

FY24 Accomplishments Report

President Timothy L. Killeen

Strengthening our System, Brightening the Future of Illinois

Highlights

The University of Illinois System is a catalyst for change, driving innovation and shaping the future. The system continues to be a powerful driver of well-being, social mobility, creativity, and inclusivity for the state. Through innovation and enduring strategic partnerships with governments, businesses, and community and civic organizations, we are providing excellence at scale and leading efforts to reinvigorate the region's economy. With our three best-in-class universities and our off-campus initiatives such as the Discovery Partners Institute (DPI) and the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN), the U of I System is a powerful engine for positive change close to home and around the globe. In FY24 we continued our strong trajectory of elevating the quality of our teaching, research, public service, healthcare, and economic development efforts. The system's impact on the citizens of Illinois continues to grow, as do our key global roles in sustainability, innovation, and growth. We are thriving as an enterprise of excellence and collaboration, earning a reputation that continues to flourish.

We are making a difference. Eighty-two percent of Illinoisians believe we are making a positive impact on the state, up from 75% in 2023 and 65% in 2019. From workforce development to healthcare, broadband access to student diversity, we're driving real change that bolsters the state's social, cultural, and economic viability.

We're breaking barriers and opening doors. The U of I System is achieving unprecedented milestones, making higher education more accessible than ever. In fall 2023, our three universities welcomed a record 13,231 first-year freshmen. We continued to make headway on our access goals. Continuing a 10-year positive trajectory, our total student body included a record 25,350 underrepresented students, a 58% increase during that time frame. The system also tallied a record 17,046 first-generation students enrolled in our universities, a 38% increase in the last decade. In spring 2024, our universities awarded 27,041 degrees for an overall graduation rate of 76%, well above the national average of 64%. About 70% of graduates from system universities stay in Illinois to live, work, and contribute to the economy. Nearly 80% of our undergraduate students are Illinois residents, solidifying how essential it is for us to continue to retain Illinois talent.

We've also prioritized affordability by approving only moderate tuition increases for in-state freshman for the 2023-24 school year at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and University of Illinois Chicago (UIC); tuition at University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) did not increase. We've frozen resident base undergraduate tuition seven of the past 10 years, ensuring sub-inflationary tuition increases.

Financial aid of more than \$1.9B assisted students at U of I System universities in 2023-24, the latest year for which numbers are available. A total of 198,764 awards were made to students in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. "Gift" aid — including scholarships, grants, fellowships and tuition, and fee

waivers — accounted for 56.6% of the total. Employment and loans covered 43.4%. Students earned more than \$310M from university-related jobs in 2023-24.

Ensuring many students graduate with minimal or no debt, we help them to march more quickly toward the prosperity they seek.

We are a destination for brilliance and impact. The U of I System is a global leader in innovation, home to the world-class faculty whose scholarship results in groundbreaking research, solving real-world problems, transforming industries, and shaping the future.

The U of I System saw an overall 8% increase in sponsored programs expenditures, from \$1.199B in FY23 to \$1.293B in FY24. At the universities:

- UIUC experienced a 10% growth from \$688.6M in FY23 to \$754.9M in FY24.
- UIC experienced a 6% growth from \$490.5M in FY23 to \$519.2M in FY24.
- UIS and University System Offices saw 8% decreases from \$12.6M in FY23 to \$11.6M in FY24 and from \$7.8M in FY23 to \$7.2M in FY24, respectively.

While UIUC has long been one of the nation's leaders in NSF funding, it saw significant growth in Health & Human Services, Department of Education, and Department of Defense expenditures, building on strategic investments to diversify its portfolio. UIUC is continuing to build its world-class biotech and biomanufacturing ecosystem, while also tallying wins in start-up successes, new federal ARPA-H funding, carbon capture, national AI research infrastructure, and more.

Plus, 16 UIUC researchers are among the inaugural, 48-person cohort of the Chan Zuckerberg Biohub Chicago, announced in mid-July 2023. The \$250M biohub — a strong, tri-lateral partnership with University of Chicago and Northwestern University — focuses on measuring human biology.

Research at UIC is reshaping educational policy, developing cleaner and more sustainable energy, helping to make sense of today's vast amounts of computer-generated data, and driving economic development by moving research to practical application. UIC manages 343 active licenses and has major therapeutics on the market today, including a vaccine to prevent the shingles virus, a bladder cancer drug, and a nonhormonal female contraceptive. Revenue from intellectual property generated \$24.5M in FY24. UIC reinvests these funds to support research programs and infrastructure.

