Teacher’s Regiment

The nation’s war tore at Illinois State during the University’s early years.
FirstWord

Each fall semester I call the campus community together
for an annual State of the University address. I value this opportunity to share budget
updates, progress with facility upgrades, and statistics that confirm our students and our
academic programs are stellar by national comparison.

This year, as I prepared my remarks, I was reminded anew of the fact that it is
indeed a blessing to have in our country the resources for focused study at a uni-
versity. I know from having spoken with myriad graduates that there is a common
bond of appreciation for the brief time spent at Illinois State. Those years offer
precious moments to contemplate and debate ideas and issues that range from prac-
tical to philosophical.

Our current students are typically so engrossed in the moment they do not
fully realize that life rarely offers such an extended window for examination,
reflection, and life-changing growth. As alumni, you know that the family and
career obligations quickly mount with age, making such focused study difficult if
not impossible.

The fact Illinois State remains a bastion for probing ideas and pushing
boundaries of what is feasible across disciplines is a credit not only to our current faculty,
but those before us who had a determination to build a sanctuary for study. You will get a
glimpse of their commitment in this issue, which includes a look at how our first admin-
istrators, professors, and students struggled to build the University in a nation divided by
the Civil War.

There have certainly been other equally significant disruptions over time that re-
sulted in roadblocks on the collegiate pathway. One formidable obstacle today is funding,
as families unfortunately struggle to cover escalating costs of a college education.

Their burden is lightened by those who give back to Illinois State. The University's
Foundation Annual Report, also found in this issue, gives a sense of how lives are im-
acted when individuals support Illinois State's mission and students. Each donor
has my gratitude. Their pledge of personal dollars helps protect the privilege of a
higher education.

Al Bowman
President, Illinois State University

Editor's note: Read President Bowman's State of the University address online at President.IllinoisState.edu/speeches.
A video link can be found on the web page as well.
FEATURES

8 From the edge of extinction
High-tech science and international collaboration were integral to keeping the giant panda found in China from demise. So was world-renowned reproductive biologist David Wildt ’72, who helped lead the effort. He counts the work as a highlight of his career, which has involved efforts to rebuild the population of other exotic creatures.

12 Weathering the war
Just four years after the University was founded, the start of the Civil War significantly impacted campus life. The first president, Charles Hovey, prepared students for battle. The contributions of his regiment are remembered as the country marks the 150th anniversary of the struggle within the divided nation.

16 Tearing down autism’s wall
Alumna Kari Dunn Buron ’73, M.S. ’80, knows the challenge of reaching autistic children. She has developed a teaching approach that acknowledges an autistic child’s challenging behavior stems from a lack of skills. Her work creates hope and opportunity for struggling students.

20 Making a case
Illinois State students contemplating a legal career have the opportunity to become familiar with the courtroom as members of the University’s mock trial team. Alumni who benefitted from the program are crucial to the success of the dedicated students, who shine in national competitions.

DEPARTMENTS

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25 Giving with a goal
Individuals who support Illinois State with a financial gift have a desire to make an impact. The Foundation Annual Report, included in this issue, showcases how private giving empowers individuals.

Illinois State’s efforts to engage students in activities that sharpen skills related to political processes and leadership have been lauded, as the University is the sole recipient of the 2011 New York Times Political Engagement Project (PEP) Program of Excellence Award.

Part of the American Democracy Project, PEP addresses the problem of political disengagement in young people and advocates a dramatic increase in university efforts to strengthen student interest in politics.

Illinois State was one of 12 institutions selected to participate in PEP, and is now considered a model for campuses across the country. The project is an initiative of the Provost’s Office in collaboration with Student Affairs.

“Illinois State students are encouraged to be responsible citizens and leave here with skills that will help them make meaningful contributions to their communities and their country,” President Al Bowman said. “This award validates the hard work of faculty and staff to incorporate political engagement in the classroom and beyond.”

Beginning as freshmen, approximately 3,500 students annually are exposed to PEP efforts in the curriculum. Enrichment opportunities exist across disciplines. Many new activities, assignments, and discussion topics have been developed, including election issues, community involvement, and diversity.

PEP is also integrated into co-curricular activities through hall meetings with elected officials and debates on timely political topics. An internship in Washington, D.C., is now offered.

“The national Program of Excellence Award recognizes Illinois State’s leadership in preparing graduates for active citizenship,” said ISU Communication Professor Steve Hunt, who is a Carnegie PEP Scholar.

“Illinois State faculty, staff, and students contribute significantly to the community by deeply integrating the Political Engagement Project into the curriculum and cocurriculum,” Hunt said. “We are honored to be selected as the inaugural winner of the prestigious award.”
Illinois State welcomes strong incoming class

While many universities struggle with enrollment declines, Illinois State started the academic year with an increase in new freshmen and transfers. With strong retention numbers as well, the University’s on-campus headcount rose to 21,080 this fall.

“Given the economy and the stiff student recruitment competition from public and private colleges, I think this year’s numbers are simply remarkable,” President Al Bowman said. “Illinois State University is once again proving to be a first choice for new students.”

There is a natural decline in the number of graduating high school seniors in Illinois which, combined with the economy, is creating competition for college-bound students. And yet the quality of the incoming freshman class remains high, with an average ACT score near 24 and a grade point average topping 3.3.

Diversity within the student body also improved. Bowman credited Illinois State’s many outreach programs with helping attract talented students from underrepresented groups. Non-white students comprise 18.9 percent of the incoming freshman class versus 17.8 percent last year. The largest gains were African American students, with a 25 percent jump from last fall.

Strategic change detailed for future of campus

A plan for the University’s physical development has been approved by the Board of Trustees. The Master Plan 2010-2030: Looking to the Future includes 67 recommendations developed after extensive campus and community discussion.

The plan addresses areas of instruction, research and academic support; campus life; administration; Intercollegiate Athletics and recreation; and general campus improvements.

The recommendations call for new facilities for University High School, Thomas Metcalf School, and the child-care center. Mennonite College of Nursing and the College of Fine Arts are also slated for new buildings.

An addition to the Science Laboratory Building is endorsed, as well as renovation of Edwards, Cook, DeGarmo, Williams, Felmley and Hovey halls, Miller Library, and the John Green building. Renovation of Watterson Towers, Bone Student Center, and Braden Auditorium is desired.

Intercollegiate Athletics recommendations include renovation of Hancock Stadium, Horton Field House, and the Karin Bone Athletic Study Center. A new softball complex and enhancements to baseball and golf facilities are detailed.

The complete report is available online at www.masterplan.ilstu.edu.

State Farm’s investment helps across campus

Numerous academic, cultural, and scholarship programs at Illinois State are beneficiaries of $1.8 million in support from State Farm Companies Foundation. The funding over two years supports programs in the six colleges, Athletics, and campus-wide minority recruitment initiatives.

The Actuarial Science program and the Katie School of Insurance and Financial Services are two programs targeted. The University’s Little Village and Auburn Gresham project, which is part of the larger Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline project, received support to continue preparing teachers for inner-city schools.

State Farm’s gift also supports the New Innovation for America’s Promise project in the Mennonite College of Nursing, creating partnerships between the college and local schools.

The Illinois Shakespeare Festival is enhanced with funding that supports outreach programs that introduce Shakespeare to school children and community members. There is funding for the Karin L. Bone Athletics Study Center for student-athletes, and the Minority Achievement Program as well.
We are thrilled to announce this new gift and celebrate the continuing commitment of State Farm Companies Foundation,” President Al Bowman said. He noted that the investment “will provide numerous long-term benefits to many diverse areas of the University, and we are grateful for their support.”

Research advances as faculty secure millions

Nearly $210 million in grants from federal and state agencies and private organizations has been received by the University during the past decade. That’s an increase of nearly $10 million in external grants every decade since the 1980s, with annual funding now averaging in excess of $20 million.

Faculty and staff secure the competitive funding for external dollars by writing grants. The dollars support research, teaching, and service initiatives.

Illinois State’s Million Dollar Club recognizes those who have brought in at least $1 million dollars in grants for research and other projects. Seventy faculty members have been honored with club status since 2009. Membership will surpass the 100 mark with a spring 2012 induction.

The high quality of research being done and the University’s strong support for research across the broad spectrum of scholarship and creative activities has resulted in more funding from top-tier agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

New dean chosen for Arts and Sciences

Gregory Simpson began serving as the College of Arts and Sciences dean in July. He was interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas prior to joining Illinois State. In that role he oversaw 58 departments and programs in five divisions, with a budget of $100 million.

Simpson received his doctorate in experimental psychology from the University of Kansas. He has served as an acting associate dean, chair of psychology, and a professor at the University of Kansas. Prior to his tenure at Kansas, Simpson was a faculty member at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

He received the W.T. Kemper Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching and a Senior Administrative Fellow from the University of Kansas. He served on the Journal of Memory and Language and Memory and Cognition editorial boards, as well as reviewer of numerous grants, journals, and programs.

Simpson is a member of the Association for Psychological Science, Psychonomic Society, and Midwestern Psychological Association. He served as an executive board member for the Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology, and has presented internationally.

“Where are they now?”

Fifty years ago, in 1961, I joined the ISU Agriculture Department, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. It’s hard to believe that I’ve had an affiliation with the department for half a century.

I retired from ISU in December of 1989, but continued to teach part-time for a couple of years and have kept in touch with the changes that have occurred. I did consulting work for Ag World Exports, presenting Dairy Management Seminars in many countries for several years.

My wife, Lila, and I live in Normal and are enjoying our retirement years. We have never considered moving anywhere else for retirement. Our three children graduated from Illinois State and have careers in education and remain in close proximity. Four of our eight grandchildren are now in college. We do a moderate amount of traveling, but also enjoy working on our farm. Hunting, fishing, home projects, and volunteer work keep me active and healthy.

Besides what I do with all my spare time (I don’t have any!), the other most frequently asked question is do I miss teaching. I do not miss all the course preparation, paper grading, etc., but I do miss the interaction with students. Many of my fondest memories are working and traveling with students on field trips and judging activities. I am always impressed and pleased to hear about the careers of our graduates.

Hope you get a chance to visit the Ag Department and join in the celebration of its 100th Anniversary or stop by our home for a visit. Contact me by email at clmoore@netzero.net.

Agriculture Professor Emeritus Clarence Moore
University strengthens community’s economy

The University, its employees and students directly contribute more than $600 million to the McLean County economy. That spending returns more than $10 million in tax revenues to the area.

“Bloomington-Normal and McLean County benefit greatly from the money students spend here. When we broke down the numbers, we found that every dollar a student spends here puts an additional 48 cents back into our local economy,” said Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development Director Frank Beck.

He and James Payne, former ISU economics professor, completed an economic impact study that took into consideration the off-campus spending by freshmen and sophomores who live in residence halls. Local spending by upperclassman and graduate students, including rent and groceries, was also noted.

They measured spending by students who enroll from hometowns outside of McLean County. In fiscal year 2010, university spending helped return $10 million in property tax revenue and $1.8 million in sales tax revenue to the local economy.

“This is an important contributor to the economic health of McLean County because the money those students are spending is coming into our area from other parts of Illinois, and from other states and nations around the world,” Beck said.

Campus sustainability work recognized in college guide


The guide profiles colleges and universities that demonstrate a notable commitment to sustainability in their academic offerings, campus infrastructure, activities, and career preparation.

Illinois State’s energy conservation and alternative transportation initiatives, recycling program, and wellness and environmental programming are highlighted in the guide. The University’s Center for Renewable Energy and its interdisciplinary renewable energy major are also prominently mentioned.


Schoolhouse on campus preserved as museum

Now a century old, the one-room schoolhouse located on west campus is still maintained by the University. The Lura Eyestone School Museum was painted and winterized during the summer.

The historic relic was built in 1899 as one of the first of nearly 300 one-room schoolhouses in McLean County. It was brought to campus in 1964 and renamed for an ISU alumnus and retired teacher.

Illinois State’s Alumni Association raised the $10,000 to move and rehabilitate the school, which is furnished with wooden desks, chalk slates, and a coal stove.

