

## IBHE Board & Staff News



**Trish Fenton**, Support Staff for the Grants Administration division of IBHE's Fiscal Affairs & Budgeting department, is retiring this month. Retirement is always noteworthy, but in this case Trish is changing life chapters after more than 37 years of service to Illinois' higher education agency. Her longevity and loyalty as a public servant are not only commendable but also inspiring as she tells her story about her career. On Wednesday afternoon of this week, the *IBHE Bulletin* conducted this interview with Trish:

**Can you remember your first day of work at IBHE?** It was September 9, 1980 (a Tuesday). I do remember the office was in the Reisch Building (our offices were on several floors – the copy center was in the basement, the budget office and the Computer Room were on 3rd floor, and the

other departments were divided between 5th and 6th floor. I started in Academic Affairs on 6th floor and our office was all the way at the end of the hall. If something had to be Xeroxed or mailed, we had to go down to the fifth floor. We did a lot of walking up and down the stairs between floors during the day. I like our current office that is all on one floor.

I do remember that the day I started, Jim Furman had just retired as Executive Director and Dick Wagner, now the Executive Director, was moving from the office at the end of the hall on 5th Floor to the Executive Director's office at the front.

**Who were all of the executive directors you worked for?** Dick Wagner, Keith Sanders, Dan LaVista, Tom Lamont, Judy Erwin, Don Sevener, George Reid, Harry Berman, Jim Applegate, and now, Al Bowman.

**Did any of them leave an impression with you that assisted you in being a better IBHE employee?** They all were unique in their own way. They all taught me that you need to do the best you can and always serve the public with a smile and that will have its own rewards.

**Can you name all of the governors during your tenure?** Jim Thompson, Jim Edgar, George Ryan, Rod Blagojevich, Pat Quinn, and Bruce Rauner.

**Having served nearly a four decade span, what would you say has been the biggest change during your professional life?** The technology and how it has improved year after year. I definitely like the technology today. It's so much improved over what we first had. The biggest improvement is that you can export and import from one software package to another. In the early days nothing was interchangeable.

**Tell us what kind of equipment you first used.** When I started, we were typing on Correcting Selectric II typewriters (there was a lot of cutting and pasting in those days). Then I worked with a Mag Card, and we finally got computers in 1994. I remember we started with Wang, a daisy-wheel printer, and had Lotus and Paradox. We finally graduated to Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and the different software that seems to be developed every day. And we still had rotary phones. I believe we were the last State agency to get push button phones. For copying I remember that if you wanted to duplex a document, you had to copy the first page and then take the paper and turn it over and

put it back in the paper tray to copy next page. We had a postage meter for mailings. Now we have no meter. Material that has to be mailed is sent to CMS and they take care of the mailing. Of course now most correspondence is through e-mail and scanned pdfs.

**Is there something about your work at the IBHE that has motivated you all these years?** I've always enjoyed what I do, my co-workers, and all the outside individuals that I deal with on a day-to-day basis. I've always enjoyed learning new things. I think that is the one thing I will really miss the most – the interaction with outside contact persons, directors, and especially students. It always made me feel really good to know that I was able to help them with a problem they were having.

**Can you give a summary of your major assignments over the years? Which one was the best...why?** It's really hard to do that. I've felt all assignments that I've had have been important. The most challenging is probably the ones that involve researching documents from years ago. Sometimes you could not find old records or anyone that remembered what you needed. You would just find all you could and do your best. If I had to pick my favorite grant program to work on it would be the DFI programs (Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois). I really liked working with the DFI Fellows and observing how this grant program provided important support to them.

**Did you have any assignments that were a real challenge....why?** I do recall that in 1985 when I was still working in Academic Affairs, IBHE was going to be introducing a new grant program – “Build Illinois.” The director taking on the responsibility for another grant program wanted a full-time secretary. They called me in and told me they had decided to move me to the Grants Department. I remember thinking, ‘I really don't want to move, I like where I'm at.’ But I decided it might be a good thing and agreed with a smile. I have always felt that was one of the wisest decisions made, because I enjoyed and still enjoy working with grants.

**What advice would you give to a young person just starting out in Illinois state government?** Start the job with a positive attitude. Try to get along with everyone. If you do have a personal conflict, try to work things out. It is important that everyone work together and look toward the end result. Treat everyone with the same respect that you would like to have them treat you with. Don't engage in “water cooler conversation,” it doesn't serve any good purpose. Keep a positive attitude. Embrace new jobs, processes, and technology. Just because something has been done a certain way in the past, doesn't mean there isn't a newer, better, and faster way.

