President Maimon’s Memo Reflects on Illinois State Budget

On Monday, June 4, Governor Bruce Rauner signed into law a state budget that fully funds higher education for the first time before the start of the fiscal year since 2014. The Governor's signature followed the General Assembly’s approval last week, prompting Governors State University President Elaine P. Maimon to issue a memo to the GSU community.

Read about the full spending plan and President Maimon’s comments to the Chicago Tribune here. Read her memo to the GSU community here.

President Maimon and State Senator Pat McGuire Speak Out on Higher Ed Funding in Illinois

On June 5, GSU President Elaine P. Maimon; Pat McGuire, Illinois State Senator and Chair of the Illinois Senate Higher Education Committee; and Eric Zarnikow, Executive Director of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, led a panel discussion on the topic of volatility of state spending in higher education during an academic research conference at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Maimon discussed the effects of the unprecedented Illinois budget impasse on Governors State, specifically as it has related to institutional decision-making.

https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADdqpB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fJdpB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAABUiTaVr4z8S2xt8
Peoria Public Radio also recently aired “Higher Ed Gets a Bipartisan Push,” a segment detailing a recently bill proposed by State Senator Chapin Rose (R) and backed by State Senator Pat McGuire (D). In the article, Senator McGuire states, “Elaine Maimon, the president of Governors State University, said, ‘Our biggest competitor is nowhere.’ We heard the same thing that day from Northeastern Illinois University and Northern Illinois University . . . and there was bipartisan jaw-dropping.”

Listen to the full segment.

The Power of Belonging and Support: A Key to Success for All Students

On June 12, Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, an internationally-recognized student success scholar, highly acclaimed public speaker, and award-winning writer, will present a keynote address, “The Power of Belonging and Support: A Key to Success for All Students.”

Dr. Strayhorn maintains an active and highly visible research agenda focusing on major policy issues in education: student access and achievement; issues of race, equity, and diversity; impact of college on students; and student learning and development. Strayhorn was named one of the country’s top diversity scholars by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education in 2011.

Seating is limited; RSVP by June 7. (For those who cannot make it, the event will also be streamed on the [GSU Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com)).

Funding for this keynote presenter is provided by GSU’s Equity Project, an AAC&U Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence initiative which is supported by Strada Education Network and Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates.

Family Development Center Enrolling Now
GSU’s Family Development Center is currently enrolling new children ages six weeks to twelve years. Learn more about the programs offered at the FDC, which include Early Head Start, Preschool, and after-school care.

Call 708.235.7300 for more information.

**Historic 2018 Commencement**

The trumpet fanfare that announced Governors State University’s 47th commencement on May 19 heralded a truly historic moment for more than 1,100 graduates at the Tinley Park Convention Center, making them part of one of the most singular events in GSU’s history.

For the first time ever, graduates receiving their baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degrees included members of GSU’s inaugural freshman class, those who had spent their entire four years of college at the university — the first fruit of a bold initiative successfully launched four years ago.

Read more . . .

**Honorary Degree Recipients Host Students**
GSU’s 2018 Honorary Degree Recipients—all examples to students, faculty, and staff—took time before Saturday’s commencement to talk with students in intimate Q&A sessions. In two invitation-only events, social activist Martin R. Castro and veteran reporting team Carol Marin and Don Moseley shared personal reflections, professional milestones, and a wealth of wisdom that left students grateful and inspired. 

Read more...

**Honors Transformational Leadership Seminar in Rome**

GSU students have returned to Rome to learn about leadership of ancient Rome, the Renaissance, the Popes, and modern leadership theories. Throughout their time in Europe, students had the opportunity to exercise their leadership skills and learn how to navigate a foreign country, building their self-confidence and resilience.
Follow the group on Facebook at [GSU Honors Study Abroad](https://www.facebook.com/GSU.Honors/) and [one student’s blog](https://example.com) documenting her experience studying in Rome.

