students and donors was critical to ensuring that the University could open its state-of-the-art Student Union in 2018. It's now one of the most popular spots on campus for the UIS community.



Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations

Fifty years! It is amazing to think the small start-up college—Sangamon State University—built “all the way out in the cornfield” has evolved into one of the best public regional universities in the nation. And while 50 years seems like a long time for most activities, it characterizes relative youth and ongoing excitement for UIS.

The University has participated in three fundraising campaigns in our history, all occurring since SSU became part of the University of Illinois System in 1995 as UIS:

- **Campaign Illinois** (1995–2000): \$15.4 million raised
- **Brilliant Futures** (2004–12): \$28.7 million raised
- **Reaching Stellar** (2014–Present): \$36.8 million raised to date toward a goal of \$40 million by 2022.

All three UIS campaigns have listed scholarships as a priority. Hundreds of private scholarship funds have been initiated during the past quarter century, and thousands of deserving students have reaped the rewards to help them earn degrees.

Campaign fundraising efforts such as *Reaching Stellar* help to provide margins of excellence; that is, gifts allow UIS to enhance opportunities for all its constituents. Gifts of all sizes help UIS fulfill its mission to provide meaningful educational opportunities by:

- Providing funding to allow an increasing number of deserving students to participate in the higher education process
- Attracting and maintaining the highest-quality faculty to facilitate valuable learning and research experiences
- Building the foundation through analysis of President Lincoln's legacy to address important contemporary societal issues
- Serving the greater University, as well as local and regional communities
- Creating physical spaces and utilizing technology to maximize the learning environment.

None of this happens without you! We are grateful to the thousands of alumni, students, faculty, staff, donors and volunteers for the progress to date on *Reaching Stellar*. Our partners at the UI Foundation and the UI System also are important in supporting our work to engage as many people as possible with our direction and accomplishments.



# With your continuing help, we will keep reaching stellar!

Of special note for the Campaign's success is the outstanding membership of the UIS Campaign Planning Committee. Co-chaired by Arthur "Hy" Bunn, '80 UIUC, and Saul Morse '69 UIUC, JD '72 UIUC, this group of alumni and community leaders began its work in earnest five years ago to help plan and execute activities toward achieving this record-setting goal. **Micah Bartlett '95 CBM;** **Bob Felker '74 PAA;** **Julie Kellner, '86 CBM;** **Pam McClelland '90 CBM, MA '95 CBM;** UIS Professor Emeritus Larry Shiner; **Janice Spears '73 LAS, MA '74 LAS, MA '81 EHS;** Julie Staley and the late Guerry Suggs all have made significant contributions to the committee.

We have come a long way, but we still have some distance to go. I am confident that, with our exceptional alumni base and the generous support of our committed donors and friends, we shall surpass the goals needed to achieve the dreams of our students. As we move forward, we want to help address important societal concerns. Fundraising efforts will increasingly focus on areas such as:

- Delivering education effectively and efficiently in the safest environment possible—particularly given recent challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic

- Committing to matters of anti-racism and social justice, as demonstrated by the outstanding work of the Illinois Innocence Project, housed at UIS and committed to the release of individuals being held in prison for crimes they did not commit
- Engaging our students and community, with emphasis on the arts as well as volunteer and civic engagement
- Driving regional economic development both intellectually and ethically, particularly through involvement with new collaborative relationships associated with the Discovery Partners Institute and the Illinois Innovation Network.

We know UIS is a terrific university, but we also know we must constantly strive for new levels of excellence. Be proud of your affiliation with UIS. With your continuing help, we will keep reaching stellar! Cheers to another 50 great years!

## Jeff Lorber, Ed.D.

Vice Chancellor for Advancement,  
University of Illinois Springfield  
Senior Vice President, University of  
Illinois Foundation



## Campaign Progress

Reaching Stellar goal:  
\$40,000,000

Raised as of Oct. 19:  
\$36,848,291

### Stellar by the numbers:

Percent raised: 92.12%

Number of gifts since the beginning of the campaign:

100,463

Number of Donors:

15,913

## Five Steps to Stellar

The *Reaching Stellar* campaign seeks to raise support for the students, faculty and staff of UIS; for the programs that elevate education; and for the communities where students and graduates serve.

*Reaching Stellar* has five campaign priorities:

- **Scholarships:** Affirming the aspirations, energy and diversity of our students
- **Academic Excellence:** Learning that empowers the future
- **UIS Center for Lincoln Studies:** To instruct, inspire and elevate us all
- **The Public Good:** Engagement, collaboration and impact
- **Facilities and Technology:** Building tomorrow's University today.



Major, private funding enabled UIS to open the Sangamon Experience in January 2020. This interactive exhibition space tells the story of the Springfield-area community.

Day Stellar/UIS Campus Relations



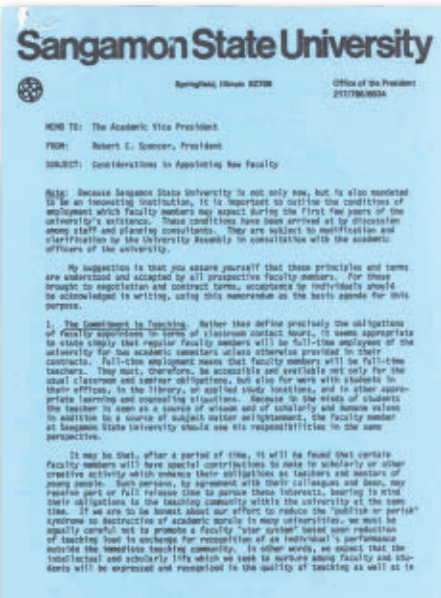
Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations

UIS has achieved world-class status in public affairs and public service by keeping true to SSU's populist origins, all while navigating

# The Ins and Outs of Innovation

By David Scott

UIS Archives



“Mandated to be an innovating institution.” The opening sentence of the December 1970 Blue Memo spelled out SSU’s mission. Over the course of the next 50 years, the University would be an agent for change and for addressing the public good.

In December of 1970, SSU founding President Robert Spencer issued a four-page document typed on peacock blue paper that outlined the new institution’s educational philosophy. Starting from the premise that the State Legislature mandated SSU to be an innovating institution, the Blue Memo—as it would come to be known—defined what SSU aspired to be by largely defining what it was not: an ivory tower.

Key phrases sprinkled throughout championed values such as “common sense and simple, homely experience,” accessibility and availability, and an openness to and concern with addressing public problems. The memo spoke to the growing concern that American institutions of higher education had become out-of-touch with both the people and issues affecting society. It called for a university that would “restore functions and commitment to the academic community as well as to foster innovation. Its impact should be both ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ to the extent to which its programs are sustained by experience and time.”

The State had established SSU to fill a void caused by its system of community colleges—many of which offered only two-year associate degrees. SSU in Springfield and Governor’s State University in University Park, Ill., would be “upper division universities” offering the final two years of specialized study required to complete a bachelor’s degree, as well as graduate-level programs designed to provide skills needed for the state’s evolving workforce.

## Addressing Public Problems

SSU’s location in the state capital lent an obvious area of specialization: politics and public affairs. The University’s first catalog heralded its tripartite mission: to provide an upper-division university, to emphasize teaching as “an

authentic representation of culture and humane learning,” and to offer a curriculum that would “address public problems besetting our society and civilization.”

SSU wasn’t timid about naming those problems: It called for environmental action and promoted human welfare and social justice. The mission reflected a cultural turning point in the U.S. when issues such as emerging Earth activism, the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War began to inform the policies of the 1970s.

With innovation comes dissent. In 1971, State Senator G. William Horsley threatened to deny promised appropriations to the University because of its alleged radical bent and, believe it or not, disregard for proper head gear. (See “Mad Hatters,” pg 25.) And in 1976, a local John Birch Society publication ran an editorial cartoon with the caption, “SSU Strikes Again!” It featured a towering, bearded professor shooting lightning bolts from his fingertips at a crumbling Capitol. Each bolt was labeled as a plank in a so-called radical agenda—including unpatriotic rhetoric and the Equal Rights Amendment, as well as sex and drugs (with oddly no mention of rock ‘n’ roll).

Yet SSU was up to nothing more radical than a challenge to the traditional structural conventions of the academy. It called for shared governance. Faculty were hired not to “publish or perish” but to provoke and promote. An early concept called for professors to “engage for up to ... 12 weeks in significant employment off campus [to renew] their understanding of the conditions of American life which their students must face upon leaving the university.” Activities could include service in a university dissimilar to UIS, research in a commercial lab or service alongside recent SSU graduates who were applying what they had learned at the University.



Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations



SSU's progressive approach to teaching and its willingness to take on public policy issues would earn the University and its faculty a reputation as radical, as pointed out in this editorial cartoon circulated by the John Birch Society, circa 1976.

SSU's mission evolved as the University expanded its offerings to include a full baccalaureate education and (as UIS) welcomed its first "true" freshman class in 1999 when it implemented the Capital Scholars program. By the time SSU was incorporated into the University of Illinois System and rechristened University of Illinois Springfield, it had come, structurally, to resemble its sister campuses—the University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana and the University of Illinois at Chicago—with one critical exception. It stayed true to its public interest mandate.

That only made sense: the University had developed the expertise and was in the right place at the right time to emerge as a leader in public affairs education.

### Growing Its Mission for Public Service

The hub of working for the public good started with SSU's vaunted Public Affairs Reporting Program (see "Reporting for Duty," pg. 12), which was started at SSU under the watchful eye of Illinois political leader Paul Simon. (See "Simon Says," pg. 33.)

