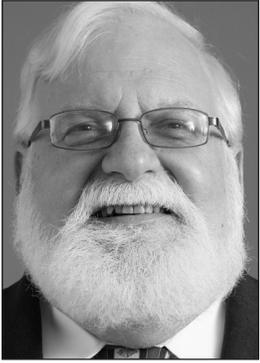


Tower Talk

Barbara Floyd, editor
Vicki Kroll, assistant editor
Cynthia Nowak, assistant editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Outgoing UTRA
President Andy
Jorgensen*

Happy UTRA 30th Anniversary! We will be celebrating our milestone through various means over the course of 2025. Please read the article on our anniversary in this newsletter for details on the first events.

This message will update you on the various actions of your UTRA executive board. Other articles will provide details and invitations to events.

Each board meeting includes a report on our finances

presented by Treasurer Celia Regimbal. You may have noticed that for some events (such as our two major in-person meetings), your dues cover part of the cost to reduce the registration for you and your guest. This is a tangible value of your membership, which has become more important as the charges at the facilities where we hold the meetings have been increasing markedly.

Our meetings include reports on our two scholarship funds by the respective chairs of those committees. Look for the report on the winners of the Health Science Retirees scholarships in another section of this newsletter and consider supporting students through these scholarships.

Board member Jim Lapp continues to attend the meetings of the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees and reports on actions from Columbus that can affect our retirement benefits. In addition, recent changes to Social Security may have major consequences on the retirement income of those of us in Ohio retirement systems. This is a subject that may well affect you.

An annual topic of the board meetings is the development of a slate of candidates for our yearly elections. Look for your ballot for this election that will come to you by U.S. Postal Service.

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UTRA TO KICK OFF '\$30 FOR 30 YEARS' SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN

The University of Toledo's Retirees Association will kick off the celebration of its first 30 years at its annual meeting on Wednesday, June 11, at 11:30 a.m. at the Belmont Country Club in Perrysburg.

The celebration will tie together the anniversary with a fundraising campaign for the UTRA and Health Science Campus Retirees scholarships with "\$30 for 30 Years." UTRA members will be asked to consider a \$30 donation to either or both of the scholarship funds. The UTRA scholarship helps fund outstanding UToledo students who are descendants of UTRA members. The Health Science Campus Retirees scholarship helps support one student enrolled in each of that campus's professional schools.

Members attending the annual meeting luncheon are asked to consider donating \$30 at that time. Members unable to attend will be able to donate through The University of Toledo Foundation's website.

The scholarship funds are important as a way for retirees to stay connected to the University, said Andy Jorgensen, outgoing UTRA president. "Those who dedicated their lives to service to the institution can continue that legacy by helping current students. If just 100 members donate, we can add \$3,000 to the scholarship funds."

The Health Science Campus Retirees scholarships are endowed, but additional funds are limited due to the elimination of the Satellites shoe sales program two years ago. A percentage of the sales of shoes went to this scholarship fund. Winners of this year's scholarships, as well as more information on the scholarship fund itself, are detailed in an article appearing in this issue of *Tower Talk* written by Keith Schlender, chair of the scholarship committee.

Continued on page 8

UTRA CONTINUES EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING FOR MEMBERS

By Barbara Floyd

Recent programs presented to UTRA members have continued the organization's 30-year tradition of offering educational opportunities on a wide variety of interesting subjects. In the past few months, lectures have spanned topics such as the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald, a history of Civil War medicine, and an illustrated travelogue through Italy.

A list of upcoming events is noted elsewhere in this issue of *Tower Talk*.

In November, UTRA and the Golden Alumni Association members heard a lecture by Tom Walton, a columnist for *The Toledo Blade*, marking the 49th anniversary of the sinking of the Great Lakes freighter, the Edmund Fitzgerald. Walton noted that the tragedy had special meaning for Toledo, as several crew members and the captain were from here.

