

Winter 2021

UIS TODAY

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS | SPRINGFIELD

Tom Livingston

Oiling the engine of commerce
Shaping education in Illinois

The founding faculty's
bold approach to
higher education

UIS TODAY

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On the Cover

Tom Livingston, MPA '97, '90 UIUC, serves as head of
state government relations and community affairs
for railway leader CSX Transportation.

Photo by Lloyd DeGrane



The Livingston Line

Tom Livingston, MPA '97, '90 UIUC, helps oil the engine of commerce through his work for railway leader CSX Transportation. As advocates for education, he and his family have a storied history of shaping the University of Illinois.

By Jonathan Black



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Karen M. Whitney

From the **Chancellor**

United in a New Year

Together, the UIS community responds to challenges by rising to opportunities

**Now is our time
to reflect on
how challenges
inform *what* we
teach, *how* we
teach and *who*
we teach moving
forward.**

Last year was like no other, and 2021 continues to prove that it will be filled with many great challenges—and many great opportunities. For those reasons and more, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to continue to work with my UIS colleagues, students, alumni and friends for another year through summer of 2022!

On my first day at UIS last July, I shared with the University 10 goals to serve as my leadership compass, and those same goals will continue to be my priorities. We will prioritize the safety of all students and employees regarding the pandemic. We will offer even more relevant, high-demand credentials. We will grow our enrollment. We will ensure UIS is a beacon of social justice and continues to demonstrate a commitment to anti-racism initiatives. We will complete our very successful Reaching Stellar fundraising campaign. And we will expand our reach as a public university committed to intensive teaching, meaningful learning, applied research and intentional public service while staying true to our legacy of more than 50 years and pursuing our very bold future.

“Leadership lived” is a guiding principle of our University. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have lived out our promise of leadership through our United in Safety approach to public health and our commitment to providing the University of Illinois’ groundbreaking saliva-based testing to our students, faculty and staff. Our steadfast protocol of rapid testing and contact tracing has provided an extraordinary service to our UIS family, and there is much to be proud of in the way our University has marshaled through this great health threat.

Now is our time to reflect on these great challenges and to consider how they should inform *what* we teach, *how* we teach and *who* we teach moving forward. We must be at the forefront of innovation and creativity regarding these great challenges of public health, equity, inclusion, democracy and civility.

We are united. We are United in Safety, and we are united in our commitment to each other and to a responsibility to transform the lives of our students, our communities, our state and our nation. I look forward to working with each of you as we realize these imperatives.

United,

Karen M. Whitney, Ph.D.
Interim Chancellor



Prairie Stars
News



Tie a Yellow Ribbon...

To honor the many veterans who are part of the UIS community, students annually festoon campus trees with the now traditional yellow ribbons each Nov. 11 on Veteran's Day. The tradition was started in 2012 by Samia Ahmad, '14 UIC—then a junior studying criminal justice at UIS—to honor her boyfriend who was deployed overseas. "I [tied] one yellow ribbon on the tree outside my apartment," she says. When she explained her action to others, they enthusiastically followed suit. A tradition took root!

Photo: Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services' Keeping It Real website (capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/focus-areas/workforce/simulation-training) uses training video created in cooperation with the UIS Child Protection Training Academy. CPTA's Betsy Goulet notes that "several state child welfare professionals have visited campus to better understand how simulation training improves decision making."

Keeping It Real

CPTA video series trains child welfare workers nationwide

A video series created in cooperation with the UIS Child Protection Training Academy serves as a national simulation training model for preparing child welfare workers and students to work with at-risk children and families.

The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services' Center for States—part of the Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative and a service of the Children's Bureau—filmed the Academy's simulation scenarios and conducted interviews at the University's residential simulation lab and mock courtroom before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March.

The videos and other resources on the new Keeping It Real website are used by child welfare agencies throughout the U.S. to prepare child welfare workers and students for difficult interactions with families, as they investigate cases of suspected child abuse. The Center for States hopes the series will help agencies learn

about the benefits, costs and considerations for implementing similar training programs in their states.

"Over the years, several state child welfare professionals have visited campus to better understand how simulation training improves transfer of learning and critical decision-making in the field," says **Betsy Goulet, '83 EHS, MA '92 EHS, DPA '14**, principal investigator for CPTA. "The new website consolidates the research, tools and videos other programs across the country need to begin to replicate the model for their workforce."

The videos cover an investigator's first knock on the door of a family's home, an interview with medical personnel on how to discuss physical evidence in a case, a presentation of findings in family court, an overview of simulation training, and a debrief from those who participated in simulation training. —Blake Wood

Gift Supports Focus on Business and Society in the College of Business and Management

Christine and Lou Friedrich have made a gift of \$100,000 to the University's College of Business and Management that should significantly advance business education. The funds will help jump-start several initiatives in finance and economics.

The gift comes as the College initiates projects on issues pertaining to business and society, providing resources for think tanks, a speaker series and a student-managed investment fund, as well as support to incorporate data analytics throughout the College's core and majors. Once implemented, the projects will better equip students to contribute meaningfully to the business world upon graduation.

"Scholars across disciplines in business and the humanities are increasingly recognizing that business and the economy cannot be studied in isolation from the rest of the human experience," says CBM Dean Som Bhattacharya. "Business and society need to be studied

together so we can truly understand the process of human welfare, social progress and the ability to achieve a more equitable society."

A director of the University of Illinois Foundation's Board of Directors, Lou Friedrich, '67 UIUC, worked for Bernstein Global Wealth Management, New York City, for 31 years as a principal and managing director. He also served as vice president of finance for Sanford C. Bernstein & Co, and as deputy and acting budget director for the City of New York from 1978 to 1982.

"Christine and I are thrilled to be able to support the innovative initiatives of the UIS College of Business and Management," Friedrich says. —B.W.



Blake Wood/UIS Campus Relations

Star Party Heartier!

Construction on a new rooftop deck for the Observatory is nearly complete. The results will offer an improved Star Party experience and feature a larger gathering area, improved traffic flow and recessed LED lighting. Star Parties will resume on the roof of Brookens Library when COVID-19 mitigations end.

Writer Round-up

Recent books by UIS faculty authors provide fresh perspectives on topics such as love, politics and taxes.

Political Science Professor Richard Gilman-Opalsky's *The Communism of Love: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Exchange Value* (AK Press, 2020) explores the meaning and power of love from ancient Greece to modern day America. Gilman-Opalsky asserts that what is called "love" by the topic's best thinkers is, in fact, the beating heart of communism understood as a human yearning and way of life, not as a form of government.

Gilman-Opalsky demonstrates that the commodification of love often destroys it, as assigning "exchange value" to things is inadequate to express what humans treasure most.

Professor of Political Science Jason Pierceson's *LGBTQ Americans in the U.S. Political System: An Encyclopedia of Activists, Voters, Candidates and Officeholders* (ABC-CLIO, 2019) was named a top ten editor's pick by Choice, a publishing unit of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.

The two-volume work includes essays on LGBTQ candidates, elected officials and voters, as well as more than 250 entries on important events, issues, organizations and people in the LGBTQ rights movement. It also includes a timeline of key events, noteworthy government documents, court cases and speeches by LGBTQ candidates and activists.

Taxation in Utopia: Required Sacrifice and the General Welfare (SUNY Press, 2020) by Professor Emeritus of Accountancy Donald Morris, provides a novel approach to examining relations between a

state's view of the general welfare and the sacrifices required of its citizens.

The book traces the moral dimensions of taxation through the utopian writings of political theorists and novelists, including Henry David Thoreau, H.G. Wells, Leo Tolstoy, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, George Orwell, B.F. Skinner, Jonathan Swift, Plato, Karl Marx and many more. "I chose [to explore] utopias for the same reasons that investigators ... adopt simplifying assumptions and develop conceptual models," Morris says. —B.W.

vimeo.com



"This is the face that has haunted my dreams since the very first time I learned what racism looks like and what hate sounds like." Dr. Wesley Robinson-McNeese reads his poem "Face to Face" in an Emmy-winning video created by UIS alumni and faculty.

Face to Face Emmys

Alumni receive kudos at the 2020 Mid-America Emmy Awards

Chris Costello, '15 LAS, and Josh Hester, MA '09 LAS, received Emmy Awards in the Short Format Program category during the virtual 2020 Mid-America Emmy Awards for their work on *Face to Face*. The short film is created around a poem written by Dr. Wesley Robinson-McNeese, associate dean for diversity and inclusion at the SIU School of Medicine, that he reads inside the

remains of Black-owned homes that were burned in the 1908 Springfield Race Riots.

Costello directed the film and Hester served as its executive producer. *Face to Face* came about when Assistant Professor of History Devin Hunter approached Springfield-based The Storyteller Studios with the idea of creating the short film while documenting archaeological work at the race riot site. Hunter connected Storyteller with Robinson-McNeese.

Hunter hopes the film and poem will help audiences focus on the victims of the 1908 Springfield Race Riots, and address work that remains to be done toward racial justice and equality.

"All possible credit is due to Wes and his remarkable poem," Hunter says. "The entire project started with his powerful words, and I'm proud that this honor may bring more attention to this amazing work."

Face to Face was produced through the University of Illinois and funded by the University of Illinois Presidential Initiative to Celebrate the Impact of the Arts & Humanities, which was created as a part of The Humanities Innovating New Knowledge (T.H.I.N.K.) Project. You can watch the film at vimeo.com/360603422. —B.W.



Clay Slater/UIS Campus Relations



Hindsight 2020

The University has weathered a turbulent year that brought a world-wide pandemic and saw people addressing longstanding issues of systemic racism and social injustice. UIS—with strong programs in public policy and health—met the challenges.

Left: Saliva-based COVID-19 tests developed by the University of Illinois helped monitor and quickly mitigate campus infection rates, keeping the University's rate well below one percent. The tests were deemed so effective that they were adopted by the Springfield Fire Department to help address infection rates among its members.

Right: A campus-sponsored Equity Over Injustice Rally allowed voices to be heard and fostered structured conversation about tough topics.

UIS
by the
Numbers

24/7

Hours and days students can access dry goods and canned foods by visiting a micro-pantry in the west entrance of the Student Union

50

Number of Springfield-area institutions listed on the Good as Gold Business Honor Roll for their community service

81%

Percent of UIS students who receive financial support for tuition



Courtesy of Elgie Sims

State Government Stalwart

Elgie Sims began his career in state government as an SSU student

"The University gave me a broad perspective of how [we can] use government to serve people," says Illinois Sen. Elgie Sims, who was a driving force behind policing policy reforms passed in 2021 by the State General Assembly.

For some, serving as budget director for the Illinois State Senate Democrats might be the pinnacle of a government career. For **Elgie Sims, MPA '97**, it was his job when he was a *student* at Sangamon State University.

State Senator from the 17th District—which includes portions of Chicago's South Side, its suburbs, and Will and Kankakee counties—Sims grew up in nearby West Pullman and attended Quigley Prep South for high school, where he considered becoming a Roman Catholic priest.

However, his undergraduate work at Illinois State University placed him on a different career path. A stint as an ISU student regent on the Board of Regents (with oversight of all of the state's public universities) sparked his interest in government and politics. In that capacity, he also learned about SSU, which prompted him to seek his master's degree there because it was "right there in the capital," Sims says, impressed that SSU focused on and maintained a large presence in state government.

Sims took advantage of that to earn an Illinois Legislative Staff Internship to attend SSU, and he also obtained from Gov. Jim Edgar a James H. Dunn Jr. Memorial Fellowship, which helps students work in state government. Former Senate Democratic leader Emil Jones met with Sims in his capacity as a Dunn Fellow and was so impressed that he decided to bring him on as a full-time staff person. "I never served a day as an intern," Sims says.

In his final year at the University, the Senate Democrats named Sims budget director. "I still was taking classes, so I had to scale my coursework back," he says.

Educating Elgie

Sims enjoyed his time at SSU. "The belief was if the school is going to put students in government, we want them to be the sharpest minds they can be," he explains. "Professors of all political leanings challenged me. Every day, I saw faculty and staff who believed in the mission of the University and wanted to see the best from the students."