With enlightened reports came enlightened media. In 1975, *Illinois Issues* magazine, an award-winning cooperative effort between SSU and the University of Illinois, devoted its coverage to the state's public affairs. The year also saw the start of public radio station WSSR (later WSSU), with UIS later serving as home to the studios of NPR Illinois (WUIS). Television would follow with community public service stations Springfield Community Access Network and ACCESS 4.

If reporting is rooted in "talk," then the University expanded its focus to action. As PAR grew, it generated interest in addressing the concerns that its award-winning reporters uncovered: child welfare, community planning, public health and wrongful convictions. (See "Gold Standard," pg. 14.)

By 1998, the University expanded its commitment to the public good beyond reporting and the College of Public Affairs and Administration to offer programs that focused on civic engagement, social responsibility and democratic values. With it came related programs such as the Institute for Public Affairs, grassroots advocacy efforts such as Capital Outreach and the Springfield

Project, and the University's Child Protection Training Academy and Child Advocacy Studies program. (See "Hometown Hero," page 45.)

PAA also expanded the boundaries of the notion of "public" as its outreach became truly international. **Dr. Dalitso Sulamoyo, MA '99 PAA, MPA '02**, learned of PAA at UIS when he went to the American Embassy in his native Malawi, Africa, in search of an academic program where he could address public issues such as poverty and social inequity. He soon found himself flying halfway across the globe to get what he sought in Springfield. (See "International Activist," page 44.)

An upstart enterprise finds itself 50 years later as a key part of that state's premier public university system. Looking forward, reflecting back—would SSU and UIS even recognize each other? The "temporary" buildings that were quickly erected still stand and serve, but in the shadow of a modern, beautiful and state-of-the-art campus. Faculty still focus primarily on teaching, but the expectation they would leave their posts to take part in the real world is gone. Today, UIS unites community and campus through internships and programs that incorporate academic and workplace partnerships, such as the Illinois Innovation Network.

And UIS still focuses on meeting public needs. Addressing SSU's alumni in the inaugural Spring 1973 issue of *Sangamon*, the University's first alumni magazine, President Spencer wrote of SSU, "The students came to learn, [and] the University assisted them in their lifetime goals of learning and problem solving in a difficult and troubled world." The important things, it seems, stay the same. ─

## Mad Hatters

### The unique tradition of Floppy Hat Day

A gigantic straw sombrero. A fey bonnet with wobbly blossoms. A head-topper of folded newspaper. And—everywhere—floppy, floppy hats.

Such was the fashion statement by faculty gathered in the plaza at Sangamon State University on April 16, 1971. The occasion was a collective retort to State Sen. G. William Horsley who, earlier that spring, opined to fellow legislators

that SSU deserved zero in appropriations. Decrying the campus (part of his legislative district) as a radical hotbed, he said, "I'm sick with what's going on out there." In particular, Horsley called out SSU professor Gus Stevens for violating the norms of polite society by failing to lose his (floppy) hat for a photo event where women were present.

Incredulity ricocheted through the faculty; they

were being defunded for...a floppy hat?

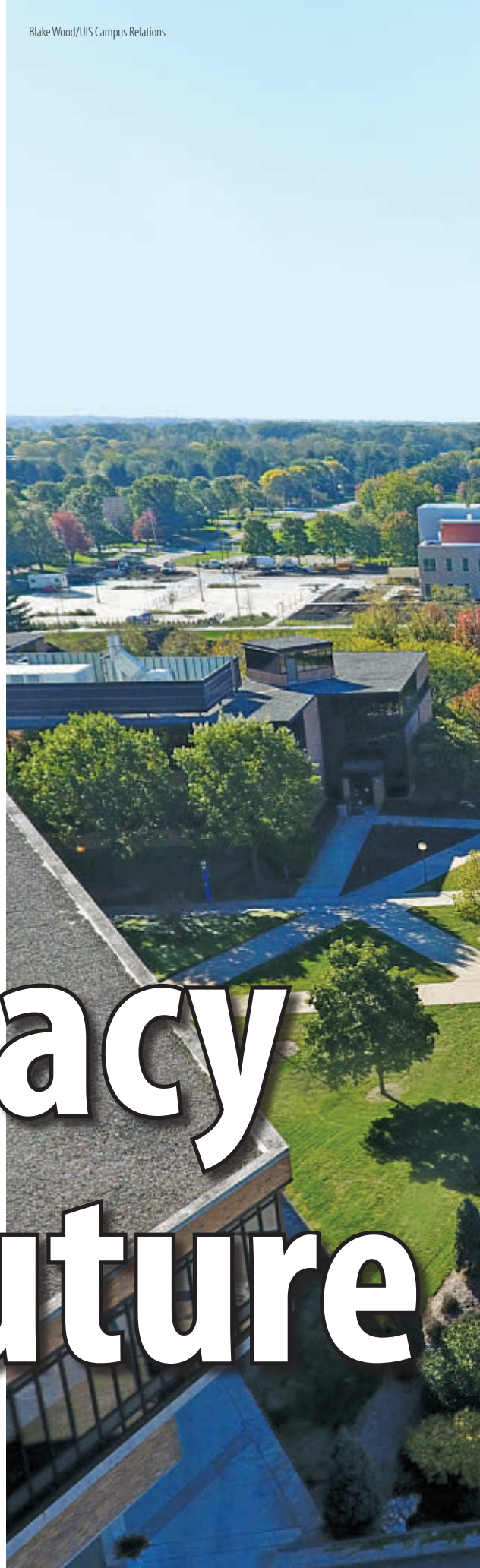
President Robert Spencer seized the moment, proclaiming April 16 as Floppy Hat Day at SSU. In a YouTube video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=15cqxoF9hyA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15cqxoF9hyA)) of the event, he sports a bright yellow hard hat and is joined by Stevens to hand out prizes for the top-rated headwear.

Horsley eventually relented, and SSU received



At SSU, floppy hats speak volumes.

its appropriation. The next and only other official Floppy Hat Day took place in 1972. But April 16 endures as a day when professors at SSU/UIS don hats in honor of the heady beginnings of a singular and special University. —Mary Timmins



# Bold Legacy Bright Future

# A time capsule of the people and events that shaped the history of Sangamon State University and the University of Illinois Springfield

By Mary Timmins

1970  2020  
**50**  
UIS



A windmill (left) from the original Strawbridge Farm remained on campus until the completion of Brookens Library—the University's first permanent building—in 1976. Today's campus includes a central Quad with classroom and office buildings, a Student Union and the iconic Colonnade, as well as adjacent residence halls and the Recreation and Athletic Center.



UIS Archives



SSU broke ground for its campus on June 10, 1970. Construction delays meant that students would meet off-campus in downtown Springfield for the first two months of classes.

An aerial view of campus construction from the early 1970s shows the cluster of "temporary" units (upper right) that served as the University's first classrooms and offices.

**Fifty years ago, Sangamon State University opened amidst the prairie and farmlands southeast of Springfield. Twenty-five years later, SSU merged with the University of Illinois System to become the University of Illinois Springfield. What follows is a time capsule of the events that document five decades of the University's still-unfolding history.**

**A Tale of Two Universities**

The idea of a university in the capital city of Illinois dates back a full century to the 1920s, when Springfield citizens unsuccessfully attempted to establish a university named after Abraham Lincoln. The University that emerged 50 years after that initial impetus makes good on the commitment to integrity, progress and shared values. Over the course of another quarter-century, Sangamon State University grows into the University of Illinois Springfield—an institution that embraces the advantages of the city while providing service to the state, nation and world. Here are some developmental milestones.

**1960**

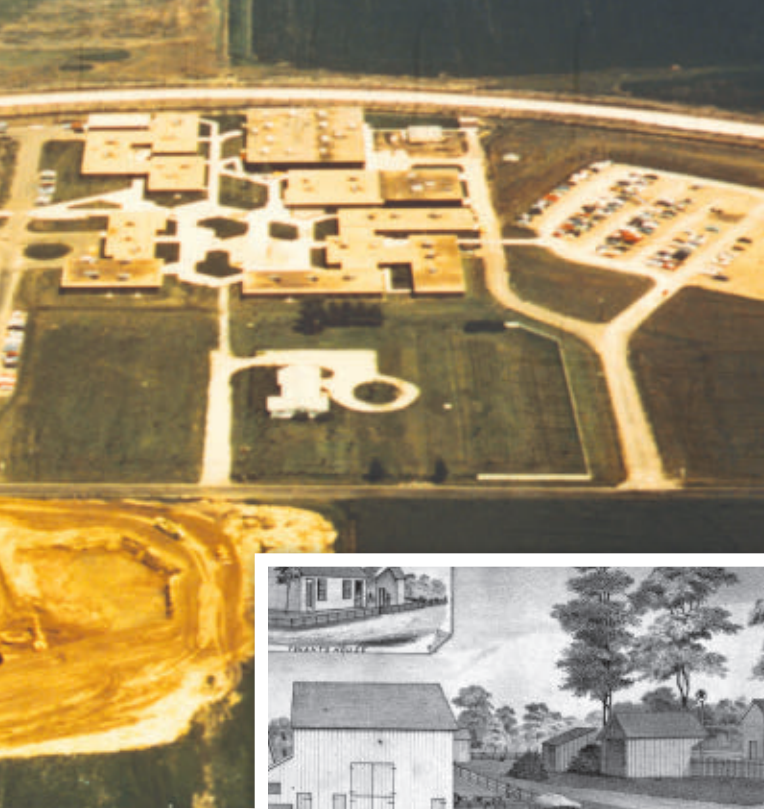
Springfield Mayor Lester E. Collins holds a meeting to discuss the city's "dire need" for a four-year college. The Springfield Committee for Education, led by attorney George Hoffman, is formed.