Mail

To the Editor,

I came to ISNU from a small Oklahoma college. I had classes on the second floor and it was a special comfort for me to enter Old Main (“Artifacts & Memories,” May 2011). It was the only spot on campus that felt like the Oklahoma schools where my youth had been spent. It was obvious that the building was about to outlive its usefulness, but it was sad for me to see it go.

Another good memory was going to the basement to check out books—a wonderful experience for me, who had never heard of textbooks being furnished to students. I worked in the cafeteria and the snack bar, and I remember that there were strict guidelines about how many hours one could work while carrying a certain amount of credit hours.

My third treasured memory of Old Main was the large bulletin board on the wall to the left of the main entrance. Notes of all kinds were left there. It gave a feeling of the “personality” of the place.

I have always recognized the critical impact the years spent at ISNU had on my entire life. I became the very first teacher in Oklahoma with a special education degree.

Thanks for the memories!

JimAnn Oliver ’54

To the Editor,

I always enjoyed my time spent at Illinois State Normal University. I had excellent teachers who were very helpful to me, and I also enjoyed the extra-curricular activities provided for the students.

As I continued my education and teaching experiences, I more fully realized what a wonderful opportunity I was given during my years at ISNU. At age 97, I am so happy that I can continue to be active in alumni activities. President Al Bowman and many of the staff members have been so kind to me. Thank you.

Roy O. Schilling ’35, ’40
Sophomore Tim Glover joined an elite group of Illinois State student-athletes earlier this year when he won the NCAA Division I Outdoor Track & Field Championship in the javelin. He took the event in June with a mark of 263-06 at Drake Stadium in Des Moines, Iowa.

The throw earned Glover All-America honors, and set school and Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) records. His was the farthest collegiate throw in the nation during the 2011 season.

“They had me predicted to finish fifth,” Glover said. “So to come in to the championship and prove everyone wrong was an awesome feeling.”

The Normal native is a two-time MVC champion in the javelin. He qualified for the Outdoor Championships for the second straight season. Head track and field coach Elvis Forde credits Glover’s continued success to his determination and strong will.

“Tim believed that he was going to be successful and win the national championship. When you believe something as much as Tim did, there is no reason it can’t be done,” Forde said.

“He put his mind to it, worked hard and accomplished his goal. Not many people come in to the championships and leave a champion. Everyone is extremely happy for him, and the support that he got from the crowd and his parents was great. It was a truly amazing experience.”

As for the first throw that clinched the national championships, Glover didn’t feel anything special. “Once it landed, I knew it was really far out there. I didn’t think it was as far as the mark read, but once I saw the mark, it was a great feeling,” Glover said.

He is the sixth ISU athlete to win a national title, and captured the seventh title all-time for the Redbirds. He joins former student Tom Smith and ISU Athletics Percy Hall of Famer Christian Goy ’03, M.B.A. ’06, as the only three ISU track and field student-athletes to win NCAA national championships. Smith was a back-to-back outdoor champion in the high jump during the 1987 and 1988 season, while Goy was the indoor mile champion in 2002.
Arch Madness tourney is around the corner

Start planning your trip to the St. Louis area during the first two weekends of March to support both Redbird basketball teams.

The 2012 State Farm Missouri Valley Conference men’s basketball tournament is March 1-4. The Millennium in downtown St. Louis will be the team hotel. The following weekend, March 8-11, the women’s basketball team plays at Family Arena in St. Charles, Missouri. The Redbirds will be at the Sheraton Lakeside Chalet in Westport, Missouri.

Visit GoRedbirds.com for more information on either event, or call (309) 438-8000.

Hall of Fame 2011 inductees honored Homecoming weekend

Illinois State Athletics welcomed five former student-athletes into the ISU Athletics Percy Family Hall of Fame during Homecoming, while honoring a family with the prestigious Stretch Miller Award.

The 2011 inductees included Stacia Besteklasen ’01, M.S. ’03, an eight-time Missouri Valley Conference champion in cross country/track and field; football athlete Tony Jones ’95, who was one of 32 national finalists for the 1991 Walter Payton Award; Michael McKenny ’86, a starting point guard for three-straight NCAA Tournament teams; basketball athlete Derrick Sanders ’87, a two-time All-Missouri Valley Conference selection; and soccer athlete Annie Wayland ’04, who holds the school and Valley record for career goals and career points.

The Shirley Lockett Family received the Stretch Miller Award for their commitment to ISU Athletics. Mike and Shirley, who passed away in 2010 of pancreatic cancer, and their children – Rachael, Adam and Kelsey – have been fixtures at Redbird Arena athletic events for close to decade in multiple volunteer roles.

We’ve Got Spirit, How About You?

Facebook.com/ISURedbirds

Don’t miss the teams in action
Visit GoRedbirds.com for a complete schedule of all fall competition.
Download the Tag reader by texting TAG to 71857.
Bear hug

A scientist’s saga of saving the giant panda species

By Tom Nugent

During his 30-year career as a reproductive biologist who specializes in rescuing threatened animal species from demise, David E. Wildt ’72 has used his high-tech scientific skills to help save such exotic creatures as the Florida panther and the black-footed ferret of the American Great Plains.

But Wildt’s greatest challenge—and the biggest thrill of his extraordinary life as a globe-trotting scientist—took place in the mountains of Southwestern China, where he worked with Chinese colleagues to bring the world’s last few remaining giant pandas back from the edge of extinction.

It was a moment that world-renowned reproductive biologist Wildt will never forget. The date was December 10, 1996, and the place was a chilly room located in the heart of Southwestern China’s Sichuan Province.

“I remember walking into this conference center in Chengdu City and finding more than 50 Chinese scientists gathered there,” the 62-year-old biology researcher said when recalling his startling introduction to the threatened world of the giant panda.

“I was visiting Chengdu with several other American scientists under the umbrella of the world famous Conservation Breeding Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. We had been invited to brainstorm why giant pandas were not thriving in breeding centers and why the species continued to struggle,” Wildt said.

“The conference room was already full of excited and enthusiastic Chinese researchers,” Wildt recalled, “and at first glance, the scene looked very promising. We were all very eager to begin what we knew would be a marathon quest to keep these magnificent animals from disappearing forever.”

But the ISU animal sciences major found the enthusiasm waned quickly after the Americans discovered to their dismay that only one of the Chinese scientists in the room spoke English.

“Unfortunately, nobody on the American research team spoke Chinese,” Wildt remembered, “which meant communication between the two groups was extremely slow and halting, with lots of uncertainty and frustration on both sides. Looking back, it’s a wonder that we were able to communicate at all—to say nothing about designing and then gradually implementing a major research effort to learn as much as possible about this unique species.”

In spite of the roadblocks, Wildt and his colleagues and their Chinese counterparts were able to pull off one of the greatest achievements in the history of animal species preservation. They turned around a declining population and made it one of the most successful captive breeding success stories for any endangered species ever.

This was accomplished over five years by Wildt and his wife, behavioral biologist Susie Ellis, who co-led an

Artificial insemination methods developed in David Wildt’s lab resulted in the birth of Tai Shan at the Smithsonian’s National Zoo in 2005.
American research team using high-tech methods to determine the health and reproductive ability of more than 60 giant pandas scattered at Chinese breeding centers and zoos.

The lessons learned, combined with sharing modern methods on artificial insemination plus a remarkable persistence, have resulted in panda numbers increasing from only about 100 animals in 1999 to more than 300 today.

The captive population is now ‘self-sustaining’ and will likely soon become the main resource for reintroducing giant pandas to the wild. This is important because most experts estimate that only about 2,000 wild pandas still inhabit the mountainous bamboo forests of China. Their numbers are thought to be dwindling each year as a result of lost and fragmented habitats.

What Wildt and his colleagues managed to accomplish was nothing short of miraculous, according to biology experts, many of whom point out that coaxing the giant panda to reproduce is one of the most formidable challenges in the world of reproductive biology.

Wildt agrees that saving the pandas was “an extremely difficult and time-consuming task, especially when you realize that we had to coordinate the efforts and the research findings of scientists from two countries with such diverse cultures and scientific experiences. But that was only part of the story because we were also up against the fact that female pandas are only fertile for two or three days out of the entire year.”

Females may give birth to two cubs, but usually only one survives. The gestation period is up to 160 days, meaning a wild female can produce young only once every other year. At best she may raise five to eight cubs in her lifetime.

According to the determined Wildt—today with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute of the National Zoological Park—the strategy that saved the pandas was based on two key components.

“For starters, we had to figure out how to internationally transport and then use the many state-of-the-art tools that are now available in the biomedical sciences, first to learn about the species’ basic biology and then to help those pandas that either were unhealthy or unable to reproduce.

“And we also had to find ways to bring together these experts (veterinarians, reproductive biologists, behaviorists, nutritionists, geneticists, animal husbandmen) from the two different cultures, getting them to work together as an effective team,” Wildt said.

“In many ways, the administrative aspects of this kind of international collaboration are even tougher than the science—and we really struggled at times to put all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together. But you know working together over the anesthetized body of a giant panda, one of the most beloved animals on the planet, really brings people together. Now some of our best and dearest friends are these Chinese colleagues who have contributed so much to panda conservation.”

The work is more than Wildt could have envisioned given his humble start. Born and raised on an Illinois farm near Chandlerville, (current population: 553), he grew up on the land. He was feeding cattle and hogs and helping to harvest fall corn by the age of 7.

“We were a John Deere family, for sure,” he remembered with a smile of nostalgia, “and my brother and I were deep into the FFA (Future Farmers of America) while taking our cows and pigs to competitions sponsored by the local 4-H Club.

“Farming was at the center of our lives. My grandfather, Bud Wildt, actually died while sitting on his old John Deere ‘A’ one afternoon. That tractor now sits in my own barn here in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia,” Wildt said.

“I loved everything having to do with farm animals. By the time I got to ISU in the fall of 1968, I knew that animal science within the Department of Agriculture was where I wanted to be.”

After moving into room 1049 of Manchester Hall, Wildt started taking classes in animal husbandry and agriculture, along with a slew of science courses in chemistry, biology, and physiology. Within a couple of semesters he was “extremely fortunate” to be studying under mentors who inspired him throughout his career: ISU agriculture professors Clarence Moore, James Thompson, and Al Culver.

“Those guys were legends in animal science, and it wasn’t long before I got turned on by the way they really cared about their students and the animals they were studying,” Wildt said. “That was an exciting time for me, and my eyes were opening up to a lot of new things.”

He received his bachelor’s in 1972 and went on to earn a Ph.D. in animal
science and physiology at Michigan State. Wildt spent the next few years working at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. He had his first opportunity to work at a zoo—the nearby Houston Zoo—where he became fascinated with research opportunities with wildlife.

In 1979, Wildt began working as a biomedical researcher at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, but spent many weekends doing small research projects at the Smithsonian’s National Zoo in Washington. A job opened there in 1983. Since then he has gained international recognition for developing one of the world’s most effective research programs in reproductive physiology and species survival, including modern technologies that can be used to protect environmentally threatened species.

Wildt authored the now-classic work on species survival, Giant Pandas: Biology, Veterinary Medicine and Management. He has also published more than 290 scientific journal articles in his specialty, along with 40 book chapters. The knowledge shared comes from having spent more than 25 years running reproductive biology-research programs at the National Zoo and now its Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI).

Today Wildt directs the Institute’s Center for Species Survival, which is located at the main SCBI facility near Front Royal, Virginia. This 3,200-acre operation supports regional ecological studies, as well as research and breeding for almost 30 endangered species.

Besides supervising a group of 25 scientists, post-doctoral researchers, and grad students, Wildt also directs another 20 staff who are curators and keepers of SCBI’s rare animals, ranging from scimitar-horned oryx to clouded leopards and Asian cranes.

Along with saving the giant pandas, Wildt’s team has been credited with helping to protect many other threatened species, including the cheetah, the Florida panther, and the black-footed ferret. The black-footed ferret has made a major comeback as a result of captive breeding. Wildt’s operation has produced more than 600 black-footed ferrets, including more than 140 by artificial insemination, with some of these now reintroduced onto the plains of the American West.