He proudly remembers playing on SSU's "two-time intramural basketball champions." Sims had met his wife, **Shivonne Nelson Sims, '97 LAS**, as an undergrad at Illinois State, and when he moved on to SSU, she came with, finished her coursework there, and they graduated together.

After serving as budget director from 1995 to 2003, Sims left to attend Loyola University Chicago's law school. After graduation, he practiced for a few years, but missed politics and ran for and won the 34th District seat in the Illinois House in 2012, and his current Illinois Senate seat in 2018.

Sims' accomplishments stretch back to his student regent days. "I advocated for creation of individual boards for institutions of higher education in Illinois, and I continued to work on that as a staff person for Senator Jones," Sims explains. "It became a reality in 1995," along with improving the state's process for appropriation of funds to universities.

Reform Minded

"From my days in the House, I've always been focused on creating a system of equity and justice and improving quality of life," Sims says. In the House, he revamped the state's bail policy, "which moved us away from having people locked up in county jails awaiting trial simply because they're poor."

Sims has passed legislation to create statewide protocols mandating police to

wear body cameras and schools to provide entrepreneurship training. "I've tried to improve education, economic development, health care and public safety," he says. "SSU gave me a broad perspective of how we [can use] the government to serve people."

As Chair of the Senate Criminal Law Committee, Sims is one of the state's leading voices in criminal justice reform.

"Senator Sims is a phenomenal lawmaker and colleague," says Illinois Senate President Don Harmon. "He brings so much to public service. He's a keen legal mind with a trusted sense of equity and fairness, especially in criminal law matters. At the same time, he knows more about the budget process than most members of the General Assembly."

Sims retains his excitement about and belief in what State government can accomplish. "I'm still in awe," Sims says, noting that every day he has walked onto the floor of the Illinois House and Senate, both as a staff person and as a member, he's gotten chills. "I remember my first day in the Illinois Senate as an employee, walking into that chamber and recognizing the immense power and authority that chamber has in improving the quality of life for people around the state. I still get those chills now. I revere the institution."

Sims has worked with six governors and many hardworking, accomplished colleagues, including one who went on to become President of the United States.

"State Sen. Barack Obama and I used to work out together and play basketball," Sims says. "He's got a nice left-hand jump shot, but he [likes to] throw a couple elbows."

Sims stays in touch with some of his professors and fellow alums to this day, "I encourage students to look at UIS for the opportunities it provides for lifelong enrichment," he says. "When you invest in UIS, it will invest in you." —*William S. Bike*

Negotiator

Professor Sudeep Sharma promotes emotional intelligence

I teach negotiation and leadership, motivation and organizational behavior, addressing how perceptions and emotions play a role in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is as important as cognitive intelligence. If you do not know how to manage relationships, you may not succeed in your job. People who don't understand the emotions of others can create lots of noise, and that can lead to low performance, productivity and morale.

Negotiation is something everybody does. Before coming online for this interview, I was negotiating with my 5-year-old. He knows that when I have a meeting, that's a good time for him. "Hey, Dad, what about it? Candy will help me." So I negotiate with a toddler. Husbands, wives, friends, buyers, unions, companies, nations—they all negotiate. It's part of our lives.

I use role-play to teach negotiation. I assign students to be car buyers and sellers. They negotiate price, financing, color, airbags. At the end of the class, everybody said, "Oh, we got a very good deal." But when I told them the actual numbers, some said, "Wow. We didn't do as well as we thought."

If I am highly dominant and I am negotiating with you, that's different than if I'm a person who is very flexible, who is saying, "Hey, if you give me some concessions, I can give you some concessions. We can come to an agreement." Yet, for a long time, researchers maintained that the personality plays a minimal role in predicting negotiation performance.

When I did a study of the literature, I found that all these researchers were citing a book chapter written in 1975. And the studies cited were very strange. Some were conducted with prisoners in correctional facilities, some during World War II with German and Jewish prisoners. This was not a normal sample. But everybody was citing this book chapter when I started working on this project in 2011. By then, psychometric instruments designed to measure emotional intelligence were very well developed. But the role of personality in negotiation still wasn't being taken into account.

When I published an article about this topic, my supervisor said that I was fighting against the top guns in the field. But the article received the Best Paper Award from the International Association of Conflict Management. The 2018 version of the classic textbook on negotiation has a chapter on the role of personality. That is a win for UIS. —as told to Mary Timmins

Edited and condensed from an interview conducted on Nov. 20, 2020, with Sudeep Sharma, assistant professor of management, marketing and operations and 2020 University Scholar.



Darrell Hoemann

The Show Must Go On

Springfield Ballet Company is keeping dance alive in Springfield, despite the pandemic



Courtesy of Springfield Ballet Company

Top: Springfield Ballet Company's Julie Ratz and Gina Decroix-Russell have helped the company's dancers cope with COVID-19 pressures.

Bottom: The company's seasonal favorite, *The Nutcracker*, went on-hold due to 2020's pandemic.



The first time Julianne Ratz stepped on stage at the Sangamon Auditorium, she felt a wave of joy rush over her. It was 1981, she was 13, and the venue had just opened; it felt massive. Ratz, then a dancer in the Springfield Ballet Company, had always danced on small stages in dingy basements. Now, she'd come to the auditorium hours before showtime to feel the awe of being among the costumes, the lighted dressing room mirror, the big stage and professional stage "tech." It was like being in a movie.

Nearly 40 years later, Ratz is artistic director of the Springfield Ballet Company and says that Sangamon Auditorium is "like home." The Ballet Company, along with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, has been the longest running and most consistent tenant of the auditorium, getting first dibs on picking dates for shows. Unfortunately, their home is now closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ratz and the Springfield Ballet Company haven't been able to put on a show at Sangamon since the winter 2019 performance of *The Nutcracker*.

"We really miss our time at that auditorium," Ratz says. "It provides such a beautiful venue for us that really gives our dancers an air of professionalism that you just can't get anywhere else."

But dance, like all other shows, must go on. While Sangamon Auditorium has been closed, the Springfield Ballet Company has performed outside numerous times at area venues such as the Panther Creek Country Club, Southwind Park and the Lincoln Home. In November, it released *Through Clara's Eyes*, a documentary about its annual performance of holiday favorite *The Nutcracker*, an ornate production starring 130 people. The company also has been rehearsing for a joint live-streamed performance with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, although it was thrown into peril with the autumn spike of COVID-19 rates.

"You really can't stop dancing," Ratz

says. "Your career is so short and it's not like you can just pause your training. Just like a musician, you have to keep practicing, or stop altogether. Dancers have to keep going."

Sangamon Auditorium also is like home to **Gina Decroix-Russell, '02 LAS, MA '03 LAS**, who danced in her first *Nutcracker* with the Springfield Ballet Company at the age of 9 and, soon after, became a member of the company. Now, Decroix-Russell is its ballet mistress, supporting Ratz and teaching students.

Although Decroix-Russell misses the auditorium—especially the crew, with nicknames like Big Tommy and Little Tommy, who have become family to her over the years—she noticed that the dancers returned from the first COVID-19 spike energized and more excited than ever to dance. Even with their faces almost completely covered with masks to quell the spread of the virus, you could see the joy in their eyes, she says.

"One of the nice things is that the number of kids interested in being part of the ballet company has not decreased," Decroix-Russell says. "If anything, it has increased."

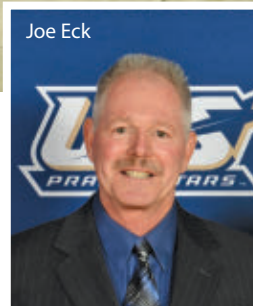
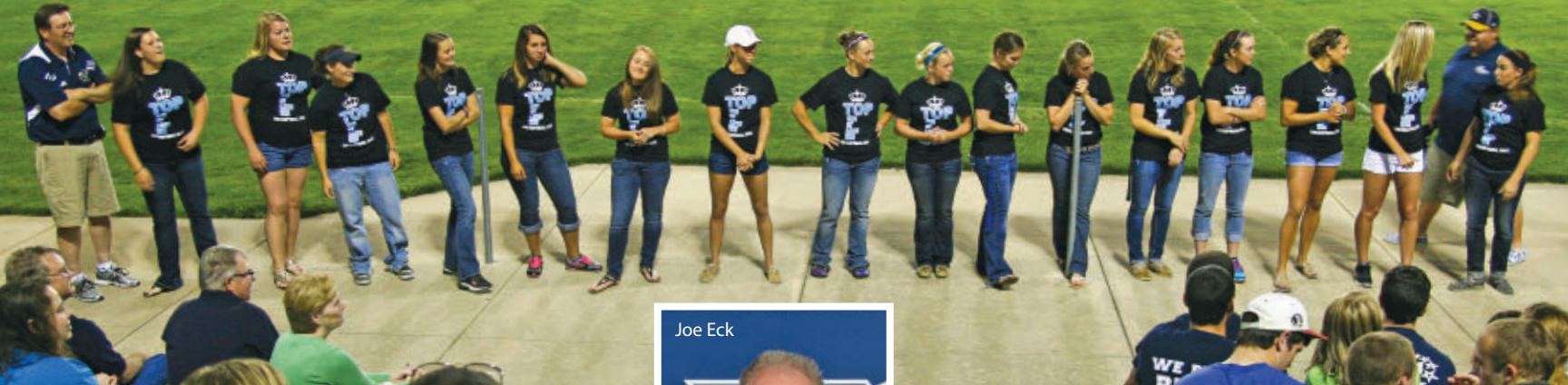
Decroix-Russell hopes that once they're able to return to Sangamon, the company's 29 dancers will feel how special it is to dance on such a stage, but that may take a while. Bryan Rives, director of the UIS Performing Arts Center—which houses the Auditorium—doesn't expect their performance spaces to re-open in full until people have been widely inoculated with COVID-19 vaccines.

Until then, Ratz believes that they will keep doing what they can to keep dance alive in Springfield: They'll stream performances, they'll dance outside, and they'll practice together on Zoom. All this in hopes that one day soon, their home will be open, the stage lights back on, the crowd back in their seats.

"Enthusiasm for dance—not just for the dancers, but for the audience—will go away if we're not able to continue dancing and performing," Ratz says. —*Hal Conick*

Athletics

The history-making 2012 Women's Softball Team being celebrated at an on-campus pep rally to send them to the postseason playoffs. They were the first team of Prairie Stars to see NCAA Division II tournament play.



Joe Eck

UIS Campus Relations

Top Honors

UIS proudly celebrates its latest Athletics Hall of Fame inductees

If today's Prairie Stars wonder who laid the groundwork for their current success, they need look no further than the UIS Athletics Hall of Fame.

Since its inaugural class in 2014, the Hall of Fame has honored those who have come before to achieve excellence. From SSU's earliest athletes to the Prairie Stars who have come to shine as UIS developed into an NCAA Division II athletics program, each played a significant role expanding excellence.

This year's selection process looked a bit different, according to **Dr. Janice Spears, '73 LAS, MA '74 LAS, MA '81 EHS**, chair of the UIS Athletics Hall of Fame Committee. Most of the deliberations occurred via Zoom. As for the induction itself, typically, athletes are honored at an on-campus event during Homecoming. Even when Homecoming was canceled, the committee held out hope the inductees could be honored in-person during spring 2021. Now, it's targeting an event in fall 2021.

Despite these setbacks, UIS is pleased to announce this year's class of inductees:

Danielle Crossen, '06 LAS, Volleyball. To this day, Crossen remains the only player in UIS history with more than 1,000 career kills and digs. She led the 2006 team to the program's first-ever 20-win season and was named once to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics All-Region team and twice to the all-conference first team.

Jakub Piotrowski, '09 LAS, Men's Soccer. Piotrowski averaged nearly a goal a game in 2007 and 2008, placing him in the top 20 nationally for goals per game and points per game. He led UIS to its first American Midwest Conference's Tournament Championship in 2007, and in 2008 was named first-team All-American and AMC Player of the Year.

