

**ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES**

**Report No. 2021.10/1100.01**  
**Educate•Connect•Elevate**  
**Illinois State Annual Report**

**Executive Summary**

The FY21 Educate Connect Elevate Annual Report includes selected accomplishments the University achieved in its third year of implementing Educate Connect Elevate: Illinois State - The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University. During a period when COVID-19 disrupted the world, faculty, staff, and students stayed the course and remained committed to the University's core values: Learning and Scholarship, Individualized Attention, Diversity and Inclusion, Civic Engagement, Respect, Integrity, and Collaboration.

The report demonstrates Illinois State's commitment to the core values and its support in implementing the strategic directions and objectives. A few highlighted accomplishments include launch of the Teach Chicago Tomorrow teacher pipeline initiative, completion of an ISU *Engineering Master Plan*, extensive planning and implementation leading to the fall 2021 opening of the Multicultural Center, and for the third consecutive year, Illinois State's day of giving reached a record for dollars raised and participation.

# Educate • Connect • Elevate

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## ILLINOIS STATE



Fiscal Year 2021  
Annual Report



ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
*Illinois' first public university*

# Letter from the President

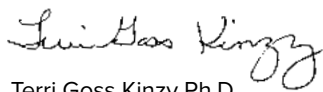
I am pleased to present the FY21 *Educate • Connect • Elevate* Annual Report highlighting the many accomplishments of Illinois State University in fiscal year 2021, the third year in implementation of its strategic plan, *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State - The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on society and individual lives. Illinois State, along with colleges and universities around the globe, was faced with a great many challenges in carrying out its core mission. The University community rose to those challenges and with innovation and creativity it continued to successfully teach students, conduct research and creative scholarship, and serve the larger community.

This report provides a snapshot of our achievements for the fiscal year and reveals many contributions made in support of the University's core values: Learning and Scholarship, Individualized Attention, Diversity and Inclusion, Civic Engagement, Respect, Integrity, and Collaboration.

I am proud of the University and its success, the result of the outstanding efforts of our dedicated faculty, staff, and students. A few highlights from the fiscal year include the launch of the Teach Chicago Tomorrow teacher pipeline initiative; completion of an ISU *Engineering Master Plan*; extensive planning and implementation leading to the fall 2021 opening of the Multicultural Center; and for the third consecutive year, Illinois State's day of giving reached a record for dollars raised and participation.

Respectfully,



Terri Goss Kinzy Ph.D.  
President, Illinois State University



## TOTAL ENROLLMENT

— Fall 2020 —

Undergraduate	17,987
Graduate	2,733
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,720</b>



# 26.5

percentage of students from

## TRADITIONALLY UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS



Fall 2020

# 228

Proposals submitted

# 132

Grants awarded

# \$90,039,249

Total amount awarded

— FY21 —

FY2021 awards include \$69,039,051 Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds and \$1,983,569 Governor's Emergency Education Relief Funds.



## AVERAGE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE

2019–2020

# \$10,214



Average amount of grant or scholarship aid awarded to full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking students who pay the in-state tuition rate and were awarded grant or scholarship aid from federal, state, or local governments, or the institution.

# 84.2%

— Fall 2020 —

## RETENTION RATE

of students from first to second year



# 89%

of first-time, full-time, degree/certificate-seeking, in-state tuition students were

## AWARDED MERIT AND NEED-BASED AID



2019–2020



— Fall 2020 —

Six-year

## RETENTION RATE of tenure-track FACULTY

# 82.1%

— Fall 2020 —

Percentage of undergrads in

## HONORS PROGRAM

# 8.4



# \$25.1M

in private support

— FY21 —

The 3rd highest private support total in university history

FOR MORE UNIVERSITY METRICS, VISIT

[StrategicPlan.IllinoisState.edu/Metrics](https://StrategicPlan.IllinoisState.edu/Metrics)

# ENHANCE STRENGTH AND STABILITY



Academic reputation, exceptional faculty and staff, financial stability, and operational effectiveness in support of student recruitment and success are key to ensuring longevity in the current higher education environment. The objectives to **Enhance Strength and Stability** are intended to leverage these interconnected components into continued strong enrollments and increasingly positive student outcomes.



