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President's Message



The months since our Spring 2023 newsletter include examples of the many ways we benefit from membership in the EIU Annuity Association and SUAA. To start, our last two EIUAA chapter meeting speakers addressed subjects of direct interest to EIU employees and retirees. In July we heard from EIU President Jay Gatrell in the early days of his administration, as he discussed the university's new strategic plan and reflected on challenges and opportunities for the university in the rapidly changing environment of public higher education. And then in October, EIU Government Relations Director Katie Anselment updated us on state legislative developments—e.g., the 7 percent funding increase for universities in FY24, a \$100 million infusion of additional funds into the Monetary Award Program (MAP) and the legislative hearings on Tier II pension issues. Both meeting presentations were informative, and taken together illustrate one of our chapter's many roles—communicating information critical to understanding issues in Illinois higher education and policymaking.

What happens at the SUAA level is particularly important to our members' interest in protecting and advocating on behalf of secure, high-quality pensions and benefits. And there is ample evidence that SUAA leadership is actively engaged in addressing both emerging and longstanding issues. The agendas of the last two SUAA statewide meetings demonstrate this. SUAA's Annual Meeting held in June included presenters on three important topics: the future of community colleges by the executive director of the Illinois Community College Board of Trustees; research results from a University of Illinois-Chicago study of emerging Tier II and

“Safe Harbor” issues; and State Representative Stephanie Kifowit’s survey of House Bill 4098’s proposal to addressing Tier II problems.

The Fall SUAA Delegates meeting included similarly hefty subjects, including the SURS Director of Legislative & Stakeholder Relations speaking on SURS funding developments and trends; the Secretary-Treasurer of the Illinois AFL-CIO making the case for coalition-building and legislative action on Tier II problems; and a University of Illinois-Chicago professor, who also was a 1970 Illinois Constitutional Convention participant, surveying issues associated with the constitution convention ballot question looming in the not too distant future--2028.

SUAA’s statewide meetings illustrate the commitment of its leadership to taking on issues facing university employees and retirees. But there is much more to SUAA/EIUAA membership! These include regular email updates from SUAA on legislation and policy concerns; access to speaker videos available on the SUAA website; the SUAA Legal Fund for attorney expertise to protect our pensions and benefits; SUAAAction’s support for lobbying and political action; and the SUAA Foundation’s emergency/survivor assistance programs and recently instituted professional development grants for working SUAA members. And we must not forget SUAA’s annually updated Legislative Platform to guide lobbying on issues critical to the membership. The list goes on, showing that the \$44 per year for EIUAA/SUAA membership is a great investment in our futures.

EIUAA Fall Social

The first annual fall social for the Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association (EIUAA) was held on September 14 at the Charleston Country Club. About 40 members enjoyed laughter, fellowship, hors d oeuvres, games, and prizes. We would like to express our gratitude to the EIU Foundation for providing the food. Rick Riccio won the putting contest, (a golf gift certificate for 4 players donated by the country club), Daiva Markelis won lunch with the Prez, (donated by President Jay Gatrell), and Jone Zieren won a gift certificate to the country club restaurant (donated by the country club). Several other participants won Eastern Illinois University t shirts, donated by President Jay Gatrell. Richard Wandling spoke about the function of the EIUAA and the importance of active membership. Sorry if you missed the event!! Stay tuned as next year's fall date will be announced soon.

Submitted by Gloria Leitschuh

Academic Regalia Closet Initiative

In partnership with the EIU Foundation and the Office of the President, the EIU Annuitants Association is pleased to announce the creation of an academic regalia closet. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that any faculty or staff members wishing to walk in graduation ceremonies have access to regalia. Being part of a graduation ceremony is an important way to show support for EIU students on their special day. So, if you have a gently used academic cap-and-gown set stored away and not being used, please consider donating it to the new regalia closet. Donations will be accepted at the Neal Welcome Center, 860 West Lincoln Avenue, Charleston IL 61920 (217-581-3313). And if you need a donation confirmation receipt, the EIU Foundation can provide one. Thank you for supporting this initiative.



Dear Eastern Illinois University Annuitants,

As we eagerly approach the Spring 2024 semester, the Academy of Lifelong Learning is thrilled to extend an invitation to you to join us for an exciting new set of programs. Our upcoming Spring 2024 Community Program Guide, set to release in December, is filled with exciting events and programs designed to enrich your knowledge, foster community connections, and provide an enjoyable experience.

We are delighted to kick off the semester with the Academy of Lifelong Learning/School of Extended Learning Spring Community Open House on Friday, January 5th, 2024, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Join us at Suite 1320 – 1335 in Buzzard Hall for a free and fun event where you can tour our office suite, enjoy some hors d'oeuvres, pick up a copy of our new Community Program Guide, and learn more about the program.