**1967–69**

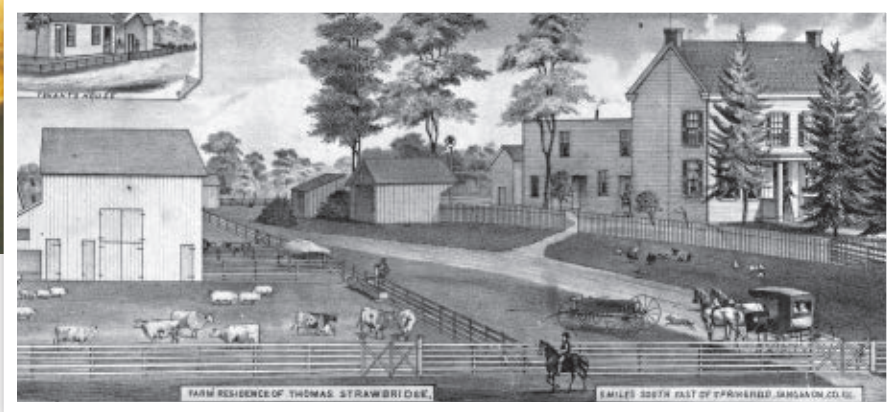
Illinois State Senate Bill 955 passes the State Legislature, authorizing a Senior University in Springfield. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recommends that the institution be primarily for upper-level study, aimed at students who commute, with an emphasis on training for public service. The Board of Regents spends almost \$1.3 million to acquire more than 500 acres of land south of Springfield. On June 10, 1969, Gov. Richard Ogilvie signs Public Act 76-131, the bill creating Sangamon State University, into law. The Board of Regents (which also oversees Illinois State and Northern Illinois universities) hires Robert C. Spencer as Sangamon State University's first president.

**1970**

President Spencer gives a welcoming address to the campus community on Sept. 20. Classes are scheduled to begin the following day, but are postponed until the 28th because of construction rain delays; they are held in a church in downtown Springfield rather than on the interim campus as planned. By Oct. 5, classes relocate to the interim campus. Enrollment totals 811.



UIS Archives



*Inset:* In 1968, the State of Illinois purchased land formerly owned by Springfield-area farmer Thomas Strawbridge in anticipation of creating SSU. The farm's main structure, the Strawbridge Shepherd House, is on the National Register of Historic Places and serves as office space for the Illinois State Historical Society and home to the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum.

*Above:* University Librarian Howard Dillon and assistant Jo Cannon consult the construction plans for Brookens Library (ca. 1974).

**1975**

The Regents adopt SSU's constitution, calling for an assembly composed of faculty, student and staff senates. The University receives full accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools for the maximum period of 10 years. SSU expands to Peoria with programs in nursing, management and social justice.

**1980**

SSU celebrates its 10th anniversary. There now are 220 faculty members, teaching 675 courses.

**1982**

On May 16, nearly 750 graduates receive diplomas at the University's 10th Commencement. Alumni now number more than 6,800.

**1990**

Enrollment exceeds 4,000, topping out at 4,192.

**1992**

"Toward 2000," SSU's first strategic plan, covers the University's commitment to quality, excellence in teaching and public affairs.

**1995**

Gov. James Edgar signs legislation merging SSU with the University of Illinois System. In a transformation heralded as "The Rebirth of a University," SSU officially becomes the University of Illinois Springfield, the third university of the UI System, on July 1. SSU President Naomi Lynn continues as chancellor; she is the first woman in the UI System to hold that title.

**1996**

The University of Illinois Springfield holds its first Commencement. Illinois State Comptroller Loleta Didrickson delivers the commencement address.

**1997-98**

IBHE begins discussions about making UIS a four-year institution. UI Trustees establish four UIS colleges: Business and Management, Health and Human Services, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Public Affairs and Administration.

**1999-2001**

IBHE approves the establishment of a four-year baccalaureate program, opening the door to the Capital Scholars, an honors

cohort that will comprise the first entering freshman class at the University. The 116-member cohort enters the Fall 2001 semester as the University's first "true" freshman class.

**2005**

UI Trustees approve a new general education curriculum, officially making UIS a four-year university.

**2006**

Enrollment reaches 4,761, including almost 1,000 off-campus students studying online and more than 300 international students. Campus housing now accommodates more than 850 students.

# Follow the Leaders



UIS Archives

**Robert C. Spencer**  
SSU President, 1969–77



UIS Archives

**Alex B. Lacey Jr.**  
SSU President, 1978–84



UIS Archives

**Durward Long**  
SSU President, 1984–90

**Naomi B. Lynn**  
SSU President, 1991–95  
UIS Chancellor, 1995–2001

**Richard D. Ringeisen**  
UIS Chancellor, 2001–10

**Susan J. Koch**  
UIS Chancellor, 2011–20

## 2010

UIS Athletics joins NCAA Division II. Enrollment reaches 5,174, including more than 3,000 undergraduates and almost 2,000 graduate students. Approximately 25 percent are in online degree and certificate programs.

## 2019

UIS welcomes the largest freshman class in its history—373 students, 90 percent of them from Illinois. *U.S. News & World Report* names UIS the top regional public university in Illinois and the fourth best in the Midwest region. The report also gives UIS a shout-out as one of the Midwest’s most ethnically diverse campuses. The publication deems UIS online bachelor’s degree programs as the 33rd best in the country.

UI Trustees approve a new Facilities Master Plan for the University. Preparing for the future, UIS refreshes its mission and vision in “UIS Strategic Compass 2028.”



UIS Archives

SSU’s first buildings—designated by letters of the alphabet—remain in use today, although they were never meant to be permanent.

## A Sense of Place

It starts as—well, frankly—a mud hole, with makeshift classroom facilities opening downtown while a “just-in-time” campus is hastily constructed. The temporary buildings of SSU’s early days have all been refurbished and remain in use today, while the University’s main campus has blossomed with state-of-the-art classroom and office buildings, student housing and the crown jewel that is the Student Union.

## 1841

Saddler and harness-maker Thomas Strawbridge purchases a farm south of Springfield. A philanthropist and farmer, he installs a state-of-the-art windmill in his cow pasture. The windmill stands on a site north of the future Brookens Library until dismantled in 1977. In 2007, the University joins with the Elijah Iles House Foundation to restore and preserve the property’s historic Strawbridge Shepherd House.

## 1970

As preliminary work begins on campus design and construction, an admissions office opens at 407 E. Washington St. in downtown Springfield for the all-important business of populating a new university. Admissions close on June 5, with 630 students signing on. The second floor of downtown Springfield’s Osco building serves as a bookstore.

A June 10 groundbreaking ceremony for the interim campus, attended by Gov. Richard B.





Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations

SSU originally enrolled 811 students. Today's figure tops 4,100.

**1976**

The city donates an observatory to be installed on a viewing deck atop the newly opened Brookens building. A year later, the three-telescope facility opens for Friday-night star viewings (dubbed Star Parties) by the public. The tradition continues.

**1979**

Most of the original farm buildings remaining on the site of the main campus are razed to make way for the ring road and parking.

**1980–81**

The Public Affairs Center opens as the University's second permanent building. The Recreation Field Building is dedicated by the University and YMCA. A center for YMCA youth soccer, the building becomes part of SSU 10 years later.

**1985**

A ribbon-cutting marks the opening of the new gymnasium, an addition to the D-E building.

**1987**

The Lower East Side Café, a snack bar, opens on the site of the old cafeteria in Building D. It remains in business until 1994.

**1990**

SSU breaks ground for its \$4.7 million Health and Sciences Building, the University's third permanent facility.

**1992**

Budgetary cutbacks oblige the University to close campus facilities downtown. The University's child care center moves to the Cox House as part of campus remodeling.

**2001**

The main entrance to campus opens on Hazel Dell Road at the intersection where 11th Street leads to Ernest Hemingway Drive, with a permanent marker dedicated later in the spring. The Capital Scholars move into their new home in the Lincoln Residence Hall, a \$10 million facility on the Quad near PAC.

Ogilvie and Lt. Gov. Paul Simon, opens the way for 13 temporary buildings identified by letters of the alphabet. By September, Building F houses a library with 20,000 volumes and 500 periodicals.

**1972**

SSU acquires the Clayville Stagecoach Stop, a 14-acre historic site west of Springfield with log cabins, barns and a blacksmith shop, as a donation. Unfortunately, the site becomes too expensive to operate and the University turns it over to the state in 1989.

Construction begins on the first permanent building on the main campus. On May 19, 1976, SSU dedicates Norris L Brookens Library. The University's collection has grown to 75,000 books, 45,000 government documents and more than 3,000 periodicals.

**1973**

Springfield Mass Transit District bus service arrives, connecting the main campus to SSU facilities downtown.

**1974**

Enrollment for the spring term tops 3,000, prompting the University to provide a toll-free number for inquiries about admissions and programs.



UIS Archives



UIS Archives

The University's 750-acre campus is home to a number of significant public sculptures. "Window's Edge" (left), dedicated in 1991 and designed by faculty member Robert Dixon (left), honors attorney George Hoffman, who led the Springfield Committee for Education, a group instrumental in SSU's founding. "Impermanent Columns" (right), a 48-ton sculpture by Thomas Skomski, dates to 1991 as well.



