

Executive Director

for Well-being *and* Recreation

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

FALL 2024



ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Illinois' first public university

A large, dark metal bell is the central focus, mounted on a heavy, dark metal tripod stand. The sun is setting directly behind the bell, creating a bright starburst effect and casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. In the background, there are lush green trees with some autumn-colored foliage, a red brick building, and a few people walking on a path. A black lamppost with a white globe is visible on the left. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

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LEADERSHIP PROFILE

This leadership profile is intended to provide information about Illinois State University and the position of Executive Director for Well-being and Recreation. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest in this position.

About Illinois State University

On 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 multi-purpose university with degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Seven colleges offer approximately 174 undergraduate majors, 97 master's programs, 17 doctoral degrees, and 40 certificate options. One of 12 public universities in Illinois, the alumni base has now grown to more than 220,000. Our new strategic plan, *Excellence by Design: 2024-2029*, 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. In fall 2023, Illinois State welcomed its largest freshman class in 36 years and enrolled a total of 20,989 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 percent hold a terminal degree in their field. Additional examples of excellence include Illinois State placing in the top 100 on the 2024 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Value Schools-National Universities rankings. Students return to campus and complete their degrees, as shown by the fact the University's retention rate is among the highest in the nation at 81.3 percent. Graduation rates are more than 66 percent, which is well above the national average. 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 the 2022-2023 academic year, 37 percent of the freshman class came from traditionally underrepresented groups. Over the past five years, there has been a 14 percent increase in African American students and a 9 percent increase in Latinx students. Students are mentored by a faculty that includes numerous teacher-scholars recognized at national and international levels, all dedicated to superior teaching.

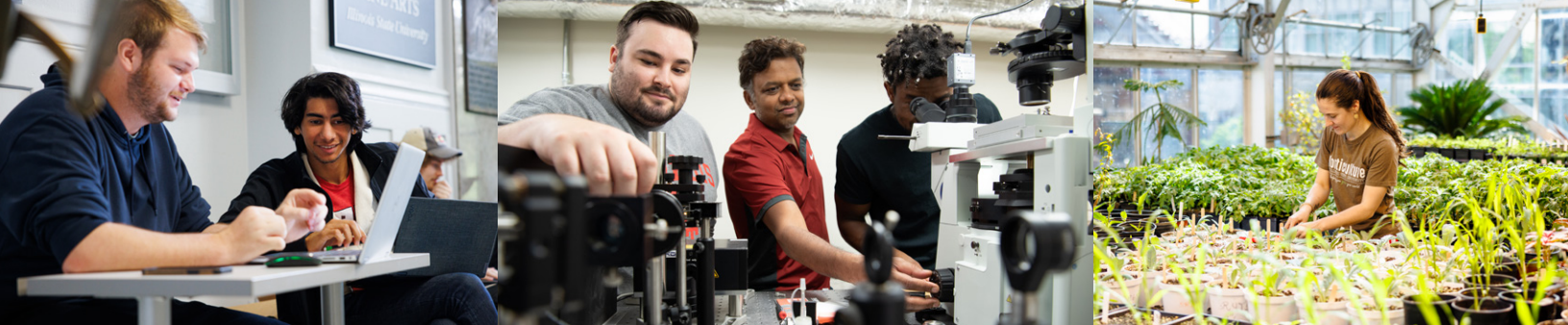




Community

Illinois State University is located in the growing twin cities of Bloomington and Normal, with a metro population of approximately 172,000. The community is also home to Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, St. Joseph Medical Center, Carle BroMenn Medical Center, COUNTRY Financial, State Farm Insurance's International Headquarters, Central Illinois Regional Airport, and electric truck manufacturer Rivian Motors. The community has distinguished itself for its outstanding school systems, and its citizens' high level of educational attainment, as well as its parks and recreation, health care, vibrant fine arts scene, job growth, economic opportuni-

ty, historic sites, and low crime rates. Bloomington made Livability's top 100 Best Places to Live (2024) and ranked No. 3 on College Values Online's list of Best Small College Towns in America (2024). Bloomington-Normal is conveniently located about three hours from Indianapolis; two hours from both Chicago and St. Louis; and an hour from Peoria, Champaign-Urbana, Decatur, and Springfield. Many of these locations are accessible from Bloomington-Normal via Amtrak, which is located one block from Illinois State's campus. For more information on our community, visit visitbn.org.