Most people are familiar with the basic information about the ship thanks to the haunting song by Gordon Lightfoot. But Walton's talk discussed in depth how the accident occurred, and his theory about why it happened.

The ship was the largest and fastest on the Great Lakes when it was built in Detroit in 1957. It was more than 700 feet long. In 1963, Walton was hired as a porter on the ship, and his job was to help feed the crew and take care of any passengers traveling on it. "It was a wonderful time in my life," Walton added. His father also worked on the ship, holding the job of second-in-command.

The Edmund Fitzgerald set tonnage records each year. Walton described how the ship left the port of Toledo empty and sailed to Silver Bay in Minnesota, where it could take on as much as 26,000 tons of iron ore. It would then return to Toledo to unload.

When the ship was loaded for what would be its last voyage, it sat very low in the water. Walton theorized that the ship was overloaded when it encountered a violent storm in Lake Superior. Typically, the ore was loaded into the front and the back of the ship, leaving the midsection as a long, empty box. The huge waves it encountered shoved the ship forward onto a sand bar, and the bow did not resurface. That night, the ship quickly broke in two and sunk in seconds, leaving no chance for any of the crew to escape. All died, including Captain Ernest McSorley, who lived in Ottawa Hills.

Walton's father was no longer working on the ship at the time it sunk, and Walton himself had long moved on to a career in journalism. Walton ended his lecture by pointing out that the Lightfoot's

poignant yet popular song has helped to make sure that the crew of the Edmund Fitzgerald is never forgotten.

In February, Dr. Lance Talmage, UTRA's vice president and incoming president, presented a lecture on medicine during the Civil War. Talmage, a physician himself, has studied the topic for many years. He noted that contrary to popular belief, medical practice benefited because of the experience of doctors during the war.

Medical education before the war was poor, with few requirements to be a physician, Talmage said. Most doctors believed illness was caused by an imbalance in the systems of the body and could be healed through bloodletting. When the war broke out, the bacterial theory of medicine was not widely believed. Talmage pointed out that in the beginning of the war, no one in the U.S. Army had even a stethoscope, though they were available.

While many soldiers were severely wounded because of the ammunition used at the time, more than two-thirds of the 600,000 casualties were due to disease. Sanitation was poor, and it was not until the U.S. Sanitary Commission was established and began work to organize nursing care and set standards for cleanliness that the number of deaths by disease began to decline.

Talmage noted that the war advanced the field of medicine by allowing doctors to observe what worked and what did not. Surgery especially advanced, and new theories about what caused disease to spread were finally adopted. New drugs that were found to be successful were also adopted after the war.

In March, the UTRA program featured an illustrated travelogue through Italy by Christine Spengler, UTRA member and former president. Spengler recounted her August 2019 trip when she and a group of supporters accompanied members of the women's basketball team on the 10-day trip.

Spengler explained that the team takes a foreign trip during the summer every four years, a custom that allows the team to bond. The team also gets a chance to practice by playing teams from the cities they visit. The trips are made possible through donations and fundraising.

The trip through Italy took the team and group of supporters from Venice to Bologna, Naples, Sorrento and Rome. Along the way, the women's team played against all-star teams from Bologna, Sorrento and Rome, winning each game.

UTRA MEMBERS CAN TRAVEL TO COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

As Americans prepare for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country in 2026, UTRA members have a unique opportunity to visit Colonial Williamsburg, one of the most important historical sites associated with the American Revolution.

The trip from Sept. 1 through 6, 2025, will include five nights lodging, eight meals, and round-trip motor coach transportation from Toledo for \$865.

The first day includes travel to Virginia Beach, Virginia. On the second day, participants can enjoy walking along that city's boardwalk, which is rated one of the best beach boardwalks in the country. On day three, the group will travel by bus to Colonial Williamsburg, the intellectual home of many of the leaders of the American Revolution. That day also includes a trip to the Mariners' Museum and Park to explore its vast collection of

artifacts.

