

apac

NEWS

keeping academic professionals informed and involved

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New Law Guarantees Right to Review of Denied Health Insurance Claims



Governor Patrick Quinn signed a bill into law giving Illinoisans the right to a review of denied health insurance claims.

A NEW Illinois law guarantees your right to an external, independent review of denied health insurance claims.

THE HEALTH Carrier External Review Act (Public Act 96-857), effective July 1, ensures that insurance company decisions to deny a recommended medical treatment are subject to review by a qualified, independent doctor.

PREVIOUSLY, ONLY Illinois consumers enrolled in a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) had the right to an external, independent review when a claim was denied. The new law requires all health insurers and HMOs to provide the same opportunities for both internal appeals and external reviews of denied claims, extending this important right to millions of additional Illinois consumers.

"THE HEALTH Carrier External Review Act empowers and protects Illinois families and businesses who, after paying hard-earned premium dollars, are all too often denied needed medical treatment," said **Michael T. McRaith**, director of the Illinois Department of Insurance. "The act also requires greater transparency on the part of health insurance companies in Illinois, representing a significant early step towards reforming the State's health insurance marketplace."

THE NEW law allows consumers to request an external

review within four months of receiving notice that a claim or treatment request was denied by the insurance company or HMO. Each case is reviewed by an unbiased doctor who is an expert in the relevant field and who is assigned by an Independent Review Organization approved by the Illinois Department of Insurance. The external review must be paid for entirely by the health insurance company and must be completed within 20 business days. In urgent cases, the review must be completed within 72 to 120 hours.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the new external review process, including a list of approved Independent Review Organizations, is available on the Department' of Insurance's website at <http://insurance.illinois.gov>.

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Survey Success



The ability to fill it out online made it easy to respond to the APAC survey. (Photo by American Association of Dental Editors.)

UNDER SPONSORSHIP provided by the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellors, and the Executive Assistant Vice President for Business & Finance, APAC conducted a survey of Academic Professionals to capture matters of interest and concern to AP staff. The survey launched on Monday, July 12, and closed five weeks later on Monday, Aug. 9.

MORE THAN 1,200 employees completed the survey, which is approximately one-third of UIC's Academic Professional staff. The goal of the survey is to create a reliable pool of information that can be used to inform campus decision-makers on matters that impact Academic Professional staff. Further, the information will be used by APAC to shape future programs, events, and other related efforts.

RESULTS WILL be rolled out to the campus in the coming months, and APAC will provide additional details as they become available.

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Laura Myers: A New Face in APAC



Laura Myers is Chair of the Building Community & Education Subcommittee.

LAURA MYERS is an Assistant Director in the Office of Career Services. The Office of Career Services provides personalized services that assist UIC students with career planning, among many other things.

HAVING WORKED at the office for nearly three years, Myers said, "I love working directly with students, whether it is during one-on-one career counseling appointments or through presentations and workshops."

MYERS OFFICIALLY became a member of APAC in April 2010 after attending a few meetings. Like other Academic Professionals, she was looking for a way to become involved on campus. Furthermore, Myers wanted to "have a voice, not just for myself, but for my fellow Academic Professionals." She currently serves as the Chair of the Building Community & Education Subcommittee.

WHILE NEW to APAC, she is proud to be a part of a committee with such "hard working and dedicated individuals," she said. Myers noted that APAC has transformed in recent years, and added that it "is amazing that such a small group of people can accomplish such great things."

THE BUILDING Community & Education Subcommittee has many exciting events planned, including educational events and professional development opportunities for APs. Myers indicated that she would like to see more APs become involved in APAC, whether by attending meetings or becoming involved in the subcommittees.

MYERS ENJOYS spending time with her 14-month-old son, **Leo**. In her free time, she loves catching a movie at a local theatre and going out to eat, which she said "I never take for granted any more now that I'm a mom."

--Ivone De Jesus

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Judith Cohen Retires from University, APAC

Judy Cohen.

AFTER A ten-year career working on behalf of



Academic Professionals as an APAC member and a 24-year career working on behalf of students for the University, **Judith Schein Cohen** has retired from both roles.

COHEN also served APAC as Vice Chair, Chair, and then accepted a second term as Vice Chair under former Chair **Booker Suggs**, with whom she

worked on APAC for several years.

A HIGHLIGHT of her APAC work was the fight to get AP representation in the University Senate; Cohen was a key player, and eloquently and successfully spoke before the Senate to plead the case of APs. Thanks to her and her colleagues' work, APs now have three Senators.

