



ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
*Illinois' first public university*

# Director of Emergency Management

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

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2026



# Director of Emergency Management

## LEADERSHIP PROFILE

This leadership profile is intended to provide information about Illinois State University and the position of the director of Emergency Management. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest in this position.

# About Illinois State University

**O**n February 18, 1857, Illinois Gov. William Bissell signed a bill creating a normal school and establishing the Board of Education of the state of Illinois as its governing body. The bill stipulated that the permanent location would be the place that offered the most favorable inducements. Jesse W. Fell took up the campaign for Bloomington and obtained financial backing totaling \$141,000. Abraham Lincoln, acting as attorney for the board, drew up the bond guaranteeing the Bloomington citizens would fulfill their financial pledges. Illinois State University was consequently founded as the first public institution of higher education in the state.

Established as a teacher education institution, Illinois State has developed into a multipurpose university with degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Seven colleges offer approximately 191 undergraduate majors, 110 master's programs, 20 doctoral degrees, and 42 certificate options. One of 12 public universities in Illinois, the alumni base has now grown to more than 243,000.

In fall 2025, Illinois State welcomed its largest freshman class in university history and enrolled a total of 21,994 students. Illinois State's students appreciate the average 19:1 student-faculty ratio. Professors teach in the classroom, mentor, and partner with both undergraduates and graduates in research endeavors. Within the faculty, 98% hold a terminal degree in their field. Students return to campus and progress through their degree programs, as shown by

the University's high fall 2024 to fall 2025 retention rate of new, full-time, first-time-in-college students of 81.9%. Illinois State is also praised for providing an affordable education, with *Washington Monthly* honoring the University as one of the Best Bang for the Buck Colleges in the Midwest. There are many other reasons that reveal Illinois State's competitive advantage as a premier undergraduate institution—from record-breaking fundraising to student civic engagement and scholarly breakthroughs. Each explains the reason Illinois State University is “Redbird Proud.”

Illinois State affirms and encourages community belonging and a respect for differences. The University fosters an inclusive environment characterized by cultural understanding and engagement, ethical behavior, and a commitment to social justice. The University supports a diverse faculty and staff who mentor a diverse student population. The institution endeavors to provide opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to participate productively in a global society and be civically engaged.

Campus diversity at Illinois State increasingly reflects the nation's changing demographics. In fall 2025, nearly 44% of new, full-time, first-time-in-college students came from traditionally underrepresented groups. Students are mentored by a faculty that includes numerous teacher-scholars recognized at national and international levels, all dedicated to superior teaching.





# Community

Illinois State is in the Central Illinois community of Bloomington-Normal, which has a combined population of 132,000. The community is home to Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, Carle BroMenn Medical Center, Rivian Motors, COUNTRY Financial, and State Farm Insurance Corporate Headquarters. The community has distinguished itself for its outstanding school systems and educational attainment, parks and recreation, health care, job growth, economic opportunity, and low crime. The University's hometown was ranked as one of the top three [best college towns in America](#) based on its affordability and safety, while its entertainment scene, community, and quality of life are listed as reasons it also ranks as one of the [Best Places to Live in the United States](#).

There are plentiful activities, cultural events, and entertainment opportunities for students and staff locally, with more opportunity to explore nearby. Normal is centrally located in Illinois, making it possible to drive or catch a train to major cities such as Chicago, St. Louis, and Indianapolis. All are within two to three hours from campus. Public transportation systems make the

community easily accessible, with a train and bus station within a few blocks of campus. There is also a regional airport with free parking that removes many of the hassles of flying. For more information on our community, please visit [visitbn.org](http://visitbn.org).

Ranked the No. 3 Best Small City for Job-Seeking College Grads, Bloomington-Normal offers multiple opportunities for students upon graduation. Illinois State partners with companies in the area, including State Farm Insurance and COUNTRY Financial—both with headquarters in the community—to provide internships and employment.

There are ample leisure activities as well, with five public golf courses in the area, several lakes, and the 45-plus miles of the hard-surfaced Constitution Trail. Converted from an abandoned railroad, the trail is bustling with individuals walking, biking, running, and blading. There are numerous restaurants and shops to visit as well. Uptown Normal is home to locally owned retail outlets with quality products and delectable food. There are unique movies, concerts, theatrical performances, and festivals to attend in every season.