Describing his career, the tireless researcher/administrator points out that he’s been very fortunate as a scientist. “My real passion, going all the way back to Illinois State, has been studying the basic biology of animals, especially how they differ from one another.

“When I think about my job today, I realize that I’m one of the luckiest guys I know,” says the affable and down-to-earth scientist. “The Smithsonian is a great American treasure which has a strong commitment to biodiversity conservation. That means they’ve been willing to commit major resources to saving species, and I couldn’t be prouder to be a part of that.

“When I reflect on the opportunity I was given to work on protecting an iconic species like the giant panda, I just say ‘Wow!’ As a guy who’s always loved working with animals, it’s been one heck of a ride.”

Don’t be fooled by the giant panda’s look

At first glance, they seem lovably cute.

Outfitted by Mother Nature with jet-black eye patches and tons of fluffy-white fur, the giant pandas are the unchallenged superstars of the zoo world.

You wouldn’t want to mess with one, however.

That’s because your typical adult male giant panda (Ailuropoda melanoleuca) stands five or six feet tall, weighs about 250 pounds, and owns a set of brutally powerful teeth designed to crunch through the leathery stalks of bamboo on which these legendary forest creatures usually feed.

“Pandas are quite cute, of course, and most zoo-goers love to watch them,” said the National Zoo’s Dave Wildt. “But it’s important to remember that they’re still bears. They’re extremely powerful animals, and can be dangerous if they feel they’re being threatened by humans.”

Although they once roamed across large swaths of Asia, the endangered panda population is these days restricted to a few mountain ranges in Central and Western China. Most bear experts believe there are no more than about 2,000 giant pandas now living in the wild, with another 300 or so inhabiting zoos and breeding centers in China and elsewhere around the world.

Like most bears, the typical panda enjoys a healthy appetite and can easily put away 40 to 50 pounds of fresh bamboo during a typical day of mountain foraging. Pandas in the wild generally live into their early twenties, but a few of the zoo-kept bears have been known to reach the ripe old age of 35.
Illinois State Normal University (ISNU) was caught up in national politics soon after the school was established in 1857. Students and faculty alike talked of John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry, the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and the election of Illinois’ favored son as president.

Soon after Abraham Lincoln took office, campus conversation turned to South Carolina’s secession, the occupation of federal forts, and Minute Men organizations springing up. Many pondered how long it would be before the Normal men would begin military drills.
In April of 1861 Fort Sumter was attacked, prompting Lincoln to summon 75,000 volunteers willing to serve three months.

Among locals who answered the call were five ISNU men: Joseph Howell, an 1860 graduate and teacher in the University’s Model School; and students Henry Prevost, Charles Clark, Hiram Johnson, and Justin Spaulding. The Bloomington company was promptly assembled for training in Springfield.

ISNU President Charles Hovey was troubled about the war’s impact upon the Normal School, as well as his own role. He did not want to see the semester disrupted, as the need for teachers was critical. But the young men of the University were restless. They missed their peers and wondered if they were shirking their duty by remaining on campus. They talked of nothing else.

Hovey counseled against immediate enlistment. He proposed that the men instead prepare for the day they might be called to battle, pledging he would go with them. He hired a drillmaster and created a practice field.

Soon there were daily drills of the men who became known as the Normal Rifles. A few had guns, but most carried only crafted imitation weapons sawed and whittled from cast-off wood.

**ISNU President Charles Hovey**

**WAS TROUBLED ABOUT THE WAR’S IMPACT UPON THE NORMAL SCHOOL, AS WELL AS HIS OWN ROLE.**
The women on campus lined up beside the “parade ground” and watched. They created a banner for the Rifles, which student Sophie Crist presented with emotion.

“We cannot say, ‘go forth to danger,’ and it may be to death, but if go you must, take with you this banner, which is to all the nation the emblem of our common freedom,” Crist said in a speech recorded by historians.

As the 1861 school term ended, the Rifles disbanded and their silken banner was folded away. Hovey promised to reassemble the men if necessary. He and ISNU founder Jesse Fell then traveled to meet with Lincoln, who had received Congressional authorization to accept the services of 500,000 more volunteers.

Hovey and Fell arrived in Washington, D.C., as citizens headed to watch a confrontation between Union and Confederate troops. Visitors mingled among the troops, making the scene a great military picnic. They did not realize they were about to witness the Battle of Bull Run.

By afternoon, the Union troops were in retreat. Dead and dying soldiers were left everywhere, as panicked onlookers ran for safety back in Washington. Hovey went to the battlefield, while Fell helped the wounded. The event convinced Hovey to petition Lincoln, who consequently commissioned Hovey as a colonel. Authorized to form a regiment, Hovey called back the Rifles and began recruiting for what was established as the Schoolmaster’s Regiment. He became one of only two college presidents to lead a Western regiment. James Garfield of Hiram College, who became the nation’s 20th president, commanded the Forty-Second Ohio Regiment.

By September more than 900 men were a part of Hovey’s Illinois Thirty-Third Infantry Regiment, which trained in Missouri. There were 46 ISNU students, including 20 who had drilled with the Rifles. Other members had grown impatient and already enlisted.

The Schoolmaster’s Regiment organized at Camp Butler in Springfield and soon moved to Pilot Knob near Ironton, Missouri, for serious training. The men saw their first engagement at Fredericktown, Missouri.

At Bayou Cache, a wounded Hovey rallied his men against a strong Confederate contingent until reinforcement arrived. He was promoted to Brigadier General for his distinguished conduct under fire.

Back on campus the regiment’s practice field grew over with weeds. Students walked across the stubble exchanging the latest news from the front. They shared letters and copies of The Picket, a little paper from the headquarters of the Thirty-Third.

The regiment remained on the move, seeing action in Arkansas and...
Louisiana swamps, Missouri, the Vicksburg campaign, Champion’s Hill, railroad guard duty, Fort Esperanza Texas, and Spanish Fort Alabama. The work ended when the regiment was disbanded on December 7, 1865.

Altogether 80 faculty members, 94 ISNU students, and 15 more from the Model School served in the Schoolmaster’s Regiment or other Illinois regiments. A total of 10 died, with Howell the University’s first casualty. His death occurred just a few months after he had returned on furlough to campus, where he was greeted as a conquering hero.

The loss was just one struggle the campus faced during the traumatic Civil War years. Men joined the military and women took the minimum courses required to qualify for a position in schools desperate for teachers. As a result, 506 students enrolled prior to the 1861 winter term but only 52 remained to graduate. State expenditures were questioned and teacher training scrutinized. The school’s existence was strenuously defended by President Richard Edwards.

When the war ended, Illinois State emerged ready to begin a new chapter. The University’s reputation for patriotism, which was evident with the creation of the Schoolmaster’s Regiment 150 years ago, became a point of pride. Enrollments increased as the campus flourished to become one of the most notable teacher colleges in the nation.

Editor’s note: Information for this piece was compiled by Jerry Abner ’75, M.S. ’92, from Grandest of Enterprises Illinois State University 1875-1957, by Helen E. Marshall; Educating Illinois: Illinois State University, 1857-2007, by John B. Freed; and McLean County Museum of History, Archive Collections, which supplied the photo on the opposite page.
For a year her job gave her stomach aches. Standing in front of high school juvenile delinquents from gritty neighborhoods put Kari Dunn Buron in knots. The physical education teacher was only 21 and it was her first teaching experience.
For a year her job gave her stomach aches. Standing in front of high school juvenile delinquents from gritty neighborhoods put Kari Dunn Buron in knots. The physical education teacher was only 21 and it was her first teaching experience.

“I was not that much older than they were and they were a lot more street savvy. It was hard to know how to be an authority figure,” she said. Five years later when the school closed, she had learned that children are “still vulnerable and learning, and certainly could be influenced by a teacher who cared.”

Buron ’73, M.S. ’80, cared so much that when the job ended, she returned to Illinois State for a master’s in special education. She then headed to Minnesota to develop one of the state’s first autism programs.

It was the 1980s and autism was a new label. Today the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in 110 children fall somewhere along the autism spectrum. Since 2002 there has been a 57 percent increase in prevalence of the physical condition that is linked to abnormal biology and chemistry in the brain. Individuals with autism lack the ability to develop social and communication skills.

Their struggle has been eased because of the teaching breakthroughs achieved by Buron, whose work with autism started with one 4-year-old student in her Minnesota public school system. Soon she had a dozen students from 12 districts. They were nonverbal, aggressive, and had severe behavioral challenges. Staff turnover was huge.

“It was just a very difficult job because you had to think on your feet all the time,” she said. “We were completely lost.”

Autism teachers relied on each other for support as programs popped up across the country. Schools had time-out rooms—the equivalent of “boxes” that reminded Buron of Minnesota fish houses. Aggressive students sat there with the door closed.

She knew it wasn’t changing behavior, but still used the room herself when a boy threw a piece of equipment at her. As she felt the blood on her forehead, she told a staff member to “put him in the box.”

It wasn’t long before she heard the child asking, “Kari, Kari, why am I in here?” She could hear him crying. “I just started crying myself. I knew he was in there because I didn’t know what else to do,” she said. “That really started my journey toward finding a better way.”

Buron’s search led to a method called “gentle teaching,” which recognizes an autistic child’s challenging behavior stems from a lack of skills rather than a deliberate act. She convinced her school district to find alternative approaches. The use of time-out rooms ended and the boxes were removed.

The small group of autism teachers she worked with grew into a statewide organization, the Minnesota Autism Network, and became a model for other states. In 2001, Buron developed an Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) certificate for Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, one of the first certification programs in the country. ASD certificates are now offered at seven Minnesota universities, and the state is developing a licensure program.

Although autism awareness has grown tremendously in the past three decades, there are still few answers as to what causes the disorder. Magnetic resonance imaging has brought insights, as researchers can look at the brain prior to autopsy. This increased understanding of ASD accounts in part for the increase in cases, Buron said, noting that Asperger Syndrome was identified in the mid-1990s and added to the spectrum.

“Professionals in the field of autism got better and better at identifying autism,” she said. “Not only did we add individuals who were diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome, we also added a number of kids in between who had been diagnosed with other disabilities.”

Asperger’s is a social learning disability. Someone with Asperger’s might not be able to hold a job or establish long-term relationships because of an inability to do simple tasks, like getting yourself up in the morning or conversing socially.

She and colleague Mitzi Curtis ’77 started teaching social skills using a visual 5-point scale to explain social and emotional concepts. Buron considers Curtis a gifted teacher and was thrilled to learn she is also an Illinois State alum.

Tips for parents and teachers

When observing challenging behavior, Kari Dunn Buron suggests you stop and ask these questions:

1. What is the child doing that you wish wasn’t happening?
2. What would you rather the student do?
3. What skills does the child need to do it that way?
4. How can you teach that?
“I always felt that my training was excellent, particularly my master’s program. It was amazing to meet another teacher, a decade later and 800 miles away, who also seemed uniquely prepared, and then to discover that she was a graduate of ISU,” Buron said.

Other teachers started using their 5-point approach. It was so successful, The Incredible 5-Point Scale was published. That led to a series of 5-point books, including When My Worries Get Too Big, which teaches relaxation strategies; and A 5 is Against the Law!, which teaches lessons such as personal distance. Social Behavior and Self-Management, a book for college students that includes how to deal with roommates and dating, is due out in the spring.

She has also completed a textbook titled Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators, and created a magazine for students with ASD called The Social Times.

Buron is quick to credit Illinois State when reflecting on her professional journey, noting that she might not have had a 30-year teaching career in autism if not for an experience while still an ISU student. She was at The Baby Fold, a Normal agency for children with emotional and behavioral disorders, and observed a class of young autistic children.

“That was all I had. That was my understanding of autism but if weren’t for my practicum, I wouldn’t have even had any idea in my mind of what I was looking at when I started the autism program,” she said.

Buron’s work has long extended far beyond Minnesota. Twenty years ago she started consulting for the Autism Society of Trinidad and Tobago. She also has done international volunteer work in Barbados, Tanzania, Ghana, and elsewhere.

And she’s explored new treatments for autism, including canine therapy. Using her yellow lab, Claire, she worked on communication skills with nonverbal children. “I was blown away by the impact Claire had,” she said. “She was a social conduit. She’s incredibly empowering. I have a lot of faith in canine therapy and autism.”

