

NEWS RELEASE

College of Commerce and Business Administration

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
414 Wohlers Hall, 1206 South Sixth Street
Champaign IL 61820
www.cba.uiuc.edu

For release November 12, 2001

For more information contact: **Ginny Hudak-David, Director, Commerce Communications**
217-244-8146; hudakdav@uiuc.edu

Illinois 2001 Accountancy Graduates Honored

Four 2001 graduates of the College of Commerce and Business Administration were honored by the Illinois CPA Society at a November 12 banquet in Chicago for their outstanding achievements on the May 2001 Uniform CPA Examination. One graduate, Stephen Weiland, recently received the Elijah Watt Sells silver medal from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants for earning the second-highest overall score nationally on the May exam. This achievement has also garnered him the Gold Award of the Illinois CPA Society.

The three other members of the CCBA Class of 2001 -- Kent Kalish (BS accountancy), Yan Liang (MS accountancy), and Scott Scharlau (BS accountancy) -- also scored among the top 120 candidates who sat for the examination, meriting the Excel Award of the Illinois CPA Society. More than 60,000 candidates took the exam, which is conducted twice yearly by AICPA.

The four honorees received their degrees under the Project Discovery (PD) program developed at Illinois. That program restructured the accountancy curriculum to enhance the development of students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills and to integrate current research findings into classes. The PD curriculum also features a working partnership between academe and practitioners.

The Sells award, created by the AICPA in 1923, recognizes the contributions to the accounting profession made by Elijah Watt Sells, a founding partner of Haskins & Sells (a predecessor to Deloitte & Touche). Sells, who was one of the first CPAs licensed under a New York state law enacted in 1896, was active in the establishment of the AICPA.

The CCBA Department of Accountancy has been ranked number one in the country for the past several years by *U.S. News & World Report* and has also been highly ranked in other national polls. The department enrolls over 700 undergraduate students, many of whom plan to sit for the CPA exam. The college's CPA pass rate was 37% in 2000, the most recent year for which data are available, compared to the national pass rate of 15%. The State of Illinois in 2001 began requiring 150 credit hours of coursework to be eligible to take the CPA exam, which is national trend.

Nationally recognized as one of the leading business schools, the College of Commerce and Business Administration has outstanding programs in accounting, business, economics, and finance. The college enrolls more than 3,000 undergraduates, 700 MBA and master's students, and 175 doctoral candidates from all 50 states and more than 30 countries worldwide.