**New Stock of Books on the Library Book Sale Shelves**

![Image of Used Book Sale]

Looking for some summer reading? Stop by the GSU Library Used Book Sale to check out newly added books.

“We very much appreciate the support of the GSU Community. The income that we raise from our used book sale goes directly to supporting your GSU Library,” offered Lydia Morrow Rutten, Dean of the GSU Library.

The Used Book Sale is open during library hours. Payment for the books is done on the honor system: deposit your money in the grey box to the left of the shelves. Hardcover books are $1, paperback nonfiction books are $0.75, children’s books, CDs, and DVDs are $0.50. Questions? Email [GSULibraryInfo@govst.edu](mailto:GSULibraryInfo@govst.edu).

**FINDING PLACE**

![Image of Library on Campus]
“All in the GSU Community are encouraged to visit the Skylight Gallery in the Library to enjoy the newest exhibit, FINDING PLACE by artist Sherri Denault,” announced Lydia Morrow Ruetten, Dean of the GSU Library. “Sherri Denault is a recent GSU graduate with an MFA, and our new Education and Outreach Coordinator working with Jeff Stevenson.”

“My inspiration is nature, meditation, thought, and the connection of all things,” said Sherri. “I am so pleased to have my artwork exhibited in the Library Skylight Gallery. My work is the meditative process and the calmness of my creativity. By exploring different media, I go on a creative journey that allows me a sense of play, mystery, and escape. I liken it to the same process of exploring books,” she said.

“Sherri’s works are very abstract and conceptual and give people an opportunity for pondering and questioning. This is one of the important values of looking at abstract art,” offered Jeff Stevenson, Director & Curator of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and Visual Arts Gallery. “We encourage students to come to the Skylight Gallery to study. By looking at this artwork, they can gain a fresh perspective on what they are studying,” he said.

The GSU Library Skylight Gallery is open during regular library hours. For more information, please write to GSULibraryInfo@govst.edu.

Announcements and Events

GSU Library Closed Morning of June 12

The GSU Library will be closed for a library staff communication workshop on the the morning of Tuesday, June 12, and will reopen to the community at 1 p.m.

Creating Art EN PLEIN AIR

![Image of an artist painting outdoors]

Take your art-making outside, and find a new level of inspiration! En plein air is the act of painting outdoors, but we welcome all art forms—drawing, painting, or even photography. Join us Friday, June 8, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the Lanleff Demeure No. 4 sculpture (Henri Etienne-Martin), situated in an oak savannah among the natural beauty of ancient oak trees, wooded paths, and diverse plant life.

Bring your own art supplies and equipment such as easels; some drawing horses will be provided. Lunch, included, will be on the patio of the Visual Arts Gallery and includes a “Strawberry Fields” salad and lemonade.

Cost of the event is $10, payable via cash or check. RSVP by June 6 to Sherri Denault.

First Dance

Dance can be a wonderful form of rehabilitation to heal both the body and mind. The Physical Therapy Student Association (PTSA) and the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) are excited to
announce that First Dance* will be coming to GSU on **Saturday, June 9** from noon – 4 p.m. in the Hall of Governors to instruct anyone who is interested in how to perform different types of ballroom dance. This can be adapted to any body type or ability level. There is NO physical requirement to attend and it is free to sign up. If you or a loved one have a mobility deficit (amputations, diabetic complications, neurological impairments, etc.) and are interested in experiencing the joy of dancing, please sign up at the link below. We are also welcoming volunteers to dance with those participants who do not bring a partner. Please sign up here as a participant or a volunteer.

*First Dance is one of 12 types of First Clinics run by the Orthotic and Prosthetics Activities Foundation. The First Clinics include adaptive tennis, golf, swimming, scuba, and so much more to bring those with mobility issues back to sports and activities that they may have thought lost to them in a safe and nurturing environment. All First Clinics are offered at no cost to any attendee.