After Williamsburg, the trip will head on the fourth day to Norfolk, Virginia, to tour Nauticus, a maritime discovery center located along the waterfront, which highlights 225 years of U.S. Navy history. The day will end with an evening cruise aboard the Victory Rover and a narrated tour of the Norfolk Naval Base. The trip will conclude with a tour of the Virginia Beach Aquarium and Marine Science Center on day five, and the bus ride back to Toledo the following day.

A \$75 deposit is required at the time you make your reservation, with the balance due by June 24. Register early, because space is limited, and the UTRA trips fill up quickly.

As UTRA members consider traveling this September to Williamsburg, photos here show events from past bus trips. Right, the trip to New York City in 2009. Left bottom, the trip to Chicago later in 2009; and below right, the trip to the Biltmore Estate and Ashville, North Carolina, in 2010.

Members are urged to make their reservation for the Williamsburg trip soon as the trips fill up quickly. Read above for the complete itinerary.



NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

By James Lapp

OPERS recorded solid investment returns (net of fees) in both the defined benefit and healthcare funds in 2024. Preliminary investment returns were 8.93 percent for the defined benefit fund and 10.01 percent for the health care fund. Those returns exceeded their actuarial assumed rates of return of 6.9 percent and 6 percent, respectively. The returns covered the calendar year of January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

U.S. equity investments performed particularly well, returning 23.7 percent. Securitized debt returned 13.7 percent, while investments in private equity, high yield debt and non-U.S. equities all surpassed the defined benefit and healthcare funds' assumed rates of return. Even with the strong return in the defined benefit fund, the system's estimated funded ratio is expected to decline to 83 percent from 84 percent. The forecasted time to pay off the system's unfunded actuarial accrued liabilities (its amortization period) is estimated to increase from 15 years to 16 years.

OPERS smooths its pension investment returns over a four-year period for funding purposes. Heading into 2024, OPERS had an unrecognized net loss carryforward of \$5.5 billion. Recognizing \$2.1 billion of that loss in 2024 yielded the 83 percent funded ratio. Going forward, OPERS will have a net unrecognized asset loss carryforward of \$2.5 billion to be recognized over the next three years. OPERS' unfunded liability for its defined benefit plan was estimated to be \$21.6 billion at the end of last year. For the healthcare fund, the primary funding metric is the estimated remaining years of solvency. With strong returns in 2024, the plan's solvency is expected to improve to 27 years, up from 25 years.

Crowe LLP reported on its audit of STRS Ohio's fiscal 2024 financial statements at the December 2024 board meeting. STRS received an unmodified or "clean" opinion, affirming the financial information prepared by the system. Crowe is an independent auditing firm selected by the Ohio Auditor of State to conduct the annual financial statements audits of STRS. The complete STRS 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is available on the STRS website, along with the more user-friendly Summary Annual Financial Report.

CEM Benchmarking issued its investment report covering the 2023 calendar year highlighting that STRS was the third lowest cost fund among its peer group, saving approximately \$122 million by

managing about two-thirds of its investments internally. STRS' five-year net total fund return was in the top decile of CEM's U.S. public universe. The report also showed that over a five-year period, STRS' investment management program added \$2.2 billion in net value compared to passive index investing. In its pension administration report, STRS member services ranked first for its total overall service score among a peer group of 68 global pension systems.

Edward Gin was introduced as the system's new deputy executive director and chief financial officer at the February STRS meeting. Most recently, Gin served as the CFO of the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. He replaces Lynn Hoover, who retired last December. Aaron DiCenzo has been appointed the interim chief investment officer effective April 1, following the retirement of previous chief investment officer Matt Worley at the end of March. DiCenzo previously served as the director of alternative investments and has been with STRS for nearly seven years. The search for a permanent chief investment officer will begin later this year. The board is working with the executive search firm EFL Associates to continue the search process for a permanent executive director. Interim executive director Aaron Hood will remain in the role until a new director is hired.