Lincoln Residence Hall



The Recreation and Athletic Center



"The Young Lawyer"

**2004**

UIS dedicates University Hall, a \$31 million state-of-the-art classroom and office building.

**2005**

The University's Quad gets a north-end "anchor." The Colonnade, with its dramatic pillars and inviting fountain and seats, becomes the major landmark, central gathering place and signature image of UIS.

**2007**

UIS dedicates the \$16.2 million Recreation and Athletics Center. It features basketball and volleyball courts, exercise facilities and a 3,000-seat performance arena.

**2008**

Partially completed Founders Hall opens to freshmen. The \$16.5 million residence hall accommodates 230 students and features an energy-saving, soil-and-sedum green roof.

**2016**

"The Young Lawyer," an original sculpture of Abraham Lincoln by George Lundeen, is unveiled on the Quad. UIS opens the new Shakespeare Garden, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death and the launch of a new major in theatre.

**2017**

Commencement 2017 ceremonies honor 1,836 graduates—the largest number in campus history.

**2018**

More than 500 guests attend a dedication for the new UIS Student Union, a \$21.7 million, 50,000-square-foot sustainable building.

**2019**

A ribbon-cutting opens the Sangamon Experience, a donor-funded, multimedia, interactive exhibition and research space in PAC devoted to the history and people of the Sangamon region of Illinois.

**Positive Identification**

What's in a moniker? Names that the board ponders for the new University in Springfield range from Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Adlai E. Stevenson (U.S. statesmen all) to prominent Illinois authors Vachel Lindsay and Edgar Lee Masters (who ultimately were used to name campus streets). Also under consideration: Res Publica (Latin for "commonwealth") and the University of Public Affairs at Springfield. Luckily, it dawns on someone that the latter appellation would be too difficult for cheerleaders to yell. Finding the perfect fit in name and image has been an evolution for SSU and UIS.

**1968**

The state Board of Regents officially sanction Sangamon State University as the name of the institution in acknowledgment of its location in Sangamon County. "Sangamo" is a Native American term for "land of plenty."

**1975**

The University adopts a design by student **John Emerick, '75 LAS**—winner of the SSU logo competition—as its official symbol.



Student Union

1983

The Prairie Dog debuts as SSU's athletic mascot.

1995

A University's re-birth calls for a new logo. The mark features a capitol dome to signify leadership in public affairs and the University's location in the state capital.

1999

UI Trustees approve a naming plan for campus facilities. Roads are named after Illinois authors and housing areas after state prairie flowers. Names replace the "alphabet" buildings of the interim campus.

2000

**Phillip Snow, MA '00 LAS, '97 UIUC**, a graduate student in history, pens UIS's new fight song, "Look to the Stars."

2014

After months of discussion, Prairie Stars—a name first adopted by the SSU soccer team in 1976—is officially reaffirmed as the University's moniker.

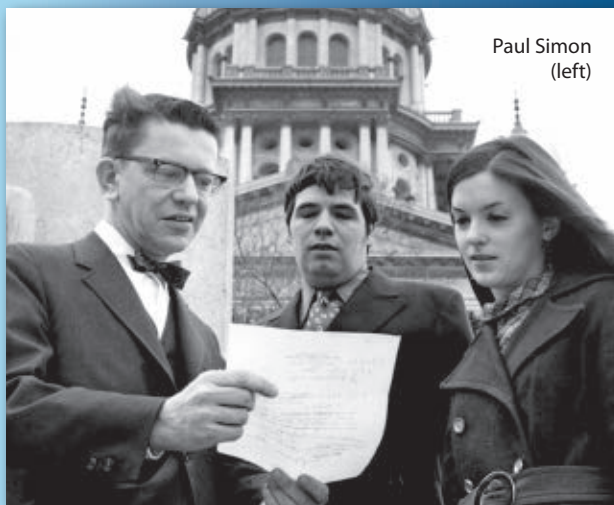
2015

The University welcomes Orion as its new UIS mascot, the sky warrior chosen to reflect strength and provide creative opportunities. Orion follows a long line of others: Cosmo, a Star and the aforementioned Prairie Dog.

# Simon Says

## Public affairs at SSU, as shaped by the hand of Paul Simon

UIS Archives



Paul Simon (left)

It took a genial politician in horn-rimmed glasses and bow tie to help expand the public affairs mission of Sangamon State University. Paul Simon was that guy. Lieutenant Governor of Illinois when SSU opened in 1970, he lost his bid for governor two years later and promptly joined the faculty, teaching courses in history and political science. Within a few years, he established a master's program in public affairs reporting that was soon sending graduates to cover state and national politics around Illinois and the nation. He also co-founded *Illinois Issues*, the University's enduring political journal.

By the time Simon returned to politics in 1975, an annual public affairs colloquium had begun at SSU. So had a prestigious internship that places graduate students in Illinois government agencies and nonprofits. As a cornerstone of the University's founding mandate, public affairs has grown into public radio broadcasting, and research centers; its degree programs have covered areas ranging from criminal justice to environmental studies, including a doctorate in public administration. The PAR program itself has gone on to produce three Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, **Triffon G. "Trif" Alatzas, MA '89 LAS**; **Kathy Best, MA '90 LAS**; and **Deborah Singer Peterson, MA '15 PAA**, as well as bestselling author and journalist **Nina Burleigh, MA '84 LAS**, recipient of the 2020 UIS Alumni Achievement Award.

Simon served Illinois for more than 20 years in Congress and made a run for the U.S. presidency in 1988. The memorable guy in the bow tie passed away in 2003. But the passion for integrity in public affairs at SSU/UIS, which he summoned out of the University's very bones, lives on. —M.T.

UIS Archives



UIS Archives



UIS Campus Relations



UIS Campus Relations



A gallery of mascots (clockwise from top left): The Prairie Dog first fanned the flames in 1983 before the Prairie Star came on the scene a few years later. Today Orion leads the charge having replaced Cosmo in 2015.



UIS Archives

*Top:* Four hundred fifty seven alumni hold the first Sangamon State diplomas issued at the University's inaugural Commencement ceremonies held June 23, 1972, on the grounds of the state highway administration building.

*Bottom:* SSU's Peer Group Counselors from 1976-77 included attendee and singer Bobby McFerrin (far right). His mega-hit, 1988's "Don't Worry, Be Happy," was the first a cappella song to top the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart.



## Pretzel Logic

The arc of academic development for SSU and UIS is by no means linear. SSU starts as a "senior" university focusing on two-year, upper-level study. It caters to students with bachelor's degrees already in progress and those seeking advanced degrees in a range of disciplines, including public administration and service. Teaching innovations range from multidisciplinary instruction and pass-fail courses to detailed written evaluations of students and course catalogs listed alphabetically by instructor.

Envisioned as a cutting-edge teaching institution, SSU bestows graduate degrees long before it allows academic minors. It provides instruction for non-traditional, "senior learners" before it welcomes a freshman class. And while UIS has evolved into a traditional four-year university with a large complement of graduate programs, its commitment to progressive values means the institution is quick to respond to societal needs and trends with academic programming. Its nimble nature may well be the "secret sauce" that makes UIS a university like no other.

### 1969

The Board of Regents approves SSU's request to grant eight bachelor's degrees (biology, English, economics, government, history, math, psychology and sociology) and 10 master's degrees (administration, community planning, and guidance and counseling, as well as all the undergraduate disciplines except history).

### 1971

SSU graduates its first cohort—109 students, including 47 B.A. recipients and 62 M.A. recipients. There is no formal ceremony.

### 1972

Sangamon State University observes its first Commencement, with 254 students receiving bachelor's degrees and 203 students receiving master's degrees. The latter are hooded in the new SSU colors of peacock royal and white. The occasion, held at the state highway administration building on Dirksen Parkway, marks the second anniversary of the University's groundbreaking.

Lt. Gov. Paul Simon is named director of the Public Affairs Reporting program. (See sidebar, pg. 33.)

### 1973

The Regents approve a change in the academic calendar, from quarters to semesters, and 10 new bachelor's and master's degrees, including programs in nursing, social justice, public affairs, creative arts and management, and children, family and community services. SSU's first study abroad students travel to Great Britain to study art, architecture, literature, and war and social change.

### 1975

SSU begins Senior Learners, an experimental program encouraging people 62 and older to study at the University.

### 1976

SSU grants a master's degree in campanology, the study of bells used in carillons, to **Karel Keldermans, '72 PAA, MA '76 LAS**, who has spent two years in Europe performing, composing and doing research in the field. The degree is just the second awarded to a student in the U.S. through an individual option program, an innovative graduate degree offered by the University.

### 1982

SSU launches an experimental class in learning Mandarin through oral instruction, the University's first language course. The medical technology program receives full accreditation, granted to only about 20 percent of med-tech programs nationwide.

### 1990

The Regents approve academic minors for undergraduates, who may choose from among more than 20 disciplines.

### 1996

UI Trustees approve the University's first doctoral program, which is in public administration. UIS accounting majors win kudos as first in the nation for their pass rate on the CPA exam.

### 2001

The College of Business and Management announces a new MBA program in Peoria, which allows working professionals to earn a degree in less than two years.

### 2013-14

UIS ups its music game via the Camerata Music Scholarship program, designed to attract talented students and enhance overall quality.

UIS launches a new degree program in cybersecurity.

**2015**

UIS creates a partnership with Memorial Health System and UIC to offer a BSN in nursing, one of several new academic programs added to enhance the University's growth and reputation.

**2017**

The University introduces new programs of study in biochemistry, data analytics, exercise science, information systems security, theatre and nursing.