# Selected accomplishments

## College of Education initiatives

- The College of Education collaborated with Chicago Public Schools and the City Colleges of Chicago on the [Teach Chicago Tomorrow teacher pipeline initiative](#). The initiative is part of a long-term strategy to prepare quality teachers to teach in Chicago schools. These students will join ISU in the fall of 2023 after completing an associate's degree in Chicago's community colleges.
- The College of Education started writing new articulation agreements with community colleges in Chicago, Peoria, and rural central Illinois areas. These agreements create a smooth pathway that makes the transfer student process more transparent, eliminating unnecessary tuition costs.
- In spring 2021, a new cohort of 20 students from Peoria began taking special education courses at ISU through the [CommuniTeach](#) initiative. Most students in the program are paraprofessionals in special education classrooms in Peoria school districts and those surrounding Peoria.

## Project Bird Tracks

The new Project Bird Tracks initiative, developed by the Division of Student Affairs, leverages data analytics for student engagement and success. Through self-assessment, data collection, integration, and visualization, students are able to see the level of their knowledge and skills across five learning domains. Further, cocurricular experiences that provide learning in these domains will be available for students to search and filter online.

## Intermediaries for Scale

Illinois State University was accepted by the Association of Public and Land Grant Institutions as part of the 16-institution national cohort participating in their Intermediaries for Scale. As part of this process, the University will administer the Institutional Transformation Assessment and participate in other self-study opportunities to determine capacity and readiness for change as it relates to student success and equity.

## University celebrates Bone Student Center revitalization project completion

The final stages of the Bone Student Center revitalization project were completed during the 2020-2021 academic year. Final components included opening two new dining venues: Timbers Grille, a self-branded concept featuring American cuisine; and Star Ginger, a franchise concept featuring southeast Asian cuisine. These venues joined Qdoba in the new Birds' Nest on the center's second floor. The Birds' Nest features various seating options, student collaboration stations, and numerous digital screens that include a video wall for entertainment. It is conveniently located next to the Student Involvement Center.

Improving the second-floor concourse was included in the project's final phase. Visitors will find new floor coverings, ceilings, wall finishes, graphics, lighting, and signage, along with the development of multiple spaces that house Career Services. The unit has a welcome desk, a Career Resource Hub, administrative offices, and 11 meeting rooms. Equipped with state-of-the-art technology, the rooms are jointly managed by Career Services and Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality. The rooms further promote student engagement at the Bone Student Center, providing inviting and collaborative spaces for students



to seek opportunities for success, build relationships, and showcase their skills.

The new International Flags Display, a vital component of the concourse improvement, is a dynamic digital display featuring flags representing the home countries of past and present ISU students, faculty, and staff. The display, located on the first floor, carries on the tradition of the international flags previously displayed in the building and serves as a visual expression of the University's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

## Student engagement reporting and dashboards

A number of units across campus came together to develop a Student Success Dashboard. Enterprise Data Analytics took the technological lead with the support from departments in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The dashboard merges data from disparate databases housed in a variety of departments/units. This leveraging of information provides a more comprehensive snapshot of a student's engagement with various offices on campus. These data are used by staff to provide individualized attention to students. Engagement reports and departmental dashboards provide an integrated view of our most valuable assets, allowing us to make informed operational decisions, tailor effective services, and prepare for future student needs.

## Academic Affairs retreat

In February, the Office of the Provost held a retreat during which academic leaders across campus identified how to make practical progress in areas such as student recruitment and retention and faculty success. Retreat planning led us to submit ISU's "Development of and Operationalizing a Comprehensive Student Success Framework" as our Quality Initiative for the Higher Learning Commission. Moreover, because of issues discussed at the retreat, Academic Affairs has become involved in the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, which will administer a faculty job satisfaction survey and help ISU analyze data that will help us better support faculty.