UIS excels in impactful research that balances scholarly brilliance with tangible societal benefits. Focused on innovation in public policy, environmental studies, and data analytics, UIS addresses pressing societal challenges. For instance, its Center for State Policy and Leadership is a hub for policy research, generating over 40 reports annually that influence informed decision-making at state and national levels. UIS has demonstrated significant impact through its research efforts, with faculty contributing over 400 peer-reviewed publications and securing more than \$7M in research funding since 2019. Despite its smaller size, UIS consistently translates academic brilliance into real-world applications, driving meaningful societal change.

We are strong financial stewards. The system is grateful for the support of Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly and is committed to being responsible stewards of that support. We successfully lobbied for the system's state appropriation increase of 1.8% for FY24. Federally, we were also successful in securing FY24 plus-ups/funding increases totaling more than \$28M across the system.

This funding is a tangible demonstration of the support and trust we have earned from our congressional delegation.

Our fiscal prudence and performance were recognized by Moody's and S&P in affirming the system's bond ratings at Aa2 and AA-, respectively, with S&P raising the credit outlook from stable to positive. The system also saved over \$18M on outstanding bonds.

We're closing gaps in healthcare. From training the healthcare providers of the future to bolstering accessibility in both urban and rural areas, we're working to ensure everyone can receive quality healthcare and adding services for communities in need. From healthy food and safe water to the latest medical treatments and breakthroughs, we're helping improve the lives of those we serve. Through pioneering research and community engagement, we're setting the standard for equity and excellence.

We have seen remarkable growth in philanthropic support, which will propel us forward and ensure our continued success. The University of Illinois Foundation (UIF) in its FY24 treasurer's report indicates a new business figure of \$461M and a cash figure of \$453.5M, marking the first time in history that both new business and cash exceeded \$450M in a single fiscal year. Alumni and friends were the largest group of donors, followed by corporations and foundations. Nearly 50,000 donors made more than 158,000 gifts in support of the U of I System and its three universities. UIF's active endowment grew to \$2.99B and boasted a 10.7% return on investments, topping the previous year's 9% return and ranking UIF's return among the best in its peer group of endowments valued at more than \$1B.

In addition to their generous financial contributions, our alumni also contribute their time and talents to support the system. We have made significant efforts to engage with our vast network of over 849,000 alumni around the world, resulting in their participation in 200 advancement and advocacy events in Illinois, nationally, and internationally, including in Europe, Asia, and South America. This marks a 17% increase from the previous fiscal year and a remarkable 137% increase from two years ago. Current students, as well as faculty and staff, benefit from the business, government, education, and community connections our alumni have through internships, jobs, and so much more.

Over 33,000 people strong, our Illinois Connection network is a powerful force for the U of I System. Our members are actively engaged in advocating for our priorities at the local, state, and federal levels, participating in district legislative events, state lobby day, and responding to calls-to-action on issues like the Federal Pell Grant and the state budget. Thanks to Illinois Connection advocacy, the Board of Trustees approved a final operating budget for FY24 that provided a nearly 2% increase over the final FY23 operating budget. To support our continued excellence and service to the state, we work with our 63 system caucus members in the General Assembly, which includes legislators who are graduates of the system's universities and legislators who are parents of alumni and future alumni. The caucus helps advise system leaders on issues that affect the system and represents the system's interest in the legislature and throughout the state.

As the state's largest system of higher education, our mission goes beyond those who attend our universities to serving the broader public good. In addition to the myriad ways this happens across our universities, we have continued to advance our economic and workforce development contributions. At DPI, the Chicago hub of the Illinois Innovation Network, the Pritzker Tech Talent Labs (PTTL) aim to foster diverse tech talent across a learner's journey, including K-12 computer science teachers. In FY24, PTTL added 1,400 participants to its total reach of more than 2,500, 70% of whom self-identified as

Black, Latino/a, or multiracial, and 39% of whom self-identified as female or nonbinary. DPI also received a \$5M award from NSF to establish the Global Center for Clean Energy and Equitable Transportation Solutions (CLEETS), which, with national and international partners, aims to accelerate alternatives for equitable transportation powered by clean energy.

Partnerships like these benefit the state of Illinois, leverage our global brand, provide opportunities for students and faculty, and secure the system's position as a leader and essential convenor. To ensure we continue to grow and evolve, we grew our international partnerships in countries including Brazil, Israel, Taiwan, Singapore, and the United Kingdom, where I joined Governor Pritzker's delegation on a trade mission.

