

# THE CENTERPIECE

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- **Donald Morris**, associate professor of accounting at UIS, has just written a new book, *Tax Cheating: Illegal – But is It Immoral?* The book, published by SUNY Press, explores the nature and extent of tax cheating, the moral problem caused by the so-called voluntary tax system, and implications for tax policy revision. More information about the book is available at [www.taxcheating.org](http://www.taxcheating.org). Professor Morris has been conducting research on state tax policy through the Center.
- **Amanda Vinicky**, WUIS statehouse bureau chief, was heard across the country on July 4th when her story about Illinois' pension system troubles aired on NPR. Illinois has the largest unfunded state pension liability in the nation, \$85 billion. Vinicky reported that state politicians likely won't act to fix the problem until after the November election. Vinicky's story featured an audio clip from **Brenda Allan**, the Center's administrative clerk, who retired from the university on June 30th.
- Assistant professor of political science **Michael Miller** has been invited to present a paper at the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute's Conference on Ethics and Politics in Illinois, to be held in Chicago on September 27-28, 2012. The paper, "Public Election Funding after McComish," is a loose summary of a book Miller is writing on how public funding changes elections. It describes recent U.S. Supreme Court action on campaign finance as well as research findings on how public subsidies affect candidate strategy and voting behavior.
- Associate professor of public health **Sharron LaFollette** was recently re-elected as the general chair of the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council. The Council develops and applies accreditation guidelines for institutions of higher education that want to ensure high quality education and training of environmental health science and protection practitioners. The Council consists of 11 academics and 10 practitioners who review applications for accreditation for undergraduate and graduate environmental health programs.

- Assistant professor of legal studies and Illinois Innocence Project associate **Gwen Jordan** spoke June 18th on a panel on Women, Civic Life, and Culture in the 19th Century at the Mary Todd Lincoln Education Workshop sponsored by and held at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Jordan talked about the social and legal status of women during Lincoln's time, including efforts to expand their civil and political rights.
- The last issue of The Centerpiece reported on the recent discovery, by staff of the **Papers of Abraham Lincoln**, of the report written by the army doctor who treated Lincoln right after he was shot. The announcement of the find generated a large amount of attention from the news media. The staff member who unearthed the report, **Helena Iles Papaioannou**, was interviewed by the Associated Press, Illinois Radio Network, Los Angeles Times, Fox News Radio, CNN, NPR's All Things Considered, NBC Nightly News, the BBC, and Sirius XM BYU Radio's Morning Line Live. **Dr. Daniel Stowell**, director of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, did interviews with MSNBC, Mike Huckabee Show, and radio stations in San Francisco, California, and Fargo, North Dakota.
- **Ashley Kirzinger** will take over the reins of the Center's **Survey Research Office (SRO)** on August 16th. Kirzinger, who recently received her Ph.D. in media and public affairs from theanship School of Communication at Louisiana State University, served as a principal investigator and assistant to the director of Manship's Public Policy Research Lab. She brings to the SRO job extensive experience in conducting surveys and data analysis across a wide variety of areas of public policy. She was the primary data analyst for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System in Louisiana, oversaw focus groups that looked at Louisiana's Children's Health Insurance Program, and co-authored a survey that examined Gulf Coast residents' attitudes toward the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf. Kirzinger succeeds Richard Schuldt, who retired June 30th after 28 years as SRO director.
- In the upcoming September edition of **Illinois Issues**, political scientist Chris Mooney, who holds a joint appointment with UIS and the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs, will examine the polarization in Congress and the Illinois legislature, including how the gap in Illinois was closed somewhat this year to deal with key financial issues, such as Medicaid funding. The September edition will also feature an article by Robert Bruno on low morale among public sector workers and what it means to their productivity and service. Bruno is a professor in the School of Labor &

Employment Relations at the University of Illinois Urbana-Campaign and director of the Labor Education Program at the university's Chicago campus.

- Those with Blackberry and Android phones will be able to access all three streams of **WUIS** via Nobex Radio. Go to [Nobex.com](http://Nobex.com) and you can listen to WUIS, WUIS Classic, and WUIS XPotential. NOBEXRC is a free app for Blackberry and Android mobile devices.

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