**2018**

Innovate Springfield, a downtown business and technology incubator, becomes part of UIS and the first hub of the Illinois Innovation Network.

**2019**

The UIS Field Station at Lake Springfield opens, is a multi-use facility providing the UIS community with opportunities for education, research and recreation on the lake.

## A Day in the Life

**SSU is envisioned as a commuter school. Student demand for room and board—occasionally quite vocal—leads the University to provide townhouses, apartments and, finally, dorms. With residence comes the need for programming. And fun. And the occasional bit of mischief.**

**1970**

The premiere issue of *The Spectrum*, SSU's student newspaper, is published.

**1973**

Students Living Under Major Stress (S.L.U.M.S.) demonstrate at a Board of Regents meeting to protest the difficulty of finding adequate housing near campus. The following spring, the board approves leases on three apartment buildings for students.

**1974**

In response to complaints about the cafeteria, the Regents okay the hiring of a food service coordinator and expansion of hours and services. Rudolph's Bean, a

to minority students who comprise approximately 10 percent of the student body. The University also hosts its first Government Career Day, a statewide event for students at two- and four-year institutions in Illinois.

**1979–80**

SSU breaks ground for its first student residence, a 70-unit apartment complex funded by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and private donations. It is dedicated on Aug. 28, 1980. Campus housing eventually grows to eight clusters of townhouses and two residence halls, providing space for 1,100 students.

**1994**

After 10 years of planning, the University opens its Women's Center in Building F.

The Office of Public Safety becomes the SSU Police Department, with police officers replacing campus security guards.

A new policy prohibits smoking in campus buildings, with the exception of student housing.

**1997**

The Gay and Lesbian Group forms on campus.

**1998**

At the semester's first meeting of the Student Government Association, President John Thompson asks that students be allowed to drink at campus parties. Thompson is reelected SGA president the following spring.

**2001**

Springfest takes root. The community-building week of events and contests continues as an annual campus tradition.



Education at UIS happens on campus and off. The University runs programs in Peoria and at Emiquon, a nature preserve on the Illinois River.

UIS Campus Relations



UIS Archives

You'd expect nothing less from a University that boasts a top-notch Public Affairs Reporting Program: *The Spectrum*, SSU's first student newspaper, arrives before the University officially opens.

new University coffeehouse, opens on East Capitol Avenue in downtown Springfield.

**1977**

Students launch *The Alchemist Review*, SSU's literary magazine, to showcase student fiction, poetry and visual arts.

SSU's Minority Services Center becomes a full-time operation, offering support

The University's first gay and lesbian student group formed on campus in 1997. By 2015, LGBTQ students and their allies sported a rainbow of UIS Pride t-shirts at the annual Closet Door on the Quad event.



UIS Campus Relations



UIS Archives



UIS Archives



UIS Archives



During 50 years, the University welcomed a number of visiting dignitaries, including sci-fi author Arthur C. Clarke (left) in 1971, U.S. Rep. Shirley Chisholm (center) in 1977 and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton (right) in 1996. In 1995, students, staff and faculty gathered at a “wake” to bid a fond farewell to Sangamon State and welcome the incoming UIS era.

## What’s Going On

**Befitting a university conceived to address public good, SSU and UIS hold events that tend toward action, activism and alliance.**

**1971**  
The first University Week, themed “The Year 2001,” takes place in the cafeteria May 24–26. Science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke gives a keynote address about life in that faraway year, and a time capsule is entrusted to the Springfield Marine Bank, to be opened on May 26, 2001.

**1973**  
Talks on the Watergate scandal organized by the Student Activities Committee include an address by James McCord, one of former President Richard Nixon’s conspirators.

**1975**  
Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter, on the presidential campaign trail, drops in on a class in public budgeting.

**1976**  
“Lincoln’s Thought and the Present,” a five-day conference at SSU, examines issues facing Abraham Lincoln and the American people. It is underwritten by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Illinois Bicentennial Commission.

The University’s first graduation picnic, sponsored by the Sangamon State Student Union, takes place at Lake Springfield. The picnic becomes a Commencement tradition.

**1977**  
At the University’s first International Festival, students from abroad share their cultures with the campus and Springfield communities. The celebration endures as the longest-running event in University history.

SSU’s first Homecoming features a box lunch at the home of President Spencer, concerts by Scottish singer Jean Redpath, and a soccer match between SSU and Illinois State.

**1980–81**  
Chinese Ambassador Chai Zemin visits campus and gives an address to a foreign policy forum. The following year, a Chinese delegation of education officials arrives to discuss exchanging ideas, materials and faculty.

**1985**  
The University marks its 15th anniversary with a Founders Day celebration in PAC.

**1990**  
Homecoming—dormant since its early days—returns! The Prairie Stars defeat McKendree College, 2–0, and a homecoming king and queen reign over the festivities.

**1995**  
SSU holds its final Commencement. The institution’s 25th—and last—anniversary takes place on Sept. 21. Students, faculty, staff and friends gather for a picnic/“wake.”

**1996**  
Four graduates are honored with the inaugural UIS Alumni Achievement Awards:

Springfield mayor **Karen Hasara, ’72 EHS, MA ’92 EHS**; journalist **Bill Lambrecht, MA ’73 LAS**; EPA administrator **Julie Barrow, MA ’81 PAA**; and IDOT administrator **Richard Adorjan, ’88 CBM**. The awards program continues to this day.

**1998**  
The University holds its first Disability Awareness Week; it includes a match in which players from UIS take on the Illini Wheelchair Basketball Team. A star party at the UIS Observatory focuses on a new telescope, designed for use by people in wheelchairs—believed to be the only one of its kind in the nation and perhaps the world.

**1999**  
Black History Month observances include talks by UIUC English professor Chester Fontenot Jr. and Haki Madhubuti, founder of the Gwendolyn Brooks Center at Chicago State University.

**2000**  
UIS hosts “Women’s Voices: Imagining Ourselves into the 20th Century,” a national teleconference on women in higher education.

**2001**  
The first Family Weekend includes a Star Party at the University Observatory, volleyball and soccer matches, campus tours, a tailgate barbecue and Sunday brunch.

**2009**  
Chancellor Ringeisen throws a picnic for returning students as part of Welcome Week. It becomes an annual tradition.



## Stormy Weather

**A university with a calling to tackle tough issues and make the most of challenging opportunities is bound to encounter a few bumps along the way (not to mention bomb threats). SSU and UIS cope during tough times.**

### 1971

A bomb threat disrupts classes being held in the old Leland Hotel in downtown Springfield. The building is evacuated, but no bomb is found.

### 1985

Mark Vasconcelles, '63 UIUC, the University's public information officer, is shot and killed in the PAC parking lot by a long-time acquaintance with a history of mental illness. A shocked, grief-stricken community responds by establishing a scholarship in Vasconcelles' memory, and the campus holds a symposium on the rights of victims of violence.

### 1995

Professors Dennis Fox and Ron Sakolsky are arrested for distributing leaflets on campus. A committee forms to study University policies on freedom of expression.

### 1999

Brookens Library and PAC are evacuated in response to a bomb threat. City, county and state police—with help from a bomb-sniffing dog—find nothing.

### 2020

Responding to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the University pivots quickly to convert all spring semester classes to an online instruction model. As cases continue to rise in the fall, the University relies on testing, expanded safety measures and a blended mix of online and in-person learning that allows students to maintain safe distances.

## Tech Trek

**UIS emerges as a leader in online and blended education, with a reputation that dates back through decades of 0s and 1s (and the occasional system error) to the beginnings of the Internet.**

### 1979

SSU begins to test computer terminals for course registration.

### 1997

The University establishes UI-Online, an initiative designed to expand the reach of its educational and public service programs.

### 1999

UIS announces its first online undergraduate degree, a B.A. in liberal studies. It is the second degree the University offers to remote learners, following the debut of its groundbreaking online master's program in MIS.

The Illinois Virtual Campus—designed to expand access to higher education through distance learning—goes live with a ceremony that switches out the usual ribbon-cutting for the click of a mouse.

### 2000–01

UIS introduces the first online master's degree program in educational leadership in the U.S. The University also introduces STAR, an automated registration system; however, a few yet-to-be-swatted bugs draw ire for the program not being customer-friendly.

### 2008

UIS offers 16 fully online degree programs to some 1,200 students; half of UIS students are taking one or more courses over the Internet.

### 2010

Approximately 25 percent of UIS students are enrolled in online degree and certificate programs.

### 2020

Because of the pandemic, the UI System relies heavily on UIS and its faculty and staff to lead the way to online meetings and education, as do other state schools and institutions.

## Tomorrow Never Knows

**The future is always speculative, but in the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan." UIS is bold enough to wish upon its lucky Prairie Stars and wise enough to have a plan to take us there and beyond. The "UIS Strategic Compass 2028" sets out the road map. The imminent completion of the Reaching Stellar campaign will provide the fuel. We can't say exactly where we will be in 2070, but we invite you back as we review those 50 years from the highest of heights.**

The University's initial foray into the digital domain was modest; in 1979, SSU began trials for computer registration. By 2020, UIS is a leader in online education, with approximately 25 percent of its students enrolled in online programs.

Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



# How We Shine!

## A Galaxy of Prairie Stars— 50 (plus) Alumni to Honor 50 Years



To best represent 50 years of our Alma Mater is to talk about her daughters and sons. The strength of our enterprise—not to mention the heart and soul—are the 44,000 living alumni who have earned their SSU or UIS degrees. We're honoring our golden anniversary by inaugurating a Galaxy of Prairie Stars: 50 Alumni to Honor 50 Years. This list is meant to capture our diversity and essence—from what we've studied to what we've accomplished to what we represent to what we've given back. It's not so much a "hall of fame" as a "who we are and how we serve." As UIS grows

and evolves through the ages, so will this list.