She’s also used yoga in the classroom, working with adaptive poses that don’t require as much balance. Short routines twice a day reduced tantrums.

Buron has found the value of applying her teaching tools in her own life when struggling for balance. She has used the 5-point scale, and finds her canine companion a great stress reliever.

“It’s trying to practice what I preach,” she said. “I know when to take deep breaths and go for a walk.”

Such down time is a little easier to schedule since she recently retired. She remains connected with four college friends who met in 1969 on the 15th floor of Hewitt Hall. They met recently in New York to celebrate their 60th birthdays.

She also enjoys spending August in Nova Scotia, Canada. Bear River is a summer home to Buron and her husband. There’s no cell phone coverage or Internet. If she wants to check on the rest of the world, she has to walk to the village café.

For a teacher who has devoted her life to helping others make connections, there’s a bit of irony in her finding peace by being disconnected. She does not stay in that mode for long, however, as Buron continues her quest to unlock a world of opportunity for individuals trapped by autism—many of whom are very talented and highly educated individuals failing at life because of a lack of social skills.

“Those skills are really what’s needed at the end of the day. If somebody can’t read, we teach reading. If somebody can’t do math, we teach math. But if a person can’t succeed socially, we tend to punish,” Buron said. “We need to address it like any other skill. It needs to be taught.”

Five things you should know about autism

1. Autism is the result of how the child’s brain works.

2. Autism appears to involve particular learning strengths, such as visual learning and learning through systems. Parents and teachers can use this information to create the most functional interventions.

3. Autism is a disorder of social thinking and can lead to social anxiety, which can lead to explosive and challenging behavior when a child needs to negotiate social interactions.

4. The school setting is the ultimate social environment, and children with autism are challenged to negotiate that every day without all of the necessary skills.

5. Bridges need to be built between neuroscience and education. As we learn more about the brain, we will learn more about autism and how to teach.
JUDGED SUPERIOR

by Susan Marquardt Blystone
The Illinois State mock trial team toils away in the campus shadows with minimal support or recognition, yet shines brightly among its national competitors. The small percentage of individuals who realize the University even has such a team inevitably ask how a school that doesn’t offer a law degree ended up with an award-winning program that has helped prepare lawyers for nearly a quarter of a century.

Politics and Government Professor Emeritus Thomas Eimermann doesn’t just know the answer to that question, he is the answer.

The team—which has sent at least one group to the national tournament in 11 of the past 19 years and captured the national championship in 2003 by beating Gonzaga University—is just one offshoot of the roots Eimermann planted when he joined what was then the Political Science Department in 1970.
“When I was hired, I was given responsibility for developing a formal pre-law program at ISU,” he said, recalling there were only two law-related courses. “The opportunity to build a program from the ground up played an important part in my decision to accept the position.”

Eimermann initially identified existing courses across the University that would benefit undergraduates considering a law career. He also expanded the number and variety of law-related courses within the Political Science Department.

He formed and advised the Law Club, which mentored students through discussions that ranged from getting the law degree to contemporary legal controversies. Still in existence, the club arranges law school recruiter campus visits and student trips to area law schools.

When paralegals began to receive formal recognition from the American Bar Association in the mid-1970s, Eimermann seized an opportunity. ISU became one of the first four-year public universities in the nation to offer the curriculum.

“Paralegal was a place for growth and it became our niche,” he said. “It attracted traditional students interested in law, but with no desire to be an attorney; and nontraditional students, such as legal secretaries, who were able to command a higher salary with the degree.”

As the program’s founder and director, Eimermann further enriched the curriculum with classes on civil procedure and appellate practice, tort law, family law, probate, criminal law, and investigative techniques. He also developed the University’s own Law School Admissions Test prep course as an alternative to paying approximately $1,000 for a commercial prep course. ISU continues to offer the 12-hour noncredit prep class for $175.

But the most intense preparation by far comes through the mock trial team, which has empowered many of Eimermann’s protégés to find their passion and profession. He learned of the program from a Drake University Law School mailing. A law professor there started the intercollegiate competition in 1985.

Seeing an opportunity to enhance the pre-law experience, Eimermann created the team and a trial advocacy course. Still mandatory for team members, the class covers the rules governing the conduct of trials. The skills involved in preparing and delivering opening statements, as well as direct and cross examinations, are also studied.

Eimermann recruited Appellate Judge James Knecht ’68 to serve as the team’s first attorney coach. Mick Hall ’89 was on the initial team and later went on to serve as an attorney coach, which is the role of litigation expert. It involves working closely with the students on strategy and tactics as they prepare their case. Eimermann was the educator coach responsible for administrative details, including the team budget and travel logistics.

“When we participated in our first tournament there were only about 30 schools involved nationally. Today there are 380 schools with teams in the American Mock Trial Association, including 18 in Illinois,” Eimermann said.

Regional qualifying tournaments are now the pathway to nationals, with teams participating in several invitational throughout the academic year to hone their performance.

Illinois State’s mock trial team thrives on the efforts of faculty and alumni. The following individuals have volunteered long hours of service to create the opportunity for students to compete.

**ATTORNEY COACHES**

- (guide preparation of the case)
  - Judge and alum
  - David Butler, 1990–1991
  - Judge and alum
  - Tom Brown, 1991–1999
  - Attorney
  - Mick Hall, 1999–2009
  - Attorney and alum
  - Scott Kording, 2009–present
  - Attorney and alum

**EDUCATOR COACHES**

- (general manager for the team)
  - Tom Eimermann, 1985–2007
  - Faculty member emeritus
  - Tom McClure, 2007–present
  - Faculty member, attorney, and alum

* Participated in mock trial as an ISU student. ** Wrote the case materials used nationally for the 2003-2004 academic year competition. *** Received a 2010 Lawyers Who Care award from the Illinois State Bar Association for dedicated work with the mock trial team.
not uncommon for ISU students to go up against Big 10 schools, universities with law programs, and the Ivy League. Illinois State began hosting its own major invitational in 2002, and continues the event each fall.

Eimermann praises the dedication of alumni and staff for maintaining the tradition, as well as extending the team’s successful record. ISU now has one of the leading programs in the Midwest, with both squads advancing to nationals again last year.

While he is still engaged and supportive, Eimermann retired from Illinois State in 2002. He ended his term as educator coach in 2007, handing over the reins to a dual alum he advised, Thomas McClure ’76, M.S. ’01.

An assistant professor in Politics and Government as well as the director of Legal Studies, McClure was a practicing civil and criminal litigator for more than 20 years prior to joining Illinois State as an adjunct faculty member in 2003.

His mock trial team partner is Scott Kording ’02, a Bloomington trial lawyer with his own private practice who has worked with the team the past four years and is now the attorney coach. He was an assistant under Hall, who with Eimermann coached Kording as an undergraduate on the team.

“Mock trial at Illinois State was a game changer for me. I knew then that I wanted to be a trial lawyer” said Kording, who met his wife, Melanie (Bertilson) ’02, on his first day of speech class as a freshman.

Kording came to the University as a Presidential Scholar. Active in student government, he served as both vice president and president of the student body and was also a Bone Scholar. During his senior year, Kording took top All American Honors at the national mock trial tournament.

ASSISTANT COACHES

Doug Kotlarczyk, 2000–2002
Alum**
Barry Tolkin, 2004–2008
Alum*
Scott Kording, 2006–2009
Attorney and alum**
Mick Hall, 2009–2011
Attorney and alum***
Adam Ghrist, 2010–2011
Alum*

A look at the logistics

In intercollegiate mock trial competition, students are given copies of court documents and witness statements from a hypothetical case. Each year the cases alternate between civil and criminal matters. This year’s competition is based on a criminal case against a young man accused of murder and driving under the influence following an auto accident in which his friend died.

Materials for the case total 100-plus pages that include a summation, victim statements, police reports, witness affidavits, and other raw material teams use to develop a strategy.

Each team participates in two trials in which they play the roles of prosecutors, defense lawyers, and witnesses. Those in the lawyer role must present opening statements and closing arguments, as well as direct and cross examinations.

Hours of preparation are required of team members and coaches, seen practicing at the McLean County Law and Justice Center. At left are Jesse Guth, Anastasia Sotiropoulos, Joe Blanche, and coach Tom McClure in the role of judge.

Coach Scott Kording, above center, works with Katie Campbell and Bill Callow on witness examination techniques.

A modified version of the Federal Rules of Evidence applies. The student attorneys must make and defend evidentiary objections in the same way they are handled in actual trials.

Students playing witnesses are required to respond to the attorneys’ questions as real witnesses would, and to make it as difficult as possible for the lawyers on the opposing team.

There are always more witnesses available than can be called, so team members must choose carefully who to include based on their strategy for the case. This fact alone makes each competition its own unique experience for students.

Scoring is based on a team’s overall performance. Individuals are judged as well, with honors given to the top four lawyers and four witnesses in each competitive round.
His own experience creates an appreciation for the effort of the 16 team members, who invest as much time as student-athletes. Kording estimates they devote 20 to 30 hours a week to practices, with nine full weekends lost to competition throughout the academic year. As a coach, Kording’s prep time, teaching, and travel equates to a part-time job.

The case material is received in August, which is when the work begins. There are always more witnesses available than can be used, so who will be called to testify varies depending on each team’s strategy. Preparation requires being ready for any of the evidence.

“Heads have their eyes opened as they learn to think quickly based on not only the witnesses but the reactions and rulings of the judge,” Kording said, noting team members write their own opening or closing statements and determine what to say in court. “It is incredible prep for law school, as we give them a good foundation.”

He and McClure focus on strengthening each student, not just taking competitions. “Although we certainly like to win, that is not our focus,” McClure said. “We want our students to become successful litigators armed with skills they can use after they graduate.”

Close to 300 students have benefited from mock trial since its start. Beyond gaining a realistic sense of the American legal system and specifically a litigation attorney’s work, they have gained enormous confidence as they honed analytical skills, oral communication skills, and an ability to think on their feet. Team members also establish lifelong friendships and build an invaluable network of mentors who write letters of recommendation, give career advice, and become life coaches.

Kording still considers Eimermann a mentor. McClure refers to him as “the hub,” noting Eimermann taught all of the key players involved with the mock trial team since its start. And he continues to influence students, as he and McClure are now coauthoring a textbook.

Eimermann’s legacy also lives on at Illinois State through an Attorney Advisory Board that he helped create, as well as the Thomas Eimermann Pre-Law Advisement Center. He and his wife, Kathleen, established the Thomas Eimermann Scholarship to assist a politics and government student committed to mock trial competition.

“I came with a vision for courses that would be good for students to test if they liked law or not and that would help them jump ahead when they got to law school,” Eimermann said. “It gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction to see all that has been accomplished over the last 40 years.”

Illinois State’s mock trial team has what it takes to soar. The students are dedicated and talented, consistently making it to the national level. Alumni are involved and supportive, with more than 70 serving on an Attorneys Advisory Board. Faculty are equally committed to continuing the team’s winning legacy that truly is remarkable, considering the monetary support has always been minimal.

As the team’s educator coach, Thomas McClure is responsible for juggling the tight budget that consists of approximately $10,000 annually. The funding comes out of a $25,000 pre-law program budget and is paltry compared to the backing ISU’s competitors enjoy. Loyola’s team, for example, typically has a $30,000 account.

“Travel is our biggest problem. To stay competitive, we have got to go to tournaments,” McClure said. “Teams that are not willing to go to multiple tournaments are not going to do well.”

Competitions are held across the country. ISU’s team stretches its dollars by skipping overnights whenever possible, which means hours spent on the road instead of resting or preparing.

McClure praises the Department of Politics and Government for its stalwart support. He is grateful for the scholarship Thomas Eimermann and his wife created to help a mock trial student. Now he is hopeful that alumni will respond to an ongoing fundraising effort started by the Attorneys Advisory Board, which is working to create an established source of funding that will carry the team far into the future.

