

1-21-1997

01/21/1997 - Park Ridge Resident Reflects On First Year As EIU Trustee.pdf

University Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1997

Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "01/21/1997 - Park Ridge Resident Reflects On First Year As EIU Trustee.pdf" (1997). 1997. 26.

http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1997/26

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Press Releases at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1997 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

97-20

January 21, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PARK RIDGE RESIDENT REFLECTS ON FIRST YEAR AS
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE

PARK RIDGE -- Susan Gilpin knows the public universities in the state will have to work hard this spring to attract the attention of Illinois lawmakers already focused on the hot issue of adequately funding elementary and secondary schools.

Gilpin, the director of Planned and Major Gifts for the Children's Home & Aid Society of Illinois, is beginning her second year as a trustee for her alma mater, Eastern Illinois University. She said she and her fellow trustees are ready for the challenge of promoting legislative support for Eastern. Their first year is behind them, a "building" year that saw the establishment of new working relationships in the revamped higher education system.

"This first year has been extremely challenging," said Gilpin. "It has left me with a much greater appreciation of what it takes to run a university. Previously, I was not aware of all the constituencies who need to be considered in the decision-making process. I was also naive as to what extent political wranglings in

-more-

Springfield affected things like capital projects on college campuses."

Gilpin was one of seven new board members appointed to Eastern's board by Governor Edgar following the reorganization of Illinois public higher education in 1995. The new board began its term a year ago this month.

At that time, Gilpin viewed the adequate funding of Eastern as a top priority. She still does and is delighted that Eastern was recommended for the highest percentage budget increase of all the public universities for next year. As part of that proposed budget, Eastern would receive approximately \$350,000 for deferred maintenance, another priority of Gilpin's.

Gilpin points to Eastern's continued strong academic reputation and record enrollments as evidence of a smooth transition to a new board. Among board accomplishments this past year, she cites the signing of a three-year contract with Eastern's faculty union that provides pay increases designed to bring EIU salaries in line with those at peer institutions.

Under the new board, Eastern also raised admission standards and supported the passage of legislation that allows universities to retain their tuition revenues in local accounts. The board approved a \$3.8 million energy conservation overhaul that will save at least \$380,000 per year in utility costs, approved purchasing a new telecommunications system that lowered student long-distance charges and upgraded outdated equipment, and supported exploration of a campus-based child care center.

She said one of the board's most satisfying efforts was working with Eastern students to finance 11 campus improvement projects, including a food court, Internet access in the dorms and 24-hour computer labs. Students voted to repay any debt taken on by the board for the projects through student fee increases.

Gilpin graduated from Eastern in 1976 with a B.A. in English/journalism, and later earned the J.D. from The John Marshall Law School. Prior to her appointment at the Children's Home & Aid Society, she was a vice president at The Northern Trust Company of Chicago.

Gilpin is eager to continue the board's work in 1997 and increase Eastern's recognition and support throughout the state.

"I am proud to be a member of this board and feel that each board member takes their responsibility seriously," said Gilpin.