

THE CENTERPIECE

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- **WUIS** has become a full partner in **Harvest Public Media**, a multi-state reporting effort funded by the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting**. Today's emerging agenda for agriculture is headlined by energy and climate change, food safety, biofuels, animal production, water quality, and local foods. By examining these issues from local, regional, and national perspectives, Harvest plans to offer a rich multimedia resource on "food, fuel, and field." WUIS will report the Illinois angle on subjects at the intersection of agriculture and the consumer. The lead station in the network is KCUR in Kansas City. Other full partners include Iowa Public Radio, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, and stations in Columbia, Missouri and Greeley, Colorado. The network recently broadcast a series of stories examining the beef industry.
- **Jonathan Moore**, whose case was handled by the Center's **Illinois Innocence Project**, was one of 22 exonerations for wrongful conviction in the United States in 2012, according to a report released recently by the **National Innocence Network**. Moore was serving out a 76-year prison sentence for murder and attempted murder when, in 2011, a witness came forward with new information demonstrating Moore's lack of involvement in the crime. The Illinois Innocence Project, together with the **Kane County State's Attorney** and the **Aurora Police**, reinvestigated the case, and all concluded that Moore could not have committed the murder. The Kane County State's Attorney presented a motion to vacate the conviction on March 6, 2012, and Moore was exonerated.
- **Illinois Issues** and **WUIS** are sponsoring the biannual **Bill Miller Public Affairs Reporting Hall of Fame** Reception at 5:30 p.m., January 28th, at the Inn at 835, 835 S. Second St., in Springfield. This year's inductees are author and journalist **Nina Burleigh**, broadcast executive **Jim Prather**, and *Chicago Tribune* project editor **Jim Webb**. The speaker for the reception will be **Patty Culhane**, White House correspondent for Al Jazeera. All are graduates of the Public Affairs Reporting master's degree program at UIS. Tickets are \$35 and can be obtained by calling Rachel Lattimore at (217)206-6094 or emailing her at rhase01s@uis.edu.
- The Hall of Fame reception will be preceded on Monday the 28th with a noontime panel discussion featuring the three new inductees. They will talk about how they shaped their careers and give advice to students. The moderator will be Kent State University journalism professor **Barbara Hipsman Springer**, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2010. The panel, sponsored by **Illinois Issues**, will be at noon in Conference Room G in the UIS Public Affairs Center.

- January 28th will also see the launch of a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) at UIS, “The Emancipation Proclamation: What came before, how it worked, and what came after.” The instructors for the course, which will run for eight weeks, are **Matthew Holden**, Wepner Distinguished Professor of Political Science, and **Gwen Jordan**, assistant professor of legal studies with a part-time appointment in the Center. The course is free and available to the public. Anyone interested in registering for the course can do so by signing up at coursesites.com.
- Professor of public administration **Beverly Bunch** has a chapter on “capital planning and budgeting” in the sixth edition of *Management Policies in Local Government Finance*, published in December by the **International City/County Management Association**. Bunch’s chapter describes the capital planning and budgeting process, challenges and opportunities the process presents, and analytical techniques for capital decision making.
- Baby Boomers are leading to changes in the funeral business. **WUIS’ Peter Gray** reported on NPR’s **All Things Considered** in early January about how the funeral industry is adapting to the needs and interests of the aging Baby Boom generation. The story focused on Harley Davidson funerals offered by a Springfield funeral home. Gray also talked about the increased use of social media by funeral homes and how this is being resisted by some in the industry. The full story can be heard at <http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=168631924&m=168642497>
- **Peter Weitzel**, research manager in the **Institute for Legal, Legislative, and Policy Studies**, had a post on measuring family background published on the well regarded blog site, **Education Policy Blog**, on January 15, 2013. The post discusses the U.S. Census Bureau’s efforts to measure poverty more accurately and the need to overcome limitations in how family background tends to be measured in education settings. The full post can be read at <http://educationpolicyblog.blogspot.com/2013/01/family-background-matters-so-measure-it.html>
- The **Center’s Office of Electronic Media (OEM)** provided the official media coverage for the 2013 inauguration of the 98th **Illinois House of Representatives** on January 9th in UIS’ Sangamon Auditorium. The multimedia webcast allowed viewers across the state to watch the inauguration. With over 2,000 people in attendance, OEM provided a live feed of the event to overflow locations on campus. This is the fourth time the Office has webcast the inauguration.
- **Donald Morris**, professor of accounting, and **Jing Wang**, graduate student in accounting, published an article, “Same-Sex Marriages, Civil Unions, and the Marriage Penalty,” in the December 24, 2012 edition of the journal, *State Tax Notes*. Their research was supported by a competitive public affairs research grant from the Center.
- **Brook Bell** has joined the staff of the Center’s executive director’s office. Bell started January 2nd as the administrative assistant to the executive director, replacing Brenda

Allan who retired last year. Bell was a business analyst and case manager with American General Life Companies the past six years, and before that worked in sales support for Coca Cola. She has a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from UIS.

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