Academics

Illinois State University is currently comprised 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. Degrees are offered at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Secondary education students major in their academic disciplines while completing their teacher preparation requirements under the auspices of the Council for Teacher Education. The University's academic programs are supported by the services and collections of Milner Library.

College of Applied Sciences and Technology houses the Departments and Schools of Agriculture, Criminal Justice, Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Sciences, Information Technology, Kinesiology and Recreation, Military Science, and Technology. The college also includes several significant centers, including the University Farm; the Center for Civic Engagement; 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 radio station WGLT.

College of Business is known for its comprehensive undergraduate programs and its highly rated MBA program. It is one of only 188 business schools in the world to have both business and accounting accreditation by AACSB International and is recognized as one of the best choices for earning an MBA, according to the 2018 Edition of the Best Business Schools published by Princeton Review.

College of Engineering anticipates enrolling its first cohort of students in Fall 2025 with an initial offering of electrical, mechanical, and general engineering degree programs. The college will be uniquely designed with a vision of student success, diversity, and workforce development. Leveraging Illinois State's reputation as a student-focused institution, the College of Engineering will prepare students for success by melding theory and practice in core engineering disciplines and innovative cross-disciplinary experiences.

College of Education partners 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 Thomas Metcalf and University High School Laboratory Schools serving approximately 1,000 students.

Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts includes the Wonsook Kim School of Art, the School of Music, the School of Theatre and Dance, and the Program in Creative Technologies. University Galleries and Illinois Shakespeare Festival are also housed within the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts. Notable alumni include Nicholas Africano, Gary Cole, Sean Hayes, Judith Ivey, Terry Kinney, Jane Lynch, John Malkovich, Laurie Metcalf, Jeff Perry, Cecilia Suarez, and Michelle Williams.

Mennonite College of Nursing offers nursing degrees at the bachelor'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 Lab with diverse clinical placements that prepare students to practice in a complex healthcare system.

Milner Library staff includes subject librarians who work closely with academic units to provide learning and research materials across the academic spectrum. Group study areas, quiet floors, collaboration stations, and a technology-rich environment support varied student learning styles. While the availability of electronic resources grows at a rapid rate, Milner is still home to 1.4 million physical volumes and the University Archives.

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

METRICS OF

Excellence



FIRST-CHOICE INSTITUTION

Illinois State has welcomed our largest freshman class in 36 years. We enroll more than 20,900 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 percent of four-year higher education institutions for graduates' return on investment.



HIGH RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

Illinois State students complete their degrees on time. ISU's retention rate remains among the highest in the nation at over 81.3 percent, and our high graduation rate (66.3 percent) 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* 2024 rankings of America's top public schools, at No. 112. 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. We enrolled our most diverse

freshman class in school history this year with 41 percent of these students and nearly 32 percent of the total student population coming from traditionally underrepresented groups.



RECORD FUNDRAISING

Illinois State University raised more than \$34 million in private support, reaching its third highest private support total in university history. Through these donations, more than 3,350 scholarships were awarded last fiscal year and 76 new scholarships were created.



TOP COLLEGE TOWN

The University's hometown ranks as one of the top 3 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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The Executive Director for Well-being *and* Recreation

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 executive director for well-being and recreation (ED) in the Division of Student Affairs. The ED reports to the associate vice president for Student Affairs, serves as a member of the senior leadership team, and assists with the direction and operations of the division in providing educationally purposeful programs, services, and facilities that foster student development, retention, and success.

The Executive Director (ED) plays a pivotal role in advancing the vision and strategic direction for campus-wide well-being and recreation initiatives. Leading a dynamic team, the ED oversees a portfolio encompassing Campus Recreation, Health Promotion and Wellness, Student Counseling Services, Student Health Services, and Redbird Esports. This position is ideal for a future-focused leader who thrives on shaping comprehensive strategies and fostering collaborative partnerships to enhance student and community well-being.