Joe Eck, MA '96 PAA, Men's Soccer Head Coach. During 31 years with the program—the first 23 as an assistant coach for **Aydin Gonulsen, MA '76 LAS**—Eck left an indelible

impact. As head coach from 2002 to 2009, he had a record of 70–61–13 and led the Prairie Stars to the NAIA National Championship Tournament in 2002 and a victory in the 2007 AMC Postseason Tournament.

2012 Softball Team. This history-making group was the first UIS team to make an NCAA Division II postseason field. They won the Great Lakes Valley Conference's West Division Regular Season title and reached the championship games of the GLVC Postseason Tournament and the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional Tournament. Coach Mat Mundell's team produced four all-conference players: Sarah Gray, Rachel Wood, **Heather Gradishar, '12 CBM**, and **Mandy Smith, '14 LAS**.

Dr. Richard Ringeisen, Friend of Athletics. UIS Chancellor from 2001 to 2010, Ringeisen helped bring the school from the NAIA to the NCAA, assisted the athletics department with building the Recreation and Athletic Center, and supported the addition of six new teams.

Alumni can nominate stellar athletes, coaches, teams and friends of athletics for the HOF. Criteria and nomination instructions are available at uispraiestars.com. "It's so important to honor outstanding individuals and groups," Spears says. "That encourages others to excel and be just as good." —Cindy Kuzma



Courtesy of Elizabeth Blair

Elizabeth Blair

Instant Replay

THEN: Elizabeth (Lizz) Blair, '93 PAA, MA '03 LAS, initially enrolled at Illinois Valley Community College, where she played her first collegiate tennis match against Sangamon State University—and lost. But Blair didn't lose again until the nationals. The next year, she transferred to SSU and was named the Most Valuable Player on a team that competed in the 1992 NAIA National Championships. In 1993, the volleyball coach made Blair

an offer she couldn't refuse—a scholarship that also included fees for her books—so she switched sports. Once again, she claimed a co-MVP title and was honored for her sportsmanship.

TODAY: Blair retired in 2018 after a 23.5-year career with the Peoria Police Department, but she hasn't stopped working. Full time, she's chief of security at Quest Charter Academy in Peoria, where she protects hundreds

of fifth- through 11th-graders. Blair also serves as assistant chief of the Eureka College Campus Police and works part-time with the Metamora Police Department. "For years, I've said police departments need to recruit college athletes," she says. "Athletes are the ones who know how to work as a team. You have natural born leaders. Those are things you need in all aspects of policing, from officers all the way up to chief." —C.K.

Motivated Runner

Blake Jones dug deep—and finished strong—during a fall like no other. The junior from Lincoln, Ill., completed an abbreviated season Oct. 24 by taking the GLVC Cross Country Individual Championship, the first in UIS history. Jones covered 8,000 meters in 24:41.30, winning by more than 10 seconds, leading the Prairie Stars to a third-place finish as a team, and earning the title of GLVC Runner of the Year in the process. The criminal justice and interpersonal communication major adds these accolades to conference championships in the indoor 5,000 meters and outdoor 10,000 meters during his sophomore year. And on Jan. 23, he set an NCAA automatic mark in the 5,000 meters, running a 14:02.84 to become the first men's national qualifier for the NCAA Division II Indoor Track and Field Championships.

Q: How did that victory feel, especially after such an unusual season?

A: I had this on my radar for quite some time. I was grateful to even be out there, to get a chance. Crossing the line was a relief.

Q: How has your training changed?

A: As a runner, I'm very fortunate. I can go outside for a run. But I also do a lot of cross training in the pool and on the stationary bike. I could bike outside, but the pools were closed.

In high school, I only ran 20 or 30 miles a week. Now, I'm up to a hundred. This year, I do 20-mile runs at the pace I did fast intervals at as a freshman. It's so fulfilling to look back and see that.

I also worked with [psychologist and associate exercise science professor] Marcel Yoder on mindfulness training. Early on, it was by email or Zoom. When we got back to campus, we did socially distant meditation training. I was often lonely during this time, too, running by myself instead of talking with my teammates. You could be dragged down by that, or turn it into a motivational thing. I learned a lot about myself. I came out mentally stronger, which, as a runner, is huge.

Q: What brought you to UIS?

A: I had verbally committed to a bigger school—but I couldn't sleep well on it, knowing I'd be more of a statistic. I came here and talked to Coach **Tyler Pence**, MA '18 EHS, and was treated more as a person. UIS has that big-campus feel, but I'm really close to my teachers, advisers and coach.

Q: What do you do when you're not training?

A: I try to focus as much as I can on school. I've found that taking classes online is easier. I'm not going out as much as I used to, so I'm watching plenty of movies and Netflix—I just binge-watched the first season of "American Horror Story" in two days.

Q: What else do you hope to accomplish before you graduate in 2023?

A: Originally, my goals would have been set on national titles and All American honors. During the pandemic, I've shifted my focus. I just want to leave it all out there; I don't want to have any regrets. If the wins fall in place, great, but those don't really mean anything if you don't appreciate the process. My goal is to be present and see what this sport can offer me.

Q: What's been your proudest moment at UIS so far?

A: You can never recreate the first time you win a title. That first 5,000 meter conference win is still my favorite race. But I'm most fulfilled by our team results. The guys on this team are like brothers to me. All the training that we put together, even during a pandemic—I was really proud of that. Watching this team grow from what it was when I got here to what it is now has been incredible. —C.K.



STATS

CAREER

Five-time all-GLVC honoree
Three-time GLVC individual Champion
Three-time GLVC Runner of the Week
GLVC Freshman of the Year

First national qualifier in UIS men's cross country history
First national qualifier in UIS men's track history

Diane M. Smalley



Jeff Lorber

Lincoln Leads the Way

Abraham Lincoln's significant political leadership began in Illinois roughly 175 years ago. Consider then that Lincoln's impact has been unrivaled for well more than half our country's existence; a long time to be sure, yet we still revere and honor his memory, perhaps more so than for any other American in history.

Lincoln remains a leader for every era. His intellect and humanity continue to help us address difficult societal and political issues. The creation of the Center for Lincoln Studies is demonstration of UIS putting its stake in the ground to be the unquestioned leader within higher education for all things Lincoln, ultimately serving our students, the greater community and even the world.

Your assistance to help UIS establish the Center for Lincoln Studies, a UIS Reaching Stellar Campaign priority, is needed and appreciated. Please enhance this legacy by visiting go.uis.edu/DonateLincolnCenter.

Thank you!

Jeff Lorber, Ed.D.
Vice Chancellor for Advancement,
University of Illinois Springfield
Senior Vice President,
University of Illinois Foundation

The Latest Milestone in Lincoln Education

The Center for Lincoln Studies has a plan to bring new energy to the message of 'our greatest president'

Abraham Lincoln's birthday is always a day that is honored in Springfield.

But this year, Feb. 12 marked an important new milestone in the legacy of the nation's 16th president: The University of Illinois Springfield held a virtual grand opening for the long-awaited Center for Lincoln Studies.

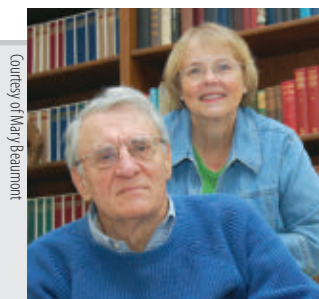
While **Anne Moseley, MA '12 LAS**, acting director of the Center, deems the opening a great moment, she saves her deep enthusiasm for what follows. "I'm looking forward to interest after the grand opening," she says, "for

people to email and call, for students to be a part of the Center." She anticipates hearing from history program alumni who have gone into 19th century studies or have studied Lincoln. She is eager to learn how Lincoln has impacted them, how Lincoln Studies propelled them into the career they are in now. "We plan to showcase the overall impact UIS can have for future students," she says.

The Center for Lincoln Studies is one of five stated priorities of the Reaching Stellar capital campaign that seeks to raise

Ensuring the Lincoln Lecture Legacy

UIS has a rich history of sharing insights from and about Abraham Lincoln—especially through its annual lecture series named in honor of the nation's revered president.



Courtesy of Mary Beaumont

James and Mary Beaumont

Inaugurated in 2002, the Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series hosts renowned scholars who present on contemporary public policy issues. In 2020, additional honors have been added. Thanks to a gift given by **Mary Beaumont, MA '89 LAS**, the lecture has endowed funding to support it in perpetuity. Its new name, the Mary and James Beaumont Endowed Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series, honors the legacy and generosity of the Beaumonts.

The Beaumonts have been fixtures at the University and in the community for decades. Mary Beaumont's involvement is so extensive that she was honored with the 2018 Alumni

\$40 million for UIS by 2022. The Center is expected to be a national base for scholarship, teaching and public history about Lincoln's life, leadership and legacy.

The Center is on the first floor of the Public Affairs Center next to the Sangamon Experience exhibit that opened in January 2020. The grand opening included commentary by Michael Burlingame, who holds the Chancellor (Emerita) Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies, and Graham Peck, the Wepner Distinguished Professor of Lincoln Studies.

Local historians and those who work at Central Illinois-based Lincoln sites were invited to discuss how the world needs Lincoln's wisdom now more than ever, as well as the future of Lincoln tourism in Illinois. Central to the discussion was how the Center could help rejuvenate those sites as new students and scholars come to Springfield to study Lincoln.

Moseley has programming planned for all of 2021, as the Center sharpens its focus on Lincoln's time in Illinois.

"People think Lincoln was hatched when

he became president," Moseley says. "At the Center, we focus on how Lincoln was shaped and molded into the great emancipator—how Illinois shaped him into the great president that we honor."

To that end, Moseley has been working with the interviewers for the Lincoln Legal Papers project, a group of researchers whose initial task was to do in-depth research on Lincoln's legal career in Illinois. Additionally, Peck has plans to share the Center's series of Lincoln-related podcasts he has been working on.

"It is beholden upon us to share what is important about him, and how his legacy can resonate today, nationally and abroad," Peck says. "You can't do that with scholarship alone. I'm interested in public outreach, too."

Records of events—including the virtual grand opening—are available at the Center's website www.uis.edu/cfls. Moseley welcomes inquiries at uislincoln@uis.edu, 217-206-8051 or through social media channels. (Search UIS Center for Lincoln Studies to find accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.)

—Kate McKenzie

Distinguished Service Award.

Lincoln holds a special spot in the hearts of the couple. The late **Jim Beaumont, MPA '84**, owned dozens of books about Lincoln and the Civil War. The Beaumonts were charter members of the foundation for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, and Mary volunteered at the museum.

They often attended the annual lecture series at UIS, and Jim took a class from Phillip Paludan, the first holder of the Chancellor Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies. The Beaumonts were surprised to learn, after Paludan's family asked for donations upon his passing, that funding was needed to keep the lecture series going.

When Mary learned about the Center for Lincoln Studies, she thought it was an obvious avenue for UIS to pursue—and for her to support. "It seemed very fitting for me to ensure that something my husband and I had cared about so much would continue as a yearly event for our community," she says.

"It's an honor to be able to do this. I'm delighted to be a part of Center for Lincoln Studies."—K.M.

"At the Center, we focus on how Illinois molded Lincoln into the great president that we honor," says Lincoln Center Acting Director Anne Moseley (left). She is joined in this work by Graham Peck, Wepner Distinguished Professor of Lincoln Studies (right).



Day Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



Campaign Progress

Reaching Stellar goal:
\$40,000,000

Raised as of Jan. 26:
\$38,506,588

Stellar by the numbers:

Percent raised: **96.27%**

Number of gifts since the beginning of the campaign:
105,037

Number of Donors:
16,384

The Livingston Line

As a government and community lobbyist for CSX Transportation, Tom Livingston helps oil the engine of commerce. As advocates for education, he and his family have a storied history of shaping the University of Illinois.

