

Good Morning.

The Campus Communication Committee would like to thank Professor Brian Clark, Tony Battaglia and Ryan Meitl for an enlightening presentation on the solar car project. It is yet again another example of how our faculty members are at the forefront of their field and give our students an edge by actively engaging them in cutting edge projects.

As President Bowman noted in his state of the University Address, Illinois State University continues to thrive despite a challenging economic environment. **Accomplishments include historic highs in the 6-year graduation rate and retention rates.** Those accomplishments and the many others are vivid examples of the university's judicious use of its resources. President Bowman's recent appointment to the nation's first higher education cabinet shows that national leaders also believe that great things are happening at this university. As a result, we are asking the state to reward our accomplishments by fully funding the university's budget request included in the board packet today.

The Campus Communication Committee applauds President Bowman and other members of the community's response to an act of intolerance at a construction site on campus earlier this Fall. We invite all members of our community to join in the efforts President Bowman has outlined to ensure that Illinois State University continues to be the welcoming community that so many of us have enjoyed. You may recall that the Campus Communication Committee sponsored a discussion hour in May that focused on the campus' various diversity initiatives. We are very pleased that the discussion led Trustee Davis to participate in a Trustee-in-Residence visit to take a further look at those initiatives. All of the above send a clear message that all segments of the university will be fully engaged in this area.

We also appreciate the naming of the UCLA/MSAC facility and a Conference Room in the new Alumni Center in honor of Dr. Julia Visor and Carl Kasten respectively. It is a wonderful way to recognize their contributions to the betterment of Illinois State University.

The Campus Communication Committee would like to express its strong disapproval of the Illinois Board of Higher Education's draft public agenda. We believe that the agenda reduces higher education to a little more than vocational education and puts it at odds with one of the university's core values: the pursuit of learning and scholarship. As the agenda is currently in its public comment phase, we invite all members of our community to demonstrate their civic engagement by expressing their views through the IBHE web site.

As Civic Engagement is one of our core values, the upcoming elections are also another opportunity for us to demonstrate it by exercising our civic duty. Early voting is already under way and should provide ample opportunity for all of us to plan accordingly.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not mention Homecoming celebrations. The sight of alumni descending upon campus is a great reminder of what Illinois State University means in the lives of so many. We are thankful for such a wonderful and meaningful tradition as it inspires us to renew our commitment to this institution. Thank you.