

The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, June 8, 2011

U of I wants \$100 million for scholarships

By Associated Press

CHAMPAIGN — The University of Illinois hopes to raise \$100 million through private donations for scholarships over the next three years to help make up for increasing tuition and shortfalls in state support for students who need help paying for college.

President Michael Hogan and his wife, Virginia, will start the campaign with a \$100,000 donation, university spokesman Jan Dennis said Wednesday. A news conference to announce the scholarship push is planned for Thursday at the University of Illinois-Chicago, where university trustees will be meeting.

“There is no higher priority to me than making sure that rising costs don’t deny students the life changing opportunities that a University of Illinois education provides,” Hogan said in a statement. “College is a cornerstone of the American dream, and we are committed to preserving it for our students.”

The fund-raising drive will appeal to alumni and other university supporters, Dennis said.

The university will have \$51 million to spend on student financial aid in the coming year, but estimates that’s \$150 million short of what it needs for its students. A year of tuition and housing at the university’s flagship campus in Urbana-Champaign costs more than \$20,000.

The state’s primary financial aid program has been underfunded for years. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission’s Monetary Award Program has turned away more than 100,000 students a year the past three years for lack of money, thousands of them at public universities like the three University of Illinois campuses but most at community colleges.