Everyone who's earned a degree from Sangamon State University or University of Illinois Springfield shines brightly. So, developing this list and then winnowing it down was no easy task, evidenced by our own willingness to bend the "50 rule" by making some groupings of association. If the history of SSU and UIS teaches nothing else, it shows how bending rules—stretching limits, breaking boundaries, exceeding expectations—for the right reasons is often the best approach.

**June Agamah, MPH '01,** *Springfield.* Guyanese-American public health administrator; logistics coordinator for the International Health & Development Network; co-founder of Community Health Giving Circle, which promotes good health in Sangamon County; author of *Caryl's Closet*.

**Linda Renee Baker-Roby, '85 PAA, MA '87 EHS, DPA '04,** *St. Louis.* Professor, Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University; held key managerial positions under three Illinois governors, including Secretary, Illinois Dept. of Human Services; first graduate to earn undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees from UIS.

**John D. Blackburn, MA CAN '79 EHS,** *Lincoln, Ill.*

Retired, COUNTRY Financial, where he had a 30-year career (11 as its CEO); retired president, Lincoln College.

**Ralph Blackman, MA '76 PAA,** *Chicago.* Retired president and CEO, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility; worked for U.S. Presidents Ronald W. Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

### Book Club

**Nina Burleigh, MA '84 LAS,** *New York City.* Investigative journalist and author of best-selling books *The Fatal Gift of Beauty: The Trials of Amanda Knox* and *Golden Handcuffs: The Secret History of Trump's Women*.

**A.D. Carson, MPA '08,** *Charlottesville, VA.* Performance artist and

educator, assistant professor at the University of Virginia; author of *COLD*, a novel, and *The City: [un] poems, thoughts, rhymes & miscellany*, a collection of poems, stories and essays.

**Wenguang Huang, MA '91 LAS,** *Chicago.* Writer, translator and journalist; author of *The Little Red Guard* and coauthor of *A Death in the Lucky Holiday Hotel: Murder, Money and an Epic Power Struggle in China*.

**Cheryl Alters Jamison, MA '77 PAA,** *Santa Fe, N.M.* International culinary writer, editor, instructor and author of *That Exciting Foods Expert*, four-time recipient of the prestigious James Beard Award.

**William Lambrecht, MA '73 LAS,** *Tracy's Landing,*

*Md.* Inaugural visiting professional, Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism; investigative reporter, author of *Dinner at the New Gene Café* and *Big Muddy Blues*.

**Robert Moore, '80 PAA, MPA '85,** *Springfield.* President of Robert Moore and Associates Black Marshal Publishing, retired U.S. marshal and author of *The President's Men: Black United States Marshals in America*.

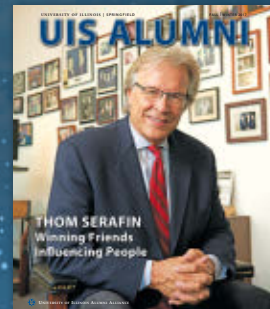
**Suzanne E. Brown, MA '84 PAA,** *St. Louis.* Immigration attorney and advocate who has worked as a Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representative; helped the Illinois Conference of Churches set

up its legalization program, which evolved into the Immigration Project.

**Dexter Burns, '14 PAA, MA '16 UIUC,** *Washington, D.C.* Founder and president, First Trip organization, which awards scholarships to college students traveling abroad for the first time; manager of foreign affairs internship programs in federal and private sectors; youngest individual to create a named scholarship at UIS.

**Cheri Bustos, MA '85 LAS,** *Moline, Ill.* Journalist, healthcare executive and member of the U.S. House of Representatives for Illinois' 17th Congressional District since 2013; became the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, 2019.





**Enzo Campagnolo**, MPH '97, *Hermitage, Pa.* More than 14 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including work in epidemic intelligence service.

**Kevin Catlin**, '12 PAA, MPA '14, *Poplar Grove, Ill.* County administrator, Boone County, Ill.; former city manager for Springfield, Mich.; also serves as a reserve officer and a local government representative for the Dept. of Homeland Security.

**Guoxing Chai**, MBA '93, *Palatine, Ill.* International financial executive and chief risk officer, Retail Banking & Wealth Management, HSBC China.

**Priyanka Deo Jain**, '10 PAA, *New Delhi, India.* Editor and anchor, TV9 India; formerly anchor and executive producer with *New India Junction*.

**The Dream Team Elizabeth Blair**, '93 PAA, MA '03 LAS, *Dunlap, Ill.* Chief of security, Quest Charter Academy; retired, Peoria (Ill.) Police Department, first woman named Peoria Police Officer of the Year; UIS tennis and volleyball MVP.

**Tina Buck-Harth**, '13 LAS, MPA '18 PAA, *Chatham, Ill.* Director of marketing, FrontlineCo association managers; owner, Buck Fastpitch Academy.

**Darrel Burnett**, '78 LAS, *Milton, Wis.* Entrepreneur and executive director of The Automobile Gallery, former sportscaster/host of "Inside College Basketball" and "Inside College Football."

**Aydin Gonulsen**, MA '76 LAS, *Shipman, Ill.* Deputy CEO for the World Collegiate Soccer Championship, SSU and UIS' first head soccer coach and athletic director; led the Prairie Stars to three men's soccer National Championships.

**George Lidster**, '84 LAS, *Myrtle Beach, S.C.* Retired professional soccer player; retired men's soccer head coach, George Washington University—winningest coach in GWU history.

**Richard Oruche**, '10 CBM, *Huntley, Ill.* Professional basketball player and first UIS graduate to compete as an Olympian (2012 Olympics).

**Chigozie Umeadi**, '12 CBM, *New York City.*

Associate manager for stats and analytics, National Basketball Association (NBA).

**Audra Roach Wyant**, '07 LAS, *Lexington, Ill.* Co-founder and owner, Finding Eminence Farm; member (volleyball), UIS Athletics Hall of Fame 2016.

**Randall F. Dunn**, '73 CBM, MA '74 PAA, *Port Charlotte, Fla.* Entrepreneur and founder of multiple medical practice management organizations; president of R. Dunn & Associates—property development and finance.

**Veronica Espina**, MA '02 PAA, *Springfield.* Executive at the Illinois Dept. of Aging and UIS adjunct instructor; founder of the Springfield Immigrant Advocacy Network.

**Lin Ezell**, '74 LAS, *Nanjemoy, Md.* Retired founding director, National Museum of the Marine Corps; two decades as a curator and executive, Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

**W. Robert Felker**, '74 PAA, *Wilmette, Ill.* Financial executive; partner, Gator Trading; former chair,

J.P. Morgan Futures and member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's financial markets and payment system working group.

**Eugenio Fernandez**, MS '07 CBM, *Memphis, Tenn.* CIO for the Florida market for Community Health Systems; held leadership positions with the U.S. Dept. of Defense.

**Teresa Haley**, '92 LAS, MPA '94, *Springfield.* First female president, Illinois NAACP State Conference and president, Springfield branch, NAACP; first ever recipient, NAACP Activist of the Year Award.

**Nina Harris**, '91 CBM, MPA '98, *Springfield.* First female president and CEO, Springfield Urban League; founder, award-winning Health Initiatives Affiliate.

**Carly Hawkins**, '05 PAA, *Washington, D.C.* Deputy director, Strategic Victory Fund for the Democracy Alliance, a progressive movement donor network.

**Gordon Heddell**, MA '75 PAA, *Laredo, Texas.* Corporate director, Gordon Heddell Group; served in the U.S. Secret

Service for nearly three decades, as well as inspector general of the U.S. Dept. of Defense and U.S. Dept. of Labor.

**Jeromé Holston**, MPA '13, *Chicago.* Director, LGBT Chamber of Commerce Illinois; worked for the Office of the Illinois Governor.

**Raju Indukuri**, MA '92 CBM, *Fremont, Calif.* Entrepreneur and co-founder of FalconX: Incubator and Accelerator, founded multiple tech companies.

**Claire Jerry**, MA '12 LAS, *Washington, D.C.* Lead curator of political history at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

**Sara Wojcicki Jimenez**, MA '03 PAA, *Springfield.* Director, marketing and communications, HSHS Home Care Central Illinois Division; former Illinois State Representative (2015–19); member Illinois Capitol Historic Preservation Board.

**Donald T. Johnson Jr.**, '82 CBM, *Bradenton, Fla.* Retired president and CEO, Aftermarket



Technology Corp. and retired executive with Ford and Caterpillar; director, automobile parts manufacturer Accuride Corp.

**Kimberly Lightford, MPA '96**, Maywood, Ill. Illinois State Senator (1998–present), majority leader since 2019.

### Mayor's Office

**Karen Hasara, '72 LAS, MA '92 PAA**, Springfield. Member of the Illinois General Assembly (1986–95), mayor of Springfield (1995–2003) and University of Illinois Trustee (2009–19).

**James Langfelder, '91**, CBM, Springfield. Mayor of Springfield (2015–present), Springfield Treasurer (2003–15).

**Charles Olivier, '15 CBM**, Washington, D.C. Global finance operations with Google; former CFO of the Democratic National Committee; served as the first African American student trustee of UIS.

**Richard C. Osborne, MA '73 CBM**, Scottsdale, Ariz. Business executive and retired CEO, chairman and president, Scotsman Industries;

senior managing director, Madison Industries.