By Jonathan Black

Not many people look out their office windows with the enthusiasm of Tom Livingston, MPA '97, '90 UIUC. Then again, not many office windows overlook a freight yard for the largest railroad east of the Mississippi. "That train's maybe 7,000 feet long. We get about 2,500 trucks in here every day and build more than nine trains a day. See the cranes there dropping containers?"—Livingston's arm shoots out, in excited indication—"Mostly, it's finished goods like plastics, electronics, blue



As head of state government relations and community affairs for CSX Transportation, a leading national railway line, Tom Livingston champions the positive ecological impact of shipping by rail. “Did you know that a CSX locomotive can haul one ton of freight 500 miles on a single gallon of fuel?” he asks. “A single train takes about 200 trucks off the road. You can’t beat that.”

jeans, stuff you find at Walmart, also some raw materials and produce. They build about nine trains a day. There goes another truck—and another!”

Livingston is a lobbyist for CSX Transportation, the huge freight railroad with more than 21,000 miles of track and 60 yards like this one near Midway airport, the largest in the CSX system. CSX is a Fortune 500 company that incorporates many of the nation’s oldest railroads.

Livingston has been with CSX since 2003. Last year, he was promoted to his current job—head of state government relations and community affairs for the railroad—which means he works with elected officials to help them better understand CSX and bolster its interests. “It’s advocacy,” he says. “It’s education. It’s defending against rules that might hurt our company or industry.”

All Aboard

You could say railroads are in Livingston’s blood. His great-grandfather was vice president for labor relations at the CB&Q (Chicago, Burlington and Quincy) railroad starting in the 1920s. Trains skipped a couple of generations until Tom went to work for Illinois Gov. Jim Edgar in Springfield. While he earned a master’s degree in public administration at UIS, he played a key role as the state’s senior staffer in transportation, which meant airlines, roads, mass transit and railroads. He was in the governor’s office when the reversible lanes on Chicago’s Kennedy Expressway opened and when the El train’s Orange Line was constructed to reach Midway Airport.

Livingston’s ties to the University of Illinois also go back generations—to a grandfather. Park Livingston, ’30 UIUC, JD ’38 UIC, MED ’81 UIC, was general counsel for Dean Foods, which was how he came to know then–Missouri U.S. Sen. Harry Truman, who served on the Agricultural Committee before becoming FDR’s vice president. As president, Truman helped engineer passage of the GI Bill, and Park Livingston, a longtime University of Illinois trustee, worked with Truman’s team to help the University of Illinois become the first public university to be affiliated with the GI Bill. The swell of applicants prompted by that bill resulted in the establishment of the U of I Undergraduate Division at Navy Pier.



Top left: Park Livingston (far right), Tom’s grandfather and a longtime trustee for the UI System, joins other U of I officials in the 1960s to discuss plans for developing a Chicago campus (seen behind the group). Mayor Richard J. Daley (left) strongly advocated for its location where UIC stands today.

Top right: As a key staff member for Ill. Gov. Jim Edgar, Tom Livingston (right) traveled frequently on state business.

Bottom: Like his grandfather before him, Livingston (left) is no stranger to planning for UI System campuses; he was part of a team that helped finalize plans for UIS, joining Gov. Edgar, Illinois Board of Higher Education Executive Director Dick Wagner and Mike Lawrence, director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute (left to right).



The success of Navy Pier led Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley to call for a permanent U of I campus located in the city, somewhere close to downtown. While serving yet another term as trustee, Park Livingston was intimately involved in the new Chicago campus. “I’ve got pictures of him meeting with Daley,” says Tom, “with renderings of the Circle Campus. It was a fight where to locate it.”

Suburbs were a possibility, as was former Chicago airfield Miegs Field. But Daley remained adamant. He wanted a location near the city’s Loop, but there weren’t many plots of land available. A big one was the Hull House settlement in Little Italy.

“There were battles with the neighborhood because Little Italy is a tight-knit community.

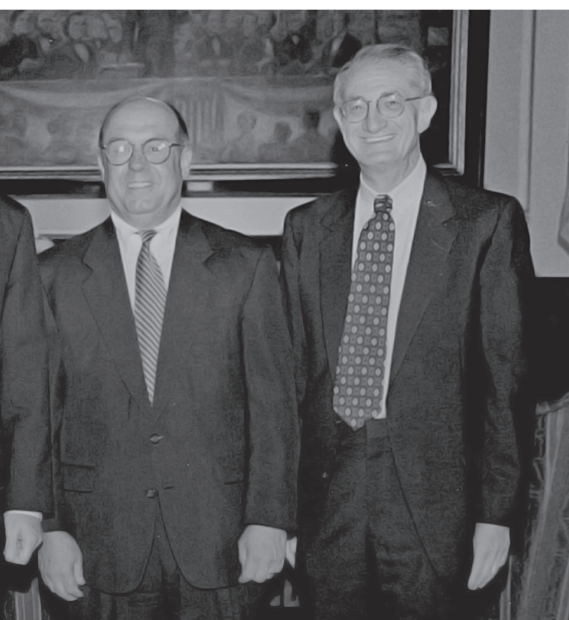
What would all those college kids mean? So it was a fight, but it worked out in the end. They found a way to keep the vibrancy of Little Italy and create a new world-class campus.”

Next Stop, Springfield

How fitting then that Park Livingston’s grandson, Tom, was on Gov. Edgar’s staff and very involved when Sangamon State University was in the process of becoming part of the UI System as the University of Illinois Springfield. Livingston played a key role, shepherding legislation to dissolve Sangamon State and helping to manage competing interests. Southern Illinois University also was lobbying hard to absorb the new school. A lot



"At one point, [my grandfather] looked at me as I was pouring over the details of the new UIS campus and he said, 'Well, here we are doing it again! The Livingstons and another campus!'"



depended on how the school would operate and look, and Livingston spent a lot of time ensuring public and administrative support for the project.

"My grandfather was still alive then, and he'd come to visit," Tom recalls. "At one point, he looked at me as I was pouring over the proposed details of the new UIS campus and he said, 'Well, here we are doing it again! The Livingstons and another campus!'"

Livingston's ties to Illinois continued long after the time he earned his undergraduate degree from UIUC and master's degree at UIS. He was chair of the UIS Alumni Council in the 1990s and chairman of the U of I Alumni Association. He's headed up numerous other organizations, such as the Civic Federation of

Chicago and the Cook County Forest Preserve Foundation. Most recently, he turned his interest in civics to La Grange, Ill., where he lives with his wife and three children. Though his great-grandfather, grandfather and parents had lived in the village, Livingston credits the University of Illinois in part for his active role in La Grange.

"I was waiting in line to sign up my kids for some park district classes—they were toddlers then. I saw some people I knew from the University and they said, 'Hey, you need to get involved in the community!' Next thing I knew, I was being sworn in as an elected trustee," Livingston says.

La Grange suits him just fine. He met his future wife in Springfield; she was from Highland Park and wanted to return to the greater Chicago area. The western suburb was "a nice balance" with easy access to the city proper by train. "We liked the tree-lined streets. We liked the schools. It's kind of urban beat meets Mayberry."

Livingston credits his UIS degree in public administration for helping him become so involved and effective in village politics. He not only accomplished a lot, but it also solidified his roots in the community. "I had a great two terms; it was fun. And I stepped off thinking that was it. Then the woman who was village president left, and I was recruited back in."

Conducting Business

As village president of La Grange, Livingston oversaw a busy, affluent suburb with one of the largest populations of the eight villages in the area. The night I visited the imposing Village Hall on La Grange Road—pre-pandemic, before Livingston's term ended in March 2020—the chairs in the large meeting room were mostly empty, but there were plenty of issues that commanded attention.

The village board had won yet another Distinguished Budget Award from the Government Finance Officer Association, which prompted a "Thank you and congratulations!" from Livingston. "Providing a budget is one of the most important things we do." There was not such good news following the recent succession of storms: "It's only a matter of time before another major rain event," warned Livingston, and he went on to report how the new pipes and reservoir construction would help alleviate future flooding.

A brand new floor looked great in the Fire Department building. Everyone was looking forward to the "Spring Forever" planting initiative. There were jobs available for the upcoming census. Restaurant Week was almost upon them. "Shopping and dining are so important," Livingston reminded everyone.

Perched behind a microphone on a raised platform and flanked by half a dozen village

board members, he held forth with an easy confidence and genuine gratitude to anyone who spoke, whether it was the police chief or a local resident from the audience who stepped up to complain about the electronic speed sign on La Grange Road that often went dark because its solar panels lacked storage.

Livingston is an outgoing man with a touch of the performer about him, a likely nod to his maternal grandfather, Tom Fouts, who was an on-air broadcaster and co-hosted WLS in the mornings with Paul Harvey. (Known as Captain Stubby, Fouts was a prominent figure on WLS' National Barn Dance, a hugely popular show that paved the way for the Grand Ole Opry. Fouts and his band—Captain Stubby and the Buccaneers—recorded the Chicago White Sox baseball anthem, "Let's Go White Sox!")

At the La Grange Village Hall, Livingston reminded everyone that this was his penultimate meeting as president. He'd served two terms before announcing late in 2019 that he would resign early in 2020 because of family commitments—"They're getting more dynamic in their travel and activities"—and his new job at CSX, which placed increased demands on his time.

That job capped a busy career. After leaving Edgar's office, he served as executive director of Chicago's Illinois Medical Center District, a public/private consortium that manages major development projects. He switched exclusively to the private sector when he joined CSX; he also serves on boards for B&O and Michigan Railroads Association.

Judging by the number of times we had to reschedule our meetings, it's clear how

demanding his job at CSX is. He was off to Jacksonville, Fla., CSX headquarters. He had an unexpected meeting in Naperville, Ill. Another day there was a conference call—could we push our time earlier to 10:30 a.m.? But when we did get together, he was fully focused and thrilled to talk about railroads.

Economic Engine

Railroads, Livingston likes to point out, are key to our economy and always were its backbone. A lot of the history goes back to Abraham Lincoln and one of his "signature accomplishments"—the Transcontinental Railroad Act. He signed it while fighting the Civil War. Many technological breakthroughs are owed to railroads. Fiber optics were first laid on rail lines. Telecommunications got its start with the railroads; Sprint was originally a radio network invented so engineers could communicate the whereabouts of their trains.

"You could lose half a train between Cheyenne and Chicago. Then some guy would have to get off to find a 7-Eleven and a quarter to phone and explain where they were. Sprint was short for Southern Pacific Railroad Internal Network Telecommunications," Livingston says.

Who knew?

The latest high-tech wizardry is called Positive Train Control. It's a radar technology that automatically engages the brakes so that two engines don't run into each other.

Railroads have continued to grow, especially with the soaring business of intermodal traffic—the system of loading containers on trains for transport and delivery. It's become even more robust with growth within the U.S. and especially from Asia.

It's not possible for safety reasons to get too close to the CSX trains and trucks that are pulled around the vast yard by squat hostlers—small, powerful vehicles not unlike those that push planes—but we hug the periphery where Livingston is just as energized in the chilly air. He's excited to promote the essential role that his trains play.

"The best way to move those containers is on a railroad," he says. "We pay for the road

"We get about 2,500 trucks in here every day and build more than nine trains a day," says Livingston of the hustle that keeps the CSX train yards humming. The yards—dotting a corridor along Chicago's south side—house hundreds of thousands of shipping containers filled with "finished goods, raw materials and produce."

Lloyd DeGrane



bed and the [tracks] under the trains. It takes that traffic off gas tax—subsidized pothole roads and puts it on an environmentally friendly mode of transportation. Our aim is to get to net zero. Did you know that a CSX locomotive can haul one ton of freight 500 miles on a single gallon of fuel? A single train takes about 200 trucks off the road. You can't beat that."

If Livingston sounds like a lobbyist for the railroads that's fine with him. Railroads happen to be terrific examples of efficiency and the smart use of technology. Truckers used to come into the yards with pieces of paper and endless problems. Now it's all thumbprints and automated directions to the right spot to await unloading. If there is a problem when they check in at the kiosks, they go to what Livingston calls the "penalty box." As we walk by, there are five or six truckers inside awaiting instructions from a woman in a glass cubicle.