# Academics

**I**llinois State University is currently composed of seven academic colleges and Milner Library, each of which contains academic departments and centers designed to provide—singly and collectively—a comprehensive and robust academic experience for students. The University’s academic programs are supported by the services and collections of Milner Library.

**College of Applied Science and Technology** houses the Department of Agriculture, Department of Criminal Justice Sciences, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Department of Health Sciences, School of Information Technology, School of Kinesiology and Recreation, Department of Military Science, and Department of Technology. The college also includes several significant centers, including the University Farm; Horticulture Center; the Child Care Center; and Illinois State’s well-known Gamma Phi Circus, the nation’s oldest collegiate circus.

**College of Arts and Sciences** houses 16 departments and offers many majors and minors at the undergraduate level. Some of these programs are interdisciplinary, including African American Studies; Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and Latin American and Latina/o Studies. Many departments have graduate programs leading to master’s and doctoral degrees. The college houses many of Illinois State’s study abroad opportunities, the Center for Child Welfare and Adoption Studies, and the University’s NPR radio station, WGLT.

**College of Business** is known for its comprehensive undergraduate programs, highly regarded master’s programs, and the

outstanding accomplishments of its alumni. It is one of only 188 business colleges in the world to hold both business and accounting accreditation by AACSB International. It is also the only college of business in a public university in Illinois that has earned STEM designation for all its master’s programs.

**College of Education** prepares early childhood through middle-level teachers, special educators, and administrators in addition to partnering with departments across the University to offer teacher education programs in a wide variety of academic programs and areas of study. With 44 accredited teacher education programs and offerings at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels, Illinois State remains true to its founding as Illinois State Normal University, specializing in teacher education. The College of Education is also home to Metcalf and University High School Laboratory Schools serving approximately 1,000 students.

**College of Engineering** enrolled its first cohort of students in fall 2025 with an initial offering of electrical, mechanical, and general engineering degree programs. The college is uniquely designed with a vision of student success, inclusive excellence, and workforce development. Leveraging Illinois State’s reputation as a student-focused institution, the College of Engineering prepares students for success by melding theory and practice in core engineering disciplines and innovative cross-disciplinary experiences.

**Mennonite College of Nursing** offers nursing degrees at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels. Building on the rich history of nursing education at Mennonite College, established in 1919, the College of Nursing was incorporated

into the University in 1999 as Illinois State’s sixth academic college. The college is proud of NCLEX and FNP pass rates consistently exceeding state and national averages and offers a state-of-the-art Nursing Simulation Center with a range of clinical placements that prepare students to practice in a complex healthcare system.

**Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts** includes the School of Music; School of Theatre, Dance, and Film; and the School of Creative Technologies. University Galleries, the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Theatre for Young Audiences, the String Project, and the Big Red Marching Machine are also housed within the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts. Notable alumni include Jane Lynch, Sean Hayes, Brendan Hunt, Nicolas Africano, LaRoyce Hawkins, Gary Cole, Judith Ivey, Terry Kinney, John Malkovich, Laurie Metcalf, Jeff Perry, Cecilia Suárez, and Michelle Williams.