Among the many programs featured in our guide, we are excited to highlight Hops and Harmonies: A Musical Tasting Experience. This unique event, facilitated by EIU faculty and administration, combines craft beer tastings with live music coordinated by EIU's own Dr. Alicia Neal, providing a harmonious backdrop to an extraordinary evening.

As we strive to offer a diverse range of programs, we encourage you to explore topics such as personal finance with *Mastering Money: Unveiling Truths and Strategies for Financial Success*, history with *1619: The Journey of a People*, true crime with *The Psychology of a Serial Killer*, and genealogy with *In the Steps of Your Ancestors*.

Stay tuned for a detailed overview of our spring 2024 programs, which will be available in December at go.eiu.edu/ProgramGuide. Stay up to date on all of the latest Academy events on Facebook at Facebook.com/EIUAcademy.

We look forward to sharing a semester filled with knowledge, creativity, and community engagement with you.

Kind Regards,

Daniel Douglas
Program Coordinator
Academy of Lifelong Learning

SUAA News

As a member of the Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association (EIUAA), you also become a member of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA). By logging into suaa.org, information can be found regarding Legislative activities, healthcare, and Ancillary benefits to name a few. Clicking on the **News** tab, finds links to several videos from recent presentations including: the possibility of the state calling for a constitutional convention to replace the 1970 constitution; and several regarding Tier 2 pensions among others.

"Like" us on Facebook



Group name: Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association

The EIU Annuitants Association now has a Facebook group as an additional way of keeping in touch with our members and sharing key association and university-related updates, news and events with everyone. All you need to do is find us on Facebook; you can readily access us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/961164987992076>

FAREWELLS

Following are brief notices only. To read a full obituary or leave condolences, visit [Legacy.com](https://www.legacy.com)
www.jg-tc.com www.mitchell-jerdan.com www.adamsfuneralchapel.com

Richard Paul “Dick” Goodrick (Political Science), 93, Weston, FL died October 26, 2023. Dick is survived by his wife Evelyn; three daughters, Elizabeth (Michael Orfanedes) of Weston, FL, Eve Goodrick (Charles Cossey) of Wauconda, IL, and Elaine Goodrick of Chicago, as well as five grandchildren.

Dr. Jerry Heath, (Health Services), 100, Charleston, IL died December 22, 2022. Jerry is survived by his son, Forest "Frosty" (Connie) Heath of Charleston, IL; and daughter, Jean, deceased, (Carson) Evans of Longmont, CO; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

Vesta Kelley, (Health Service), 92, Charleston, IL died October 8, 2023. Vesta is survived by her children: Susan Lyn (Danny) Getche Butler of Lerna, IL, Mary Elise Getche Hood of Ashmore, IL, and John Charles (Tanya) Getche of Kansas; one brother; one sister; nine grandchildren; twelve great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Thomas “Skip” McDevitt, (Baseball Coach), 88, Effingham, IL died July 8, 2023. Tom is survived by his wife, Carole (Frazier); his children: Julie (Therese Hickey), Matthew (Amy), and Tim; and six grandchildren.

John McElligott, (History), 87, Charleston, IL died June 6, 2023. John is survived by his nephew, Raymond Johnson of Charleston, IL, and grandnephew, Albert Adkins and wife Kaity of Charleston, IL.

Donald Rogers, (Secondary Ed/Foundations), Port Charlotte, Florida, died November 11, 2023. **Ferne Rogers**, (Speech Comm/Bio Sciences), 86, Port Charlotte, Florida, died July 4, 2023. Donald and Ferne are survived by four daughters, Debi (Larry), Michelle, Jill (Tony) and Amy; and grandparents to 20 grandchildren, and 27 great grandchildren.

Larry Shobe, (Groundskeeper), 77, Charleston, IL died July 28, 2023. Larry is survived by his brothers Gary Shobe, Leland Ralph Shobe, Jr., and Loren Shobe. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

Margaret Ann Speer, (Records Office), 90, Charleston, IL died April 23, 2023. She is survived by her daughter, Celia Lea Sanders of Charleston, IL; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Alice C. Stoughton, (Dance Instructor), 96, Billings, Montana died June 10, 2023. She is survived by her remaining sons John and Paul, and preceded in death by her two sons Doug and Dan.

Larry “Steve” Whitley, (Zoology), 86, Charleston, IL died June 12, 2023. Steve is survived by his sons: Christopher Stephen (Missy) and Patrick Thomas (Amy); his daughter, Erin Jolene Whitley; his brother; his six grandsons; as well as several nieces and nephews.