**Prepare for the GRE at GSU School of Extended Learning**

Applying for graduate school? Attend an upcoming GRE Preparation Workshop hosted by the GSU School of Extended Learning from 9 a.m. – noon on Saturday, September 22 or 29; or October 6, 13, 20, or 27. The fee is $399 and includes textbook, practice tests, and all course materials. Deborah Perez will be the workshop instructor.

Registration Details: First, [sign in or create a new profile](#). Second, [register here](#).

For more information, please contact **Dr. Felicia L. Townsend**, Director of Corporate and Community Education (708.534.3044).

**Odyssey Project/Proyecto Odisea**

The Odyssey Project/Proyecto Odisea is a free, college-credit earning humanities program for income-eligible adults with limited or no access to higher education. El programa se da en inglés y en español. Classes begin September 18, 2018. Applications are due by September 1 (fecha límite para solicitar admisión es el 1 de septiembre). For more information, [visit the website](#)/Para más información [navega a la página web](#).

**Highlights**

**CAS Dean Profiled on American Historical Association Member Spotlight**

https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&l=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAAAdqdpB%2fHZ3ZeAFCLrwRE8wB%2fdqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9iAABUItaVt%2eZ2xt
Andrae Marak, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Dean of Graduate Studies, was recently featured on the AHA Member Spotlight. In the profile, Dean Marak describes his past and current research interests, which are primarily focused in the North American borderlands, and provides anecdotes on his experience as a historian.

[Read the AHA Member Spotlight.]

**Newly Appointed Associate Provost Rosemary Johnsen Speaks at NEH Discussion**

Rosemary Erickson Johnsen, former Professor of English and newly appointed Associate Provost, presented at the National Endowment for the Humanities’ recent panel discussion *Veterans Studies: Understanding Those Who Serve and the Experience of War*. In the discussion, Dr. Johnsen shared a reflection on her [2017 NEH-sponsored project](https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&l=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADdqqB%2f3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fRdqqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAABUJTaVh4z8S2x8), which explores and studies how war is commemorated in the humanities.

The grant supporting the project, which Dr. Johnsen co-authored with Andrae Marak, Dean of CAS, has been awarded again for the 2018–19 academic year.

**2018 Commencement: A Word of Thanks and Appreciation**

[https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&l=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADdqqB%2f3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fRdqqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAABUJTaVh4z8S2x8]
Karen Caesar, University Events Office Director and Commencement Coordinator, provided a note of thanks and appreciation to all in the GSU community who contributed to the success of the 2018 Commencement ceremonies.

Workshops & Trainings

A list of workshops for students, faculty, and staff, including the LGBTQ+ support group schedule and Career Services drop-in hours, can be found here. **Faculty:** If you have not already done so, it’s time to have a new headshot photograph taken. Please refer to the schedule to find a convenient time.

Do you have a story or event you want to submit for the GSU View? Click here to learn about our submission guidelines.

Governors State University
1 University Parkway,
University Park, Illinois 60484-0975
+1 (708) 534.5000
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University Park, IL, June 05, 2018

President Maimon Issues Memo, Reflects on FY 19 Budget

Date: June 1, 2018
To: GSU Community
From: Elaine P. Maimon, President
Re: Approval of Appropriations for FY19

The General Assembly passed a budget for FY19 on May 31, and Governor Rauner has indicated that he will sign it. Funds have been appropriated for the public universities at a 2% increase over FY18. You may recall that FY18 funding represented a 10% decrease of FY 15 funding—the year prior to the budget impasse and the annual appropriation that public university leadership considered to be a base. In fact, the public university presidents lobbied strenuously for FY15 funding. The current appropriation is an 8% decrease from FY15 and, we fear, establishes a new normal.

Nonetheless, we appreciate being able to plan based on a full-year appropriation. Predictability is essential to every successful enterprise, and we are grateful that the General Assembly and the Governor have honored that principle. We celebrate the hard work and openness of the bipartisan, bicameral Working Group on Higher Education. These state senators and representatives invited a wide range of administrators in admissions, marketing, and institutional research to Springfield to answer questions on issues facing the public universities. The GSU team did an outstanding job. In addition, we all owe many thanks to Maureen Kelly, GSU’s legislative liaison, who was on top of every issue, providing facts, documents, and background information to plead our cause.