We're a thriving enterprise, laser focused on making a real difference and deeply committed to real-world impact. Our research is changing lives, our innovations are shaping industries, and our graduates are leading the way. I'm proud of the work we're doing across our state and globe to realize this vision.

Together, we're making strides toward a brighter future.

Key Indicators of Health and Momentum

Pillar 1: An Institution of and for Our Students

While many other colleges and universities are facing enrollment challenges, our commitment to academic excellence has never wavered, reaping essential benefits like stronger futures for individuals, families, and communities. In fact, in fall 2023 our three universities welcomed a record number of first-year freshmen (13,231), and our systemwide undergraduate enrollment reached an all-time high (60,013).

Retention and graduation rates also remained strong. And the system's universities again ranked high among public institutions and universities nationwide in the 2023-24 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings.

In a FY24 affordability win, UIS launched Prairie Promise, a new four-year financial aid program for Illinois residents that covers the cost of tuition and fees for first-time, first-year undergraduate students enrolled full time in on-campus degree programs.

To better serve our students, we continued our Distinguished Faculty Recruitment Program, adding four faculty members in FY24, as well as the Underrepresented Faculty Recruitment Program. For the latter, UIS is exploring requests, while UIC and UIUC hired 22 and 20 faculty members, respectively. Both students and the research enterprise benefit from high-quality faculty.

Recognizing the impact our alumni make shows today's students what their tomorrows can look like. For example, UIUC is ranked 10th in PitchBook's recent global rankings of universities, based on the number of venture capital-backed companies started by our graduates. Undergraduate alumni have launched an astounding 680-plus companies and raised more than \$24B in capital in the last decade. UIUC is #25 in graduate rankings, with founders creating 488 companies and raising nearly \$16B in capital.

Pillar 2: Research and Scholarship with Global Impact

The system is a fountainhead of cutting-edge research in Illinois and worldwide. R&D expenditures across the system increased from \$1.21B in FY22 to \$1.32B in FY23; FY24 data will be available in February 2025.

FY24 brought the news that the U of I System will be the host institution and co-organizer of the 2025 Sustainability Research and Innovation Congress, the first that will take place in the United States. The fifth gathering of the world's largest annual congress focused on action-forward, knowledge-based, and inclusive approaches to sustainability will take place in Chicago in June 2025 and draw even more attention to the system's research teams and innovative solutions.

Also on a global scale, DPI received a \$5M NSF award to establish the Global Center for Clean Energy and Equitable Transportation Solutions (CLEETS). This award was given simultaneously to the University of Birmingham in the UK via a partnership between NSF and the UK Research and Innovation Engineering and Physical Sciences Council. CLEETS aims to accelerate alternatives for equitable transportation powered by clean energy. We also are well represented in \$120M in NSF funding for four new Science and Technology Centers. The Center for Quantitative Cell Biology will be led by researchers from UIUC, Harvard Medical School, and the J. Craig Venter Institute. The Center for Complex Particle Systems will be led by researchers from UIUC, six other universities, and Formative Evaluation Research Assistants.

When it comes to transportation innovation close to home, UIUC has been a national leader in railroad transportation engineering research and education for more than 140 years. In June, the university formally launched the National University Rail Center of Excellence, the first academic rail research and education center of excellence to be supported by the Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration. The \$15M center will advance research solutions to enhance the safety, efficiency, reliability, and sustainability of both passenger and freight rail transportation.

Building on a strong legacy of partnership, UIC is collaborating with a federally funded energy research center combining the R&D firepower of five Department of Energy national laboratories, five universities, and four private firms in a quest to achieve revolutionary advances in battery performance. UIC's engagement with the Chicago metropolitan area is embodied in the Great Cities Commitment, an umbrella name for the hundreds of teaching, research, and service programs that connect the campus with the community. Industry partnerships, internships, business and entrepreneurial development, infrastructure improvement, and neighborhood revitalization are examples of how the campus' partnership with Chicago benefits urban neighbors as well as faculty and students.

We have increased our efforts to build productive new international partnerships for the benefit of the system and the state. In Brazil, we launched the Brasillinois initiative to grow collaborations around themes such as climate and sustainability, science, medicine, public health, and social inclusion through research and student exchanges. In Israel, the system and Hebrew University of Jerusalem launched the Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program aimed at fostering research collaborations. Our Mexico City office on the National Autonomous University of Mexico campus is now staffed with a director and is working to increase academic and research collaborations among Mexican and American institutions. Students from the National University of Singapore (NUS) arrived in Chicago this summer

for internships with startups and classes at UIC, and DPI forged a new partnership with the National University of Singapore, which will see two NUS programs open in DPI's Chicago offices. And in Taiwan, the system established a program in conjunction with the National Taiwan University that funds joint research and development teams and provides travel grants to stimulate collaborations between the respective entities.