"Take that line of trucks there," he says, pointing to what seems to be an endless line of trucks entering the CSX yards. "They go into that building to get checked and photographed, all automatic, even the undersides. It used to take forever. Now it's constant. Drip, drip, drip. At night, the building's lit up like a scene from *Frankenstein*."

Ideally they drive off with another container. They come in full and they leave full. That's where the money is for them."

Not that there aren't challenges. The big ones, says Livingston, are "operational issues." Unlike planes that fly over towns, railroads go through them or by them, which means everyone notices. So Livingston and his team have to stay in touch with local and state policymakers to ensure that their problems are addressed. Union issues can be big; in the old days, companies like CSX had a locomotive and a caboose and eight people working the train. Now that number is rarely more than two. With each step, Livingston emphasizes, safety has gone up, usually thanks to technology. Increased efficiency is always a priority.

Crossing Guard

Nothing is more emblematic of that goal in hubs like Chicago than "crossings."

Back in his office, Livingston shows me a wall map with a color-coded grid of all the rail traffic in the greater Chicago area—trains



Above: Noted Illinois alumnus, gridiron great and Hollywood star Red Grange (far right) had a longtime friendship with Park Livingston dating back to their time together as University of Illinois trustees. Grange and his twin-engine plane frequented La Grange, Ill., when he visited the Livingston clan. Tom's father is the littlest Livingston on the far left.

Left: Livingston's maternal grandfather, Tom Fouts (center), was an on-air broadcaster for Chicago powerhouse WLS and performed as Captain Stubby. He and his Buccaneers recorded the baseball anthem "Let's Go White Sox!"

that include Amtrak and Metra. It's a mess of tracks largely due to the days when steel mills and the stockyards had rail connections inside the city. "Every day—500 freight trains and 800 Metra and Amtrak passenger trains," says Livingston.

Actual accidents are rare when tracks cross but there can be onerous wait times. A long freight train may have to wait for as many as three crossings to clear. Passengers on Metra and Amtrak aren't thrilled either, because waits can add as much as an hour to a trip to, say, Detroit. Which is why Livingston is so pleased to show off the latest solution on his computer: a CSX promotional video in which a freight train chugs underneath a 23-foot-high overpass while a passenger train streams above.

On-screen, it looks a little like a Thomas the Tank Engine video but it's real, very real.

Metra already has had such an overpass built at 63rd and State just south of Union Station. Next up is a much bigger crossing, the so-called "75th Street" project that will alleviate huge tie-ups there.

"I'll tell you something," Livingston says, for a moment abandoning the video to look out his window. "It's really impressive to see a team build a train. So much has to go right from different customers. You have to get that person on the locomotive, you have to put the train together, you have to get it out of the yard and stop at the right spots. It's like a ballet. And then someone has to put all that into words as public policy in the state of Illinois, which is the Super Bowl of railroading."

He doesn't say it but that person, of course, is the man still gazing out his office window: Tom Livingston. ■

How We Shine!

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



Daramola Abina



Alex Fruth

As we continue to celebrate 50 years of Sangamon State University and the University of Illinois Springfield, we recognize another round of alumni whose talents and contributions add luster to every SSU and UIS degree. Join us in saluting the accomplishments of these remarkably bright Prairie Stars!

Daramola Abina, '11 CBM, MPA '15, *Chicago*. Assistant dean of students for the Noble Network of Charter Schools (Chicago).

Aimee Allbritton, '95 LAS, *Springfield*. Senior vice president and chief transformation officer, Memorial Health System.

Raymond Bruzan, MA '73 EHS, *Rochester, Ill.* Longtime educator for Springfield School District 186, he turned his classroom into an Environmental Action Center during the 1969–70 academic year. A flag his students carried in a march to the Illinois Capitol on the first Earth Day in April 1970 is now displayed at the Smithsonian Institution.

Darrel Burnet, '78 LAS, *Milton, Wis.* Executive director of The Automobile

Gallery (Green Bay, Wis.); radio sportscaster host of *Inside College Basketball* and *Inside College Football*.

Dr. Natasha Conley, MA '94 CBM, *Chesterfield, Mo.* President and founder of PRSI Technologies, providing information technology/administrative and clerical project management; vice president of family-owned Professional Services & Resources.

Susan Cornwell, MA '80 LAS, '77 UIUC, *Washington, D.C.* Correspondent for *Reuters* and co-founder of the Rupert Cornwell Trust, which supports young journalists and honors her late husband, Rupert Cornwell, a British journalist.

Sarah Creviston, MPA '96, *North Barrington, Ill.* Former vice president of

global government affairs for Baxter International.

Phil Dehner, '82 CBM, *Lincoln, Ill.* Financial adviser, Edward Jones; a recent recipient of a double lung transplant, he has made it his passion to educate about organ donation.

Mathias Delort, MPA '17, *Chicago*. Appellate court judge for Illinois' First District, 6th Division.

Farah K. Eck, MA '05 LAS, *Washington, D.C.* Senior director of the United Nations Foundation.

Alex Fruth, '14 LAS, *St. Louis, Mo.* Advancement director for St. Louis-based Wyman Center, which empowers economically disadvantaged teens; founder of Phi Kappa Tau fraternity at UIS.

Tamara Gibbs, MA '98 LAS, '96 UIUC, *Durham, N.C.* Created Single Serving for Single Women, a digital Christian ministry.

Dr. Chad Grueter, MS '02 LAS, *Coralville, Iowa*. Assistant professor of internal medicine at University of Iowa Health Care, researching metabolism and the cardiovascular system.

Chaitanya Tej Jala, MS '16 LAS, *Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*. Senior software engineer for Capital One.

Dr. Laura Johnson, MA '02 LAS, *Winterthur, Del.* Director of collections and senior curator of textiles at Delaware's Winterthur Museum.

Diana Jordan, '94 CBM, *Springfield*. Senior consultant for Unified Trust Company.

Dr. Jay Kahn, MA '76 PAA, PHD '88 UIC, *Keene, N.H.* New Hampshire Democratic state senator since 2017; spent 43 years in higher education, including 28 years at Keene State College as vice president for finance and planning.

Scott Kaiser, '88 PAA, *Chatham, Ill.* Illinois Senate assistant secretary.

Ben Kieckhefer, MA '01 PAA, *Reno, Nev.* A Republican state senator in Nevada since 2010.

Greg Knott, MBA '95, *Saint Joseph, Ill.* Secretary of the UI System Board of Trustees.

Ray Long, '80 LAS, MA '81 LAS, *Chicago*. *Chicago Tribune* investigative reporter.

Sarah L. Mackey, MPA '09, DPA '16, *Atlanta, Ga.* Senior director of U.S. transformation at Habitat for Humanity.

Penny McCarty, '97 LAS, MHRIR '99 UIUC, *Springfield*. Chief human resources officer for HSHS Medical Group in Springfield.

Steve McClure, MA '08 PAA, *Springfield*. A Republican state senator in Illinois since 2018; former assistant state's attorney for Sangamon County.

Jennifer McMillin, '07 PAA, MPA '08, *Decatur, Ill.* Executive director of the Mini O'Beirne Crisis Nursery in Springfield.

Jingyu Meng, MBA '18, *Fuzhou, Fujian, China*. International student affairs specialist for Fujian Medical University.

Martha Miller, '97 LAS, MA '02 LAS, *Springfield*. Author who has penned 10 books and numerous articles.

Terri Miller, MPA 17, *Hillsboro, Ill.* County extension director for the University of Illinois Extension serving Logan, Menard and Sangamon counties.



Kaleigh Moore



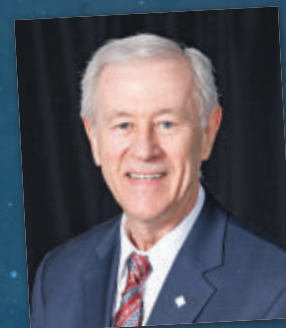
Dominique Wilson



Anne Moseley



Adam Unes



Bruce Strom

UIS Campus Relations Photos

Kaleigh Moore, '11 LAS, *Jacksonville, Ill.* Freelance writer for SaaS & eCommerce platforms; writes for *Vogue Business*, *Forbes* and *Fast Company*.

Tejesh Morla, MS '10 LAS, *St. Louis, Mo.* Created OMNISKOPE, a software solutions and managed services enterprise.

Anne Moseley, MA '12 LAS, *Springfield.* Director of engagement, Sangamon Experience; acting director, Center for Lincoln Studies at UIS.

Chi-Man (Bill) Ng, MA '89 CBM, *Waukegan, Iowa.* Owner of CK International, exporter of antibiotic-free, organic free-range pork products.

Dana Perino, MA '95 LAS, *New York City.* Best-selling author, news analyst for *Fox News* and former White House press secretary for President George W. Bush.

Mark Petrilli, '91 CBM, *Springfield.* State director of the Illinois Small Business Development Center at the Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Paul "Pizza" Pianezza, '12 LAS, *Culver City, Calif.*

Senior VFX producer at Digital Domain in Los Angeles, working for television shows/series *The Kominsky Method*, *The Politician*, *Barry*, *S.W.A.T.* and *Criminal Minds*.

Ozzie Pierce, MA '82 PAA, *Chicago.* Director of equal opportunity compliance, Boeing.

Paula Johnson Purdue, MA '07 PAA, *Chicago.* Lobbyist representing, among others, the American Association of University Women; advocate for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in Illinois.

Khoran Readus, '17 EHS, *MSW '19 UIUC,* *Springfield.* Founder of Black Lives Matter Springfield.

Dr. William J. Rothwell, MA '82 CBM, MA '76 UIUC, *PHD '85 UIUC,* *University Park, Pa.* Penn State University professor of education in workforce education and development; prolific author of human resource development and related articles.

Roberto Sabas, '13 LAS, *Champaign, Ill.* Commercial artist and graphic designer.

Dennis Sedlak, '75 PAA, *MA '83 CBM,* *St. Louis, Mo.* Recently retired vice president, J.P. Morgan Chase.

Christine Snyder, MA '07 EHS, *Cleveland, Ohio.* Attorney with the Cleveland firm Tucker Ellis who specializes in wage and hour class actions, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, FMLA and wrongful dispute discharge cases.

Alden Solovy, MA '80 LAS, *Jerusalem, Israel.* Liturgist-in-residence for the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies; poet and journalist.

Keith Spencer, MPA '13, *Wheaton, Ill.* Director of strategic initiatives for Metro Strategies, a policy, advocacy, public engagement and planning services provider for clients in Illinois and Indiana.

Jeff Stauter, MA '97 PAA, *Dixon, Ill.* CEO of Dixon-based Kreider Services, which provides support to people with disabilities so they can live, work and participate in their communities.

Bruce Strom, MA '77 PAA, *Springfield.* Public servant

and former Springfield alderman.

Rohit Thadapakalli, MS '18, *Atlanta, Ga.* Engineer for Cognizant Technology Solutions.

Debbie Thompson, '93 CBM, MA '98 LAS, *Girard, Ill.* Vice president of talent acquisition and senior strategic human resources business partner at Horace Mann Educators Corp.; former alderwoman for the City of Springfield and member of the Sangamon County Board.

Kelly Thompson, MA '02 LAS, *Audubon, N.C.* Nonprofit executive; former CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois and currently a development manager for the National Audubon Society.

Adam Unes, '14 CBM, MBA '16, *Chicago.* Coordinator of Minor League operations for the Chicago Cubs.

Richard Van Rheeden, MS '01 LAS, *Swisher, Iowa.* Supervisor at the University of Iowa Cytogenetics Lab.

Natalia Vera, '06 PAA, MA '08 PAA, *Chicago.* Senior paralegal for the American Bar Association.


Amanda Vinicky, MA '05 PAA, '03 UIUC, *Chicago.* Correspondent and segment host for *WTTW Chicago Tonight*, focusing on Illinois government and politics.

Apeksha Wali, MS '18 LAS, *Forsyth, Ill.* Business analyst for Simplify Healthcare in Aurora, Ill.

