Approved by the Board of Trustees

June 9, 2025

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Board Meeting

June 9, 2025

APPOINT CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN, AND VICE PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

**Action:** Appoint Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois System

**Funding:** State Appropriated Funds

Following a six-month national search, the president of the University of Illinois System recommends the appointment of Dr. Charles Lee Isbell Jr., presently provost and vice chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Madison, as chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System. This is an academic professional administrative appointment, non-tenured, on a twelve-month service basis, on 100 percent time, at an academic professional appointment annual salary of $382,000, and an academic professional administrative increment of $518,000, for a total annual salary of $900,000, beginning on August 1, 2025. Dr. Isbell will serve as chancellor designate, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president designate, University of Illinois System, under the same conditions and salary arrangements from July 16, 2025, through July 31, 2025. Dr. Isbell’s appointment as an administrative officer is subject to terms contained in the University of Illinois *Statutes*, the State of Illinois *Government Severance Pay Act* (5 ILCS 415/), and other applicable regulations or policy, including provisions relating to notice of termination.

Dr. Isbell will succeed Dr. Robert J. Jones, who has served as chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, since September 26, 2016, and will vacate the position on July 31, 2025.

Dr. Isbell will also be recommended for appointment at the rank of professor, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science, The Grainger College of Engineering, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, on indefinite tenure, on zero percent time, non-salaried, beginning July 16, 2025, which shall be considered pursuant to the college’s established processes for appointment and review for tenure.

The principal components of Dr. Isbell’s appointment include the following:

* As chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, Dr. Isbell is appointed by the Board on the recommendation of the president of the University of Illinois System and serves at the direction of the president.
* Dr. Isbell’s appointment as chancellor/vice president designate will commence on July 16, 2025.
* Dr. Isbell’s title will convert to chancellor/vice president on August 1, 2025.
* Dr. Isbell’s total annual salary of $900,000 is subject to periodic adjustments consistent with and in accordance with the annual merit-based salary program, if any, and will not exceed the authorized percentage applicable to University of Illinois System level administrators. Dr. Isbell will also receive the University’s standard benefit package in accordance with University policies and practices.
* Dr. Isbell will be eligible to receive deferred compensation of $400,000 if he remains employed as chancellor/vice president through July 15, 2030.
* Dr. Isbell will be provided up to $100,000 to support the transition of his research program, and $100,000 per year for five years for research purposes.
* Dr. Isbell will be reimbursed for moving and other relocation expenses up to $25,000.
* Dr. Isbell will be provided with access to a designated property for housing as a full-time residence and an annual housing allowance of $60,000 for use and maintenance thereof.
* The University of Illinois Foundation will provide funds for a club membership or other similar activity for Dr. Isbell to promote the interests of the University.

The Committee to Advise the President on the Selection of the Next Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and vice president of the University of Illinois System[[1]](#footnote-1) is thanked for their time and efforts in this search.

  The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The president of the University of Illinois System seeks approval.

(A biographical sketch follows).

CHARLES LEE ISBELL JR.

Education

Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, BS, 1990

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, SM, 1993

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, PhD, 1998

Professional and Other Experience

Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, College of Computing, 1998-2002, research scientist; 2002, visiting scholar; 2002-08, assistant professor; 2008-12, associate professor; 2008-12, associate dean; 2012-23, professor; 2012-17, senior associate dean; 2017-19, executive associate dean; 2019-23, John P. Imlay Jr. Dean

University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2023-date, provost and vice chancellor, and professor

1. Jennifer Bernhard, *chair,* The Grainger College of Engineering; Kathy Adams, Illinois Human Resources; Rummana Alam, College of Law; Alex Belanger, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences undergraduate student; Nerissa Brown, Gies College of Business; Antoinette Burton, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Felecia Commodore, College of Education; Charlotte Davidson, Native American House; McKenzy Heavlin, The Grainger College of Engineering graduate student; Megan Mahoney, School of Social Work graduate student; Kristin McMurray, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Operations; Chrystalla Mouza, College of Education; Cynthia Oliver, College of Fine and Applied Arts; Gilberto Rosas, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Taher Saif, The Grainger College of Engineering; Jami M. Painter, *staff,* senior associate vice president and chief human resources officer, University of Illinois System [↑](#footnote-ref-1)