"THINGS COME and things go," Cohen philosophized. "I've been in my house for 35 years and at the University for 24, so the change feels very odd. But as I look back, I can say I made good connections with people and have enjoyed the people I met at APAC and all over the University. I'm going to miss the good, dedicated people I have met. UIC is a place where you come across all different kinds of people, whom I never otherwise would have had the opportunity to get to know—and that's fun. I've helped a few along the way, and they've taught me a great deal.

"APAC IS a good organization that helps people make connections and works well as an advocacy group," she continued. "I wish APAC success in whatever it takes on."

AS FOR the future, "I have a list," Cohen said, laughing. "I want to travel. I have children who live on the West Coast, so my husband, Howard, and I want to spend more time with them—they're wonderful. I might do some kind of part-time work. Last year, Howard and I did tax preparation for people with modest income. That was interesting, fun, and another way to meet a lot of different people.

"I HOPE I have more adventures in my life," Cohen concluded.

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Town Hall Reveals Administrative Review and Restructuring Working Group Recommendations

MORE THAN 150 people were in a standing-room only audience on Aug. 19 for the AP Town Hall: Administrative Review and Restructuring Recommendations presentation in the Molecular Biology Research Building.

PRESENTERS WERE Dr. Craig Bazzani, senior advisor to the University of Illinois Foundation; Dr. Avjit Ghosh, vice president for technology and economic development; and Peg O'Donoghue, interim associate chancellor at UIUC.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE Review and Restructuring Working Group, appointed by former President Stanley Ikenberry, has completed its review and issued their report. The aim of the Working Group was to identify avenues to improve service while reducing costs for the University. The co-chairs of the Working Group were Drs. Bazzani and Ghosh, and O'Donoghue was chair of the HR subcommittee.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY the group for reorganizing administration and services are not going "to collect dust," the group's co-chairs told the meeting.

AND ONE of the first efforts will focus on human resources, they said.

"ONE OF the things the group concluded is that we need to do a major overhaul of how we approach human resources — not just two or three small changes, but change the way we think about and manage human resources," said Ghosh.

THE GROUP made 43 recommendations that members estimated could save about \$58 million over three years.

"WHAT DO universities do a lot of? Talk. What do they do very little of? Act," said Bazzani. "I hope you will be convinced that the University is, this time, prepared to act."

BAZZANI SAID many of the frustrations cited by Academic Professional employees — including a lack of consistency in job titles, salaries, career progression and opportunities for professional development — "have not changed dramatically in 30 years.

"IT'S BEEN largely the same issues," he said.

O'DONOGHUE SAID the University needs a "human capital strategy" for carrying out HR functions.

"HOW DO we communicate to people that we think it's important, what they do?" she said.

O'DONOGHUE OUTLINED some of the subcommittee's recommendations:

- Service centers that would handle HR tasks for several campus units;
- Simplified statutes and policies;
- A streamlined hiring process;
- A review of benefits, especially pensions;
- A review of the State Universities Civil Service System, including employment classes and the testing process;
- Cut back the required ethics training to once every five years or for new hires;
- Eliminate the Positive Time Reporting requirement.

WORK ON the group's recommendations could be "well underway within the current academic year," Ghosh said.

"TOP ADMINISTRATORS have been personally charged with making sure these recommendations get implemented."

FOR THE Administrative Review and Restructuring Work Group report [click here](#) (pdf). For the Human Resources Management Subcommittee report [click here](#) (pdf).

-- *William S. Bike and Sonya Booth*
soboorth@uic.edu



A full house was on hand to hear about administrative review and restructuring working group recommendations.

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Peer Pointers: Mentoring Program Underway



Veronica Arreola (right) teaches Sophia Magill tips for boosting her

professional skills as part of the Academic Professionals Mentoring Program. "It helped me make more connections and gain more knowledge about how to navigate the University professionally," Magill said. (Photo by Roberta Dupuis-Devlin)

AFTER WORKING at UIC for a year-and-a-half, **Sophia Magill** still felt like she had a lot to learn.

SO WHEN she heard about a new pilot program that connects academic professionals through mentorships, she knew it would be a perfect fit.

"I REALLY want to be more strategic in terms of gaining professional development opportunities," said Magill, coordinator of [Campus Programs](#).

SHE WAS matched with [Veronica Arreola](#), assistant director of the [Center for Research on Women and Gender](#).

THEY MET regularly through the spring semester to talk about topics ranging from career mapping and networking to writing tips and funding.

"WE ACCOMPLISHED the goals we set out to achieve," Magill said. "It helped me make more connections and gain more knowledge about how to navigate the university professionally."

THE PILOT program will expand to a full-year initiative — the Academic Professionals Mentoring Program — in September, running through May.