**Fred Parsons, '81** CBM, Edwardsville, Ill. Entrepreneur and former founder and president, Southern Illinois Railcar Co. and Metro East Recycling.

**Donovan Pepper, '94 PAA, MA '96 PAA**, Oak Park, Ill. National director, Local Government Relations, Walgreens Co.

**Rikeesha Phelon, '99 PAA, MA '05 LAS**, Springfield. Director of marketing and communications, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; president and owner, Phelon Public Strategies.

### Pulitzer Prize Club

**Triffon G. "Trif" Alatzas, MA '89 PAR**, Baltimore. Publisher and editor-in-chief of The Baltimore Sun Media Group, led his team to Pulitzer wins in 2019 and 2020.

**Kathy Best, MA '90 LAS**, College Park, Md. First director of the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism, led *The Seattle*

*Times* staff to win two Pulitzers.

**Deborah Peterson, MA '15 PAA**, St. Louis. Editorial writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; 1982 Pulitzer Prize winner at the *Kansas City Star*.

**Mitch Pugh, '98 LAS**, Mount Pleasant, S.C. Executive editor of the Charleston, S.C., *Post and Courier*, which won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service and was a finalist for three other Pulitzer Prizes since 2013.

**Tim R. Randolph, '83 PAA**, Fenton, Mo. Chairman, Biomedical Laboratory Science, St. Louis University; founder, Randolph World Ministries, which provides aid to Haiti; medical researcher in field of sickle cell anemia; holder of three patents.

**Justin Rose, '12 LAS, MA '14 PAA**, Springfield. UIS director of Diversity and Inclusion, founder of the Black Male Collegiate Society.

**Randall L. Schilling, MBA '89**, St. Charles, Mo. Founder/CEO of MembershipWare; startup company entrepreneur who

founded multiple technology and training companies.

**Thom Serafin, '73 LAS, MA '91 PAA**, Chicago. Founder and CEO of Serafin and Associates; public affairs and public relations leader.

**Kyle Simpson, '08 PAA**, Washington, D.C. Senior government affairs manager, National Recreation and Park Association; spent nearly a decade in Congress working for Illinois and Missouri lawmakers.

**Elgie Sims, MPA '97**, Chicago. Illinois State Senator (2017–present), member of the Illinois House of Representatives (2012–18).

**Donna Sollenberger, '71 LAS, MA '74 LAS**, Richmond, Texas. Executive vice president and CEO, University of Texas Medical; held CEO positions at multiple health systems for nearly two decades.

**Danielle Stanley, '11 PAA, MPA '13**, Chicago. Policy and programs manager, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce; fellow for former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn.

**Jason Stuebe, '05 PAA, MPA '07**, Humble, Texas. City

manager for Humble, Texas.

**Brian Su, MPA '96**, Springfield. CEO and president of Artisan Business Group and co-founder of Sangamon Watch Company.

**LeRoy Walker Jr., MPA '81**, Jackson, Miss. Entrepreneur; founder and president of multiple organizations; community and civic leader in Jackson, Miss.

**Samuel Wheeler, MA '02 LAS**, Springfield. Former Illinois State Historian; former director of research and collections for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

**Randall Witter, MPA '82**, Springfield. President, Cook-Witter; lobbyist and advocate for Illinois higher education.

**Julie Zara, '86 LAS**, Sherman, Ill. Founder and owner, Zara Collision Center.

**Phillip Zeni, '72** EHS, Memphis, Tenn. International businessman, consultant, Internet pioneer, publisher and author; medical practice administrator for Zenith Health and Aesthetics.

# Gallery



1

2



3



4

UIS Campus Relations



5



6

## That Was Then; This Is Now

**Seeing stars:** We wore buttons (1) to support the men's soccer team who adopted the name Prairie Stars in **1976**. The name became official in **2014**. Thanks to the University's Star Parties (2)—started in **1977** and continuing **today**—we're still looking up.

**Being stars:** We welcomed the University's first "true" freshman class with a button (3) heralding the arrival of the Capital Scholars in **1999**. The inaugural group came back to campus in **2005** to celebrate a 5th reunion (4).

**Sipping Starbucks:** We enjoyed our lattes and cappuccinos at Starbucks (5) when the Student Union opened in **2018**. Dedicated public radio station listeners have enjoyed coffee from a WSSR promotional mug (6) since the station first went on air in **1975**.



Charles J. Schrage

# Alumni Relations

## A Time for Celebrating

Chartered in 1969... registration and classes commence in 1970... roots in Sangamon... Our 50th anniversary is here! We'll be celebrating the University's *Bold Legacy Bright Future* through May 2021. And we'll do so *United in Safety*.

**W**e'll celebrate using a mix of technology and tradition. To begin with, we'll continue publishing *UIS Today*, in print and online, with each issue featuring unique, historic and forward-thinking content. In fact, we hope you'll find this issue to be a very special souvenir.

We'll use email, social media and the web to engage, celebrate and inspire. We've launched a special 50th anniversary site on the UIS web site. Our social media will host flashback photos and memories of monumental moments. A 50th anniversary memories campaign is underway where you can share memories, photos and stories of your time as a student—whether you attended classes in-person, online or in a “blended” format, a concept that predates the pandemic at UIS.

For the fall of 2020, we've moved many activities to a virtual format. The UIS Alumni SAGE Society will hold six virtual Lunch and Learn Series programs throughout October, November and December. The theme is “Timely Talks on Timeless Topics,” featuring discussion of evolving issues that have had an impact during the past half-century. UIS Music and the legendary

Star Parties at the UIS Observatory are hosting programs virtually. The Beaumont Endowed Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series occurred virtually in October, as well.

Watch your email and social media for details. The virtual nature of these activities enables us to expand participation well beyond the vast prairie of central Illinois to cities and locales near and far, and even internationally.

In 2021, just like you, we are pivoting to plan virtual programs that will celebrate and inspire.

In closing, I want to state the obvious: We're taking every reasonable precaution to prioritize the health, safety and welfare of everyone within the UIS community, while balancing expectations of the *Bold Legacy Bright Future* celebration. We are *United in Safety* for everyone—protecting our students, faculty and staff, and society at large. And that certainly includes you!

Now, let's celebrate!

Best wishes,

**Charles J. Schrage, MA '05 PAA**

Associate Vice Chancellor for Alumni Relations

It takes  
a star to  
know  
a star

**Volunteer!** No one knows UIS better than its own stars, and UIS Admission wants to train interested alumni to be volunteer Alumni Admission Ambassadors. If you work in education, are active in your community and/or are willing to share your positive Prairie Star experience with prospective students, you can help our enrollment management effort. Contact us today!

**Undergraduate alumni** can apply to 14 master's degree programs with no GRE/GMAT requirement.

**Get'er done.** Millions of Americans have college credit and no degree. Refer returning students among your friends, colleagues, neighbors and family to UIS for one of its on-line bachelor's degree completion programs.

**Email:** [admissions@uis.edu](mailto:admissions@uis.edu).

Courtesy of Josh Walton



Tech entrepreneur Josh Walton built his vineyard information app, VineCrawl, using his nose, eyes and feet. “Sometimes, I don’t even mention that I have a disability because I want people to see the work that I produce. Then I surprise them,” he says.

## Tactile Techie

Josh Walton, who learned coding online at UIS, put body and soul into his first app

Like many budding tech entrepreneurs, **Josh Walton, '15 LAS**, made his mark by building an app. He worked on it methodically, starting soon after graduation. The process took years.

Walton, who has cerebral palsy, built it using his nose, eyes and feet. Exaggerated reflexes and involuntary motions make it impossible for him to type on a keyboard. Instead, he uses other devices. Sometimes, he navigates with a joystick; other times, he types slowly by pushing his nose against the screen.

It's Walton's eye-gaze system that still amazes him; he uses it to type by looking at a letter, then pressing a pedal with his foot. This allows him to work more quickly. That any of this happens amazes people who see Walton's work before meeting him.

“Sometimes, I don’t even mention that I have a disability because I want people to see the work that I produce. Then I surprise them,” Walton says.

Walton launched VineCrawl in 2019. The app tells users the hours, locations and event details of local California wineries. He

got the idea after wondering why it was so hard to find information on the more than 100 wineries where he lives in Santa Barbara County. VineCrawl ([www.vinecrawl.com](http://www.vinecrawl.com)) has been downloaded 341 times since February, most of the activity coming after Walton appeared on a local NBC news show. He's disappointed by the numbers, but they've motivated him to redouble his efforts. He continues to work full-time on the app, adding new features and winery information.

Walton lives in California with his family by necessity, as they care for his physical needs. As an online UIS grad, he hopes to one day visit his Alma Mater in person. He still thinks fondly of his UIS experience, learning to code and talking over email with his UIS professors.

Surprisingly, Walton rarely drinks wine. When he does, he takes small sips from a straw, usually from his dad's glass. Even so, Walton loves wineries, large places where he can enjoy being with his family and friends. Those occasions are the main reason he created the app. “I love to do things with my family,” he says. —*Hal Conick*

# Class Profile 2000s

Darrell Hoemann



"I never sat at a desk until the fifth or sixth grade," says Champaign County Regional Planning Commission CEO Dalitso Sulamoyo of his early education in Malawi, Africa. "We sat under a tree and practiced writing in the sand."

## International Activist

Dalitso Sulamoyo left his native Malawi, Africa, and came to America where he addresses poverty and champions social justice

On the first day of his first job, **Dr. Dalitso S. Sulamoyo, MA '99 PAA, MPA '02**, had to navigate a city he'd never been to in a country that was relatively new to him.