**Tell us more about you and your family.** I grew up in Divernon, which is south of Springfield. It's a small town (population is currently about 1,100). I am currently a member of the Divernon Lion's Club. I graduated from Divernon High School. I have two children. My daughter, Heather, is married and has a 2-year old daughter, Emely. She is a stay-at-home mom. Her husband is a Sergeant with the UIS police. My son, Jonathan, is a sales associate with Circle K and has a 21-month old daughter, Piper. He is planning on taking some classes next semester, probably something to do with automotive technology, since he comes from an “automotive” family. My father and brother own Herman's Garage in Divernon.

**What plans do you have for the next chapter of your life?** Right now I have many projects that need done around the house. I plan on spending more time with my grandchildren. I will be able to help my daughter and her family when they move to Texas and will be visiting them. I know my father would like to visit family in Tennessee and Florida more and I'll be able to go with him more.

*Editor's note:* A few comments from IBHE staff corroborate Trish's valuable role at the agency: “She is thoroughly dedicated to helping people. She is kind, patient, resourceful, thoughtful, and follows-up with every request and question. Trish represents the best of customer service for all things related to grants and more.” “Her deep well of knowledge about IBHE is going to be sorely missed, but she's certainly earned her retirement.” And most simply stated, “Trish is one of the best workers for IBHE!”

Trish will be honored at an Open House at Noon, December 15 at IBHE, 1. N. Old State Capitol Plaza in Springfield. Best wishes can be emailed to her at [fenton@ibhe.org](mailto:fenton@ibhe.org). Her final day at IBHE is December 21.

The [Illinois Student Assistance Commission](#) (ISAC) has announced the names of more than 20,000 2018-19 Illinois State Scholars. These outstanding honorees represent some of Illinois' best and brightest, and join the other top Illinois high school students honored with the prestigious designation since it was introduced in 1958.

The 2018-19 **Illinois State Scholars** rank in approximately the top ten percent of high school seniors from 737 high schools across the state. Honorees are chosen based on a combination of exemplary ACT or SAT test scores and sixth semester class rank. While the State Scholar recognition does not include a monetary award, honorees will receive a congratulatory letter from ISAC and personalized Certificates of Achievement. This year, State Scholars can also receive a digital Illinois State Scholar badge, which can be displayed on their online profiles and social media accounts, and shared with high school counselors, prospective colleges, employers, family members and others. [Current State Scholars](#) are also listed on the ISAC website.

"On behalf of ISAC, I congratulate all of this year's State Scholars for their exceptional work and wish them much success in their future endeavors," said **Eric Zarnikow**, ISAC executive director. "Thank you also to the teachers, parents, coaches and other mentors who support our students, inspire them, and help them navigate a path to college. You make a tremendous difference not only in our students' lives, but in improving economic prosperity and building a bright future for our state."

## Reducing Gaps for Underserved Students

The **Underrepresented Groups in Academia Task Force**, called for in [House Joint Resolution 2](#), sponsored by **Rep. Andre Thapedi** (D-32) and **Sen. Napoleon Harris, III** (D-15), has been convened and held an organizational meeting on November 30. The Task Force members are:

- **State Representative Andre Thapedi**, 32nd District
- **State Representative Norine Hammond**, 93rd District
- **Dr. James Applegate**, Visiting Professor in the College of Education's Center for the Study of Educational Policy, Illinois State University
- **Dr. Linda Renee Baker**, Professor, Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University
- **Ms. Khadine Bennett**, ACLU Director of Advocacy and External Affairs
- **Mr. Andrew Broy**, President, Illinois Network of Charter Schools
- **Ms. Claudia Castro**, Hispanic Lawyers' Association of Illinois
- **Ms. Veronica Cortez**, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
- **Dr. Mona Davenport**, Director of Minority Affairs, Eastern Illinois University
- **Mr. Will Davis**, Vice President for Development, Governors State University
- **Ms. Cathy Early**, Board of Trustees Chairwoman, Western Illinois University
- **Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden**, Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer, Northern Illinois University
- **Dr. Valerie Goss**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Engineering Studies, Chicago State University
- **Dr. Satasha Green**, Interim Associate Provost, Chicago State University
- **Dr. Robert Jones**, UIUC Chancellor and University of Illinois System Vice President
- **Dr. Daniel Lopez**, Vice President for Student Affairs, Northeastern Illinois University
- **Ms. Candace Moore**, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
- **Dr. Sulyema Perez**, Director of Governmental Relations, Northeastern Illinois University
- **Mr. Scott Savage**, Principal at Bloom High School, Chicago Heights

The Task Force plans to determine ways to better assist African-American and Latino populations, in particular, in achieving access, academic success, and completion of postsecondary educational pursuits. Four Task Force meetings are planned for 2018, with a final report due to the Governor and General Assembly by the end of that year. The **Illinois Board of Higher Education** is designated by the Resolution to provide administrative support.

