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EIU Foundation President Predicts Success for "EI&U: Expect Greatness" Campaign

Mar-16-2011

Although Eastern Illinois University formally launched its "EI&U: Expect Greatness" capital campaign just a few short months ago, the EIU Foundation predicts the campaign's success.

"We will achieve greatness," said Donald L. Gher, Foundation board president.

"We all recognize that in addition to the freezes and cutbacks in operational expenses, the Illinois budget crisis will continue to hinder the university's growth for many years to come. However, in this time of economic uncertainty, I'm encouraged by the gifts we continue to receive," he said.

"More than ever, we need to reach out to those who had their dreams fulfilled because of Eastern and who now may have the capacity to give back to the university. Through these efforts, we will continue the Eastern legacy of excellence, which has been so important to generations of its students."

Founded in 1953 under the leadership and direction of H. Ogden Brainard, the EIU Foundation has, since its inception, been dependent upon the generosity of its members to encourage and provide private support to the university, and to promote the ideals of volunteerism and philanthropy among alumni, friends and employees of the university. The Foundation, an Illinois not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, is a completely separate organization from the university and is defined by the state as a University Related Organization.

Foundation members come from a variety of backgrounds and professional areas, and include EIU alumni, annuitants, community leaders, and business and educational professionals.

With nearly 300 members, led by an 11-person board of directors, the EIU Foundation has committed its support to "EI&U: Expect Greatness," a university-wide capital campaign designed to raise \$50 million for student, faculty, facility and program support.

"Eastern has launched its long-awaited EI&U: Expect Greatness' Capital Campaign, which embodies the academic vitality, vision and culture that the university has so richly cultivated over the years," Gher continued. "Those of us closely associated with the university, the Foundation or the Alumni Association, already know about Eastern's ability to help its students defy expectations."

"It is a privilege to be associated with an institution whose purpose is to educate and develop the intelligence, character and integrity of our future leaders."

Gher, of Bellevue, Wash., is joined on the EIU Foundation board of directors by Floyd Akins of Columbus, Ohio; Jason Anselment, treasurer, of Springfield; Timothy Burke, secretary, of Evanston; David J. Maurer of Charleston; Sue C. Payton of Fairfax Station, Va.; Christine Reid Robertson of Naperville; Judith Sunderman, vice president, of Charleston; and Charles W. Witters of Las Vegas, Nev.

Also, Joseph Dively of Charleston and William Robinson of Scottsdale, Ariz., now serve as directors, having been newly elected this academic year. They replace retiring directors and past presidents Timothy D. Gover of Mattoon and Jeffrey G. Scott of Richmond Hill, Ga.

As a representative from the EIU Alumni Association, Julie Sterling of Charleston serves as the EIU Foundation board's newest ex officio member. (She joins Don Yost, EIU Board of Trustees; William Perry, president of EIU; Robert Martin, vice president for university advancement; and William Weber, vice president for business affairs.) Sterling replaces Gary Kling of Champaign, who retired from the post.

See [here](#) for more on the EIU Foundation.