At the time he made the trip, he was working for the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies and had to meet with Illinois' congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. IACAA addresses poverty and promotes social justice, issues that were important to Sulamoyo who grew up in Malawi, an economically depressed country in southeastern Africa. "I never sat at a desk until the fifth or sixth grade," he recalls. "We sat under a tree and practiced writing in the sand." In middle school, "we slept on the floor and grew our own food; it was pretty rough."

To escape poverty and get an advanced education, Sulamoyo came to the U.S. when he was 22. His only guide was a book of American colleges at the U.S. Embassy in Malawi. Sulamoyo would eventually earn degrees in political studies and public administration at UIS, and a doctorate at Benedictine University in Lisle, Ill. "Everything I was taught at UIS I apply to this day," he says.

After less than two years at IACAA, Sulamoyo was promoted to CEO, becoming the youngest and first African American in the position. His proudest accomplishment came during the state budget impasse of the late 2010s. Funding was shuttered for many nonprofits. "I was one of the leaders who fought for legislation to allow federal pass-through funding not just to the organizations I represented, but to other organizations that work on poverty. That helped probably thousands of families."

Now Sulamoyo lives in Champaign, Ill., and heads the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, but he still wants to help on an international level. "Some people think I will end up working in Washington, D.C." as a professional or elected official, he says. "I'm intrigued with politics. It could be either one." —*Tara McClellan McAndrew*

Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



Dr. Betsy Goulet, who coordinates the University's CAST certificate program, earned three degrees from SSU/UIS. "I feel incredibly fortunate," she says. "The university in the corn field changed everything for me."

## Hometown Hero

Betsy Goulet has dedicated herself to helping Springfield's youth, even founding a child advocacy agency as her master's thesis

"Hometown heroes" don't come any more qualified than **Betsy Goulet, '83 EHS, MA '92 EHS, DPA '14**. She grew up in Springfield, and she still calls the University home as she now serves as a clinical assistant professor in public administration and coordinates the Child Advocacy Studies certificate program (CAST).

When she was young, Goulet wanted to be a guidance counselor, and she found that advocacy is "not too far from that." Her experiences soon opened her eyes to the extent of the need. "I didn't realize how many children go to bed scared at night," she says.

CAST is an academic program in the College of Public Affairs where students spend time in simulation labs to get a sense of environments they likely will encounter in the field.

Goulet developed an appreciation for that kind of environmental training in her position as an investigator for the Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services.

"I lost a lot of sleep," she says about that job. "It was such hard work and I felt so under-prepared. It made the biggest impact on [my work to create] simulation training for investigators."

Goulet also credits her ambition to professors who were not only academics, but also practitioners. She is quick to acknowledge the encouragement of Harry Berman, then a new UIS professor who would later serve as an interim chancellor. "He inspired everyone in the program, [making them believe] that they could accomplish anything," she says.

Her work at UIS with Berman led Goulet to found the Sangamon County Child Advocacy Center. As Berman notes, "Most people don't start an agency for their thesis."

"No one stopped me," Goulet says with good humor. "No one told me I couldn't."

Goulet's "three degree/three decade" tenure at UIS made her an ideal candidate for this 50th anniversary Class Notes profile salute. Representing the 1990s is fitting; it was the decade when she began the work that would define her course of study and career.

"I feel incredibly fortunate," Goulet says "The university in the corn field changed everything for me." —*Julie Sevig*

UIS Campus Relations



"We step into taxpayers' shoes when there's a problem," says Victor Juarez of his work as an IRS advocate. "We work things out directly with the IRS for you, so you don't have to deal with it anymore."

## Tax Advocate

Victor Juarez may change your notions about that call from the IRS

**C**hampion, supporter, proponent, promoter—**Victor Juarez, '87 CBM**, is an advocate in every sense of the word. As one of the founders of the non-profit organization El Cielo, he's dedicated himself to promoting the education, employment and culture of Latino Americans in Springfield and Central Illinois. During his eight years as a member of the UIS Campus Alumni Advisory Board, he's worked tirelessly to help make the campus more welcoming and supportive of Latino students.

Even his business card reads "advocate." That may come as a surprise to those who dread a call from the Internal Revenue Service. For the last 10 of his 31 years at the IRS, Juarez served as a local taxpayer advocate. The advocate program is an independent organization within the IRS that serves as a voice for the taxpayer. "We step into taxpayers' shoes when there's a problem," Juarez explains. "We talk with you and get the necessary information, and then we work things out directly with the

IRS for you, so you don't have to deal with it anymore."

Juarez joined the Springfield IRS office as a revenue agent right after graduating from UIS, and subsequently become an advocate, a role, he says, that has been "a great opportunity for me to help my community in another way."

In 2010, he moved to the Philadelphia IRS bureau to head up a 60-person team in the national taxpayer advocate office, which fields requests for help from taxpayers all over the globe. He was a bilingual voice of assurance for countless corporate expats, soldiers stationed overseas and international students.

But UIS students remain dear to his heart. Every year, he returns to campus to present the Victor A. and Daisy A. Juarez Latino Scholarship, named in honor of him and his wife by the El Cielo Foundation. Winners must be active in their communities as volunteers and mentors, following the example that Juarez first set in Springfield so many years ago. —*Kristin Baird Rattini*



Justin L. Fowler/State Journal-Register



Edna Walden serves up free ice cream at Central Baptist Church in Springfield. Jim Edgar, whom Walden “knew from church,” brought her into state government.

## Exceptional Educator

Edna Walden’s stellar performance as an elementary school teacher ultimately landed her in the governor’s office

As a grade school teacher in Springfield in the early 1970s, **Edna Walden, MA ’74 LAS**, recalls “a lot of excitement” about her city becoming home to the new Sangamon State University.

Walden already had a B.S. in education from Alabama’s Tuskegee University, but when she learned that Professor Gus Stevens would teach multicultural education at Sangamon State, she decided to enroll.

“There was a lot of buzz about this cool professor,” she says. “Plus, the 16 credit hours ensured a bump up on the teachers’ pay scale.”

Adding to her workload as a teacher, wife and mother, Walden took night classes and chose the University’s unique Individual Option Program for her master’s degree, because it allowed students to design a curriculum tailored to their career goals. Her favorite professors, besides Stevens, were Judy Everson and Jacqueline “Jackie” Jackson. “Their inimitable styles made learning fun,” she says. “They were interested in me as a person and took my well-being to heart.”

Walden says that SSU prepared her to add value beyond the classroom. “Taking counseling courses enabled me to become a student relations specialist, counseling students who traveled to schools out of their neighborhoods due to court-ordered busing.”

One of her former students, Dennis Banks, was profiled by *The State Journal-Register* when he became an official with the Springfield Housing Authority. Banks told the newspaper that Walden had been his “most important teacher” and credited his success to her guidance.

The article caught the attention of Secretary of State Jim Edgar, who attended Central Baptist Church in Springfield with Walden. Edgar then recruited Walden to join his staff.

She worked on Edgar’s comprehensive traffic safety program, which helped to reduce drunk driving, and on a program to increase literacy.

Elected governor in 1990, Edgar brought Walden along to direct his internship and fellowship program, represent and speak for him at various meetings and events, and handle constituent requests and myriad inter-office tasks.

After serving with Edgar throughout his tenure as secretary of state and governor, Walden went to work for the Illinois Dept. of Human Services, retiring in 2007. —*William S. Bike*

# View Finder



## Buck Up!

Architect and visionary Buckminster Fuller spoke on SSU's campus in May of 1973 during Alternatives in Environments and Technology Week. Political science professor Robert Sipe and his students constructed a large geodesic dome—a so-called "Bucky Ball"—to welcome him.



# my ILLINOIS REWARDS

**NEW EXPERIENCES...**  
*thanks to your purchases*

## REWARDS FOR YOUR EVERYDAY PURCHASES

Earn 1 point for every \$1 spent with the UIS VISA Rewards Card. From groceries, to utility bills, to dinner out, watch the points add up towards rewards.



- NO** Cash advance fees
- NO** Foreign transaction fees
- NO** Annual fee

Apply today at **UISCARD.ORG**



*In Partnership With*



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS ALUMNI ALLIANCE

\*Terms and conditions: APR=Annual Percentage Rate. APR for UIS VISA® Platinum with Rewards accounts is 12.90% to 17.90% based on your creditworthiness. Rewards are only earned on UIS VISA® Rewards Accounts, selected at time of application. "Purchases" do not include balance transfers, cash advances, travelers checks, foreign currency, money orders, wire transfers or similar cash-like transactions, lottery tickets, casino gaming chips, race track wagers or similar betting transactions, any checks that access your account, interest, unauthorized or fraudulent charges, and fees of any kind, including an annual fee, if applicable. Transactions are subject to the account opening disclosure and your Credit Card Agreement. UICCU reserves the right to refuse any application.

Office of Advancement  
University of Illinois Springfield  
One University Plaza, MS PAC 591  
Springfield, IL 62703-5407

© University of Illinois Foundation  
Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois 9-20-16, 725-57270

# Reaching Stellar

## THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS

**Because scholarships affirm the aspirations of students.**

More and more UIS alumni are stepping up to create scholarships. There's no better way to experience the sheer joy of giving than to look into the face of a student whose future you have changed.

**Find out for yourself. Choose your own criteria. Named scholarships start at \$1000/year, or \$84/month for 12 months.**

[UIS.EDU/REACHINGSTELLAR](http://UIS.EDU/REACHINGSTELLAR)

**REACHING STELLAR**  
CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
**SPRINGFIELD**