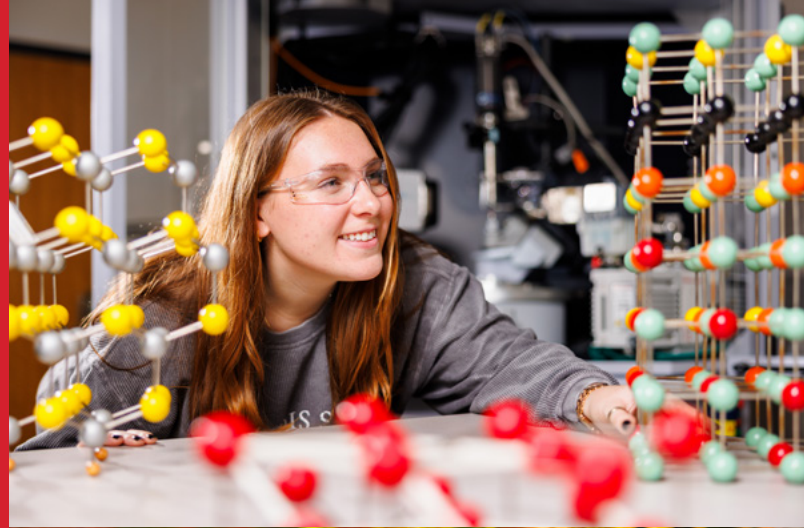
**Milner Library** personnel work closely with academic units to provide services and research materials across the academic spectrum. Subject liaisons collaborate with faculty in all colleges, schools, and departments on information fluency instruction, collection management, and research assistance. Group study areas, quiet floors, collaboration stations, and a technology-rich environment support varied student learning styles. Library resources support textbook affordability initiatives, open-access publishing, and primary source research. Milner is home to distinctive collections in Special Collections and the University Archives as well as a Federal Depository Collection of government information beginning in 1858.

# Strategic Plan

The University's strategic plan, *Excellence by Design: 2024-2030*, approved by the Board of Trustees in the spring of 2024, is a shining example of the University's commitment to shared governance, with faculty, staff, students, and campus stakeholders playing an active role in contributing to the creation of the document. Guided by a strong foundational design and building on our past strategic plan, *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State: 2018-2023*, the plan emphasizes Illinois State's commitment to excellence through continued improvement to shape an exciting future.

*Excellence by Design: 2024-2030* lists our seven core values: Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship; Individualized Attention; Equity, Diversity, Access, and Belonging; Collaboration; Community and Civic Engagement; Respect; and Integrity. By acting on these values, we create a learning environment that results in our university being the first-choice public university in Illinois for high-achieving, motivated students who seek an individualized educational experience combined with the resources of a large university.

With its four strategic directions—Cultivate a Culture of Success and Belonging, Foster a Culture of Responsible Stewardship, Elevate Our Institutional Excellence, and Expand Mutually Beneficial Partnerships—*Excellence by Design: 2024-2030* serves as a practical guide for all units within the University for planning and resource allocation decisions. This plan guides Illinois State as it forges a new educational path across the next six years.



# ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

# METRICS OF

# Excellence



## FIRST-CHOICE INSTITUTION

Illinois State has welcomed our largest freshman class in history. We enroll 21,994 students, while maintaining academic quality and small class sizes.



## BANG FOR THE BUCK

Illinois State is ranked among the top universities for return on investment. *U.S. News & World Report* recognized the University as one of the Best Value Schools in the nation, and *Washington Monthly* included the University on the Best Bang for the Buck list in the Midwest. In addition, the University was also ranked among the top 30% of four-year higher education institutions for graduates' return on investment.



## HIGH RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

Illinois State students complete their degrees on time. Illinois State's retention rate remains among the highest in the nation at over 81.9%, and our high graduation rate (67.3%) is well above the national average.



## TOP PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

*Washington Monthly* ranked the University in the top 106 out of all public national universities for the institution's contribution to the public good through social mobility, research, and public services. Illinois State made *U.S. News & World Report's* 2026 rankings of America's top public schools, at No. 122. In addition, the University was ranked in the upper echelon of *Money's* 2024 list of Best Colleges in America for quality education and affordability.



## DIVERSE CAMPUS

Illinois State provides accessible opportunity and increasingly reflects the nation's changing demographics. In fall 2025, nearly 44% of new,



## RECORD FUNDRAISING

Illinois State University raised more than \$44.5 million in private support, reaching its highest private support total in university history. Through these donations, more than 4,640 scholarships were awarded last fiscal year.



## TOP COLLEGE TOWN

The University's hometown ranks as one of the top three best college towns in America based on its affordability and safety, while its entertainment scene, community, and quality of life are listed as reasons it also ranks as one of the Best Places to Live in the United States.



## MILITARY FRIENDLY SCHOOL

Illinois State supports veterans and those in the military. We are ranked a top 10 Military Friendly School by VIQTORY.