We are also pleased to see a number of new laws that will assist us in educating students. One example is the four-year MAP commitment, which will allow us to recruit students for Fall 2019, with the assurance of four-year funding, dependent on successful performance.

Please watch future editions of the GSU View for more information on helpful laws presented by the Working Group and passed by the General Assembly.

Many thanks to students, faculty members, and staff who have lobbied in Springfield and in our communities. This work is having a positive effect, but we have much more to do.

Best wishes for a restorative summer. We begin the season with a sense of relief that we have a budget providing a necessary degree of security and sustainability.
University Park, IL, May 20, 2018

**Historic 2018 Commencement**

The trumpet fanfare that announced Governors State University (http://www.govst.edu/)’s (GSU) 47th commencement on May 19 heralded a truly historic moment for more than 1,100 graduates at the Tinley Park Convention Center, making them part of one of the most singular events in GSU’s history.

For the first time ever, graduates receiving their baccalaureate (https://gsunews.govst.edu/2018-baccalaureate-for-first-freshmen/master’s and doctoral degrees included members of GSU’s inaugural freshman class, those who had spent their entire four years of college at the university — the first fruit of a bold initiative successfully launched four years ago.

In 2014, GSU took the unprecedented step of expanding the upper-division university by adding underclassmen and welcoming its inaugural freshman class. (https://gsunews.govst.edu/gsu/) The following academic year, GSU achieved another milestone by welcoming students at all four undergraduate levels as well as graduate students.

On May 19, Commencement for the class of 2018 was as exuberant as it was historic. Graduates from the College of Business (COB) the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) and the College of Education (COE) received their degrees at a morning ceremony. (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/videos/10157618196054599/) while those from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) received theirs at an evening ceremony. Master of Ceremonies Tony Labriola, Professor Emeritus in CAS Division of Communication-Visual and Performing Arts opened both with a combination of celebratory joy and decorum.

Among those who received special recognition were graduates from the Honors Program (http://www.govst.edu/honors/), the Dual Degree Program (http://www.govst.edu/DDP) and those who have served in the U.S. military and their families (http://www.govst.edu/veterans/). Several speakers gave warm recognition to members of First Class 14, as freshmen were called four years ago.

“At GSU, we celebrate diversity,” said Patrick Ormsby, President of the Board of Trustees. “And today, we celebrate diversity of a different type. Today, we graduate the full spectrum of students, from students returning to school after years in the workforce all the way to our first class of graduates who began at GSU as freshman in the fall of 2014,” he said.

Faculty Senate President David Golland (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/videos/10157618904389569/), associate professor, echoed the sentiment with a touch of humor. “For 45 years, something was missing at GSU: that pitter-patter of 18-year-old feet,” he said.

“Like expectant parents, we prepared for the big day with great anticipation, developing curriculum, expanding and creating new programs, hiring new faculty. We built you a
house to live in, establishing Prairie Place, GSU’s first living-learning community, also known as ‘the dorm.’ We even created a mascot, (Jax the Jaguar).

“It has been such an immense pleasure, these last four years, to watch you grow, to become what you now are. And now, here you are,” Golland said.

Angela Hickey, of the GSU Alumni Association welcomed students to the "lifetime club" of more than 45,000 fellow graduates. "I believe everyone has opportunity to lead not by virtue of position, but by virtue of a passion. Share your passion with future GSU students and graduates,” she urged. “As graduates, we know firsthand the excellent education that await future students and how obtaining a GSU degree opens so many possibilities.”

Due to the historic nature of 2018 commencement, there were two student speakers at each ceremony including graduates from First Class ’14.

An overjoyed Justin Smith, graduating with his degree in entrepreneurship from the COB, kicked off his speech with the declaration: "We made it!"