## People in the News

[Thomas Dowling](#), a senior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign pursuing a double major in political science and history, has been named a Rhodes Scholar. Dowling, of Chicago, is one of 32 students from the United States [selected as Rhodes Scholars](#) for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. The first Rhodes Scholar on the Urbana campus since 1998, Dowling is poised to become the first in his family to graduate from college. He is a James Scholar honors student with a 4.0 GPA. Dowling is interning at the Institute of Government and Public Affairs investigating the state of Illinois pension system's structural deficits.

At Oxford, Dowling plans to pursue a master's of public policy. He previously was named a Truman Scholar for his dedication to public service, academic excellence and leadership. Long-term, Dowling aspires to represent residents of his home district on the South Side of Chicago, and to get them and others more involved in the political process.



**Bing Liu**, a graduate of **Rock Valley College's** Mass Communication program, just received word that his documentary feature film, ***Minding the Gap***, has been selected for the **Sundance Film Festival**. The film is one of only 16 selected for competition of the grand jury prize.

In *Minding the Gap*, three young men bond together to escape volatile families in their Rust Belt hometown. As they face adult responsibilities, unexpected revelations threaten their decade-long friendship.

The Sundance Film Festival, which will take place January 18-28, 2018, in Park City, Utah, is the largest independent film festival in the United States.

[Andreas Cangellaris](#), the dean of the College of Engineering at the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#), has been selected to be the campus's next vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, pending approval by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. Cangellaris is slated to start in his new role Jan. 16.

"Dean Cangellaris has earned an international reputation for excellence as an academic leader, a teacher and a researcher," **Chancellor Robert Jones** said. "His career here at Illinois has provided him with the vast institutional knowledge and with the deep personal connections with faculty members, staff and students. This is a combination that no one else in our pool of candidates could match, and is what made him such a clear and outstanding choice to be our next vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost. I'm excited to start working with him in this new role."

Cangellaris has served in his current role since 2013. The College of Engineering instructs more than 7,500 undergraduate and about 3,000 graduate students, and the dean administers an annual budget of \$265 million. During his tenure as dean, the number of women and traditionally underrepresented undergraduate students increased by more than 55 percent. Cangellaris earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in electrical engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as an electrical engineering degree at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece.



## Other News

Applications are now open for the Fiscal Year 2018 **Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative** (GYO). The goal of GYO is to recruit and prepare parent and community leaders and paraeducators statewide to become effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools serving low-income students. [Click here](#) for the application package.

## Upcoming Events

26th Professional and Student Development Conference  
**Latino Resistance in Higher Education: A Legacy of Struggle**  
Friday, April 20, 2018 | Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
[Registration Now Open](#)

**Joseph Bamgart**  
Northern Illinois University



**By Thy Rivers Gently Flowing**

**John Guest, Jr.**  
Heartland Community College



**Untitled**

Participants in the 2017 IBHE Student Art Exhibit are welcome to pick up their artwork at the IBHE office. The office is located at 1 North Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 333, Springfield, IL. Our hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Please notify [Cindy Deitsch](#) when you plan to retrieve your art.

## IBHE Student Art Exhibition

**Adrian Castaneda**  
Northern Illinois University



**Summertime**

**Michaela Gomez**  
Danville Area Community College



**Pablo**

# IBHE Student Art Exhibition

**Kassi Apel, Northern Illinois University**



**The Angry Painting**

**Thomas Hatala, College of DuPage**



**Mountain Valley Fall**

**Veronica Clements,  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**



**Going Nowhere**



**Rock**

**Becky Daly, Joliet Junior College**



**Moonlit Dance**

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## In Case You Missed It

**Inside Higher Ed**: Handing off DeVry, December 6, 2017.

**Inside Higher Ed**: Moody's downgrades higher education's outlook, December 6, 2017.

**WGLT 89.1/NPR**: Bowman: 'Difficult conversations' coming for Illinois higher education, November 21, 2017.



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