SEVEN MENTORS and protégés were paired during the pilot program, organized by the [Academic Professionals Advisory Committee](#), the [Office for Access and Equity](#) and the [Chancellor's Status Committees](#).

"WE REALLY want the program to help Academic Professionals network with each other and learn more about the institution," said **Angela Prazza**, co-chair of the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women and coordinator of research programs at the Center for Advanced Design, Research, and Exploration.

"WE'RE HELPING people establish connections — it's a big campus and we're a little disjointed."

THE PROGRAM has proven especially beneficial in the current climate of economic uncertainty, said **Caryn Bills**, director of the Office for Access and Equity.

"IN TIMES like this with budget constraints, academic professionals are in real need of just being able to seek support from someone who can provide guidance on career goals, how to look to the future and how to advance within the university," she said.

"SINCE WE can't really give people salary increases and monetary rewards at this point, it's a great way to offer support, guidance and assistance."

BOTH MENTORS and protégés say they gained from the experience.

BILLS WAS a mentor for **Sheila Regan**, project coordinator for the [Chicago Project for Violence Prevention](#).

"I GAVE her advice on how to resolve conflicts in the workplace in general, and she told me about her job going out and talking to victims of shootings and understanding conflicts that exist at the most extreme level of violence," Bills said.

"IT WAS a very eye-opening experience for me to see how she handles conflict on her job at a much different level."

AS MAGILL'S mentor, Arreola explained what she had learned about navigating the university over the past 13 years. She learned something in the process, too.

"BY SITTING down and talking to her about how things run, who to talk to, who to meet and connect with, it gave me that perspective of my own history at UIC and the things I've learned," she said.

IN FACT, Arreola said, she learned so much from the pilot that she decided to apply for the full-year program, but this time as a protégé.

"I'VE BEEN here for a while, but I still have a lot to learn," she said. "I think this is a great program for any academic professional."

CYNTHIA MORENO plans to keep in touch with her mentor, **Mark Ursev**, academic advisor in College of Medicine student affairs, although their mentorship has ended. Ursev helped her set career and educational goals and provided advice on developing professional skills, she said.

"I GAINED a professional friend who has provided me with a lot of specific guidance," said Moreno, recruitment and admissions counselor in admissions and records.

"FOR PEOPLE who are just starting out their careers here, it's beneficial to gain some insight from professionals who have been here longer."

LEARNING FROM others' experiences on campus can be beneficial for all academic professionals, Bills said.

"MENTORING CAN certainly spark people's goals," she said. "It's really key to getting people motivated again to reach or aspire to attain their ultimate goals."

--Christy Levy, Courtesy UIC News

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Join PACADEMY

PACADEMY IS a listserv moderated by APAC that communicates information related to the interests and concerns of APs. All APs are encouraged to join PACADEMY.

POSTINGS MIGHT include information on; registration for APAC events; *APAC News*; other campus events; internal

job postings; links to news articles of interest to APs; resources and services available to APs; APAC meeting notices and updates from APAC; and other campus committees.

IF YOUR e-mail address ends in "@uic.edu," you can subscribe by e-mailing listserv.uic.edu. If your e-mail address ends in "@uillinois.edu," you can subscribe or unsubscribe by going to <https://illinois.edu/fb/sec/6594264>.

PACADEMY POSTINGS are moderated by APAC and are limited to topics of interest or concern to Academic Professional employees at UIC. APAC does not post any advertisements, including internal sales of goods or services. PACADEMY postings are unformatted text only. Send your posting to pacademy@listerv.uic.edu. Allow several business days for APAC to process your post.

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Websites & Phone Numbers to Know

U of I PRESIDENT Michael Hogan has started a blog: <http://www.uillinois.edu/prezrelease/index.cfm>.

HR eNEWS is a bi-monthly newsletter from UIC Human resources:

<http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/Enews/HreNews.shtml>.

UIC RESOURCE Guide from *UIC News*.

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The Continuing Crisis

Editor's Note: "The Continuing Crisis" is a section of APAC News which links to news pertinent to the State budget crisis as it affects the University and Academic professionals. These news outlets are not affiliated with or endorsed by APAC.

NO RAISES for APs and faculty, according to the *Daily Illini* of Aug. 5. [See here.](#)

GOVERNOR QUINN cuts higher ed funding. See [UIC News](#).

A UNIVERSITY of California-Berkeley law professor has proposed that cash-strapped states such as Illinois borrow from the U.S. Treasury. See [Progress Illinois](#) of July 9.

POLITICIANS' INACTION only makes the budget crisis worse, said the [State Journal-Register](#) on July 11.

DELAY-AND-denial budget politics were decried by the *Daily Herald* on July 6. See <http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=392061>.

