

## UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUYS PEACE PAYS FORMER EMPLOYEE \$175,000 TO DROP WAGE CLAIMS



In an attempt to resolve the ongoing dispute between its former president's chief of staff, Lisa Troyer and the University, the University of Illinois has agreed to pay her \$175,000. On her part, Troyer will resign from her faculty post and drop all unresolved wage claims. Lisa Troyer was former President Michael Hogan's closest adviser. Following accusations that she had posed as a faculty leader, without disclosing her identity, to sway faculty debate. Since she denied it, it led to a clash that attracted widespread publicity. The email scandal, as it was referred to caused an uproar that saw her resigning hastily from her administrative position, earlier this year. However, Troyer was allowed to continue working at the University on tenure for nine-months. She was given a \$109,000 salary. Campus officials had suggested that they could challenge her faculty position, but the settlement means that the University of Illinois will be spared the pessimistic publicity that a long drawn legal battle brings in its wake. "This is a reasonable, responsible agreement with Dr. Troyer reached through mediation," U. of I. spokesman Thomas Hardy said. The settlement announcement came as a welcome reprieve for the University that said that they were happy to relegate the incident to the past and move on. The last three years has seen two President's resign for reasons that were not too complimentary for the University. U. of I. education professor Nicholas Burbules said that the announcement brought "a welcome end to a very sad chapter for our university." "It's the best outcome for all parties concerned," said Burbules, who was among the 20 faculty senators who received the anonymous emails in mid-December. "I don't think there was any great appetite for spending another year investigating her activities and, speaking personally, I am just relieved it's over." The new University President Robert Easter signed the agreement, even though Troyer, had consented to the terms, and had affixed her signature on June 19. Easter who has worked for more than 40 years at the Urbana-Champaign campus, said that his top priority would be to stabilize and steady the university system. "There are periods you go through that are a bit rocky and hopefully we are not in that world for a while," Easter said Monday. Off late the relationship between Troyer and the University had become contentious and was threatening to go out of hand. Both Troyer and the university officials agreed, to let bygones be bygones and not to make derogatory or accusing statements, about each other, including on Facebook or Twitter. However, the severance money of \$175,000 has not gone down well with some people, who feel that her ways merited being penalized rather than rewarded. David Morrison, deputy director for the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, said "It does sound to be awfully generous, all things considered," Morrison said. The emails not only cost Troyer her job, but also led to her boss's downfall. People attached her email scandal to "failure of leadership" in the president's office. Troyer was one upon whom, Hogan relied and trusted the most and both of them had worked together at three universities. Troyer's anonymous act was caught, when an expert in computer science that the text sent supposedly by someone claiming to be a member of the group was being sent from Troyer's computer. The emails were intended to influence opinion on the President's plans regarding the controversial issue of enrollment management. Even though evidence proved otherwise, Troyer continued to deny the accusation and said that she did not write or send the two anonymous emails. She further alleged that the external investigation was inconsistent. The investigators had reviewed Troyer's laptop, phone records and thousands of emails. They reached the conclusion that the mails were sent from her computer and there seemed to be no evidence that, apart from her, someone also know about them. Virtually, saying that she had sent the mails. Troyer's resignation from her faculty post is effective Aug. 15.