As you have undoubtedly heard by now, earlier this year then-President Biden signed the Social Security Fairness (SAFE) Act into law. After many years of debate in the U.S. Congress, it was finally approved by both the House (by a vote of 327-75) and the Senate (76-20) last December. All Ohio members of Congress voted in favor. This action repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). Those provisions had an impact on employees who contribute to a public retirement system in lieu of Social Security, but who have also contributed to Social Security through non-public employment. OPERS and STRS Ohio retirees who are also eligible to receive a Social Security benefit have had their Social Security benefit reduced by WEP because they received a retirement benefit from their state pension system. The law also changed spousal or survivor benefits for retired public sector workers who did not pay into Social Security. Benefits include retirement or disability benefits, and also spouse's or surviving spouse's benefits on another person's Social Security record.

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The act's language calls for back payments to be made to January 2024. The implementation of the Social Security payment changes is handled by the Social Security Administration (SSA). The Social Security Administration has indicated that retirement benefit recipients subject to these two provisions should expect to receive retroactive benefits by the end of March.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the SAFE Act will boost monthly payments to the affected beneficiaries by a monthly average of \$360 by December 2025. Beneficiaries should note possible tax consequences and changes to their overall income tax bracket. The payments could push some individuals into a higher tax bracket and/or trigger the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) that affects Medicare Part B and Part D premiums.

Individuals who did not previously apply for retirement benefits because of the WEP, or for spouse's or surviving spouse's benefits, should contact the SSA. The most convenient way to apply for retirement or spouse's benefits is online at ssa.gov/apply. Applications can also be made by telephone by calling 1.800.772.1213, although pending changes to identity verification directed by the White House may end application by phone. The survivor benefit application is not available online. Those who need to apply for survivor benefits must call the SSA at 1.800.772.1213. The date of application might affect when benefits begin and the benefit amount.

Additional information can be found at ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/social-security-fairness-act.html. As of March 7, SSA had taken 81,000 new applications since the Social Security Fairness Act passed.

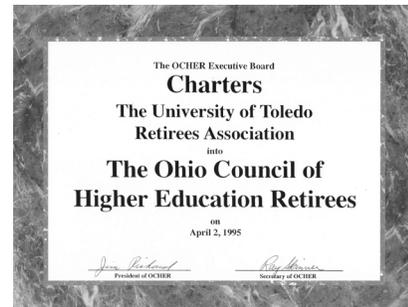
OCHER CONTINUES ITS WORK ON BEHALF OF HIGHER ED RETIREES

Editor's note: As part of our celebration of UTRA's 30th anniversary, James Lapp has written a history of the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees, of which UTRA is an active member.

The origin of the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees (OCHER) can be traced back to January 1992. Representatives from several state-supported universities in Ohio met on the campus of Ohio State University to share information about the retiree organizations on their campuses and to consider the formation of a statewide association of those groups. Attendees described their organizations, shared common concerns, and agreed on the need for a statewide communication network among the organizations. They also agreed to contact other state schools to invite them to attend future meetings of this group, and to encourage them to organize their retirees.

Further conversations and meetings ensued, and at a June 1993 meeting the name Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees was adopted for this

network. On May 24, 1994, the OCHER constitution was approved, and officers were elected. Jim Richard, representing the Medical College of Ohio, was elected as the first vice president of OCHER. He would go on to become OCHER's second president in 1996. The University of Toledo joined in 1995. OCHER has since grown to include representatives from all 13 public universities in Ohio that have active retiree associations. Retiree associations pay annual membership dues of \$100. Four yearly OCHER meetings not only provide representatives with a chance to meet and exchange ideas, but to also hear directly from OPERS and STRS staff who present updated information on pension and healthcare benefits, member services and legislation at both the state and federal levels that could affect the state's retirement systems.



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OCHER CONTINUES ITS WORK ON BEHALF OF HIGHER ED RETIREES

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Today, OCHER continues to pursue its purpose to promote the welfare of retirees of Ohio public institutions of higher education. It provides advocacy, leadership and representation for retirees in Ohio public retirement systems to the legislature, and to other appropriate groups at the local, state and national levels, while also sharing information among member institutions of general interest and supporting retiree organizations at each of the member institutions.

