

Message from the Executive Director



The Institute for Public Affairs began the fiscal year by opening its new Office of Policy and Administrative Studies (OPAS), a goal we had been pursuing for several years. With a focus primarily on state executive branch agencies, the office complements the activities of the Institute's Illinois Legislative Studies Center and Center for Legal Studies. The IPA now has research and service units for each branch of government — executive, legislative, and judicial. OPAS faculty and staff were largely responsible for the Institute's 47.5 percent increase in external funds from fiscal year 1998 to fiscal year 1999.

In early October 1998, we learned that the Institute had been awarded a highly competitive Community Outreach Partnership grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Funding, which extends over a three-year period, is enabling the campus to work with The Springfield Project, the Springfield Urban League, and Lincoln Land Community College to carry out four types of activities on Springfield's east side: neighborhood revitalization; home ownership and housing

code enforcement; microenterprise development; and community empowerment.

We also elevated our position in the technological age with the addition of several online training initiatives. Funded by a contract from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, faculty and staff of the Center for Legal Studies put two course sequences online — the Career Specialist 12 credit-hour program and the Employment Specialist eight credit-hour program. In the past, the sequences had been offered using compressed video technology, which required students to attend class at specified times and locations. Now, workforce professionals and high school guidance counselors can log onto the programs on their own time and still get the same content and receive the same credit. In addition, the Institute offered its first online conference. For two weeks in November 1998, OPAS co-sponsored with the National Center for Public Productivity at Rutgers University a conference titled "National Public Sector Performance Management, Performance Improvement Online Conference."

Campaign finance remained on the Illinois Legislative Studies Center's research agenda and resulted in two new educational publications by Kent Redfield — "Show Me the Money," which succinctly describes trends in campaign contributions and "Stacking the Deck," which describes the ebb and flow of the campaign contribution history of various segments of Illinois' gambling industry. Working with faculty from the School of Social Work on the Urbana-Champaign campus, faculty and staff from OPAS and the Survey Research Office began a study, funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services, to find out what happened to former Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients after they left welfare. The Center for Legal Studies continued its research to determine if juvenile offenders have equal and proper access to legal counsel.

The Institute published the second edition of *Mostly Good and Competent Men*, a book profiling the lives of Illinois' 39 governors. *Illinois Issues* provided in-depth coverage of major statewide issues, such as blockage of foreign markets for genetically manipulated U.S.-grown corn and soybeans, state funding of the arts, and Illinois' Y2K preparations. The Television Office produced several new training video tapes, including *A Good Rule to Know*, a child sexual abuse prevention tape for the Sangamon County Child Advocacy Center; while WUIS/WIPA produced, in addition to its Statehouse coverage, its own in-depth series on rural health care issues and welcomed Brad Swanson, its former program director, as its new general manager.

Fiscal year 1999: It was a very good year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy L. Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy L. Ford