The new "2+2" agreement between Black Hawk College and Western Illinois University will allow students enrolled in engineering, nursing, and liberal-arts-and-sciences degree programs to complete courses at both schools simultaneously. Students who receive financial aid can save up to 25 percent over four years as they earn a bachelor's degree. Studies have shown that community-college students who simultaneously take university courses have a 15- to 20-percent higher rate of success. For more information, call the Western Illinois University Quad Cities campus at (309)762-9481 or Black Hawk College at (309)796-5100.

Project Vote Smart and FollowTheMoney.org have collaborated to produce an online tool that allows citizens to view state-legislative-committee rosters alongside campaign-donor data. The Legislative Committee Analysis Tool (L-CAT) is located at Follow TheMoney.org/pvs/index.phtml?em=39
and illustrates how campaign donations might affect public policy and lawmaking. The tool draws from FollowTheMoney.org's database of campaign-donor information and Project Vote Smart's database of candidates and elected officials, providing citizens a greater level of transparency in state government. The recent launch of the L-CAT was timed to coincide with Sunshine Week 2009 (March 15 through 21).

One hundred eighty area sixth-graders in 45 teams participated in the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency's 31st-annual regional Math Bee held March 9. The five top teams will represent the region at the State Math Bee in Fort Dodge, Iowa, on May 1.

The Physical Therapy Department at St. Ambrose University is teaming up with Iowa Wheels for the World to collect and distribute wheelchairs and other mobility equipment to people with disabilities around the world. Manual wheelchairs, aluminum crutches and canes, foldable walkers, and jogging strollers can be dropped off Friday and Saturday, April 24 and 25, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Rogalski Center, located at the corner of Ripley and Lombard streets in Davenport. A statewide list of additional equipment drop sites can be found at SAU.edu/pt/wftw . The most-recent Iowa collection netted more than 1,400 wheelchairs. Monetary donations will also be accepted to help cover restoration costs and student expenses associated with outreach and delivery trips.

U.S. Representative Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) launched a new feature on his Web site through which citizens can report government waste, fraud, and abuse. To use the feature, click on the "Waste Watchdog" link at

Braley.House.gov
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More than $121 million from the federal economic-recovery package has been released to Iowa from the U.S. Department of Energy for weatherization funding and energy-efficiency grants. The funds for weatherization will be allocated through local Community Action Programs throughout Iowa.

Christian Care has announced its Spring Canned Food Drive and is requesting donations of canned and nonperishable food items as well as financial contributions to be matched by the Feinstein Challenge. The Feinstein Foundation of Rhode Island will divide $1 million among hunger-fighting agencies nationwide, and will match every dollar and food item donated with a percentage of its funding. All donations and pledges must be received by April 30 to be counted toward the Feinstein Challenge. Donations can include cash, checks, food items (valued at $1 per pound), or pledges, as long as they were obtained for the challenge. Monetary contributions can be mailed to Christian Care Feinstein Challenge, P.O. Box 4176, Rock Island IL 61204-4176. Food donations can be brought to the Rescue Mission at 2209 Third Avenue in Rock Island.

Junie B. Jones is a spirited and sassy six-year-old made famous in series of books by author Barbara Parks. Professional actress Sunshine Ramsey will be playing her in Circa '21's upcoming production of *Junie B. Jones & a Little Monkey Business*. Junie will come to the Rock Island Main Library's Children's Room at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, to read from her favorite books and play games with participants. This event is free and open to the public.

Seventeen young leaders have been named 2009 Quad-Cities Area Leaders Under 40 and will be honored at an event April 9 at the i wireless Center in Moline. The event begins at 6 p.m., with a ceremony starting at 6:45 p.m. The cost is $50 per person or $500 for a table of 10. To make reservations to attend the event, go to Foundation.BHC.edu, call (309)796-5061, or e-mail durnalp@bhc.edu. The winners are Clayton Birtell, Tony Carpita, Clint Christopher, Jennie Clausen, Sarah Cronk, Justin Dean, Mike Doucette, Moises Eilemberg, Laura Ekizian, Yolanda Grandberry, Kimberly Guy, Eric Kies, Chad Lewis, Rhonda Ludwig, Frank Mitvalsky, Guy Pauley, and Ryan Weber.