## Third largest fundraising year in history

Illinois State raised more than \$25.1 million in private support in fiscal year 2021. This was the third largest giving total ever recorded. The only two larger totals—\$37.3 million in 2019 and \$36.8 million in 2015—were bolstered by eight-figure gifts during the Redbirds Rising campaign.

## Campus Green Map

The Geographic Information Science Team partnered with the Office of Sustainability and WEB and Interactive Communications to develop an accessible [Campus Green Map](#) web application featuring seven sustainable resources on campus. The map highlights bike racks, electric vehicle charging stations, horticulture center trees and gardens, Redbird Express stops, solar charging stations, Bigbelly central waste collection stations, and water bottle refill stations.

## Electric equipment for Grounds

New electric Grounds equipment was researched and purchased through a partnership with the Student Sustainability Committee. By replacing gas powered tools with battery powered ones, the department will reduce campus fuel consumption and emissions, as well as noise pollution.

## Central Waste Collection Stations

With the support of the Student Sustainability Committee, Facilities Services successfully expanded Central Waste Collection Stations in eight campus buildings in fiscal year 2021. The stations streamline the process of picking up the trash and recycling for building service workers and offer consistent signage to help the campus community become better recyclers while reducing contamination. A total of 314 old bins (192 trash and 122 recycle) were removed and replaced with 176 (88 stations) new central waste collection stations. This resulted in a 44 percent reduction of overall bins in the eight buildings.





# FOSTER INNOVATION

Creativity, knowledge generation, continuous improvement, and lifelong learning are hallmarks of any great university. The objectives designed to **Foster Innovation** highlight the ways the University will support students, faculty, and staff as they embrace emerging opportunities, face challenges, and solve problems.





# Selected accomplishments

## College of Engineering proposal

Illinois State submitted three proposals to the Illinois Board of Higher Education to approve the establishment of a new College of Engineering with electrical engineering and mechanical engineering departments. The process included the completion of an ISU *Engineering Master Plan*; a proposed College of Engineering facility; and development of a phased plan, along with cost estimates.

## Academic program changes FY21

Several new programs were established in FY21 consisting of 15 new sequences, two new certificate programs, and two new minors. These new offerings include: Computer Systems Technology, B.S.; Low Vision and Blindness, M.S.Ed.; Nutrition, M.S.; Bilingual/ESL sequence, M.S. in Teaching and Learning program; higher education sequence, Ph.D.; Interdisciplinary Technologies sequence, B.A., B.S.; and Game Design sequence, B.A., B.S. in Creative Technologies program; Leadership, Equity, and Inquiry sequence, Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Foundations program; School Social Work Graduate Certificate; Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Graduate certificate; Game Design minor; and Water Sustainability Studies minor.

## Creation of Postdoctoral Scholar recruitment and hiring process

Human Resources partnered with the Graduate School to create the Postdoctoral Scholar recruitment and hiring process. The hiring program defines the Postdoctoral Scholar classification, minimum appointment requirements, appointment, and funding parameters. It also requires that every postdoctoral student has a designated full graduate status faculty mentor in their hosting department.

## Illinois State named Adobe Creative Campus institution

Adobe declared Illinois State University a Creative Campus, the only university in Illinois to currently hold the distinction. It recognizes Illinois State's commitment to digital literacy and to teaching creative and persuasive digital communication skills. The University has demonstrated a pledge to achieving strategic goals and student outcomes related to digital literacy, including integration of Adobe Creative Cloud into cross-disciplinary curricula, as well as collaborations with other institutions sharing content and best practices.

## Gladly We Game

More than 1,000 participants engaged in esports club activities in one of 14 clubs established in FY21. Three varsity esports launched in fall 2020 and had great success. All three teams finished in the top 25 nationally, with the League of Legends team finishing 5th out of more than 300 teams from across the country.

Students involved in esports were able to experience The Vault, Campus Recreation's newly dedicated gaming space. The Vault, which is the practice and competition space for Redbird Esports, features 25 powerful gaming PCs equipped with high-end monitors and gaming peripherals.