Earlier this year, the OCHER Advocacy Committee, with support of the entire board, drafted a letter expressing concerns and views on the state of affairs of STRS Ohio, and a STRS board that is currently in turmoil. Among other things, the letter

expressed OCHER's support for intergenerational fairness between current retirees and active teachers, a reduction in the number of years active teachers must work for full pension benefits, increases in cost-of-living adjustments but only if such increases do not cause serious damage to the present and future health of the fund, and an increase in employer contributions to the system. In addition to STRS, the letter was distributed to the members of the Ohio General Assembly, and organizations such as Ohio Education Association, Ohio Federation of Teachers, American Association of University Professors, Ohio Retired Teachers Association, plus OPERS and SERS. OCHER has received many positive responses to this letter.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE PRESENTS SLATE OF CANDIDATES

The UTRA Nominating Committee, chaired by Donna Haar, has developed an outstanding slate of candidates for the organization's upcoming elections. Below are brief biographies of those running for office:

For the Office of President, Lance Talmage

Talmage, current vice president, said he has been privileged to serve on the UTRA Board for the last three years. He has been active on the Bylaws Committee, the Committee on Committees, and has attended many UTRA events. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering degree from UToledo, and served as president of the Alumni Association from 2009-2010. He was appointed a part-time faculty in the medical school in 1973, and became full time faculty in 2014, as a clinical professor in 1988, and professor in 2014. He also served as interim chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology from 2014 – 2017 and retired as professor emeritus.

For the Office of Vice President, Lynn Hutt

Hutt graduated from the UT College of Business in 1995. She joined the board of the Alumni Association in 2002, and continues to be a member of the Finance Committee. She has worked for the State of Ohio Auditor's office and ProMedica. In 2005, she joined UToledo auditor's

office and became the UTMC compliance officer in 2006. She retired in 2020 and joined UTRA as the chair of the Philanthropy Committee in 2022.

For the Office of Secretary, Janice Mary Whitaker

Whitaker retired in 2011 after 22 years as a social worker with the transplant program at the University of Toledo Medical Center. She received her undergraduate degree from Grove City College and her MSW from the University of Minnesota. Jan currently serves as chairman of the UTRA Book Group and is an active participant in two other book groups.

For the Office of Member-at-Large, Catharine Harned

Catharine recently retired from UToledo after nearly eight years working in the Marketing and Communications department as a marketing strategist. Her work focused on responding to the needs of partners in the clinical enterprise, which included UTMC and University of Toledo Physicians. For the majority of her career, Catharine's focus has been health care marketing for independent hospitals and healthcare systems. She holds a master of liberal studies degree from UToledo and a bachelor of science degree from Colorado State University.

For the Office of Member-at-Large, Mary Jane Horn

Horn retired from the University of Toledo in 2012. She began her career at UToledo as a temporary employee in the Upward Bound program and was then hired full-time at Carlson Library, where she worked in the Circulation Department for the rest of her career. She graduated from the university in 1968 from the College of Business Administration, with a degree in Marketing and worked in that field for several Toledo corporations. She valued the time she spent in the library getting to know the students, faculty, and staff.

For the Office of Member-at-Large, A. John McSweeney

McSweeney received his B.A. from the University of Wisconsin, his M.A. and Ph.D. from Northern Illinois University, and his J.D. from UToledo. John retired as interim chair of the UT Psychology Department in 2016 after 35 years as a faculty member at UT and MCO. He served an additional six years

as a part-time faculty member and clinical neuropsychologist in Psychiatry before retiring completely as professor emeritus of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neurology.

For the Office of Member-at-Large, Kathy (Bielski) Wilson

Wilson retired from the University of Toledo in 2020. She has served on the UTRA Program Committee and Philanthropy Committee, and participates in the UTRA Pathfinders walking group, as well as attending many UTRA events and activities.

