

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
**2011 Presentation to the
University of Illinois Board of Trustees**

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the Alumni Association's activity and progress.

I am grateful to this board for its continuing support of our programs, and the role of alumni in the life of the University. And I especially appreciate the participation of Trustee **Jim Montgomery**, in his role as liaison to the Association's Board of Directors.

We are fortunate to continue to have such a high caliber of alumni leadership comprise that board. Led by current Chairman **Gery Chico**, the board has steadily guided the Association through these recent years of declining budgets, but also to new opportunities to mobilize our large alumni base to have a positive impact for the University.

We continue efforts to diversify an already-diverse Board of Directors, as evidenced by our two newest members:

- Dr. **Mona Khanna**, medical director at US Health Record and Emmy-winning television reporter. Mona is a UIC graduate from the Rockford campus and 2008 recipient of the Alumni Humanitarian Award.
- And Dr. **Bo Zhang**, chairman and CEO of American Electronic Products in Beijing, China. Bo received the 2008 International Alumni Award at the Urbana campus.

One of the most important efforts we are involved in right now is developing a more collaborative and productive approach to advancement – the business of building relationships that foster participation and support for the U of I.

In response to the Administrative Review and Restructuring Committee's recommendations, the Alumni Association is working with **President Hogan**, as well as with **Sid Micek** at the U of I Foundation, to increase that participation and support.

To do that successfully, we all need to be more customer-oriented. It is our alumni and friends, our students and their families, whom we rely upon more and more to provide support. We need to be responsive to their interests and passions that can be channeled into advancing the University's mission.

Together, I believe we're drawing a good road map for working together more efficiently ... and effectively.

We've already seen this concept in action when we collaborated on a very successful event in Washington, D.C., last fall. Our goals were to introduce President and Mrs. Hogan, and to energize and engage a diverse alumni base. We had an eclectic group of hundreds – including Capitol Hill and agency staffers, donors, alumni club members and student interns – all focused on University priorities.

By working more closely together, we will continue to streamline each of our operations and eliminate redundancies. In the last few years, for instance, the Association has reduced its budget by a full one-third, and our staff now numbers 45, down from 63 just a few years ago.

And yet, we also expanded the organization's focus to include all 650,000 alumni when we moved away from having membership predicated on paying dues. So as our customer base continues to grow with each new class, we're focusing on ways to engage alumni and deliver services through scalable communications and technologies.

We help organize and develop groups of alumni by how they want to engage with the University – either through their college or department, culturally or by some special interest, or based on where they live and work.

From these networks of alumni, we help identify University resources for financial support, leadership, volunteerism and, of course, advocacy.

The Association's advocacy network, Illinois Connection, is another of our key initiatives. In addition to events like the one in D.C., we coordinate a lobby day in the state capital every spring.

In the last couple of years, we've strengthened the Illinois Connection program from a few hundred advocates to 8,000 alumni and students. We also just completed a recruitment video that can be found on the web and will be shown at alumni group meetings as we expand our national focus.

You have a 6-minute DVD at your places, but we have a 90-second version queued up. So I'd like to conclude with that.

By cultivating leadership; communicating the big picture; encouraging diversity; improving technology; and advocating for support, we believe the Association's mission helps to advance the University's mission.

And, we welcome the opportunity to continue to work with you to build and strengthen that partnership.

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Thank you for your time and attention, and most of all, for your continued support of the University of Illinois Alumni Association.