

September 5, 2002

For Immediate Release

### **USI Board of Trustees approves operating budget for 2003-2005**

At the USI Board of Trustees meeting on September 5, the trustees approved the University's operating budget request of \$61,486,799 for 2003-04 and \$62,856,192 for 2004-05. The budget will be submitted to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the State Budget Agency, and the Indiana General Assembly. The budget is funded through a combination of student fees and state support.

Cindy Brinker, vice president for Governmental Relations, said the budget request was developed in response to the State's primary concerns and objectives of increasing access to higher education, maintaining affordability, expanding the use of technology, improving educational quality, and developing a strong highly skilled workforce.

The University will seek support from the State to fund current programs and services, growth in enrollment, operating costs for approved projects, and quality improvement initiatives to respond to regional workforce needs.

The University is requesting a two percent increase in the expenditure base each year of the biennium for personal services and student assistance and a one percent increase for supplies and expenses. USI will request \$1,023,408 in 2003-04 and \$1,042,593 in 2004-05 to fund current programs and services.

Funding for enrollment change is a major component of the University's operating budget request. An all-time high of 9,675 students enrolled at USI this fall. \$1,564,500 is requested in 2003-04 to fund increases in enrollment.

\$969,607 is requested for operation of the new Science and Education classroom building scheduled for completion in July 2003.

The request under quality improvement initiative focuses on the need for funds to restructure and expand engineering laboratory space, acquire modern laboratory equipment, add laboratories to implement expanded offerings, and meet recurring programmatic needs. The University is seeking \$253,100 in 2003-04 and \$326,800 in 2004-05 in quality improvement funding.

USI requests \$29.1 million for one capital project, the Library/Classroom Expansion and Renovation, and bonding authorization, but no state funds, for University Center Expansion.

The request also includes appropriations for Historic New Harmony and Lincoln Amphitheatre, two outreach programs of the University. The request is a continuation of the funding appropriated by the Indiana General Assembly in prior years.

Brinker said, "The request for operating appropriations for the 2003-05 biennium is necessary for USI to carry out its mission to better serve the southern Indiana region and to help achieve the goals of the State."

She said, "More than 18,000 students have graduated from USI. Two-thirds of USI students come from an 11-county area in southwestern Indiana, where the University has made significant progress in advancing the college-going rate of residents. Since 1985, the percent of public high school graduates from this region who have pursued postsecondary education has risen from 33 percent to 74 percent, according to the Indiana Department of Education."

Surveys of the graduating classes of 1991 through 2001 reveal that 78.9 percent of USI graduates remain in Indiana, and of those, 83.5 percent remain in southwestern Indiana.

Sent to: Pat Swanson; Indianapolis Star/News; Our Times; Ferdinand News; Ft. Branch IN - South Gibson Star-Times; Henderson Gleaner; Huntingburg Press; Jasper Herald; Message; Mt. Vernon Democrat; Oakland City Journal; Paoli News; Perry County News; Petersburg IN - Press-Dispatch; Posey County News; Princeton Clarion; Warrick Newspapers' WEHT, WTVW, WFIE, WGBF, Web