The board started the Pre-Law Endowed Program Fund in March with a goal of raising $500,000. Beyond funding the pre-law program, donor support will cover mock trial operating expenses and allow for growth with such things as high school mock trial workshops, which in turn will bolster efforts to recruit stellar students.

Director of Development Mary Crawford is working to secure $5,000 gifts to be made over five years as one way to reach the goal. Several graduates of the program have already teamed up to make such a pledge.

To learn more about the endowed fund or the Thomas Eimermann Scholarship, contact Crawford at (309) 438-7725 or merundu@ilstu.edu. Donations may also be made online at Advancement.ilstu.edu/support.
Thank you
With the season for giving thanks quickly approaching, now is the perfect time to express gratitude to those who have supported the University during the past year. Whether earmarked for a research project, a specific academic program, or a scholarship fund, all gift dollars ultimately impact a student’s life.

The Foundation Annual Report is inserted into Illinois State each November as one way to share just a small sample of how every gift has an impact. Take a moment to realize how grateful recipients are when doors of opportunity open because of another’s generosity.

You too can help lift a financial burden and fuel a dream. Use the envelope enclosed in this issue to send a gift, or go online to IllinoisState.edu/giving. Visit Advancement.IllinoisState.edu for a complete list of donors. Each is a valued Illinois State partner whose commitment to the University is truly appreciated.
A family of Redbird fans

By Kate Arthur

Sometimes the money comes from their tax refund, other times it’s from his work bonus. Finding a little extra in a young family’s budget isn’t easy, but Amy and Randy Roser have supported Redbird Athletics for more than a decade. The alums met on a blind date at an Illinois State-Bradley University basketball game.

“It’s just something we make happen,” said Randy Roser ’86. “We were doing it even before we had kids. I like what the University stands for.”

Randy was a first-generation college student who lost his father at a young age. Financial aid helped with the tuition bills while he worked his way through college. Amy (Mersinger) ’95, M.S. ’02, was also a first-generation college student. Her father didn’t graduate from high school, but believed so strongly in education that he put all six children through college.

The Rosers are loyal supporters of Athletics. So loyal that Amy couldn’t break herself away from a game even when her contractions started with their first child, Paige, 3.

“I kept asking if she wanted to leave and she said she wanted to watch the end of the game,” Randy said. Their second child, Miranda, 1, also arrived after a game. Her parents were back in their seats a week later.

The couple donate to the Weisbecker Scholarship Fund, which rewards a Redbird student athlete who has a commitment to academics and competition.

“It’s good to teach our kids the value of giving, education and loyalty,” Amy said. “Our commitment to the University demonstrates that. We’re so lucky to be a part of Illinois State. It’s a university that cares so much about its students.”

As associate director for Illinois State’s University College, she sees students struggling financially. Some even have trouble finding a few dollars to print documents for class.

“Every gift makes such a difference,” she said. “It doesn’t have to be a huge amount to name a building. It can be enough to buy a student a textbook. It may not seem like a lot, but it means a lot to the students.”

Pictured in photo: Redbird Katie Broadway and Paige Roser

Weisbecker Scholarship Fund

This fund was established in 1990 and is named for Milt Weisbecker, Illinois State Athletics director from 1966 to 1974. More than 1153 Redbird Athletics donors support the Weisbecker Scholarship Fund annually.
A DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By Kate Arthur

Not many high-schoolers know what they want to do with their life. Ronnell Robinzine ’09 was different. Even before he was old enough to drive, he wanted to be a lawyer.

“I saw lawyers as leaders making a difference in society, and I wanted to make a difference,” he said.

Illinois State was one of two colleges he considered for an undergraduate degree in finance. What made his decision was the State Farm Hall of Business, how he felt when he walked the campus, and scholarships. Three years in a row he received the Illinois State University’s Black Colleagues Association Judge Russell DeBow Scholarship based on his grades, campus involvement, and leadership.

“The scholarships not only helped me finance my education, but allowed me to focus more on my studies,” he said. “Having that financial aid enriched my overall campus experience, academically, socially, and professionally by allowing me to get involved in campus organizations and in the community.”

Robinzine was active in the Mentoring Scholarship, Academics, and Achievement Initiative, a mentoring program for freshmen. He became a residence hall advisor and was active in student government, the Student Involvement Center, and College of Business organizations.

After an internship in investments at State Farm Insurance Companies, he decided to blend his love of finance and law by pursuing a career in corporate law.

He graduated magna cum laude and was accepted into his first choice for law school, the University of Florida College of Law in Gainesville, where he’s a third-year student. He’s continued to make headlines there, earning scholarships for academics and leadership.

“I’ll have loans when I get out, but scholarships helped reduce them,” he said. “Law school is really challenging me academically, and I look forward to the opportunities that I will have after graduating. I enjoyed my experience at ISU. It gave me a great foundation.”

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY’S BLACK COLLEAGUES ASSOCIATION

Illinois State University’s Black Colleagues Association awards three scholarships: the Judge Russell DeBow Scholarship, the President’s Office Book Scholarship, and the Vice President for Student Affairs Book Scholarship. Gloria Campbell-White ’58 and John Jordon (photo above, left), and Julie (Fuery) ’90 and Tracy Jones support this fund through planned gifts, along with many additional annual donors.
**GOING THE EXTRA MILE**

By Steven Barcus

Not many people would drive four hours every day for three years to pursue a dream. That is what Jenni McCool, Ph.D. ’09, did when she chose Illinois State for her doctorate.

Moving to campus wasn’t an option for McCool, who didn’t want to uproot her two toddlers and husband from their home in Macomb. But she wouldn’t let the 111 miles stop her. Armed with audio books, music, NPR, and a hunger for learning, she prepared herself.

“I was going to have to spend four hours a day in the car, 20 hours a week teaching, and also do all of my coursework. At first I wasn’t sure how I’d be able to do it all,” she said.

But the August before her first semester she received a letter saying she’d won the O’Daffer Fellowship.

“When I got the letter, we celebrated. It was a big deal for the whole family. That was a huge burden off our shoulders. The O’Daffer Fellowship allowed me to focus on my studies, and made sure I had some income to support my family.”

McCool continued a tradition established by past recipients by working with an accelerated student at Metcalf. This was a natural fit for the seasoned educator who had taught high school while working on her master’s. After years of teaching, McCool wanted to touch the lives of even more students.

“I thought I could impact more students in the long run if I could impact their teachers. So I decided to get my Ph.D. so I could work with future teachers.”

McCool is an assistant professor in the Mathematics Department at the University of Wisconsin at Lacrosse. She researches how students learn and puts that research into the hands of teachers. When she looks back at what she had to do to reach her goal, she has no regrets.

“I wouldn’t change anything. The whole program was awesome. I am very thankful for the experience I had at Illinois State. It was totally worth the four-hour car ride.”

**ABOUT THE O’DAFFER FELLOWSHIP**

The O’Daffer Fellowship was established in 2003 by Phares and Harriet O’Daffer. Phares ’55, M.S. ’57, is a retired mathematics faculty member, and Harriet (Gove) ’55, M.S. ’57, is a homemaker. They have three children. The fellowship is awarded to a student enrolled in the Ph.D. Mathematics Education Program and has been awarded 11 times.
Garrett Anderson ’10 is the first in his family to graduate from a four-year college. This puts him one step closer to a career helping fellow veterans. More importantly, his graduation left a lasting impression on his 4-year-old daughter.

“She was at my graduation and she thought it was the greatest thing in the world,” he said. “She’ll always have a memory of me walking across the stage, getting my diploma, and seeing her dad out there. I think that was a really exciting time for her. Maybe in the future she’ll want to do that too.”

Anderson joined the U.S. Army as a way to help pay for school. After serving his country, he planned on getting a degree and becoming a police officer. Getting a degree was something his father, a blue-collar painter, always encouraged. “He never wanted me to work as hard as he had his whole life,” Anderson said. After serving eight years, he lost his right arm while fighting in Iraq. His injury made a career in law enforcement difficult, so he shifted his focus to helping other veterans. A job with the Department of Veterans Affairs became the new destination, with a degree in criminal justice from Illinois State the first stop.

If hitting the books wasn’t enough, helping his wife raise two daughters while taking care of a typical homeowner’s bills was. When he received the Disability Concerns Educational Scholarship, it relieved the financial pressure so he could concentrate on what was important: his family and his classes.

“There was less stress on life for me,” he said. “I put more focus on school, and that allowed me to graduate on time.”

Disability Concerns made certain tasks, such as asking teachers for help, more comfortable for him. That’s just another reason he advocates for Illinois State. “When people are thinking about college, I recommend ISU. If they have challenges or disabilities I say, ‘Listen, get over to Disability Concerns and they’ll take care of you.’”

**Disability Concerns Educational Enhancement Scholarship**

Recipients are clients of Disability Concerns, enrolled in good standing, and demonstrate financial need. Five scholarships are awarded each year through a fund established by donors who wish to keep their names confidential.
**Energy Source**
Lauren Knapp ’11 earned her degree in renewable energy, a program that receives significant support from corporate donors. She dreams of running her own nonprofit, teaching women in impoverished nations how to use solar-powered water purification systems. Read her story at IllinoisState.edu/magazine.

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The purpose of the Illinois State University Foundation is to assist in developing and increasing educational opportunities and the facilities of Illinois State University; and to receive, hold, and administer gifts with the primary objective of serving the education purposes of the University. Each and every gift to the University is appreciated. In order to make wise use of our resources and be environmentally friendly, our Honor Roll of donors is now located on the University Advancement website, Advancement.IllinoisState.edu. If your name appears in the online listing and you do not wish for it to appear there, please accept our apologies and contact Kathy Alexander, director of Stewardship, at (309) 438-5711 or kkalex@IllinoisState.edu.

**FY11 Contribution Summary**
Funds raised in FY2011 totaled more than $13.5 million. This is an increase of $1.27 million from FY2010, and represents more than a 10 percent growth in funds raised during the past year. Of the total invested by donors, cash and new commitments were up 7.2 percent. Given the current fundraising climate, it is significant to note the number of alumni who supported the University in FY2011 increased by nearly 100 to total 9,183 graduates.

**FY11 Foundation Expenditures**

**Long-Term Investments Market Value**

This document is available in alternative formats upon request by contacting Donor and Information Services at (309) 438-5711.

An equal opportunity/affirmative action university encouraging diversity. UNIVERSITY MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS. 72-0021 printed on recycled paper.
THEN and now!

Remember your freshman year? That semester started without you even realizing how your college experience would shape who you are today. In many ways, who you became created a stronger foundation for the University’s continued growth. Current students are inspired by alumni like you, who have paved a successful road in their careers and personal lives.

ISU’s tradition of excellence continues through the support of those who are grateful for their Redbird experience. Use the envelope in this issue to make a gift, or go online to IllinoisState.edu/giving.
Alumni and students from the Windy City do not have far to go for a campus connection, as the University continues to maintain a Chicago office in the downtown area.

Opened in 1990 through the Illinois State University Foundation, the office at 150 North Michigan Avenue was established to serve the high concentration of Chicago Redbirds. It remains a valuable resource that is instrumental in recruiting students and appreciated by alumni networks.

Located in the heart of downtown Chicago, the sophisticated office is an ideal meeting place where faculty, staff, alumni, and students regularly gather. The space is perfect for business or social gatherings.

There is also a private office available for use by drop-in visitors. Traveling alumni especially appreciate this convenience, as the suite is a peaceful location with computer resources needed to stay in touch with work or home.

A fine art gallery is also housed within the office space. Through a partnership with the ISU Fine Arts Galleries, a variety of striking pieces are on loan for display. Each work is created by alumni or Illinois State faculty. The pieces are on loan to the Illinois State University Foundation. Images of the display are available on the office website.

“We are very happy to offer this resource to our alumni, students, and faculty,” said Kelly Howell, director of Alumni Relations for the greater Chicago area. “Whether it is providing space for alumni volunteer groups to meet, prospective students to visit, or faculty to share educational sessions—we always have something going on, and would love to have more visitors.”

