



Greetings from IUPUI

December 2007

As lights glow for the holiday season, political campaigns in anticipation of early 2008 primaries are heating up. It is worth remembering Woodrow Wilson's learned admonition:

One cool judgment is worth a thousand hasty counsels.

The thing to do is to supply light and not heat.

Shedding light on some issues of particular concern to citizens and policy makers here in Indiana are several faculty at IUPUI who have been engaged in efforts to apply their expert knowledge to important matters of government. They have been at work with two separate commissions, both of which have reports due out this month. Others are expanding education and research partnerships with state agencies.

Created in July by Governor Mitch Daniels, the blue-ribbon Commission on Local Government Reform is cochaired by former Governor Joe Kernan and Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Randall Shepard. The commission is working with IUPUI's Center for Urban Policy and the Environment faculty to conduct research on current local government structures, previous reform efforts, and best practices from other states.

The governor asked the commission to develop recommendations both to increase the effectiveness of local governments and reduce costs to taxpayers. In recent months, Indiana residents have responded by the thousands to the commission's invitation to send comments and participate in public forums. Input has ranged from one-sentence e-mails to fully researched and substantiated proposals.

All comments provided to the commission are available for public review on the commission's web site [<http://indianalocalgovreform.iu.edu/>]. Now in the process of reviewing the research and public input, the commission will deliver its proposals in time for the 2008 General Assembly to review during its short session.

At the same time, members of the Indiana University Workgroup on Health Care Reform have been at work since last March—at the request of Mitch Roob, Secretary of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration—to study potential reforms in the state's healthcare delivery system.

The workgroup includes representatives from our Schools of Medicine, Law, and Public and Environmental Affairs with expertise in health administration, health economics, bioethics, and other disciplines. Eric Wright, director of our Center for Health Policy, and Eleanor Kinney, director of the Hall Center for Law and Health, chair the group. A public report to the governor and legislature on ways to address the future of healthcare delivery in Indiana is due by the first of the year.

The workgroup's vision is to recommend a "cost-effective, state-of-the-art healthcare delivery system for all Hoosiers." During the past several months, the faculty have met with national consultants and held public meetings throughout the state to gather advice and input from citizens and stakeholders.

Our School of Social Work has also been a committed partner with Governor Mitch Daniels and the Indiana Department of Child Services, who were honored last month by the Annie E. Casey Foundation for progress in reforming the state's child welfare system. The nonprofit foundation cited Daniels' commitment to hiring hundreds of additional caseworkers, thereby reducing client load, and to increasing the training and educational requirements for employees at all levels.

The statewide training partnership was implemented in January 2007 by IU Dean of Social Work Michael Patchner and the Department of Child Services' Deputy Director of Staff Development M. B. Lippold. The new program includes training for everyone from experienced case managers to brand-new employees working emergency hotlines. Like partnerships elsewhere around the country between child welfare agencies and state universities, Indiana's will combine research-based practices with practical applications and professional development. It also includes a strong distance learning component so caseworkers statewide can be included via web-based or video training modules.

These are just three examples of ways in which IUPUI faculty expertise is put to work on matters of importance to Indiana. IUPUI faculty translate their research into practice. As part of our commitment to civic engagement, it is evidence that IUPUI is indeed a place where impact is made.

Happy holidays to all our friends and partners!

Charles R. Bantz
Chancellor

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