



Contact: Melissa Hahn | 217.557.7354 | 217.441.1066 cell | hahn@ibhe.org

May 15, 2020

IBHE NAMES HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS TO COVID-19 CAMPUS REOPENING COMMITTEE

Leaders to determine how students can safely return to campus in coming months

SPRINGFIELD – Following the release of Governor JB Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has convened a committee to shape guidance on how campuses across the state can open safely this fall semester amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Deputy Governor for Education Jesse Ruiz said, "I am grateful for IBHE's leadership on this and look forward to the committee's recommendations for the 2020-2021 academic year. As always, our priority remains protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff, while providing a high-quality education to prepare students for future careers."

The University of Illinois System, with its deep scientific expertise and on-going statewide work related to COVID-19, will ensure the committee has access to the latest public health research and guidance with a lens that is uniquely focused on higher education.

"Higher education leaders, faculty and staff did an amazing job of rising to meet the unprecedented challenges this pandemic posed to our students and institutions this spring," IBHE Chair John Atkinson remarked. "Keeping our students on track to post-secondary attainment remains our primary focus and I am confident that together these leaders will help enable continued success in that effort."

"We know there is a lot of uncertainty, but one thing that is certain is that Illinois colleges remain the best, most affordable option for many. Whether that means working online to be safe, or a socially-distanced in-person experience, our colleges and universities will be here," said Ginger Ostro, executive director, IBHE. "As we focus on implementing the Restore Illinois plan across the state's higher education system, the expertise of these college and university leaders will be invaluable."

—more—

The committee includes:

- IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro
- Representatives of Illinois' public universities
 - Northern Illinois University President Lisa Freeman
 - University of Illinois President Tim Killeen
 - Southern Illinois University President Dan Mahony
 - Chicago State University President Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott
- Representatives of Illinois' private colleges and universities
 - Judson University President Gene Crume
 - Loyola University President Jo Ann Rooney
 - Northwestern University President Morton Shapiro
 - University of Chicago President Robert Zimmer
 - Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities President David Tretter
- Representatives of Illinois' community colleges
 - City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Juan Salgado
 - Illinois Central College President Sheila Quirk-Bailey
 - Lincoln Land Community College President Charlotte Warren
 - Rend Lake College President Terry Wilkerson
 - Illinois Community College Board Executive Director Brian Durham
- Dean and Provost of the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine Jerry Kruse

###