The office is open from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Full-time staff are on hand to assist guests during their visit. To hold a meeting or a social event at the Chicago office, contact Jackie Marshall, office manager, at (312) 251-3500 or (866) 366-4478. She can answer questions of availability. Additional information can be found online at ChicagoOffice.IllinoisState.edu.
Replacement diplomas easy to obtain

There’s something special about displaying your degree in a professional or personal setting. The University Registrar can help alumni showcase their ISU pride by replacing lost or damaged diplomas.

To obtain a replacement diploma or diploma cover, download the request form at www.registrar.ilstu.edu/graduation/diploma.shtml or write a letter of request to Illinois State University, Evaluation Services, Campus Box 2202, Normal, IL, 61790-2202. Diplomas can be replaced at a cost of $12, and a diploma cover can be replaced for $4. Please provide the quantity of diplomas or diploma covers desired, as well as the current name, name to be printed on the diploma, University Identification Number or date of birth, date of graduation, mailing address, email address, and phone number. Your signature is required to release your diploma.

Due to the danger of identity theft, persons who wish to change their first, middle, or last name on their diploma must provide a copy of their marriage license, a court order, or a dissolution decree certifying their name change. Please send a copy of one of these documents with your request.

Payment can be made by credit card by completing the box on the request form, or by check or money order payable to Illinois State University.

Alumni Association sponsors insurance program

The Alumni Association has been a long-time partner with the American Insurance Administrators, a USI Affinity Company, which provides opportunities for alumni to acquire health, life, and travel insurance. A wide variety of insurance plans are offered, all with the goal of bringing peace of mind through quality products and excellent customer service.

For additional information on the products available for you and costs, call (800) 922-1245 or visit the insurance link at Advancement.IllinoisState.edu/services.

Alumni Association directors elected

Three at-large executive committee members confirmed were Terrence Sykes ’93, of Elwood; Kaci Rollings ’94, of Ottawa; and Bob Freitag ’84, of Carlock. Matt Miglin ’10, of Loves Park, will serve another one-year term as the Student Alumni Council representative.

Established in 1863, the Alumni Association is a volunteer, nonprofit group that serves more than 180,000 alumni, the University, and its students. All graduates are automatic members of the Alumni Association. Alumni who have made a gift to the Illinois State University Foundation in the current or preceding year have active membership status and are eligible to serve on the board.

Keep in touch during extended vacations

Are you headed to a warmer climate for winter? Make certain you receive this magazine and other important Illinois State mailings while away from your home address.

Simply send your seasonal address to Alumni Relations, along with the dates for the change of address. Doing so also guarantees that you’ll receive information about alumni events in the area you are visiting. If you annually travel to the same location during the same time period, just one notice is required. If you travel to a different destination each year, please contact Alumni Relations each time you temporarily relocate.

Your name, telephone number, email address, seasonal address, and the start and end dates for the time of your relocation are needed. The information can be submitted by email to alumni@IllinoisState.edu. Mail should be sent to Illinois State University, Migrating Redbirds, Campus Box 3100, Normal, IL 61790-3100.
The power of partnering with faculty was made clear to Amy Rude ’07, M.S. ’11. While finishing her master’s degree in social work this past spring, Rude’s participation in a relief effort with the American Red Cross was made possible through intervention from her academic department.

Rude was able to help flood victims because of Judith Sevel, School of Social Work director of field education. Sevel, above left with Rude, is a Red Cross mental health disaster volunteer who headed to Mississippi and Tennessee with Rude.

Rude was able to help flood victims because of Judith Sevel, School of Social Work director of field education. Sevel, above left with Rude is a Red Cross mental health disaster volunteer who headed to Mississippi and Tennessee with Rude.

Typically mental health workers must have their graduate degree and license, meaning students are unable to participate. Sevel arranged for expedited certification training and served as Rude’s supervisor.

“I was eager to put my training into practice,” Rude said, noting she expected it would be a couple years before she could obtain her license and be involved as a disaster mental health volunteer. She assisted at various shelters with other professionals as well.

“One really nice thing about the Red Cross is that although she was working primarily with me, because all of us were licensed she had the chance to work with other people too, giving her many more opportunities to interact with volunteers and people who were directly affected by the flooding,” Sevel said.

During the trip she and Rude were given the opportunity to move beyond the student and faculty relationship to form a friendship. “I never had Judith as a professor and really only talked to her once about my practicum placement,” Rude said. “I wasn’t worried about going because she was genuinely caring the first time I met her.”

Together the two comforted a strong-knit community dealing with great loss. Many moments impacted Rude, especially interacting and connecting with children.

Since graduating, Rude continues to work hard and is eager to continue helping others. “I am very grateful to the School of Social Work for giving me the opportunity to serve people affected by disaster,” she said.
30s
Roy O. Schilling ’35, ’40, is a retired educator who worked as both a teacher and principal. He is a life member of the Illinois Congress of PTA, the Decatur Area and Illinois Retired Teachers Associations, and the National Education Association. Schilling remains active in his church and community. He has received many honors, including induction into the Illinois State College of Education Hall of Fame. He enjoys traveling across the country and internationally. His wife, Rachel, is deceased. He has an adult son and resides in Decatur.

50s
Kenneth Myler ‘58, M.S. ‘66, taught business classes at Tonica Community High School for 32 years. He completed another four years when the school consolidated as LaSalle-Perry Township High School before retiring. He resides in Peru.

60s
William Bohren, M.S. ’65, is the head football coach at LaBrae High School in Leavitts, Ohio. He has been inducted into the Ohio High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. He resides in Cortland, Ohio.

Alan Lerstrom ’67, M.S. ’72, has retired from Luther College as a professor of communication studies. He joined the faculty in 1988 and is the recipient of the National Communication Association’s Presidential Citation for Outstanding Service to the Association award, as well as the Iowa Communication Association’s Citation Award for Service to the Association. He resides in Decorah, Iowa.

Mort Castle ’68 is an author who has been nominated for the Bram Stoker award seven times. He is coeditor of the book Live Forever: An Anthology of All New Stories in Honor of Ray Bradbury. It is tentatively set for launch in 2012 at the San Diego Comic Con. He resides in Crete.

James H. Cherry ’68, M.S. ’69, Ed.D. ’75, served as chair and associate professor of educational leadership at University of Illinois-Springfield. He joined the school in 1993 when it was Sangamon State University. He retired from the school in 2002. He was honored this year by the College of Education and Human Services with the hanging of his portrait in the Wall of Fame in Brookens Library. He and his wife, Nancy, reside in Springfield.

Carolyn (Laung) Finzer ’69 is a self-employed artist, teacher, storyteller, and award-winning gardener. She and her husband, Melvern, are the parents of two adult children. Their first grandchild, Bering Iskander-Royal Read, was born in February of 2010. Finzer resides in Naperville.

F. Gale Meseke ’69 retired as principal of Washington Elementary School within Vandalia Community Unit School District #203. He also worked as an instructor with Illinois Virtual High School and Illinois Virtual School, but has retired from both. He has been listed in Who’s Who Among American Educators, Who’s Who Among American History Teachers, and Who’s Who Among Young Professionals. He and his wife, Helen, enjoy traveling and working for social and environmental justice. They reside in Shobonier.

Pause for applause

Innovative sound
Travel is a passion for Michael Szymczak ’06. Music is equally important, which explains why Szymczak started the company OrigAudio with a friend. They developed portable audio products, including a fold-and-play speaker set powered off an iPod, and a unit that turns common objects—such as a cup—into a speaker. The products were cited by Time in the “Top 50 Best Inventions of 2009.” With sales in more than 500 stores across 25 countries and on QVC, Szymczak successfully pitched his company during an ABC’s Shark Tank episode earlier this year, winning the financial support of a major investor.

Soldiers’ advocate
John R. Davis ’78 is director of legislative programs for the Fleet Reserve Association, which represents enlisted members of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The association protects the pay and benefits of service members and their families. Davis appeared before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense this past summer to voice concern about adequate funding of the military health care system. He supports active duty/reservist pay increases on par with civilian pay increases, a seamless transition for disabled veterans transferring to Veterans Affairs healthcare systems, and retroactive early retirement benefits for reservists frequently mobilized since 9/11.

Airing without erring
School of Communication alumna Jamie Reed ’07 has been behind a microphone since her days at ISU’s student radio station, WZND. There three years, she took on the roles of music director and general manager. Now Reed is the award-winning, on-air talent for Bloomington’s WBNQ. The Illinois Broadcasters’ Association named her the first place recipient of the 2011 Silver Dome Award for Best Medium Market Radio Personality. The award is the most prestigious broadcast performance award in Illinois, with entries judged by out-of-state broadcasters. It’s the second Silver Dome Award for Reed, who captured her first while at WZND.

Jumping ahead
Inspired by The Amazing Race, Joe Reynolds ’03 decided in 2007 to energize communities across the country with an event called The Great Urban Race. Teams of two loved completing clues and racing to the finish line. Success was so immediate that Reynolds created a company in Chicago called Red Frog Events. Soon there was a muddy obstacle course called Warrior Dash and a sand adventure known as Beach Palooza for fun-seekers. Expect even more from Reynolds and Red Frog Events, as the company recently won the 2011 U.S. Chamber of Commerce DREAM BIG Small Business of the Year Award.

Reggie Reads
Check out a column dedicated to book reviews of work by alums at IllinoisState.edu/magazine. Click on Reggie Reads. Download the Tag reader by texting TAG to 71857.
How we met

While attending Illinois State, Amanda Thomason ’05 and Mike Williams ’04, M.S. ’07, never expected they would live next door to their future spouse.

Amanda met Mike when her sorority, Alpha Gamma Delta, paired up for an exchange with the fraternity next door, Alpha Gamma Rho.

They began dating and soon their social groups mixed. She was an English education major, while Mike studied public relations. He also completed a master’s in sports management.

“Since we were literally separated by a driveway, a lot of the girls from her house were always at our place. It was a big group of friends,” Mike said.

After graduating, the two were in a long distance relationship for nearly four years. While Mike finished his master’s degree, Amanda started her teaching career at Sandwich High School. Mike then worked at Indiana State University while Amanda taught at Herscher High School. They spent hours on the phone.

“More or less, we were apart for four years after almost a year of living literally two seconds from each other,” Mike said. “I think it was those conversations throughout those years of being apart that really made us realize there’s something here and it’s kind of special.”

Everything changed after Mike received a job offer from ISU Athletics.

“The first week I got back, I went and bought the ring,” said Mike, who is the associate Athletics communications director. Amanda continues to teach at Herscher. They reside in Pontiac.

“When we were planning our wedding, I knew ISU had to be a huge part of our wedding,” Amanda said. “Our engagement pictures were on the football field and on the Quad in ISU jerseys.”

The two married in June of 2010 at Normal’s Uptown Marriott in a ceremony that celebrated both their love and the University that shaped their past and future. They entered their reception with Reggie Redbird as the ISU fight song played.

“Without ISU, we probably never would’ve met,” Mike said. “We wouldn’t have the opportunity we have now.”

70s

Patricia Taylor Fuller ’71 retired from school counseling this past summer. She taught 6th grade in Creve Coeur and worked for Fulton County Gifted Cooperative before becoming a school counselor in 1991. She also worked in addictions for Illinois Institute for Addiction Recovery at Proctor Hospital and North Central Behavioral Health Systems. Fuller holds a master’s degree from Bradley University. She resides in Canton.

Timothy Johnson ’72 has retired as a judge in Bexar County government in Texas. He was the founding director of Bexar County’s Judicial Support Services. In that capacity he was deeply involved in the Bexar County Re-Entry Council. He served for the commissioner as a chief ambassador to various judicial courts and was responsible for a program to reduce the jail population. He resides in San Antonio, Texas.

Ronald Christensen ’73, M.S. ’78, retired as a senior engineering specialist. He is a graduate of the Dale Carnegie effective speaking and human relation course, as well as the Factory Mutual’s Large Loss Investigator’s Class. He is a professional member of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers. He resides in Streator.

Lenora Maxwell Fisher ’73 completed two master’s degrees at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville and has taught dance, physical education, and reading in Illinois public schools since 1973. She spent 25 years at South Roxana Elementary School, retiring this year. Fisher also coached two pom squads and was a judge with the Illinois Drill Team Association and Team Dance Illinois for 20 years. She now enjoys traveling internationally and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She resides in Moro.