Matthew Wallace, '06 PAA, *Yangon, Myanmar.* Managing director and co-founder of Opportunities NOW, Myanmar, Southeast Asia, an entrepreneurship development system that seeks to reduce poverty.

Brad Ward, '05 CBM, *Fishers, Ind.* Co-founder and CEO of BlueFuego, providing web-based tools for college admissions and marketing.

Dominique Wilson, '16 LAS, *Chicago.* Co-founder and customer success manager of RiseKit, a Chicago-based startup for underserved and low-income job seekers.

Jeffrey R. Wood, '74 EHS, *San Anselmo, Calif.* International music producer, engineer, composer and label consultant; owner/producer of Jeffrey Wood Music. 



UIS Archives



Yesterday Once More

SSU and UIS alumni share memories of programs that changed lives, coaches who cried and professors who planked



In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of Sangamon State University and the 25th anniversary of the merger that gave rise to the University of Illinois Springfield, the Office of Advancement invited alumni to share their memories of both schools, citing things that meaningfully impacted lives. Here are some highlights.

I remember the cool temporary buildings with banked seating, instead of chairs, and the incredibly wonderful professors. Furthermore, I loved the interdisciplinary curriculum—specifically Justice and the Social Order—and being in class with people in their 50s and 60s when I was in my early 20s.

—Ruth Lowenthal Suarez, '74 PAA

One of my classes was held in a room on the ground floor in the former Leland Hotel. There were no regular chair/desks, and we sat on hay bales placed in a circle in the room. Everyone was very casual, relaxed—and excited to have a local university to pursue his or her master's degree.

—Leona Garrison, MA '72 EHS

While I didn't see Jimmy Buffet, I did see noted blues artists Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry on campus. Brownie could play intricate guitar riffs, and Sonny could really play a great harmonica.

—William Shaw, '76 PAA

UIS Campus Relations





I thrived as a student. The SSU experiment not only gave me an above average education, it demonstrated that a university could operate where faculty, administration and students were considered equal partners. It was a new university doing higher education differently.

—**Ted Brown, '74 CBM**

I was on the Student Senate, and several of us made posters cheering on the soccer team. We got permission to get into the Athletic office over night before one of the away games and decorated the office with streamers and posters. That made soccer Head Coach **Aydin Gonulsen, MA '76 LAS**, cry! It was the first time that students not associated with the athletes had shown support for the team.

—**Judson DeVore, '86 LAS, MBA '89**

As both a student and staff member in Public Affairs at SSU since 1976, I had mixed feelings about the merger, [fearing] SSU's Public Affairs mission would no longer be a focus. However, the University of Illinois leadership supported our unique position in the state capital, and President Naomi Lynn led the merger so successfully that, while our name changed, the character of the campus was retained.

—**Barbara Ferrara, MPA '89 DPA '11**

One winter I had a weekend class. It was so cold and windy that my fellow classmates and I could hardly walk to the building with our projects without blowing away. The class was enjoyable, and the professor made us a special [home-cooked] meal—beef stroganoff.

—**Michele Whitlock, MA '97 PAA**

I remember blue books in Professor Bob Sipe's Political Philosophy class. I would leave with an incredibly sore hand and a feeling of accomplishment in just being able to answer in [such] detail. Also, I loved that when he said something poignant, he would do a "golf swing" for emphasis.

—**Brace Clement, '06 PAA**

My favorite memory was directing a play by Carole Kennerly called *Rising Up of the Springdale Ladies Aid Society*. It addressed women's rights and issues of slavery. As a Filipina-American, that meant a lot.

—**Anica Malabanan, '07 PAA**

Although I was an online student, I was able to participate in the Student Veterans Affairs committee with Mark Dochterman. I was honored as a military retiree to provide my input in drafting a veteran's guide and helping

create policy/procedure in welcoming military and veteran service members to UIS.

—**Edward Wayne Powell, MPA '19**

In our Sports Psychology class, we did a plank challenge that Professor Marcel Yoder took part in. It was fun and definitely tested our mental and physical capacity. Dr. Yoder won and held a plank for over 10 minutes!

—**Ashley Beaton, '17**

I transferred to UIS and had no idea what my life would become. UIS helped me find a community. I met my lifelong best friend and connected with so many people. UIS provided me with a small campus with a big school heart and spirit. I blossomed as a young adult, became an educational leader, and learned the importance of "Leadership lived." I was able to take my experiences and share them with my current students. Since graduation, I have sent several of my high school students to UIS for college, and two have already graduated!

—**Symphoni Henry, '14 LAS**

To enjoy more memories that are as inspiring and unique as the alumni who share them, go to www.uis.edu/advancement/alumni/news-and-stories/50th-anniversary-alumni-memories.

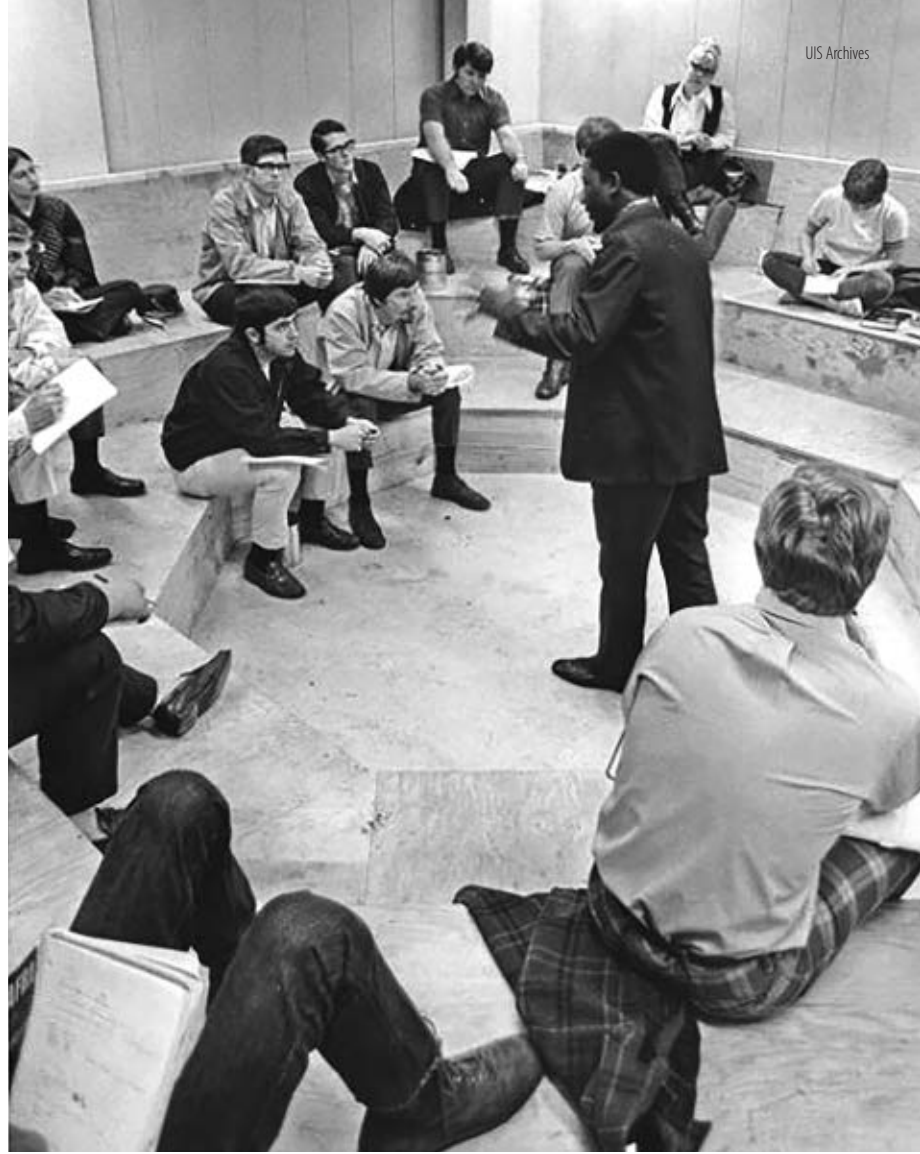


Standard Bearers

Founding SSU faculty Larry Golden, Jackie Jackson and Judy Everson share memories on the SSU Legacy Campus. Notes Golden of their efforts to found the University, "We were taking what we knew about education and reorienting it to make it more applicable to the world."

Sangamon State University's founding faculty met a singular, sweeping task: build a new kind of university from the (muddy) ground up

By Mary Timmins



The Pit—a learning space without chairs, desks or traditional classroom structure—serves as a symbol of SSU's practical, egalitarian approach to education.

Mudhole.

Ask people who were there what Sangamon State University was like when it opened in 1970, and that word bubbles up like an air pocket from a hot spring. Rains had thrashed central Illinois late that summer, washing out the unfinished roads, parking lots and sidewalks of the new state university, which opened to offer degree completion and professional and graduate programs. On Sept. 28, some 800 juniors, seniors and graduate students trooped downtown, inaugurating the academic calendar a week late in classrooms improvised inside a Methodist church.

A suitably messy, somewhat slippery start was not out of place for an institution working to find major traction. Having arrived the previous June, the all-new faculty, 54 strong, was assembling the University from its academic and administrative foundations up. Their orders came from SSU President Robert

Spencer via a memo printed on blue paper—deemed “the blue memo”—that outlined a new kind of university where, “the teacher is seen as a source of wisdom and of scholarly and humane values in addition to a source of subject matter enlightenment.” In the vision of Spencer—and the regents who had hired him—Sangamon State would be a place where the power balance between students and faculty was effaced and the “publish or perish” ethos of higher education eliminated, a place where freedom of thought would both guide and inspire learning. Devotion to the public good was very much part of the ethos, as were changes to the ruling order flowing out of the civil unrest of the 1960s.

Political science professor Lawrence Golden describes the creation of the University as “a landmark event in higher education. We were taking what we knew about education

and reorienting it to make it more applicable to the world.” In lieu of departments, four overarching programs identified challenges and connections that remain as relevant as ever today: communications in a technological society; environments and people; justice and the social order; and work, leisure, poverty and power.

Grades were out: Faculty would provide students with thoughtful evaluations of their performance. Degree programs could be designed individually. Enrollment in public affairs colloquia was required. Students also had to engage in semester-long learning experiences at businesses and organizations within the community. The faculty was expected to do likewise. And tenure? Not happening.

The mud got covered over by asphalt, and a cluster of alphabet-identified buildings



Top: Professor Everson leads a class in the early days of SSU. Now a professor emerita, she enjoyed a 30-year teaching career with SSU/UIS, serving in academic administrative service and as LAS dean.

Center: Professor Golden (far right) “relates” to fellow SSU founding faculty members Mark Conley (left) and Mark Heyman. Golden continues to teach and guest lecture, and he is the founding director of the Illinois Innocence Project at UIS.

Right: Jackson, professor of English and women’s studies, came to SSU after four years as principal cellist of the Madison (Wis.) String Sinfonia and then graduate school.



opened to classes on Oct. 6. One housed The Pit—a tiered space without desks or a podium, shaped for free-ranging discussion. New ways of learning flourished everywhere. Literature professor Jacqueline “Jackie” Jackson used to begin her four-hour night classes by darkening the room and advising students to close their eyes while she played Beethoven and read to them. They were graduate and upper-level undergraduate students, most of them upwards of 30 years old and “coming from jobs, from childcare, getting out just in time to get to class,” Jackson recalls. “They would arrive panting and frazzled.” Her intro helped them to relax and get primed for the hours of instruction ahead.

Course listings in the SSU catalog were alphabetical. Teaching was multidisciplinary, with courses organized along one of the four program themes and often co-led by two or more faculty members. Office space was multidisciplinary, too. “For the first couple of years when we moved to the campus, we were not housed by disciplines,” Golden recalls. “You might find your office next door to a psychologist or a philosopher or a biologist.”