Students from the School of Kinesiology and Recreation were able to gain valuable experiences by creating events such as the Redbird High School invitational and Redbird Esports combine. Both programs connected high school students, their parents, and the digital support community to Illinois State University.



*Selected accomplishments, continued*

### Redbird Stage Crossing

Eleven days of a stage crossing experience were held for approximately 3,000 Illinois State 2020 and 2021 graduates. The opportunity allowed graduates and their families to have a traditional commencement ceremony recognition while complying with state gathering size restrictions. The individualized experience permitted a small group of family and friends to accompany the graduate and kept intact the elements of a traditional ceremony that are most important to the graduate.

### Student Counseling Services and Student Health Services

- Student Counseling Services (SCS) contracted with a third-party vendor to expand access to counseling services for out-of-state students as well as in-state students as part of the department's stepped-care model. SCS offered up to five sessions of therapy per issue delivered through video telehealth, telephone, or chat modalities.
- Student Health Services (SHS) implemented an application that allows students to view their office visit notes and lab and radiology results on the SHS patient health portal. This provides the students with a more comprehensive understanding of their health and active participation in their wellness.



### Career Services virtual programming

The transformation to virtual career fair platforms provided opportunities for Career Services to offer more industry cluster fairs in fields such as agriculture, actuarial science, and information technology. An additional 154 employers, 214 recruiters, and 386 students were served. With the use of innovative technology platforms, these new collaborations with academic partners allow increased efforts for student career development and career readiness.

### Digital magazines offered via redesigned news hub

University Marketing and Communications and WEB and Interactive Communications combined efforts to redesign the [News.IllinoisState.edu](https://www.news.illinoisstate.edu) news hub and develop a new platform for university magazines. News users throughout campus benefit from added user experience features, better user interface functionality, and enhanced curation. The new digital platform allowed for the reduction of printed magazines by 73,000 or 13.5 percent in FY21.

### Patents protect intellectual property

In FY21, four international patents and three provisional patents were filed to protect the intellectual property being created on campus. Several of the patents are to support the further protection and development of pennycress as a cash crop. This relationship engages private industry, other partner academic researchers, and federal funding agencies to create a framework of support to bring this technology to the market as quickly as possible.





# NURTURE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Inclusion is an important component to an educational institution realizing its full potential. The objectives to **Nurture Diversity and Inclusion** emphasize the mutually reinforcing ways the University will support a welcoming and inclusive environment through the curriculum, co-curriculum, organizational practices, and partnerships with other institutions.



# Selected accomplishments

## First college-level EDI officer at ISU

The College of Education welcomed the first college-level equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) officer at Illinois State. The officer supports efforts to assess and implement equity, diversity, and inclusion in the college, and helps create sustainable systemic change.

## Improving and optimizing teaching and learning for all

Student Access and Accommodation Services staff conducted trainings for faculty on Universal Design. They assisted in implementing, conducting training, and advocating for proactive use of accessibility enhancements of software, which resulted in a more universal approach for serving students.

## Career Services Cultural Career Network

The Cultural Career Network coordinated through Career Services expanded to include alumni engaging with students through new programming focused on understanding identity, workplace culture, and leadership and career advancement.

## Exploring Wicked Problems Series

A new programming series from the Center for Civic Engagement encouraged campus and community members to come together in conversations around community safety and justice. The series included campus and community book groups, a screening of the film *Just Mercy*, and a deliberative dialogue on safety and justice. Participants considered how systemic discrimination based on race and class affects the justice system. They were provided opportunities for a more in-depth exploration through multiple programs and perspectives.

## University Housing Services

- University Housing Services (UHS) created the I.D.E.A. (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action) committee to respond to equity, diversity, and inclusion concerns and be proactive in the areas of training and professional development. This group is comprised of residence hall staff and UHS administrative team members.
- UHS provided resident assistants training and facilitation sessions on the topic of implicit bias. The training curriculum gave more than 150 participants the necessary awareness, content knowledge, and skills to help foster staff development and mutual respect when exploring diversity issues.