ILLINOIS IS in its worst financial position in history, the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) said on July 9.

STATE COMPTROLLER Dan Hynes issued a report on the State's financial health, noting "Fiscal problems worsen significantly." See <http://www.comptroller.state.il.us/>.

Hynes also spoke about the state's financial problems on [CNN](#).

STATE, LOCAL governments could slash 400,000 jobs in the next year, says the [Huffington Post](#) of July 6.

THE ILLINOIS "dysfunctional political class refuses to pay the State's bills and refuses to take the painful steps" to close the State's deficit, the [New York Times](#) wrote on July 3.

LAWMAKERS HAVE left State universities in limbo, says the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) of July 16.

ILLINOIS DEBT to reach \$130 billion? See WHTI-TV 10 Terre Haute, IN, [feature](#).

ILLINOIS ECONOMIC recovery "painfully slow," says U of I prof. See Aug. 2 [Pantagraph.com](#).

TIAA-CREF CEO calls retirement security a pressing national need. See July 29 [Business Wire](#).

PROVOST BIDS farewell: the *Chicago Flame* did a two-part interview with retiring Provost **R. Michael Tanner**. See [Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#).

ARE WE public sector employees the new "welfare queens?" Some say we are. Jonathan Cohn of the [New Republic](#) on Aug. 8 argued as to why we're not.

COMPELLING AP vacation use prior to termination? See July *HR eNews* ([pdf](#)).

TERRY SAVAGE, financial expert, says the State is actually \$120.6 billion short. See Aug. 23 [Chicago Sun-Times](#).

PRESIDENT HOGAN planning to shrink number of administrators? See Aug. 25 [Daily Illini](#).

FOX NEWS Chicago brought together University of Illinois spokesperson **Tom Hardy** and **State Senator Martin Sandoval** (D-12th) who talked about tuition, furloughs, and a hiring freeze. [See here](#).

Q & A with President **Michael Hogan** in the [State Journal-Register](#).

DEMONIZING THE public sector harms the middle class overall, says the Aug. 26 [The Hill's Congress Blog](#).

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Academic Professional Resource Spotlight

GET BANNER finance training resources, participant guides, job aids, and handouts, and sign up for, and sign up for accounting, payroll, purchasing, payables, and other courses, through the Office of Business and Financial Services. Go [here](#).

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Quick Takes

APAC MEETING SET

THE OCTOBER APAC meeting will be held in Room 1152, Molecular Biology Research Building, 900 S. Ashland Ave., on the West Campus on Wednesday, Oct. 13, at 12:30 p.m. All Academic Professionals are invited to attend.

GREG PITTSLEY ON VICE CHANCELLOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

THANK YOU to everyone who voted in the election for Academic Professional representative to serve on the Search Committee for UIC's Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The person elected by the APs is **Greg Pittsley**, Senior Program and Policy Analyst in the Office of Healthcare Management.

ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

APAC'S 2009-10 Annual Report is available online at <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/apac/downloads.html>. It includes information about APAC's mission, activities, representational functions, communications, the Chancellor's Academic Professional Excellence (CAPE) Award, and members.

INCOME GAP NOW MASSIVE

THE GAP between the wealthiest Americans and middle- and working-class Americans has more than tripled in the past three decades, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

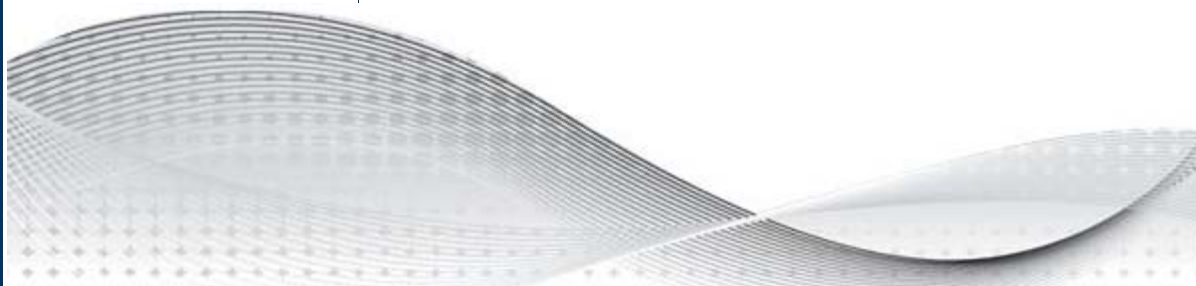
NEW DATA show that gaps in after-tax income between the richest 1% of Americans and the middle and poorest parts of the population in 2007 was the highest it's been in 80 years, while the share of income going to the middle one-fifth of Americans shrank to its lowest level ever.

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