She began working in University College in 1987, with stints at the former ComTech, College of Pharmacy, Enrollment Management, and Division of Student Affairs. She is an alumna of the UT Higher Education program.

Ballots for the election will be mailed in May, so watch for yours to arrive, and remember to vote.

UTRA WELCOMES NEW RETIREES

Lynne Basden
Mary Bierbaum
Gregory Bond
Song Cheng
Dr. Joanne Ehrmin
Louise Fauser
Amy Finkbeiner
Diane Foley
Reynaldo Guerra
Cindy Hallauer
Jill Hass
Holly Helminski
Thomas Hodges
Robert Huntsman
M. Robert Johnson

Dr. Beverly Karabin
Sandra Kazmierczak
Lori Legendre
Dr. Sakui Malakpa
Arlene Mayer
James Medlen
Kevin G. Miller
Mark Monhollen
Anita Montague
Connie Mueller
John Murnen
Lor Nijim
Tonya Nobles
Sandra Owens
Chris Peters

Patricia Peterson
Marianne Palmer
Dr. Azadeh Parvin
Elida Potts
Tamara Renner
Thomas Roberts
Kristi Rogers
Rena Schuler
Kathy Schultz
Christian Schwarz
Dr. James Slama
Staci Sturdivant
Dr. Mary Templin
Francoise Thompson
Dr. Katherine Wall

Talven Warren
Stephanie Wilson
LIFETIME MEMBERS
Dr. Jon Bjorkman
Dr. Karen Bjorkman
Teresa Hayes
Dr. Jeen Su S. Lim
Kimberly Pollauf
Patricia Rutherford
Brenda Snyder
Gwen Terwilliger
Maria Villagomez
Cennis Zablocki

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Continued from page 1

Each of our several committees would welcome participation of UTRA members. One need not be on the organization's board to contribute your efforts and ideas. Please let me or one of the committee chairs know of your interest. We can always use new ideas to make UTRA an even better organization for our members!

This would be a very appropriate time for us to recruit additional members to UTRA. As you know, new retirees receive a complimentary membership for one year. They are then invited to renew their annual membership or become life members. Only about 25 percent of our retirees are members of UTRA. If you regularly connect with other retirees, please consider inviting them to join UTRA. Various articles in this newsletter will give you ideas of what aspects of our organization you can highlight as reasons to join.

If you have received this newsletter in the mail, but do not receive the regular UTRA emails, please send your email address to our staff liaison Ansley

Abrams (Ansley.Abrams@utoledo.edu) so you can be added to that distribution. If you are on Facebook, look for UTRA postings there. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for future activities, please contact me at Andy.Jorgensen@utoledo.edu.

Let me end my final report to you with some reflections on my term on the board and as president. I have found UTRA to be a very rewarding means for remaining connected to the University where I served as an employee for almost 30 years. Continuing to see colleagues and make new friends from within our group has been a great joy. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as an officer of our organization. Finally, I want to offer an expression of gratitude to board members and others who have served UTRA in carrying out our programs over the years. Their efforts have made our organization what it is today.

**Andy Jorgensen, UTRA President
Outgoing President**

UTRA TO KICK OFF '\$30 FOR 30 YEARS' SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN

Continued from page 1

The UTRA scholarships are also endowed but depend on yearly donations from UTRA members to grow the funds.

Other anniversary events planned for the annual meeting include honoring all past UTRA presidents and a special anniversary celebratory cake. For

more information on the history of UTRA and its sister organization, the former Medical University of Ohio Retirees, see additional stories in this issue of *Tower Talk*, and in the fall issue.

Watch your email for information regarding how to register for the annual meeting luncheon.



Help us continue our legacy of giving back.

Consider donating \$30 for our 30th, or any amount that's meaningful to you. Every gift makes a difference! Scan this QR code to make a gift now.

tol-edo.org/UTRA30

UTRA DUES WILL NOT INCREASE

UTRA is pleased to announce that despite previous communication, membership dues will not increase for the 2025 calendar year. The organization is committed to keeping UTRA accessible and valuable to all members.