## Student experience enriched with Multicultural Center completion

Construction of the Multicultural Center continued throughout the year and was completed in time for its scheduled opening this semester. Located at 301 South Main Street, the center is led by Dr. Christa Platt, M.S. '09, Ph.D. '17.

"I envision this center having a long-standing impact on this campus. It's an honor to have a hand in its development and implementation," said Platt, who has served as the center's director since July of 2020.

The center's pillars are antiracism, identity, and belonging. To that end, the facility was designed with multipurpose gathering and lounge areas for students to comfortably connect. Two rooms were constructed with the option of opening to create a larger event and programming space. Three additional conference rooms, wellness space, and a reflection/prayer room are included. Gender neutral restrooms are available, as is a gender-affirmation station for non-binary and trans students to access clothing. It serves any student needing attire.

Meeting rooms were developed to provide an affirming



space for historically marginalized students while furthering the University's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. Staff advise the Black Student Union, Association of Latin American Students, Asian Pacific American Coalition, and Pride. Each group has offices at the center.

In addition to outreach through the center, a multicultural therapist was added to staff in Student Counseling Services. This new counselor, who will provide counseling services onsite, will focus on antiracism work and racial trauma healing.

*Selected accomplishments, continued*

### College of Business Registered Student Organizations

Students in the College of Business started two new RSOs: ACUMEN (The Association for Cultural Unity, Mentorship, Education, and Networking) and The Association of Latino Professions for America (ALPFA). ACUMEN featured speakers in the Corporate in Color series and developed opportunities for students to forge long-term relationships with business leaders of color. ALPFA creates opportunities, adds value, and builds relationships for its members, the community, and its business partners while expanding Latino leadership in the global workforce.

### ReggieCon

ReggieCon, a series of five virtual events, featured a panel of experts in comic and popular media. Panel topics focused on issues of race and diversity and aligned with national recognition months such as Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month.

### Milner Library Resources

Milner Library has developed two websites that serve as guides for those seeking more information on systemic racism and/or LGBTQIA+ topics. These websites direct faculty teaching on these subjects and/or students and community members studying them to resources, references, and library materials on these social justice issues.





# ENRICH ENGAGEMENT

Academic excellence in the 21st century will increasingly be characterized by its impact on, and contribution to, the larger society—be it in the form of cultural enrichment; collaborative partnerships; development of knowledge and technology; or the fostering of engaged, informed citizens. The objectives serving **Enrich Engagement** highlight the many mutually beneficial ways the University will contribute to, and grow from, broader and deeper connections among those on campus and with those off campus.



# Selected accomplishments

## **EMERGE Transfer Student Leadership Program introduced**

This program is designed to provide transfer students an opportunity to gain hands-on leadership engagement, education, and development that can be used in their personal and professional leadership journey. Students participated in the eight-week program during both the fall and spring semesters.

## **ISU helps vaccinate campus community against COVID-19**

The University hosted COVID-19 vaccination clinics for frontline workers and vulnerable populations in spring 2021. Student Health Services and Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN) staff and students initially administered the vaccines. Later in the spring, the Illinois National Guard and McLean County Health Department ran the clinics with support provided by Illinois State's Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality; Emergency Management; and Facilities Management staff.

## **Redbirds assist McLean County Health Department with contact tracing**

MCN and the Department of Health Sciences teamed with the McLean County Health Department to facilitate contact tracing to help slow the spread of the virus. Nursing students and health promotion and education students completed hours of training through online modules to prepare and earned clinical or professional practice experiences while helping the community.

## **Received the Voter Friendly Campus Designation**

Illinois State was awarded the Voter Friendly Campus Designation by the Voter Friendly Campus Initiative. Campuses were evaluated on their individual plans to register, educate, and encourage turnout by student voters; how they facilitated voter engagement efforts on campus; and a final analysis of their efforts in the face of a global pandemic.