## CIVICALLY ENGAGED CAMPUS

Illinois State's campuswide commitment to our core value of civic engagement has earned us recognition with the Elective Classification for Community Engagement, as an Excellence and Innovation Award for Civic Learning and Community Engagement recipient, and as a Voter Friendly Campus.



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# Student Affairs

## Mission

We support Redbirds in achieving their personal and professional potential by providing holistic care, promoting healthy behaviors, addressing barriers to success, developing leadership skills, and inspiring civic engagement.

## Vision

We equip Redbirds with the wisdom and skills to lead meaningful lives and transform communities for the better.

## Divisional values

Our mission is guided by divisional values that amplify student voices and align with the University's core values.

- **Excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship:** We value our roles as educators and learners. This value is exemplified in providing robust hands-on experiences and the capacity to integrate learning across experiences over time.
- **Individualized attention:** We value the well-being, growth, needs, and success of each person. This value is exemplified in our commitment to developing and delivering experiences tailored to providing purposeful assistance, advocacy, and support.
- **Equity, diversity, access, and belonging:** We value and embrace the richness of human diversity by prioritizing inclusion across policies, programs, services, and spaces. This value is exemplified by our commitment to equitable opportunities and fostering a community that celebrates varied perspectives, ideas, and cultures.
- **Community and civic engagement:** We value every individual's contribution to their communities. This value is exemplified by creating and supporting

opportunities for individuals to advance their knowledge and skills, enact their values in partnership with the community, and create a more just and equitable world.

- **Respect:** We value the contributions and perspectives of others. This value is exemplified in our words and behaviors, built on a foundation of care, cooperation, recognition, and civility.
- **Collaboration:** We value that our best comes from a team approach. This value is exemplified in our commitment to educate, communicate, and cultivate relationships that build and sustain mutually beneficial partnerships to achieve shared success.
- **Integrity:** We value the integration of ethics into personal and professional practice. This value is exemplified in our commitment to being accountable, authentic, consistent, and just.

## Strategic plan priorities

How we invest in our campus community to achieve our mission, vision, and values.

- Empower students to shape their Redbird experience
- Strengthen community, well-being, and safety
- Build a strong infrastructure for onboarding, retaining, and developing staff
- Cultivate stronger connections with Student Affairs and campuswide partnerships
- Uphold equity as a systemic practice
- Harness technology and data to maximize effectiveness



To learn more about these priorities: visit [studentaffairsstrategicplan2024.my.canva.site](https://studentaffairsstrategicplan2024.my.canva.site).



# The opportunity

Illinois State University seeks a strategic and mission-oriented collaborator and leader committed to the mission, vision, and values outlined in the University's strategic plan to serve as director for Emergency Management within the Division of Student Affairs. The director reports to the vice president for Student Affairs and serves on the Student Affairs Council, which includes directors from across the division. Together, the council reviews and provides guidance on policies, procedures, and initiatives affecting students, staff, and the broader work of Student Affairs.

The director is the University's leader advancing the vision and strategic direction for the University's comprehensive, all-hazards emergency management program. The director leads a dynamic team of three full-time employees and approximately 20 student employees. This position is ideal for a future-focused leader who thrives on shaping comprehensive strategies and fostering collaborative on-and off-campus partnerships to enhance the University's resiliency.

The director will provide visionary leadership to drive the strategic direction of the University's emergency management program. This includes leading comprehensive strategic planning, operational planning, and assessment

initiatives to ensure alignment with applicable laws, institutional policies, and priorities outlined in university and divisional strategic plans, and to meet the needs of students, faculty, staff, and guests. The director will also oversee the department's budget and budget forecasting. Furthermore, the director will serve as the University's lead advocate and ambassador for emergency management-related initiatives, collaborating closely with internal stakeholders and external partners to enhance the institution's capabilities before, during and after emergencies occur.

Finally, the director will lead the University's Incident Management Team, which coordinates the University's response to and recovery from major events, incidents, and emergencies.

This position will lead and serve on an extensive range of university committees, task forces, and ad hoc committees.