The Executive Director (ED) will provide visionary leadership to drive the strategic direction of well-being and recreation efforts across the division. This includes leading comprehen-

sive strategic planning, goal setting, and assessment initiatives to ensure alignment with institutional priorities outlined in the strategic plans for the university and the division and to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff. The ED will also oversee the short- and long-term financial model supporting programs, services, facilities, and operations within the portfolio. Furthermore, the ED will serve as a prominent advocate and ambassador for well-being and recreation initiatives, collaborating closely with internal stakeholders and external partners to enhance their visibility and impact on campus.

As a member of the senior leadership team, the ED will assume responsibility for the planning, coordination, and facilitation of various division projects, research, and/or initiatives as assigned by the associate vice president or vice president in addition to representing the interests of the division and the Division of Student Affairs 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 holistic well-being of our campus community. As part of a collaborative team, the ED will have the autonomy to innovate and drive positive change while contributing to the overall success and vitality of our institution.



Qualifications *and* Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will bring broad-based student affairs and/or higher education administration experience 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, along with an enthusiasm for the management of designated departments and enhancement of student life at Illinois State University. The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate a commitment to consultation and consensus building, an ability to represent the division with tact and diplomacy, high emotional intelligence, sensitivity, independent judgment, and an ability to uphold confidentiality on all matters. 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:

1. Master's degree in higher education administration, public health, counseling, psychology, business administration, recreation, or related field.
2. Minimum of seven or more years of progressively responsible leadership experience in student affairs, health promotion, counseling, recreational programming, or health services within a higher education setting.
3. Demonstrated knowledge of best practices in well-being, mental health, and recreational services.
4. Extensive knowledge of best practices in talent development, including recruitment, performance management, employee relations, and compliance with labor laws.
5. Strong interpersonal, communication, and collaboration skills with the ability to work effectively with diverse stakeholders.
6. Demonstrated track record working with cross-divisional committees or initiatives.
7. Experience in strategic planning, budget management, and program evaluation.
8. Commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive campus environment that prioritizes student success and well-being.

Preferred Qualifications:

1. Advanced degree in public health, health care administration, psychology, education, social work, or related field.
2. Active in related professional associations.
3. Experience in facility operations and design, including the ability to integrate facility design and operations with organizational strategies to enhance workplace efficiency, safety, and employee well-being.

LEADERSHIP

Levester (LJ) Johnson, Vice President for Student Affairs



The 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, WI, 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.

LEADERSHIP

Danielle Miller-Schuster, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs



The Associate Vice President provides leadership for division-wide strategic planning, ensuring the delivery of educationally purposeful programs, services, and facilities that cultivate student and staff development, retention, and success.

Dr. Danielle Miller-Schuster began her career at Illinois State in 1998. She became Assistant Vice President in 2014 and Associate Vice President in 2022. Her executive portfolio includes a wide range of areas, including Campus Recreation, Career Services, Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality, Health Promotion and Wellness, Professional Development and Staff Recognition, Redbird Esports, Student Affairs Advancement and Constituent Relations, Student Affairs Assessment and Data Analytics, Student Counseling Services, and Student Health Services.

Earning three degrees from Illinois State, Miller-Schuster holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Political Science, a Master of Science Degree in College Student Personnel Administration, and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Foundations.

Her contributions have been recognized with several awards, including Illinois State University's Civic Engagement Award, the College of Education's College Student Personnel Administration Alumnus of the Year, the Neal R. Gamsky Quality of Student Life Award, and the University's Administrative Professional Distinguished Service Award.

Miller-Schuster currently serves as a member of the AVP Steering Committee for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), where she co-chaired the 2023 AVP Symposium and served as a faculty member for the 2024 New AVP Institute. She will join the faculty again in 2025.



Procedure

FOR CANDIDACY

We invite inquiries, nominations, and applications. Initial review of applications will begin on August 11, 2024 and continue until the position is filled. Candidates should provide a letter of interest that addresses the position responsibilities and qualifications described in this leadership profile, a current résumé or curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information for at least three (3) professional references. These materials should be submitted electronically via Illinois State University's application portal.

The direct link to apply is:

<https://jobsearch.illinoisstate.edu/en-us/job/519040/executive-director-for-wellbeing-and-recreation>

Questions and nominations may be directed to Tracy Willet,
Executive Administrative Associate, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, at
tbwille@ilstu.edu or (309) 438-7221.





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