

**DIVERSIFYING HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY IN ILLINOIS  
PROGRAM BOARD APPOINTMENT**

**Submitted for:** Action.

**Summary:** This item recommends an appointment to the Diversifying Higher Education Faculty (DFI) in Illinois Program Board to fill a current vacancy.

In accordance with program statutes, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has responsibility to appoint the members of the DFI Program Board. The Program Board is responsible for administering the program and developing policies and strategies to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff at Illinois institutions of higher education.

**Action Requested:** That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the appointment to the DFI Program Board as presented in this item.



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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PROGRAM BOARD APPOINTMENT**

On August 4, 2004, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed Public Act 93-0862 into law thereby creating the Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program (DFI). The purpose of the DFI Program is to encourage “minority students to enroll and complete academic programs at the post-baccalaureate level (masters/doctorate) and to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff of Illinois institutions of higher education.” The DFI Program provides financial assistance, based on demonstrated financial need, to students from traditionally underrepresented groups to pursue and complete graduate degrees at Illinois institutions of higher education.

This item proposes an appointment to fill a current board member vacancy on the Program Board.

**Program Board Composition**

The DFI Act calls for the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to appoint the members of the DFI Program Board. The Act specifies that the Program Board membership must include individuals in “*leadership positions in institutions of higher education, including community colleges*”, and individuals that represent “*Illinois institutions that grant doctoral degrees*.” The IBHE also is required to assure that the Program Board includes “*racial minorities who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education programs and activities*.”

The DFI Program Board is responsible to administer the program and develop policies and strategies to enhance the diversity of faculty and staff at Illinois institutions of higher education.

**Program Board Member Appointment**

There currently is one vacancy on the DFI Program Board. The IBHE proposes the appointment of Ms. Leslie J. Drish as a new member to fill that vacancy. Ms. Drish serves as the Director of Education with the Chicago Urban League, Chicago Illinois. During her career, Ms. Drish has demonstrated significant leadership in education in the public and private sectors. Ms. Drish will serve the remainder of the current two-year term, which expires December 31, 2008.

**Recommendation**

The following resolution is proposed for adoption:

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby approves the appointment of Ms. Leslie J. Drish to the DFI Program Board.*