Glen “Ed” Moulton ’73 completed a doctorate in 1982. He taught for seven years, was a graduate instructor at Purdue University for three years, and a high school building administrator for another two. He also served as supervisor of instruction for 24 years before retiring in 2009 from Calvert County Public Schools in Maryland. He served as president of Maryland Science Supervisors Association and chaired the Governor’s Commission on Hazardous Substances. Moulton started CHESPAX, an environmental experience for students, and teaches chemistry at Rogue Community College. He has authored several books, including The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Biology. He and his wife, Kimberly, have three adult children and live in Applegate, Oregon.

Lou Ann Hayford ’75 has retired from COUNTRY Insurance. She has authored her first novel, About Time Already, which captured an honorable mention in the 2010 Los Angeles Book Festival mystery category. She resides in Normal.

Alfreda (Feith) Keller ’75 has retired as a juvenile probation officer for the Cook County Circuit Court. She still fondly remembers her four years as an Illinois State cheerleader, and serving as the squad’s captain for two years. She has two adult children and resides in Park Forest.

Brian F. McCleish ’77 retired in 2010 after teaching career and technical education for 33 years. He was at Bloom Trail High School in Chicago Heights for 18 years, and with Lincoln-Way Central High School
in New Lenox for 15. He resides in Tinley Park.

Mike Profilet ’78 is a cashier and clerk at Kroger in Bloomington. He has worked at the store for 22 years. He resides in Normal.

Kurt Seelbach ’78 joined Armed Forces Insurance in 2008 and has been promoted to president and CEO. He and his wife, Brenda, reside in Edwardsville.

Margaret C. (Skandera) Adkins ’79, ’80, teaches fifth grade at Dubois Elementary School. She became a National Board Certified Teacher and Illinois Master Teacher during the 2010-2011 school year. Her husband, Richard ’79, is a data manager with the administrative office of the Illinois courts. They reside in Springfield.

Susan Hubble Burchell ’79 retired from the University of Southern Mississippi as associate dean of the College of Health. During her career at the university, she served as interim director of the School of HP&R. She and her husband, Charles, reside in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

80s

Marcia Riegel Jackson ’80 worked for 31 years as a school librarian in Illinois and Missouri before retiring this year. She and her husband, Claude “Sandy,” reside in Florissant, Missouri.

Dennis Norman ’80 completed his M.B.A. at Pepperdine University. He is a CPA with more than 23 years experience. He is chief financial officer with Keenan, Hopkins, Schmidt & Stowell Contractors, Inc. He oversees the banking and investment relationships for the company, which is in Tampa, Florida.

Susan O’Neal ’81 is a self-employed attorney. She was recently featured in the Lawyers Give Back section of the July ABA Journal, which is the magazine of the American Bar Association. She traveled to Honduras on a mission trip with Food for the Poor in April of 2011. She has begun a project to build a village of 25 homes in rural Honduras. She resides in Decatur.

Mindy J. Hopper ’82, M.S. ’85, completed a doctorate at the University of Rochester. Her teaching career in education began in Illinois and took her to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in New York. Her interest is in the non-traditional pedagogical approach that focuses on the benefits to students of incidental and informal learning. She is the recipient of the 2011 International Alumnae of Delta Epsilon Sorority Fellowship Award. She resides in West Henrietta, New York.

Maurice L. Allen ’83 completed a master’s degree in telecommunications at DePaul University. He is an account manager with AT&T global services. His wife, Jody (Remack), attended Illinois State. She has been promoted to channel manager with ACE Hardware Corporation. They reside in Lombard.

Frank Bush ’84, M.S. ’88, M.S. ’07, teaches art at Henry-Senanichwine High School in Henry. He was named the Illinois Art Education Association Early Art Educator for 2011. The honor recognizes educators who have been teaching five years or less. He resides in Bloomington.

Katy Antoine ’87 completed an M.B.A. at DePaul University. A credit analyst for BP Products North America, she is the recipient of the 2011 CBA Designation of Excellence Award from the National Association of Credit Management. She is a member of the the association’s Midwest board of directors, as well as many civic and professional organizations. She resides in Glen Ellyn.

Robert J. Paterkiewicz ’88 has completed an M.B.A. at Lake Forest Graduate School of Management. He is the executive director for Selected Independent Funeral Homes. He serves as the chief staff executive of this international trade association, representing independent funeral service since 2007. He and his wife, Cindy, reside in Downers Grove.

Charlie Simpson ’88 is a communications executive who has been named the corporate/financial managing director of Burson-Marstellar in Chicago. The company is a leading global public relations and communications firm. He will serve as a specialist in corporate reputation, issues and crisis management, and public affairs. He previously served as a senior vice president in the Chicago office of Porter Novelli. He resides in St. Charles.

Doug Metcalfe ’89 has more than 20 years of broadcasting, marketing, sales, and management experience. He has been named executive vice president of marketing for Atcore Systems. The company is a leader in business software solutions. He resides in Loganville, Georgia.

Kirk R. Salmela, D.A. ’89, has been named principal of Buchanan Middle School in Wray, Colorado. He is an avid skier and occasionally teaches evening history classes at the college level. He and his wife, Debbie, reside in Fort Collins, Colorado.

90s

Steven E. Potsic ’91 has joined the B&D Equity Property Tax Group as a vice president in the firm’s downtown Chicago office. He has more than 16 years of professional experience in national property tax consulting, valuation, compliance, and software development. He is a certified member of the Institute for Professionals in Taxation. He resides in Libertyville.

Roger Nalewajka ’92 is a project manager at State Farm Insurance Companies. He and his wife, Julia, were married in December of 2010. They reside in Bloomington.

John J. Desjarlais, M.A. ’95, teaches journalism and English at Kishwaukee College. He previously worked as a producer with Wisconsin Public Radio. A member of the Academy of American Poets and Mystery Writers of America, he is listed in Who’s Who in Entertainment and Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers. He is the author of two mystery novels. His first, Bleeder, was published in 2009. The sequel, Viper, was released earlier this year. He resides in Byron.

Kara Prusko ’95 is the principal of Dwight D. Eisenhower Junior High School in Wood River; Pat (Hutson) Keipper ’70, Surprise, Arizona; Pat (Anderson) Horn ’70, Littleton, Colorado; Marilyn (Murray) Werremeyer ’69, Valrico, Florida; and Rosie (Faber) Terry ’70, Buffalo Grove.

Pi Beta Cooperative reunion

Eleven ISU students came together in the spring of 1967 to create the Pi Beta Cooperative. Many in the group have stayed in contact since, connecting regularly for reunions. Their most recent event was held in the village of 25 homes in rural Hon-
Redbird legacy

When Estella Hensley ‘34, ’71, attended Illinois State in the 1930s, she never predicted a legacy in the making. She earned a teaching certificate with her mother’s persuasion and began her career in a Central Illinois country school.

For nearly 10 years she taught first through eighth grades, and did so much more.

“In the country schools, you were the janitor,” Estella said. “If you had hot lunch, you did the cooking. You did everything.”

Estella, now of Normal, returned to Illinois State to earn a bachelor’s in education. She continued teaching for 30 more years after having her only daughter, Karen (Billingsley) Schulz ’68, M.S. ’80.

Karen, who lives in Bloomington with her husband, Bill, followed in her mother’s footsteps. She received dual ISU education degrees and then taught in the same school district as her mother. Karen’s two daughters also attended Illinois State.

Teri (Billingsley) Spratt ’89 is an elementary school teacher. She married fellow graduate Ron Spratt ’87. They reside in Chanhassen, Minnesota. Becki (Billingsley) Wahls ’93, M.S. ’95, is a speech pathologist working in schools. She too chose an alum as a spouse, Richard Wahls ’89. They reside in Lewis Center, Ohio.

Family gatherings include reminiscing about ISU. The bond is especially tight for the women, who share a love of teaching. “It has been wonderful to share experiences from my teaching career with my mother and grandmother,” Teri said. “They have given good advice and have been very supportive.”

All the members of this extended Redbird family appreciate the huge role Illinois State has played in their lives. “A lot can be attributed back to the education” at ISU, Karen said, reflecting on fulfilling family careers spread across three generations.

High School within Schaumburg School District 54. She resides in Huntley.

Sara Roberts ’95 earned a juris doctorate from the Chicago Kent Law School and has been in practice for a decade. She is a senior associate in the family law firm of Matthew Kaplan & Associates. She was admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States in a ceremony held at the Supreme Court in June of this year. She resides in Mundelein.

Robert J. Wallace ’95, ’02, works for Rantoul City Schools. He is the principal of Eastlawn Primary and the bilingual director for Rantoul City Schools. His wife, Gwendolyn (Willoughby) ’02, is a math instructor at Parkland College. She is also the director of the American Diabetes Association summer camp at Allerton Park in Monticello, and the leader in home sales for ThirtyOne. The parents of three children, they reside in Monticello.

Lori M. Robeau ’97 is the assistant director of Connecticut Art Connection, an organization that produces exhibits around the state of Connecticut. She is also the executive director of the Vernon Community Arts Center in Vernon, Connecticut. An independent curator, she coproduced and curated this summer Nature Nourishes, a multimedia group exhibition of 22 national artists at ArtSpace Hartford. She resides in Vernon, Connecticut.

Traci D. Nixon ’98 completed a master’s of public administration from the Illinois Institute of Technology. She works with individuals who have autism in her job as a vocational coordinator with Easter Seals of Metropolitan Chicago. She is the mother of two daughters and resides in Griffith, Indiana.

Flo Falayi ’99 is an author who has released his first book, titled Get Off Your Duff. The inspirational book shares life stories and was released in 2010. He and his wife, Lande, are the parents of three children. They reside in Gurnee.

Benjamin P. Johnson ’99 is the academic technology coordinator for the global energy management program within the business school at the University of Colorado in Denver. He oversees a hybrid online/in-person master’s program for employees in the energy field. He previously spent 10 years working in academic technology at the University of Illinois in Urbana. He and his wife, Amy, reside in Denver, Colorado.

00s

Artishia Hunter ’00 completed a master’s degree in early childhood administration at National-Louis University. She has taught elementary and preschool students in Evanston and Bloomington, worked as a head start education consultant, and developed a nursery for a nonprofit organization. She has been chosen as an Illinois Early Childhood Fellow for 2011-2013 and will work with Positive Parenting DuPage during that time. She resides in Evanston.

Matthew P. Kellam ‘00 earned a juris doctorate at The John Marshall Law School, won the National Moot Court Championship, and passed the Illinois Bar all in 2010. He was on the dean’s list for three years and served as a judicial extern for the Honorable John W. Darrah in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois while at John Marshall. He is a labor and employment attorney at Laner, Muchin, Dombrow, Becker, Levin & Tominberg, Ltd., which represents management in labor and employment law. He and his wife, Alison, reside in La Grange.

Zachary A. Callen ’01, M.S. ’03, is an assistant professor of political science at Allegheny College. His dis-
sertation, The Seams of the State: Infrastructure and Intergovernmental Relations in American State Building, won the American Political Science Association’s William Anderson Award for Best Doctoral Dissertation in Federalism, Intergovernmental Relations, State, or Local Politics. His wife, Shawna Kelly Cook ’01, M.S. ’04, graduated from the University of Illinois in Chicago pharmacy school. She is a pharmacist with Vantage Healthcare. They reside in Palatine.

Brooke L. (Barnes) Highline ’01 is a marketing manager and loan officer assistant at Wintrust Mortgage. Her husband, Michael R. Highline ’99, is president/owner of MRB Communications, a low-voltage service for security systems, stereo, and home audio distribution. They are the parents of two sons. Logan David was born in June of 2011. They reside in Palatine.

Kathleen M. Hopper ’02, M.S. ’06, received her doctorate from the University of Missouri. She is an assistant professor in the School of Communication at Illinois State University. She resides in Bloomington.

Andrew B. Whitehead ’02 obtained an M.B.A. and his juris doctorate at Saint Louis University. He is licensed to practice law in Missouri, and has joined Armstrong Teasdale’s intellectual property practice group. As he is registered to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, his main focus is on the preparation and prosecution of U.S. and international patent applications in the mechanical and electrical arts. He resides in St. Louis, Missouri.