Pillar 3: A Healthy Future for Illinois and the Midwest

We are dedicated to fostering a healthier future for all, with a specific focus on Illinois and the Midwest. Our vision is to collaborate with these regions to strengthen their efforts toward transformative change, cultivating thriving, resilient communities. Achieving this requires a strong foundation built on interconnected pillars that drive a prosperous regional economy—enhancing college readiness, investing in human capital, promoting civic engagement, and, most importantly, ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare.

At the heart of this transformation are the groundbreaking biotech and biomanufacturing facilities, programs, and initiatives at UIUC, which are propelling both regional and national bioeconomies forward. Through innovative research, commercialization, and workforce development, we are seeing major wins, including the launch of iFAB, the iBiofoundry, PreFerS, the Levenick Center for a Climate-Smart Circular Bioeconomy, and two of just six NSF Global Centers. These projects build on longstanding, signature projects like RIPE (initial award 2012; \$117M), CABBI (initial award 2017; \$262M), and the Molecule Maker Lab Institute (initial award 2020; \$20M).

Further strengthening our economic impact, UIC's Innovation Center, a 10,000-square-foot collaboration space and research laboratory, serves as an incubator to develop and deliver ideas, products, and intellectual property on behalf of the university and industry sponsors such as Caterpillar, BMW, and the OSF Healthcare System.

UIC's Incubator Lab Facility (ILF), formerly the Chicago Technology Park Research Center, is occupied by the College of Medicine and private startups for both UIC faculty and local entrepreneurs engaged in various startups including biotechnology, energy, and material sciences work. TI Labs supports ILF in its programming and ILF is often the next step for startups that have graduated from TI Labs.

IIN is also growing partnerships with government agencies to increase its economic and social impact. In 2023, IIN made a \$5M agreement with the state's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to work with community college partners to grow the manufacturing workforce pipeline. IIN also hosted 25 sessions across the state and online from February to May to gather input for the state's economic growth plan. Through the Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) program, IIN developed and provided workforce training on the digital economy for inmates at four federal prisons in Illinois.

A critical part of advancing our vision for a healthier future involves bringing together key stakeholders and providing a platform for meaningful collaboration, exploring all the ways we can work together. We are cultivating partnerships that not only benefit the state of Illinois but also extend our global brand reputation, creating new opportunities for students and faculty while further solidifying the system's role as a leader and convener.

To amplify this work and to support initiatives across the state, we embarked on the third installment of the leadership state tour, which was focused on strengthening partnerships. Our 2023 tour included stops in Chicago, the Quad Cities, Peoria, Havana, Alton, Makanda and more to activate partnerships and develop even more ways to act on our mission to serve the public good. From workforce development to enhancing rural healthcare, expanding broadband internet access to recruiting more underrepresented students, system leaders explored real-world challenges to further bolster the state's social, cultural and economic viability.

These efforts have positioned our system at the forefront of critical conversations, ensuring that we occupy key seats at the right tables. A cornerstone of this engagement is the Center for State Policy and Leadership, which plays a vital role in supporting UIS's public affairs focus by addressing state and national public policy issues, promoting governmental effectiveness, and fostering civic engagement.

Our commitment to improving the well-being of Illinois students extends beyond policy to directly impacting their lives, particularly in preparing them for post-secondary success and today's workforce. DPI has already worked with 750 pre-college students, a number set to grow, and engaged 200 teachers who will reach many more students. Additionally, 58 learners completed 12-week apprenticeships through DPI. DPI also co-hosted High-Tech-CHI, a daylong event at Google's Chicago offices, attracting hundreds of students and families from across the city, with notable participation from Mayor Brandon Johnson, city leaders, and tech experts.

At the heart of all these initiatives remains our commitment to the health and well-being of our communities — on our campuses and across the state — particularly when it comes to mental health, which continues to be one of our top priorities.

Since 2020, we have hosted an annual systemwide Mental Health Symposium to precipitate conversation, identify problems, and innovate solutions related to mental health. The scope of the initiative has since expanded to include students, faculty, and staff, and now includes a holistic approach to overall well-being. Over 350 students, faculty and staff attended the fourth annual symposium.