He recalled the road he and fellow graduates had traveled from freshman to graduating senior. “In the first year, we had to wake up … and realize that we had to learn the unfamiliar place we were in and adapt,” he said.

"In the second year we had to stand up and let it be known that we were going to take on this pivotal time in life, and let it be known that we are here to stand together.

"In the third year, we had to tear down all the walls that would attempt to hinder us. We had to tear down old ways of thinking, and we had to tear down anything that would get in our way.

"And in the final year we had to build up! We had to build up the new foundation that we began to lay even in our first year. We have to build up a foundation for the next generation," Smith said.

"Because of our sacrifice, because of our discipleship and diligence, and because we endured, in this season we will reap. … Get ready, because of the seeds we have sown, it’s harvest time.”

Jamal McPherson, who earned his bachelor of science in criminal justice and was the first recipient of GSU’s Global Learning Scholarship, paused before he spoke to wipe away tears.

Using the “iceberg theory,” he said, “What you see is only 10 percent of it; 90 percent is under water.

“There are three major variables that are factored into the 90 percent. The first is the process—being present and aware to learn and enjoy the process. The second is letting go of fear … the fear of change, of failure, rejection, pain, doubt and criticism. We often times become our biggest barriers to success. The last salient variable is sacrifice. You will not gain something for nothing. Sacrificing time, unhealthy relationships, energy and money are all essential in growth.

“We have won the battle, the battle we fought to get where we are now, but we have yet to win the war. Today we will celebrate our victory, and tomorrow we will get back to work.”

At the evening ceremony, First Class 14 member Simone Jones said what resonated with her most was living in Prairie Place. “The sense of being part of a community gives you that extra push to be better and be a good role model for that community,” she said. “Although I wasn’t a formal leader on campus, I utilized the things I learned from my personal experiences and being a mentee of the Student Leadership Institute. I would always introduce myself to the underclass population in the dorms and offer my academic and mental support the best way I knew how. If I couldn’t help them, I would direct them to the proper authority figure or online resource that best met their needs. Just through these small gestures I learned that knowledge is power. The power of knowing gets things done effectively and promoted growth.”

Student speaker Jerry Davis-EL, who was receiving a master’s degree in social work, called himself "a product and proponent of GSU’s mission of
transformative education and restorative justice.” After a 16-year cycle of arrests and convictions for nonviolent offenses, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in social work from GSU, was named a student laureate by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois in Springfield for leadership and founded GSU’s Generating Hope, which provides support, mentoring and resources to formerly incarcerated students and their families.

At the evening ceremony, he thanked all those who had supported him along his incredible journey. “I am not in this by myself, and my fellow graduates, you are not in this by yourself,” he said. “Collectively, we can change the world for the better! Collectively we can change policies, dismantle racism, discrimination, poverty, racial profiling, sexual harassment, the abuse of power, privilege and entitlement and the list goes on! Collectively we can live out America’s principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Before offering words of advice to the Class of 2018, President Elaine P. Maimon acknowledged those whose foresight and support had helped bring GSU to this historic moment. “I want to give special thanks to former trustees, Jack Beaupre and Loraine Samuels, who chaired the Board of Trustees during the period of GSU’s transformation to a full-service, comprehensive university, and to our current Board Chair, Pat Ormsby. They exhibited their own lifelong learning by leading the university through this momentous period of change,” she said.

Dr. Maimon offered concise advice to graduates that would serve them all their lives: to keep learning and to help others. “Make us proud; make us better; make a difference,” she told them.

GSU’s 2018 honorary degree recipients represented decades of successful work toward maintaining a free and open society for all.