Kenneth Lyle Wooddell, (Communications Department), 97, Mattoon, IL . died September 15, 2023. Kenneth is survived by his wife Mabelle S Snapp. He is also survived by two sons, Ken (Polly) Wooddell II and Gary (Marilyn); four stepchildren, Mike (Maria) Snapp, Lisa Snapp, Laura Schneider, and David Snapp; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legislative Committee

Illinois state and local employees hired on or after January 1, 2011 are all participants in Tier II, and this means that with the passing of each year, more and more future EIU retirees are under this plan. SUAA has been devoting increased attention to growing concerns of how university/community college employees are being affected by Tier II’s constraints on their retirement plans and pension benefits. At SUAA’s Annual Meeting in June 2023, Illinois State Representative Stephanie Kifowit (84th District) updated delegates on Tier II hearings conducted by the House Personnel and Pensions Committee, and she summarized features of HB 4098 designed to amend the state’s Pension Code. More recently, delegates at SUAA’s fall meeting heard from Pat Devaney (Secretary-Treasurer of the Illinois AFL-CIO) who pointed to Tier II’s flaws and made the case for why substantive changes are needed to protect the pensions of state/local employees. These flaws include the 10 year vesting requirement, low annual cost of living adjustments and an unfavorable benefits calculation formula. He noted plans for a coalition of public sector workers and retirees to take on problems such as these, with the expectation that legislative movement will start in early 2024. For our EIUAA chapter, this is an opportunity to have an impact on the future of EIU employees affected by Tier II’s built-in problems.

With the above in mind, we do have one urgent request. We need more members on the EIUAA Legislative Committee, not just to work on issues noted above but also to represent our concerns across the board, from higher education funding on through pensions and health care benefits. For example, we know from the TRAIL Medicare Advantage fiasco in Fall 2022 that getting the attention of state legislators can make a difference. If you're interested in being part of our chapter's Legislative Committee, we will be glad to talk with you about how you can help. Just contact Rich Wandling at rawandling@eiu.edu. Thank you for considering this need.

Scholarship Committee

Thank you to all who make the scholarship possible. We continue to work to build the corpus so that we'll be able to make a \$2000 award. We have reached our goal of a \$1000 scholarship. To give to the scholarship please visit eiu.edu, click on "Give to EIU", and choose "other gift". Specify Annuitants Association Scholarship in the space provided. We should soon be able to click directly on Annuitants Association Scholarship, which will make it even easier for those donations to roll in!

Nora Pat Small, Chair
EIUAA Scholarship Committee

Membership Committee

EIUAA's Greatest Asset

As part of a new membership outreach initiative, a postcard has been developed (thank you Rich Wandling!) and is currently being printed. Initially, these postcards will be given to the Human Resources staff to distribute to employees beginning the retirement process as well as new hires. Other plans for distribution are in the works.

Our membership is our greatest asset. Increasing and sustaining membership in EIUAA/SUAA is essential to the success of our organization. **Membership is open to current EIU employees as well as Annuitants.** If you know anyone that would like to join but might have questions about the organization, please feel free to have them contact any of our Board members. We'll be happy to talk to them!! Membership applications are available online at [EIU Annuitants Association - Join Us!](#) Also, if you would be interested in serving on this committee (or any of our committees) reach out to us!

Here are a few tips for sustaining our membership:

- #1 - Renew your membership as soon as you receive the first renewal notice from SUAA.
- #2 - If you pay annually, switch to payment through a monthly deduction of \$3.67 from your SURS annuity so that you don't have to renew each year.
- #3 - Thanks to all of our members who do pay dues through SURS deduction! That helps EIUAA and SUAA be more cost effective and efficient!

Thanks for maintaining your membership! EIUAA and SUAA will continue to advocate on your behalf to maintain your retirement and health care benefits.

Wendy Long, Chair
Membership Committee

EIUAA OFFICERS (BEGINNING SP 2023)

Richard Wandling	rawandling@eiu.edu	President
Nora Pat Small	npsmall@eiu.edu	President-Elect
		Past President
Kathy Reed	ksreed@eiu.edu	Secretary
Amy Lynch	ajlynch@eiu.edu	Treasurer

Web Page: <https://www.eiu.edu/annuitants>

BOARD MEMBERS - 2023

Lisa Dallas, Cathy Engelkes, Steve Lane, Gloria Leitschuh, Wendy Long, Amy Lynch, Margaret Messer, Marita Metzke, Billie Rawlings, Kathy Reed, Nora Pat Small, Richard Wandling

COMMITTEES

Communications: Wendy Long (Chair), John Ryan, Lisa Dallas

Events: Billie Rawlings (Chair), Gloria Leitschuh, Kathy Reed

Legislative: Rich Wandling (Chair), Bailey Young, Sue Kaufman

Membership: Wendy Long (Chair), Steve Lane

Scholarship: Nora Pat Small (Chair), Nancy Dole, Cathy Engelkes, Tami Babbs

CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
January 25, 2024	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
February 22, 2024	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
March 28, 2024	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
May 23, 2024	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
July 11, 2024	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
September 5, 2024	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
October 3, 2024	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
November 7, 2024	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
<i>Note: Chapter meetings at the Neal Welcome Center begin with an 8:30 a.m. social time and come to order at 9 a.m.. Watch your email or Facebook for any updates!</i>		