This role offers a unique opportunity to lead transformative initiatives that enhance the institution's ability to be ready for all threats and hazards. As part of a collaborative team, the director will have the autonomy to innovate and drive positive change while contributing to the overall success and vitality of our institution.

# Opportunities and personal qualities

The successful candidate will bring broad-based emergency management leadership experience (ideally some within higher education) with increasing levels of responsibility, including supervision of staff, and will be a person of the highest integrity with a collegial style that engenders trust and inspires collaboration. The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate a commitment to consultation and consensus building; an ability to represent the department, division, and

university with tact and diplomacy, possess high emotional intelligence, sensitivity, independent judgment, and an ability to uphold confidentiality on all matters. The candidate must uphold institutional and divisional values of excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship; individualized attention; equity, diversity, access, and belonging; collaboration; respect; community and civic engagement; and integrity.

# Required qualifications

- Bachelor's degree.
- Minimum of seven years of progressively responsible professional experience in emergency management or a closely related field, with demonstrated responsibility for comprehensive emergency management functions, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Demonstrated experience supervising and developing professional staff, including hiring, performance management, coaching, and team leadership.
- Illinois (or other state) Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) certification or acquired within two years of employment.
- Demonstrated expertise in emergency management and disaster planning, including the ability to lead preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts and apply NIMS, FEMA guidance, and other nationally recognized emergency management frameworks and protocols.
- Knowledge of federal, state, and local regulations, policies, and practices related to emergency management.
- Valid driver's license.
- Ability to report to the Normal campus within 30 minutes of notification during emergency situations and critical incidents. This position is on call 24/7 for emergencies.

# Preferred qualifications

- Degree in emergency management, homeland security, fire science, criminal justice, public administration, public safety administration, business continuity, risk management, environmental health and safety, or a related field.
- Master's degree.
- Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) or Professional Emergency Manager (PEM).
- Higher education emergency management experience.
- Experience leading emergency management programs in complex organizations such as universities, healthcare systems, municipalities, government agencies, or large corporations.

## LEADERSHIP

# Levester (LJ) Johnson, Vice President for Student Affairs

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**T**he Vice President for Student Affairs provides leadership for a wide range of educationally purposeful programs and services that foster personal and professional growth, healthy behaviors, leadership development, and civic engagement.

Dr. Levester Johnson became the vice president for Student Affairs in July of 2016. Johnson has over 40 years of experience within student affairs including over 25 years at the vice president level. He has held numerous leadership positions within professional organizations, including NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, where he served as the first chair of the board of directors and was

recognized as a Pillar of the Profession. A native of Milwaukee, Johnson holds a B.A. degree in broadcast communications from Marquette University, a M.S. degree in college student personnel from Southern Illinois University, and an Ed.D. degree in higher education administration from Indiana University.

Johnson has also been recognized throughout higher education for his innovative and effective use of social media in engaging campus communities. He is often asked to speak on the topic of social media within the U.S. and abroad.

# Nominations and applications

Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. To submit a nomination, please send an email to [cclotz@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:cclotz@IllinoisState.edu); be sure to include the nominee's full name, title, position, and email address. Those who are considering applying are encouraged to request a confidential conversation with:

**Cindy Lotz**

Director of Executive Search Services

(309) 438-7487

[cclotz@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:cclotz@IllinoisState.edu)

**Apply on the**

[Illinois State University Jobs website.](#)

**Each application should include the following materials:**

- A detailed **cover letter** expressing interest in the opportunity at Illinois State University and explaining how you meet the qualifications and expectations of the position.
- A current, full **curriculum vita** that includes relevant responsibilities and accomplishments.
- A list of **three to four professional references** (including name, title, email address, and professional connection).

The position is open until filled. Priority consideration will be given to candidates whose materials are received by **October 11, 2026**.



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Illinois State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and anti-harassment. Illinois State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, order of protection, gender identity and expression, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, unfavorable military discharge, or status as a veteran in employment, educational programs and activities, or admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed by contacting the director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access by email at [EqualOpportunity@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:EqualOpportunity@IllinoisState.edu), by calling (309) 438-3383, or by mailing to the office at Illinois State University, Campus Box 1280, Normal, IL 61790.