Nicole M. (Abate) Albanese ’03 is a wedding manager at Illinois Beach Resort in Zion. She and her husband, Matthew, were married in December of 2010. They reside in Round Lake.

Craig M. Lennon ’03 completed a doctorate in physics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is a physicist with the U.S. Army, working as the night vision and electronic sensors directorate. His responsibilities include the growth of CdTe and HgCdTe by molecular beam epitaxy. He resides in Alexandria, Virginia.

Robbie Q. Telfer ’03, M.A. ’06, is a slam poet who is co-founder and cocurator of The Encyclopedia Show, which is a live variety show featuring local and touring artists who speak on subjects taken randomly from the encyclopedia. He created the show in 2008. Since then it has become one of the most talked about reading series in Chicago, receiving an Orgie Theatre Award in 2010. Telfer was cited this summer in a Newcity Lit article, “Lit 50: Who Really Books in Chicago 2011.” He is also head organizer of the Louder Than a Bomb teen poetry festival and director of performances for Young Chicago Authors.

Anne E. Darr ’04 is a victim specialist with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. She received the Director’s Award from the United States Attorney’s Office for Best Performance by a Litigative Team in 2010 and was nominated for Federal Employee of the Year, State of Alaska, in 2009. She resides in Westminster, Colorado.

Alaina (Filkin) Pantoja ’04, M.B.A. ’06, is the assistant director of the executive M.B.A. programs at Duke University. Her husband, Joseph ’04, M.B.A. ’06, is a financial services professional with Treloar & Heisel. They reside in Durham, North Carolina.

Mike Yordy ’04 is the owner of Mike Yordy Excavating, Inc. He is a part owner of Mike Yordy and Sons, Inc., which is crop production farming. He and his wife, Holly, reside in Morton.

Michelle M. Daly ’05 completed a master’s degree at Concordia University in school leadership and a doctorate in education at Olivet Nazarene University.

Megan E. Prentice ’05, M.B.A. ’07, is an employment consultant at Illinois State University. She and her husband, Chad, are the parents of a daughter. Meredith Grace was born in May of 2011. They reside in Bloomington.

Jake Wager ’05 is a teacher in the public schools at Des Moines, Iowa. He and his wife, Stefanie, were married in March of 2011. They reside in Grimes, Iowa.

Rachel R. (Smith) Caracci ’06 is the coordinator of transfer and international initiatives in Admissions at Illinois State University. She works to recruit transfer and international students to the University. She and her husband, Joe ’06, were married in July of 2011. He is a network engineer at COUNTRY Financial. They reside in Bloomington.

Amanda C. (Hanson) Crumrine ’06 is the life enrichment coordinator at Bickford Senior Living. She and her husband, David, reside in Quincy.

Rachel (Eaton) Ehlers ’06 is a business educator with Ferguson-Floissant School District. She and her husband, Jared ’06, were married in September of 2011. He is employed at Fleet Feet. They reside in St. Peters, Missouri.

Lacey (Mattioda) Full ’06 is a case worker with Youth Service Bureau in Ottawa. Her husband, Tyler ’07, is a seed sales associate with Merident Grain. He also works at First State Insurance. They reside in Mendota.

Chloe Riley ’06 is completing a master’s degree in journalism at Columbia College in Chicago. The recipient of the Follett Scholarship Award from the college, she completed an internship this past summer at Kurtis Productions. She works at Café 28 and resides in Chicago.

Michael E. Stevens ’06 is a field claims representative with Farmers Insurance Group. His wife, Jodi L. (Gura) ’07, is a financial cost analyst with Provisur Technology. They are the parents of two children. Their daughter, Emilee Noel, was born in February of 2010. They reside in New Lenox.

Lucas L. Wenthe ’06 completed his juris doctorate at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. He is an intellectual property associate at Armstrong Teasdale LLP, where he focuses on patent law related to the mechanical and electrical arts. He works closely with inventors and marketing teams during all phases of new product design and development.

Troop support from overseas

U.S. Army Capt. Adam Bolliger ’08, an economics graduate, is a proud alumnus who shows his ISU spirit while on active duty in Kuwait. He is stationed at Camp Arifjan with fellow officer, Capt. Rebecca Scrimo. She helped Bolliger display an ISU flag on a Black Hawk UH-60.
development. He is active in his community and has been honored with a “30 Under 30” award from the St. Louis Business Journal.

Erin Goldenstein ’07 is a teacher working with Teach for America, an organization committed to providing educational opportunities for all students. Her husband, Jacob ’10, is a human resource assistant with the Veteran’s Affairs Hospital. They reside in Greenfield, Wisconsin.

Nick Mikula ’07 is a member of the Improv Comedy group Octavarius, which was named Best Sketch/Improv Troupe in the Chicago Reader’s “Best of Chicago 2011” poll. The group is comprised entirely of Illinois State graduates and was the runner-up for the award in 2010. Mikula also received the Best Local Actor award in the poll, which named Nothing Special Productions as the Best Off-Loop Theatre Company. It was founded by ISU students in 2005. Mikula resides in Palatine.

Ross Richards ’07 is a manager in the annual giving department of the University of Illinois Foundation. He resides in Champaign.

Julie Ross ’07 is the payroll manager with ELM Locating & Utility Services in Peoria.

Mary Yurgil ’07 completed an M.B.A. in marketing from Benedictine University. She is a business marketing specialist with Hyatt Hotels Corporation and is an active member of the American Marketing Association. She resides in Chicago.

Michael Dorsam ’08 is the school librarian and director of media services at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. He joined the school in 2009 as an English teacher. He resides in Bourbonnais.

Lance Golliday ’08 is employed with Brandt Professional Ag. He and his wife, Katie (Trainor) ’08, were married in November of 2010. She is a nanny. They reside in Normal.

Adam Price ’08 is a graphic designer with Compliance Signs, which made the Inc. 5000’s in 2010. He resides in Chadwick.

Matthew Blecha ’09 is an officer with the Illinois State University Police Department. He and his wife, Kelly (Seymour) ’09, were married in May of 2011. They reside in Bloomington.

Ryan Fitzpatrick ’09 is the XL crystal growth production manager with Rubicon Technology. The company grows monocrystalline sapphire in multiple sizes and orientations. He developed a highly efficient technique to deliver the highest quality substrates and windows for the appropriate market in the size of 83 kg and 200 kg boules. He resides in Des Plaines.

Kerianne Johnstin Guth ’09 completed a master’s of social work at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy & Practice. She and her husband, Chad ’08, were married in July of 2011. They reside in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Liz Reich ’09 is finishing her second year of AmeriCorps service in central Oregon, where she teaches sex education. When she is not busy helping the community, she freelances for a local paper and reviews restaurants and concerts. In July of 2011 she moved to the Marshall Islands through WorldTeach to serve as an English teacher on a remote atoll.

Kristen (Smith) Velázquez ’09 is a special education teacher at Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire. She and her husband, Tobin ’08, were married in May of 2010. They reside in Deerfield.

10s

Laura M. Darr ’00, M.S. ’02, is the deputy director of Educational & Developmental Intervention Services. He was named 2010 Air Force Audiologist of the Year. He and his wife, Christine “Jayne,” are stationed in Italy.

Our troops

Maj. Kwame Curtis, U.S. Air Force, ’00, M.S. ’02, is the deputy director of Educational & Developmental Intervention Services. He was named 2010 Air Force Audiologist of the Year. He and his wife, Christine “Jayne,” are stationed in Italy.

In memory

Alums support baseball standout

An Illinois State connection was made at a minor league baseball game this past summer. ISU baseball standout Ryan Court now plays for the Osprey in Montana, which is associated with the Arizona Diamondbacks. Court started 159 consecutive games while a Redbird from 2008 to 2011. He was named to the 2011 All-MVC First Team. Watching him play were Jim Koch ’64, who is an ISU honorary doctorate recipient, Distinguished Alumni Award winner, and president emeritus of Old Dominion University. He and his wife, Donna (Stickling) ’66, M.S. ’69, wore their ISU attire to get Court’s attention, which resulted in a photo of the three.

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Paul W. Anderson, Building Maintenance; 6/11
Timothy A. Bell, Food Services; 7/11
Betty J. Bond ’81, Milner Library; 7/11
George J. Brabb, Management and Quantitative Methods; 5/11
Ralph M. Dunbar, Facilities Management; 5/11
David M. Gibson, Food Services; 5/11
Richard E. Hulet, Student Affairs; 3/11

An Illinois State connection was made at a minor league baseball game this past summer. ISU baseball standout Ryan Court now plays for the Osprey in Montana, which is associated with the Arizona Diamondbacks. Court started 159 consecutive games while a Redbird from 2008 to 2011. He was named to the 2011 All-MVC First Team. Watching him play were Jim Koch ’64, who is an ISU honorary doctorate recipient, Distinguished Alumni Award winner, and president emeritus of Old Dominion University. He and his wife, Donna (Stickling) ’66, M.S. ’69, wore their ISU attire to get Court’s attention, which resulted in a photo of the three.

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Three easy ways to submit your information

1) Go online to www.Alumni.ilstu.edu/news and click on "class notes." Information submitted using this method will also be posted online.

2) Email your news to sjblyst@IllinoisState.edu.

3) Mail your news to Class Notes, Illinois State University, Alumni Relations, Campus Box 3100, Normal, IL 61790-3100. Please include your graduation year, major, maiden name when applicable, and daytime phone number for verification purposes. News releases and information from published news clippings may also be used. Engagements and pregnancies will not be published.

For additional information, contact Alumni Relations at (309) 438-2586 or (800) 366-4478, or by email at alumni@IllinoisState.edu.
Alumni Update  Update your information online at Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/myinfo

Name (including maiden)  Graduation year(s)

Major(s)  Degree(s)

Mailing address

City  State  Zip
(     )  (     )

Home phone  Cell phone  Email address

Professional title or position  Employer

City  State  Zip
(     )

Work phone  Work email address

Marital status  Spouse’s/partner’s name (including maiden if Illinois State graduate)

In addition to above, please list any career changes, awards, honors, marriages, births, or memorial information that you would like reported in Illinois State. Please report only events that have occurred. Announcements will appear as soon as possible.

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Signature (required)

Return to: Illinois State University, Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100, Normal, IL 61790-3100
Facsimile: (309) 438-2858  •  Email: alumni@IllinoisState.edu
Nicholas Christensen arrived as a freshman with more than 30 AP credits, technically making him a sophomore. Beyond his stellar academic record, he prepared for college with leadership experiences as an Eagle Scout, a National Honor Society member, and athlete. His resume now also includes selection as an ISU Alumni Association Legacy Scholarship recipient.

“I was very happy and very surprised to hear I had been awarded it,” Nicholas said. “I figured there were a lot more deserving people than me, so it was a big surprise.”

Nicholas’ parents were also pleased, but not as surprised because they know how hard their son worked through high school. His father, Scott Christensen, M.S. ’95, was an accounting student at Illinois State. It was his experience, combined with the encouragement of high school teachers and friends, that led Nicholas to choose Illinois State.

“ISU was the best deal out of all of the universities I visited. Teachers and upperclassmen also told me how great it was,” Nicholas said. “I was also impressed with the IT program. It seemed like the best one to me, and I visited six or seven different schools.”

Nicholas is majoring in computer science, and will take advantage of the University’s rich social opportunities. He’s already considering the IT and Physics Clubs, and hopes to get involved at the Newman Center near campus.

You can make a difference by providing financial support to students. Make a contribution online at IllinoisState.edu/giving, call (309) 438-8041, or send an email to jdhutch@IllinoisState.edu.
A-maze-ing Redbird

The Agriculture Department’s 100th anniversary year was uniquely celebrated at Homecoming with creation of a farmland maze at the Rader Family Farms in Normal. Sons Adam ’99 and Arin ’04 are both ag alumni. Cut within corn and bean fields, the maze included a farmer with a plow and “100 years of ag” spelled out. For more Homecoming highlights, go to IllinoisStateHomecoming.com.