For the students, it was a brave new world. **William Furry, ’85 LAS, MA ’97 LAS**, who transferred to SSU after two years at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Ill., recalls a midterm chat with his English professor, Dennis Camp. “He asked, ‘What grade do you think you deserve?’” Furry says. “That would never have been a conversation at my previous college.” Intellectual accessibility ruled. Professors chatted freely with students in the lunchroom and on campus, welcomed unscheduled office visits and even shared their phone numbers. “I felt embraced,” Furry says.

For the faculty, it was the opportunity of a lifetime. “It was a thrill to see the campus grow and to be part of something exceptional,” says professor emerita and founding faculty member Judy Everson. “We were building an institution.” A speech professor, Everson blossomed into an interdisciplinary virtuoso. Her accomplishments included a course on women’s liberation that she designed and taught with Jackson. Everson paraphrases Jackson’s metaphor for those early days. “It was like designing a cello, building a cello, rehearsing a cello and playing that cello in concert,” she says, “all at the same time.”

Alas, cellos slide out of tune, varnish cracks, sometimes strings snap. SSU’s

innovative agenda provoked political pushback almost from the start. Having advertised his good wishes with an ad in the first edition of *The Spectrum*, the student newspaper, Illinois Sen. Chuck Horsley was, by the following spring, calling on the Illinois Legislature to defund the University. Horsley relented, but over time, state funding ebbed nonetheless. Enrollment, expected to explode, instead declined, reflecting a national trend. Reality intruded in ways large and small. Course listings got organized by discipline. Grades were introduced. The academic calendar shrank from four 10-week quarters to two semesters, moving the public policy colloquia to semester break. Tenure began with a faculty vote in 1974—a vote that resulted in a reduction of faculty numbers. The casualties included several members of the founding cohort, including Judy Everson's husband, David, a political studies professor. President Spencer himself departed in 1978.

Yet many charter faculty members flourished through a half-century of changes, spanning the 1995 transformation of SSU into the University of Illinois Springfield. Golden established the Illinois Innocence Project on campus and still works with students to advocate for wrongly incarcerated inmates of state prisons. Jackson continued her unconventional instruction in writing and literature, including classes for elementary students broadcast on WSSR, the University's public radio station, which went on the



Professor Jackson began her four-hour evening classes by playing soothing music for her students and reading to them. Most were older graduate and upper-level undergraduate students, Jackson explains, “coming from jobs, from childcare, getting out just in time to come to class. They would arrive panting and frazzled.”

air in 1975. A storied teacher, Everson also served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences before she retired in 2001. Last October, she shared the cello metaphor in a well attended address at the Student Union.

A half-century and a change of identity later, the spirit of those early times still infuses campus life—in freedom of expression, diversity, access to education through online programs and community engagement. Meeting facilities at the Student Union are available to the public—a commitment to the Springfield community also reflected in the opening of the Sangamon Experience, an interactive campus exhibition space devoted to

the history of the region. Those 10 temporary buildings survive on a campus that has grown magnificently around them with a performing arts center, library, research and classroom facilities, residence halls and public art. Not bad for a mudhole.

And the spirit of SSU lives everywhere in its alumni. Asked to comment on the University's impact on his life, Furry, now executive director of the Illinois State Historical Society, invokes the gracious words of Abraham Lincoln upon departing Springfield for the White House. “To this place and the kindness of these people,” quotes Furry, “I owe everything.”

terry farmer



The “temporary” buildings of SSU's first campus still stand in use, but they have nothing on three founding faculty members who celebrate more than a century of service among them!

Trailblazing Marshal

Robert Moore made history expanding career opportunities for minorities in law enforcement

"At every point in my career, somebody was there to assist and mentor me," says Alumni Achievement Award recipient Robert Moore. "You don't make it the way I've made it without someone looking out for you."

It was 1970. **Robert B. Moore, '80 PAA, MPA '85**, moved from a small town in Mississippi to Rockford, Ill., with only \$20 in his pocket, a stint in the Army under his belt and a diploma from a segregated rural high school in his hand. Today, he says he could not have dreamed that he would soon embark on a storied career in law enforcement that would find him one day shaking hands with the President of the United States.

Moore may be the epitome of a self-made man, but he gives credit to those who helped him along the way. "Others saw my potential before I saw it myself," he says. "At every point in my career, somebody was there to assist and mentor me. You don't make it the way I've made it without someone looking out for you."

That conviction has guided the focus of Moore's career: breaking down the racial barriers that he had to overcome by working to increase minority employment in law enforcement and improve

community relations with police.

Much of the early help that Moore received came while he was earning his bachelor's and master's degrees at Sangamon State University. But he first took a factory job and earned an associates' degree at Rock Valley College, the first racially integrated school that he attended. That enabled him to land a position with the Illinois State Police in 1972, where, after three years, he was appointed to manage the newly created Office of Affirmative Action in Springfield. While serving in that post, Moore played a pivotal role in increasing the makeup of the state police force from 1.9 percent black to 27.5 percent minority and female. All the while he was attending UIS at night, and he and his wife, Barbara, a school teacher, were raising a family.

After completing his master's degree, Moore was recruited to Savannah, Ga., where he served as its deputy chief of police. In 1994, at the recommendation of

U.S. Sen. Carol Moseley Braun, '69 UIC, Moore was selected by President Bill Clinton to become a U.S. marshal for the central district of Illinois. During his tenure, he held nationwide hearings on discrimination in minority recruiting. He left that post in 2002 when he was asked to return to Mississippi to serve as police chief of the state's largest city, Jackson. But his interest in the U.S. Marshals Service, the nation's first federal law enforcement agency, didn't wane. Summoning the writing skills that he says were honed at SSU, Moore wrote a book, *The Presidents' Men: Black United States Marshals in America* (Robert Moore & Associates, 2010), which was published after he returned to Springfield, where he now lives. That has led to the development of a traveling exhibit on the topic that tours colleges and universities.

Moore has maintained his connection to the University through the years, serving on the

Alumni SAGE Society Coordinating Committee and mentoring students through the Black Male Collegiate Society and UIS Diversity Center. In 2009, he received the University of Illinois Alumni Humanitarian Award. More recently, Moore and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the UIS Student Union.

He currently chairs the Criminal Justice Committee of the Illinois NAACP and was involved in developing a historic shared principles agreement between that organization and the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police that was signed at the Old State Capitol in 2018.

While acknowledging that there is still a need for major work to be done in this critical area, Moore chooses to opt for optimism. "I don't allow myself to get frustrated," he says. "I can't afford to get bogged down in what has not happened. I focus on what I have been able to do to bring things forward." —*Paul Engleman*

The University of Illinois annually salutes alumni who have made their marks for achievement, service and good works. We are honored to recognize the UIS recipients of these prestigious awards.

Guiding Light

Naomi Lynn served UIS as its inaugural chancellor, one of many firsts in an exemplary career of service



"It was important [for me] to break barriers," says Distinguished Service Award recipient Naomi Lynn, who was the first Hispanic president/chancellor of a public state university in Illinois. "I live for the day when no woman will have to be introduced as the first."

A career in higher education culminating in a top leadership position was not how Chancellor Emerita Naomi Lynn was expected to leave her mark on the world. Her parents had a different set of expectations for their children. "We had to be doctors or lawyers!" Lynn says with a laugh. Lynn wasn't alone in defying expectation; her sister, Ruth Burgos Sasscer, became chancellor of the Houston Community College system.

Lynn earned three degrees in political science—including a master's degree at the University of Illinois in 1958—as she followed her husband, Robert "Bob" Lynn, in his academic career. After the couple's four daughters were born, Bob researched life insurance to make sure Naomi and the girls would be provided for if something happened to him, but changed course. "Bob is a very practical man; he was a business dean," Lynn says, noting that an investment in Lynn getting a Ph.D. was a better investment than life insurance "because I would

earn more from my doctorate."

When Lynn accepted her first full-time teaching position at Kansas State University in 1970, she insisted on getting the same position and salary as a man would receive. KSU agreed.

That wouldn't be the last barrier Lynn would break. She was the first woman to head the Political Science Department at KSU and, later, the first female academic dean at Georgia State University, which made a big impact at the conservative school. At SSU, she became the first Hispanic president/chancellor of a public state university in Illinois and the first woman president of Sangamon State University where she oversaw its transition to a four-year school in the University of Illinois system.

"It was important to break barriers," Lynn says. "I live for the day when no woman will have to be introduced as the first."

Lynn has worked hard for that day by mentoring women and minorities in academia and the community, and by advocating for women's rights nationally and

internationally. She has attended numerous international United Nations women's rights conferences around the world and covered them for the media. She also has campaigned for the Equal Rights Amendment and made sure women's Constitutional contributions were commemorated. "When the U.S. was celebrating the Bicentennial of the Constitution, there were a lot of conferences going on, but there wasn't any national focus on women and the Constitution. I found this very frustrating," Lynn says. She mentioned this to the director of the Carter Presidential Library, a friend, and he said he was sure Rosalynn Carter would be interested in this.

President and Mrs. Carter loved the idea and charged Lynn with developing the program for a conference in which women would address how females helped shaped the Constitution and how it has affected them. Four thousand people attended, including Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and future Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. "It

was a dream come true," Lynn says. "It became part of the official national record of the celebration."

Lynn was nominated for the Distinguished Service Award for her many contributions to the University, the University of Illinois System and the greater Illinois community; she was cited as a "champion of women's rights [who] became a leader and mentor for women and minorities in academia and the larger community."

When Lynn retired from UIS in 2001, the family of Dr. Richard E. Vaden funded the Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair for Lincoln Studies. Lynn received the University of Illinois Loyalty Award for Exceptional Alumni Service in 2001. In 2012, Gov. Pat Quinn presented Lynn with the Lincoln Laureate award, the state's top honor.

"I am so pleased to receive the Distinguished Service Award because I know it isn't just for me, but for the men and women of UIS and Sangamon State University who have made our growth and success possible," Lynn says. —Tara McClellan McAndrew



Charles J. Schrage

Alumni Relations

Innovation and Success on the Prairie

Rigorous testing, consistently low positivity rates, resilient students, flexible scheduling and steady leadership bring light to the end of the tunnel.

Words can never do justice to the hardships that so many have endured over the past year. The impacts of the pandemic are far-reaching and will shape a new, unexpected normal for years to come.

Yet, through collective efforts by many, your University found successes and victories. And now, we begin to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

UIS has been part of a COVID-19 saliva-based, reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction testing regime, developed at our sister University in Urbana-Champaign, and provided by the UI System. Students, faculty and staff who are studying, teaching and working on campus participate in a minimum once-per-week surveillance testing program. The campus positivity rate was well below one percent for most of the fall semester.

UIS students have been incredible; that cannot be understated. They've put endless effort into completing coursework, submitting weekly COVID-19 tests and supporting each other. Their resilience inspires us!

UIS evolved its pedagogy practices and course delivery offerings. Accelerated course offerings were introduced to currently enrolled students, those

who delayed enrollment, and those who desired to re-enroll or add courses.

Intercession is back! Students were provided with an option to complete four- to six-week courses between the end of the fall semester and the start of the spring semester. The last two weeks of the fall semester were completed online.

Combined, these reimaged course delivery options enabled students to fully complete the fall semester and stay on track with graduation schedules. Some may graduate sooner—and potentially at less cost.

Tangible and transparent leadership has guided the University. The transition in leadership from Chancellor Emerita Susan Koch to Interim Chancellor Karen Whitney has been seamless.

As others have professed, on the other side of pain is glory. As therapeutics and vaccines become more available, take stock in victories achieved, and see the glory ahead. The light at the end of the tunnel may appear faint—but it is there.

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.