Award-winning television news reporter Carol Marin (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/videos/10157618875049569/) and producer Don Moseley (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/videos/10157618862069569/) received honorary degrees at the morning ceremony. Moseley spoke about the importance of teamwork, truth-speaking and lifting up others. “All of you are walking out into a world full of complicated issues,” he said. “The most important guidance I can give you is this: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Marin acknowledged the wonderful diversity of the GSU community and said that like many graduates, she and Moseley had been the first in their families to attend college. She urged them to find work they love. “We believe in the value of the work we do. It’s our jet fuel,” she said. “If you love what you do, it will be your jet fuel. Let this happen to you. If you so love what you do, it’ll propel you to do so much more and be so much more.”

At the evening event, social activist Martin R. Castro (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/videos/1015761965089569/) the first Latino to head the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, was awarded an honorary degree. The Jaguar inspires pride in him, Castro said.

“It’s this institution’s mascot. But as a proud Mexican-American, in my roots I have the Aztec empire. It has two warrior classes, the Eagle Knights and the Jaguar Knights. Today I stand before you as a fellow Jaguar Knight. They were noble, loyal, and persistent. And that’s what we shall be for all the people we represent.”
University Park, IL, May 20, 2018

Honorary Degree Recipients Host Students

Governors State University’s (http://www.govst.edu) (GSU) 2018 Honorary Degree Recipients—all examples to students, faculty, and staff—looked forward to Saturday’s commencement to talk with students in intimate Q &A sessions.


Marin and Moseley, an award-winning reporting team for more than 30 years, responded to questions on how to maintain the relevance and integrity of journalism, often attacked as “fake news” in the digital age.

“These two represent brilliance together as a team,” said Professor Yvette Brown, who called Marin and Moseley mentors and moderated Friday’s discussion (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/posts/10157617050374569).

Journalists, once limited to print or broadcast media, have watched newspaper after newspaper fade and television news stations implode. Meanwhile, social and other web-based media have exploded in popularity.

Still, journalism is alive and well, Marin said. “You are now on all platforms. You are going to tweet it, put it on Facebook. It’s everywhere. It’s not dead.” GSU President Elaine P. Maimon, who attended Friday’s session, said the university’s media program is evolving right alongside the industry. “We have to transform what we do in media education.”

Co-directors of a university-based media studies program, Marine and Moseley said they infuse a lesson on ethics in each journalism class they teach.

To preserve their own integrity and that of the craft, Moseley said reporters are obligated to question what officials report as truth. “You have to be able to challenge. Challenge everything,” he said.

“Hold it up to the light,” Marin added. “Does it meet the standard?”

They pose questions of their own to students who say they want to pursue journalism: “Can you do research? Can you pick up the phone and call somebody?” Moseley asked, adding a journalist’s skill set includes the ability to converse rather than text.

Across campus, Castro (https://www.facebook.com/govstate/photos/?tab=album&album_id=19157617094259569) and Associate Professor David Golland spent time with students seeking social justice careers.

Like Marin and Moseley, Castro was the first in his family to graduate college and for more than 30 years has sought to expose and correct injustices.

He, too, had faced difficult circumstances early on in his law career. As a young attorney at Baker McKenzie Chicago, the international law firm, he spoke out at a company meeting after learning a senior partner had made racist comments to a job applicant.
Saying the act had contrasted with the widespread acceptance he had experienced as a Latino at the firm, Castro recommended the man be fired. He admitted he feared losing his job but could not stay silent about discrimination. “The cost would be my soul,” he said. The firm took his advice.

For Castro, the call to challenge what he was being told also drove him to press forward for the rights of his own community and others.

He challenged a high school counselor’s advice to get a job at a local steel mill after graduation.

He went to college and ultimately obtained a law degree from the University of Michigan because he realized it was lawyers who were making many decisions that impacted his South Side neighbors.

In his lifetime, Castro has impacted millions of lives as the Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights appointed by President Obama in 2011 and before that as chair of the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Today, Castro is president of Castro Synergies, a consulting firm that advises corporations, entrepreneurs and nonprofit organizations on working with diverse communities and markets.

Senior Justin Smith thanked Castro for taking time and sharing experiences and context. “You can get data everywhere,” Castro said. “But it doesn’t teach you how the world works. The combination with experience is what’s important.”