



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, August 29, 2012

CONTACT: Brooke Anderson (o. 312-814-3158; c. 312-590-0195)
Annie Thompson (o. 217-782-7355; c. 217-720-1853)
Dave Blanchette, CDB (o. 217-558-8971; c. 217-370-9223)
Darcy Shinberger, WIU (c. 309-298-1993)

Governor Quinn Breaks Ground on “Phase Two” of WIU Riverfront Campus

*\$42 Million in Capital Funding to Add New Classroom Building on
the Moline Campus and Create Nearly 300 Construction Jobs*

MOLINE – August 29, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today was joined by Western Illinois University President Jack Thomas, Moline Mayor Don Welvaert, and several state and community leaders to break ground on Phase Two of the Western Illinois University (WIU) Riverfront Campus expansion. The new \$42 million classroom building funded by the *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital construction program will create nearly 300 construction jobs and allow the university's Arts and Sciences, Education and Human Services, and Fine Arts and Communication programs to relocate to the Riverfront Campus. Today's groundbreaking is part of the governor's commitment to put people back to work and strengthen Illinois' infrastructure.

“Today is a milestone in the 100-year history of Western Illinois University's Riverfront Campus,” Governor Pat Quinn said. “This investment will create jobs now and in the future by expanding education opportunities that will help our students compete in the 21st century economy.”

Construction on the 94,800-square-foot classroom building should be complete by summer 2014 to open in time for the 2014 fall semester. The Riverfront Campus expansion will allow WIU to serve more than 3,000 Quad Cities-area students. The campus currently serves more than 1,370 students at its 60th Street campus in Moline and at the Riverfront Campus.

The project is administered by the Capital Development Board, which oversees state-funded, non-road construction projects. Governor Quinn opened the \$18.4 million Building One in January, which concluded the first phase of the state-funded construction work on the Moline campus. With today's groundbreaking, the state has funded more than \$60 million worth of work at the Riverfront Campus. Phases One and Two will create between 135 and 166 new permanent jobs, increase annual Riverfront Campus graduates by more than 300, and have an annual economic impact of between \$20 and \$24 million in the Quad Cities area.

“We are so thankful for our many partners. Because of these relationships and the support Western Illinois University has received from a variety of constituency groups, we have moved the expansion of Western Illinois University's Quad Cities campus forward to provide the region with outstanding public higher education opportunities,” said WIU President Jack Thomas.

“The presence of Western Illinois University in the Quad Cities helps define who we are. Knowledge is power. Raising the bar on the education level in the Quad Cities area identifies us as a community with a highly skilled workforce and an appreciation for higher education,” said Moline Mayor Don Welvaert.

Governor Quinn's *Illinois Jobs Now!* program includes \$1.5 billion for higher education, including \$788 million for public universities and \$400 million for community colleges. The overall \$31 billion program is creating and supporting an estimated 439,000 construction jobs and is the largest capital construction program in Illinois history.

###