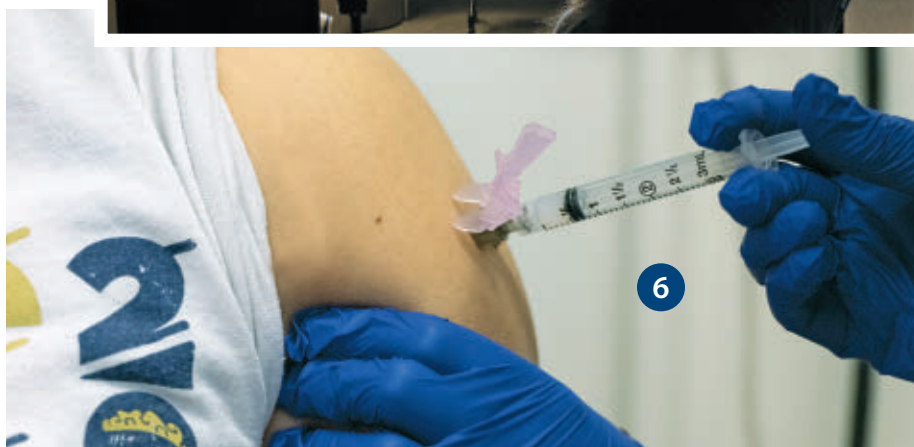
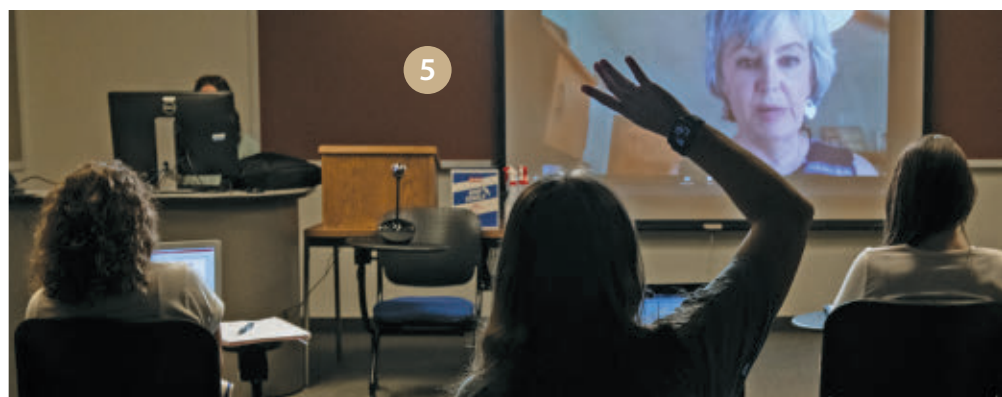
Gallery



Pandemic Precautions

(1) Building service worker Jamie McGill uses an electrostatic spraying machine to disinfect surfaces in between classroom sessions. (2) Runner Taryn Christy masks up to protect herself and her cross country teammates. (3) Building service worker and student Claude Henry helps to deep clean the Student Union before fall classes occasion students' return. (4) Space throughout campus has been rethought to ensure maximum physical distancing, including Student Union study table capacity. (5) Classroom accommodations serve multiple learning options; in this blended setting, Professor Betsy Goulet presents via Zoom to a mix of students who are either online or physically separated in a campus classroom. (6) A shot of hope! The University's front-line and essential workers receive recently delivered vaccines.

Clay Stalter/UIS Campus Relations



Class Notes

Lloyd DeGrane



While LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois Director Jeromé Holston has adapted quite handily to Zoom calls, he misses his pre-pandemic groove. “I’m not good at sitting at a desk,” he says. “I want to be out building relationships, helping companies, businesses, people connect the dots.”

Commerce Coordinator

Jeromé Holston advocates for LGBTQ+ businesses statewide

It’s a long way from an Historically Black College and University in the state often called the Heart of Dixie to Springfield. Yet when **Jeromé Holston, MPA ’13**, moved from Alabama to Illinois a decade ago, he found himself quite at home.

As an undergraduate, Holston attended HBCU stalwart Alabama State University, which he says provided a developmental and foundational experience he relied on in his transition to life in Springfield. Holston relocated to serve as a staff assistant and assistant deputy chief of staff for Gov. Pat Quinn’s administration. He appreciated Springfield’s quality of life, and found that he enjoyed government work and opportunities for advocacy. He also found UIS, and its master’s degree in public administration program, to his liking.

The cost of living was affordable for a graduate student, Holston says, and he has fond memories of working in the library on his research capstone (which focused on Millennial non-profit engagement), being a library blogger and making lifelong friends.

Now living in Chicago, Holston has been director of the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois—which he calls a great job for his combination of skills and work experience.

Of his strong ability to understand and act on what it means to “follow up and follow through,” he says that “it’s something that has

helped me get to this point and stand out.” Holston also has a need for action. “I’m an external person. I’m not good at sitting at a desk. I want to be out building relationships; asking why; helping companies, businesses, people connect the dots to discover the joy of being all that they can be.”

In his current job, he provides resources, builds relationships, and advocates on behalf of LGBTQ+ businesses and for those looking to spend their dollars with them. He’s also involved in LGBTQ+ advocacy on a broader, national level.

During the pandemic, businesses have needed guidance and resources to pivot, stay open, reduce costs, alter marketing, and manage and retain staff. To help them meet those needs, Holston now does his road trips to cities such as Springfield virtually via Zoom.

Holston believes the MPA program prepared him for careers in both non-profit and government, and likely any other opportunities that come his way. That may be another government role, an executive job, tourism or anything that supports small businesses.

In addition to freelance writing and managing his own greeting card line, he’s adding consulting to his list of side hustles: “I’d welcome the opportunity to talk to corporations about thoughtful engagement and corporate responsibility. I would love to do that.” —*Julie Sevig*

In Memoriam

Leroy A. Jordan, MA '72 EHS, died on Sept. 5, 2020 in Springfield. A lifelong educator, Jordan was the first African American schoolteacher in Springfield and served as a vice president of academic affairs for SSU.

Robert H. Kyes, MA '72 LAS, '52 UIUC, passed away on Dec. 14, 2020 in Springfield. Kyes was a history teacher in the Springfield School District and coached until his retirement in 1991.

Nancy (Lanphier) Chapin, MA '73 LAS, passed away on Aug. 7, 2020 in Chatham, Ill. A native of the U.K., Chapin was active in community service and local history.

Charles C. Smith, MA '73 PAA, passed away on Nov. 27, 2020 in Alexandria, Va. A dedicated public servant, Smith served as deputy secretary of state for Illinois and as a key staff member for Sen. Alan Dixon and Sen. Wendell Ford.

Nancy S. Pistorius, '74 LAS, MA '78 LAS, died on June 13, 2020 in Lawrence, Kan. She was a writer who contributed to *Women's Day*, *Cosmopolitan*, the *State Journal-Register* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Renee M. Housel, MA '75 LAS, passed away on Nov. 11, 2020 in Rochester, Ill. She worked for the Illinois National Insurance Co. and the Rochester School system.

Henrietta J. Knepler, MA '75 PAA, died on Nov. 5, 2020 in Springfield.

A clinical laboratory specialist, she retired from a 40-year career at Memorial Medical Center.

John P. Penning, '74 PAA, MA '75 PAA, passed away on Oct. 31, 2020 in Springfield. Penning was salesman, jewelry designer and small business owner.

Elizabeth L. Vance, MA '75 EHS, died on Oct. 23, 2020 in Monmouth, Ill. She was a grade school teacher.

Roger A. Douglass, '76 LAS, passed away on Dec. 27, 2020 in Rochester, Ill. A popular recording artist in the 1960s, Douglass was best known for his song "Your Happiest Years."

John M. Schwarberg, '76 CBM, MA '79 PAA, died on Sept. 12, 2020 in Lake Zurich, Ill. Schwarberg served the State of Illinois as an auditor and accountant.

Thomas E. Marvel, '77 PAA, MA '82 PAA, passed away on Dec. 12, 2020 in Waggoner, Ill. Marvel was an air force and Army veteran who served his country in Operation Desert Storm. He retired from the Springfield Police Department.

Elizabeth (Rachford) Cartwright, '78 EHS, died on Dec. 31, 2020 in Springfield. She was a teaching assistant until her retirement in 2018.

Allan R. Giesecking, MA '78 EHS, passed away on Oct. 23, 2020 in Rochester, Ill. Giesecking taught junior

high and high school and coached in Springfield.

Roseanne R. Ommen, '78 EHS, died on Dec. 8, 2020 in Jacksonville, Ill. She served as a registered nurse.

James R. Pearsall, '79 CBM, passed away on Sept. 6, 2020 in Sun City, Ariz. He began his career as a typewriter repairman before joining the Air National Guard.

Connie D. Roegge, MA '79 PAA, died on Aug. 4, 2020 in Jacksonville, Ill. She was a teacher.

Patricia (Goodall) Staff, MA '79 LAS, passed away on June 10, 2020 in Franklin, Tenn. She was a fourth-grade teacher for more than 30 years in Springfield.

Belinda J. Droll, MA '80 LAS, died on Oct. 19, 2020 in Decatur, Ill. Dr. Droll taught at Millikin College.

Pauline M. Santini, '80 CBM, passed away on Sept. 16, 2020 in Springfield. She worked for the Heart Association before completing 30 years of service for the IRS.

John L. Conner, '81 CBM, died on May 21, 2020 in Springfield. Conner worked for the American Heart Association, the Springfield Board of Realtors and the Barton W. Stone Home.

Ann (Nelson) Lindvahl, MA '81 LAS, passed away on July 2, 2020 in Danville, Ill. She taught third grade at

South School in Taylorville.

Andrew F. Garland, '82 CBM, died on Oct. 1, 2020 in Lynn Haven, Fla. He was a lab technician.

John D. McKirgan, '82 LAS, passed away on July 3, 2020 in Waggoner, Ill. He worked as a salesman and a building contractor.

Virginia (Polk) Owens, '82 EHS, MSW '84 UIUC, died on May 21, 2020 in Hahnville, La. Owens was a social worker for the State of Illinois for most of her professional career.

William T. Rodgers, '83 EHS, passed away on Dec. 30, 2020 in Springfield. He worked at Bakers Hardware and as a driver for Access Springfield.

Suzanne (Farrar) Runge, MA '83 LAS, died on May 26, 2020 in Rochester, Ill. She was a teacher, spending most of her 30-year career at Riverton High School.

Michael J. Majdic, '84 LAS, MA '93 LAS, passed away on Oct. 17, 2020 in Peoria, Ill. Majdic was an award-winning documentary filmmaker and television producer, as well as a professor at the University of Oregon.

Mark R. Bargmann, '85 CBM, died on Dec. 13, 2020 in Palatka, Fla. He worked for the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 31 years, serving as a special agent.

Katherine (Tyson) West, '86 PAA, died on June 26,

2020 in Springfield. She retired in 1998 from work with the Illinois State Board of Education.

John H. Neathammer, '87 LAS, MA '89 LAS, '97 LAS, passed away on June 2, 2020 in Sherman, Ill. He served as a professor at Springfield College before becoming a chemist for TMI Analytical, Prairie Analytical Services and the Sangamon County Water Reclamation District.

James R. Hollis, MBA '88, passed away on Sept. 9, 2020 in Belleville, Ill.

Susan M. Lamb, '89 LAS, passed away on Aug. 7, 2020 in Rochester, Ill. Lamb served as an actuary with several area firms and with the Illinois Dept. of Insurance.

Joseph R. Finley, '91 CBM, died on July 22, 2020 in Auburn, Ill.

Keith R. Burklow, '95 CBM, died on Aug. 27, 2020 in Springfield. Burklow spent his career with the State of Illinois, most recently as bureau chief of federal finance at the Dept. of Healthcare and Family Services.


Anthony Pianezza, '95 CBM, passed away on July 4, 2020 in Springfield. He was a partner in family-owned Roma Bakery for over 30 years.

Jimmie Voss, MA '95 PAA, died on Oct. 30, 2020 in Springfield. He was a past president of the NAACP.

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 *UIS Today*, 200 South Wacker Dr.,
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Green Screen Scene

In November, UIS Theatre live-streamed performances of *Rogue's Gallery*. The collection of monologues by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright John Patrick Shanley delves into the allure of bad behavior and the absurdity of being human. With no live audience in attendance, the production was a triumph of show-biz enthusiasm and technical know-how, thanks to direction by Professor of Theatre Eric Thibodeaux-Thompson and the green-screen scenic wizardry of Associate Professor of Theatre Dathan Powell.

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