To improve access to quality, affordable healthcare and close gaps in patient outcomes, UI Health conducted 1.4M clinical visits last year, including both dental and Mile Square Health Center, representing other dimensions of the enterprise's services and health equity advances. The College of Dentistry provides more than 70,000 appointments annually to patients enrolled in the State Dental Medicaid program. And 98% of the children treated in UIC's dental clinics are Medicaid enrolled or Medicaid eligible. Growth in the area includes the March 2024 opening of the Dentistry Inclusive Care Clinic. When healthcare is accessible and issues are under control, our neighbors live more fulfilling lives with less worry and more hope for the future.

Other significant clinical services include that UI Health is a certified comprehensive stroke center, and ophthalmology has been a long-standing area of excellence. Also, robotic surgery is a huge area of excellence and reputational awareness. Robotic surgery resides in UI Health's newest clinical facility, the Specialty Care Building, with training and research purposes at the Surgical Innovation and Technology Lab. Technological advancements and innovations that help people get well faster improve lives.

The system is making other efforts to improve health equity and access for better outcomes and peace of mind. The new Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) established the system-wide wastewater program for

preventive surveillance of various viruses, providing early-detection information to help keep our university communities healthy and safe. OSI also partnered with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to establish an internship program with all Illinois universities, increasing the number of IDPH internships from four to 64 and helping students gain valuable work experience.

OSI and IDPH also distributed air purifiers and over 300,000 antigen tests to approximately 2,220 daycare centers in an effort to both promote and research student health. Last, we executed an amendment to the intergovernmental agreement between the state's Department of Healthcare and Family Services and the system that updated data-sharing protocols and financial support, and expanded operations at the system's Office of Medicaid Innovation (OMI), and we partnered with Innovate Springfield at UIS to support OMI's Medicaid Technical Assistance Center in developing training materials and establishing new student-based programming to support the Illinois Medicaid program.

Pillar 4: Tomorrow's University Today

Moving ever forward, the system places great value on being responsible stewards of the state's financial support and strong partnership. This ensures that students from all corners of the state and all backgrounds have access to an affordable, world-class education, while enabling us to continue leading the way in advancing technology and innovation to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges.

We continue to see results from our work to increase access for underrepresented populations. Almost 21,000 U of I System students receive Federal Pell Grants, and the President's Award Program continues its efforts to enrich the diversity of the student body by supporting highly capable Illinois students who are members of groups that have been historically underrepresented or less likely to enroll. The system also debuted offering Advanced Placement Summer Institutes (APSI) to equip high school teachers statewide with stronger programs to prepare their students for college. The system covers the cost of APSI tuition and more for teachers from districts where less than 20% of students take AP exams.

We also have been working closely with community colleges in Illinois to make the transfer process smoother, resulting in a systemwide increase of 5.7% in first-time transfers from two-year public institutions. For UIUC, UIC, and UIS, the increases were 8.2%, 4.3%, and 5.6%, respectively.

Our technology prowess stands out in so many ways. At UIUC, the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) was named in January 2024 as one of the primary NAIRR partners aiming to develop a national AI research infrastructure that will connect a wide array of researchers and educators with essential AI computing resources. Led by NSF in partnership with 12 other federal agencies and more than 25 nongovernment contributors, NAIRR is quickly living up to its vision prompted by the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020 and later Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence that President Joe Biden signed in 2023.

In addition, NCSA has been awarded \$4.9M in supplemental funding from NSF for Delta and an additional \$4.9M for DeltaAI. NCSA originally received nearly \$25M from NSF in 2023 to deploy and operate DeltaAI, an advanced computing and data resource that will be a companion system to Delta. DeltaAI triples NCSA's AI-focused computing capacity and greatly expands the capacity available within the NSF-funded advanced computing ecosystem.

In the sustainability space, DPI, UIC and UIUC are also among 50 partners on the new NSF-funded Great Lakes Water Innovation Engine, which seeks to develop innovative ways to extract valuable minerals and toxic chemicals from wastewater and could receive funding of up to \$160M over 10 years.

IIN, through its network of hubs, continues to mature, creating new opportunities and solving challenges throughout our state. In FY24, IIN awarded 10 new Sustaining Illinois seed grants and three seed grants under its new Social Innovation and Impact grant program. These seed grants pair researchers from IIN hubs to address critical problems facing Illinois such as water resources, energy consumption, and cultural heritage. To date, Sustaining Illinois has funded 46 projects totaling \$1.4M and involving all 15 IIN hubs.

In Conclusion

The U of I System ended the year stronger than ever. With the support of our board of trustees, the dedication of our chancellors and vice presidents, and strong engagement from our partners and collaborators, we have built a platform for performance that will continue to drive impact for our system, our state, and beyond for many years to come.