

Illinois AAUP News

Glenn Poshard Named SIU President

SIU alum Glenn Poshard, a former state senator, member of Congress, and Democratic candidate for governor in 1998, was named president of the SIU system in November. Poshard was chair of the SIU Board of Trustees until he resigned this summer to pursue this job. SIU attracted controversy for paying a search firm \$90,000 to find candidates and refusing to release the names of the finalists. Poshard will be paid \$292,000 per year; he holds a doctorate in educational administration from SIU.

SIU Minority Graduate Fellowships Under Attack

The U.S. Department of Justice in November threatened to sue Southern Illinois University for three graduate fellowship programs aimed at helping underrepresented minorities, including one financed by the National Science Foundation. Two of the programs are limited to minority students, while the Graduate Dean's Fellowship is "for women and traditionally underrepresented students who have overcome social, cultural or economic conditions." According to the Justice Department, "The University has engaged in a pattern or practice of intentional discrimination against whites, non-preferred minorities and males." U.S. Senator Barack Obama, an expert on civil rights law, told the *Chicago Sun-Times*: "One of my concerns has been with all the problems the Bush administration is having, that they'll start resorting to what they consider to be wedge issues as a way of helping themselves politically."

Arbitrator Sides with City Colleges Administration

City Colleges of Chicago won a November ruling by an arbitrator supporting the firing of 55 adjunct emeritus professors who had honored a picket line of striking full-time professors in fall 2004. The arbitrator ruled that the retired professors did not have a valid complaint because they were not part of the bargaining unit, even though the new contract prohibits reprisals against anyone for strike. City Colleges chancellor Wayne Watson received a vote of no confidence from faculty because of the City Colleges' retaliation.

Judy Erwin New IBHE Head

Former state legislator Judy Erwin was named in October as Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). Erwin chaired the House Higher Education Committee during her legislative career, and also taught political science as a graduate assistant at UIC. Erwin said, "We live in a time when postsecondary education is increasingly an essential experience for the modern workplace."

Future State Pensions Reviewed

In a November 2005 report, the Advisory Commission on Pension Benefits refused to recommend any specific reductions in benefits for new state hires, rejecting the two-tier system of higher retirement ages and lower cost-of-living increases proposed by Gov. Rod Blagojevich to help resolve the state's underfunded pension system.

Campus Equity Week

Campus Equity Week was held nationally on October 30-November 5. Sponsored jointly by the AAUP, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association, Campus Equity Week raises awareness about the status of adjunct faculty at colleges. At Green River Community College in Washington, organizers held a bake sale with "full time" and "part time" cookies of identical quality, except that the part-time cookies cost half as much. At Triton College, Adrian Fisher reported, "Triton College Adjunct Faculty Association (IEA-NEA), River Grove, IL, ran its first CEW information table. We distributed CEW/FEW buttons, which were very popular. The top administration got some, too! We spent most of our time educating students, I hope to good effect. We are in the midst of negotiating our first contract, and CEW/FEW was a low-key way to get our message to the campus at large. Next year we plan to do more." Joe Berry, author of *Reclaiming the Ivory Tower*, spoke during Campus Equity Week at his home institution of Roosevelt University along with a speech at St. Xavier University sponsored by the AAUP chapter there.

Illinois Academe Wins Again

At the AAUP Annual Meeting, the Illinois AAUP newspaper won its second straight award for the best tabloid conference newspaper in the country.

Shimer to Chicago?

Shimer College in Waukegan is currently in talks with the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) to lease space in Chicago and move most of its operations there. IIT made the offer in order to strengthen the liberal arts on campus and allow its students to take Shimer's Great Books courses.