## **Food Recovery Network receives national recognition**

Many students at Illinois State joined the student chapter for the Food Recovery Network (FRN) to help in the fight against hunger. The student chapter on campus helps pick up leftover food from the dining halls and takes it to Home Sweet Home Ministries so that it can be distributed to people in need. ISU was recognized as "Top Food Recover-er" for 2020, logging more food recoveries than 99 percent of the FRN chapters in the country. The students delivered more than a ton of food to those in need over the course of the academic year.

## **Food Insecurity Initiatives**

National and local data reveal that up to 40 percent of college students experience some level of food insecurity while pursuing higher education. A campus-wide group formed to assess needs, inform the campus, develop infrastructure and programs, and create marketing plans to connect students to resources.

## **Birds Give Back sets giving records**

For the third consecutive year, Illinois State's day of giving reached a record for dollars raised and participation. A total of \$1.1 million was received in donations from 3,184 participants. Numerous campus organizations benefitted from the event. Among the top fundraising areas was the Multicultural Center, which placed first of the 72 participating campus units. The center's inaugural philanthropic campaign resulted in 390 gifts from community, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Athletics was a close second, garnering 355 gifts. There were 284 gifts for LGBTQ+ Student Support, with the School of Communication securing 215 gifts and Redbird Esports a total of 117 gifts.



## *Selected accomplishments, continued*

### **Virtual engagement programs connect alumni to campus**

- To keep Redbirds involved in campus over the last year, Alumni Engagement staff quickly built expertise in staging events via Zoom Premier. Guest speakers including President Larry Dietz, Head Football Coach Brock Spack, and faculty including College of Business Professor Dr. Rick Ringer drew alumni to listen and interact on wide-ranging topics. Virtual 5K runs allowed Redbirds to challenge themselves while sporting specially designed Redbird running gear. Recordings of virtual events were archived and can be found at [Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/Virtual](https://Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/Virtual).
- The Division of Student Affairs staff also connected with alumni via online platforms to reminisce and share important updates. In FY2021, they engaged close to 150 individuals from 15 states and four countries over six events. The audience was primarily young alumni from the following affinity groups: University Program Board, Student Wellness Ambassador Team, Welcome Week Student Crew, Pride, Black Student Union, Asia-Pacific American Coalition, and Association of Latin American Students.

### **Health Sciences and Wellness Themed Living-Learning Community**

University Housing Services launched the Health Sciences and Wellness Themed Living-Learning Community (TLLC) in fall 2020. It is designed for students interested in a living community supportive of health and wellness and/or are majoring or minoring in one of the Health Sciences programs. These include environmental health and sustainability, public health, school health education, medical laboratory science, and health informatics and management. Minors include occupational safety and health, public health, and health and wellness coaching.

### **Wellness kits for students**

Health Promotion and Wellness mailed wellness kits upon request in the spring semester to students who did not live locally or on campus. This demonstration of care and support has led to the program continuing for students living on- or off-campus to promote personal well-being.

### **Personal Wellness Days programming**

In spring 2021 departments within the Division of Student Affairs collaborated to offer students virtual and in-person activities for Personal Wellness Days. Events focused on the eight dimensions of wellness and included opportunities such as viewing films, sampling special food offerings in the dining centers, participating in games and activities, giveaways, and special fitness classes.

### **Athletics earns 2020-2021 MVC All-Sports Trophy**

Despite limited opportunities for fans to attend events during the pandemic, Athletics gave alumni and friends reasons to celebrate the success of student-athletes this past year. For the first time in more than three decades, Illinois State earned back-to-back Missouri Valley Conference All-Sports Championships. Redbirds earned six team titles out of 16 MVC sports in which they compete, including men's cross country, softball, women's tennis, women's indoor track and field, women's outdoor track and field, and volleyball.

### **University receives AASCU award**

Illinois State University received the 2021 American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Excellence and Innovation Award for Civic Learning and Community Engagement. The University's Embracing Our Redbird Impact: Elevating Civic Education and Political Engagement program was selected by the awards committee for its outstanding results and potential to influence and serve as a model for other institutions.









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*Illinois' first public university*

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