UTRA continues to offer engaging programs, events,

and opportunities for connections at an affordable price for members. The Board appreciates your dedication and looks forward to another year.

Thank you for your support and membership.

UTRA AT 30—A HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP

At its upcoming annual meeting in June, UTRA will honor the past presidents of both UTRA and the former MUO Retirees Association. Below is a list, compiled from the archives of both organizations, of the leaders of these groups and the years that they served.

Past Presidents of the University of Toledo Retirees Association:

James Brunner, 1995-1997
Lancelot C. A. Thompson, 1997-1999
Robert Niedzielski, 1999-2001
Richard Perry, 2001-2003
George Murnen, 2003-2005
George Kertz, 2006-2007
Jim Richard, 2007-2008
Mildred Allred, 2008-2010
Keith Schlender, 2010-2012
James Lapp, 2013-2015
Keith Schlender, 2015
Pam Pullella, 2015-2017
Donna Haar, 2017-2019
Curt Black, 2019-2021
Christine Spengler, 2021-2023
Andrew Jorgensen, 2023-2025

Past President of Medical University of Ohio Retirees Club:

Jim Richard, 1990
Gerald Connolly, 1991
Paul Moyer, 1992
Virginia Nilsson, 1993
Russel Rice, 1994
Augusta Askari, 1995
Lois Hupp, 1996
Jim Mansfield, 1997
Deanna Cedargren, 1998
Pat Harmon, 1999-2001
Richard Ruppert, 2002-2003
Joanne Schwartzberg, 2003-2004
Roberta Raeder, 2004-2006

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Mesbah U. Ahmed, Toledo, professor emeritus of information systems and operations management, died Nov. 28 at age 78. He joined the faculty as an associate professor in 1981, was named professor in 1985, and was chair of the department from 1985 to 1987. He served on Faculty Senate. Ahmed retired in 2015 and returned to teach from 2016 to 2018. He was a recipient of the UT Outstanding Teacher Award and the College of Business Graduate Teaching Award.

Arlene C. (Haddad) Albright, Sylvania, a former nurse at MCO, died Nov. 5 at age 88.

Alberta "Bert" Allen, Toledo, a custodian at UT for three decades, died Jan. 4 at age 74. She joined the staff in 1987 and retired from the University in 2017.

Ned E. Baker, Bowling Green, former MCO/MUO employee, died Jan. 4 at age 97.

Patricia A. Barrett, Toledo, who was a custodial worker at MCO/MUO/UTMC from 2004 until her retirement in 2011, died Sept. 27. She was 59.

Allen R. Bell, Maumee, a former MCO employee, died March 8 at age 84.

Kathleen (Weicket) Birr, Toledo, who was a nurse at MCO from 1976 until her retirement in 2000, died Nov. 23 at age 84.

Sandra L. (Suffety) Blackford, Toledo, a custodial worker at UT from 2002 until her retirement in 2021, died Aug. 8 at age 77.

Dr. G. Allen Brunner, Toledo, professor emeritus of marketing, died Feb. 1 at age 92. The UT alumnus received bachelor of business administration and master of business administration degrees in 1957 and 1959. He joined the faculty as an associate professor of marketing in 1967. Brunner was promoted to professor in 1972 and served as department chair from 1977 to 1978 and from 1982 to 1988. He was named managing director of the Division of Business Research and Services in 1987. During his time on campus, Brunner served on the Faculty Senate and numerous committees. He retired in 1999 and received the emeritus designation.

Dr. Thurid M. (Kaaber) Campbell, Toledo, professor of dentistry at MCO from 1980 until her retirement in 1999, died Dec. 31 at age 87. She was a founder of the MCO Gourmet Club.

Joseph L. Clark, Perrysburg, died Nov. 12 at age 84. He was hired to lead the Public Relations Office in 1991 and was an instructor in the Communication Department from 1989 to 1990 and from 1997 to 2009. He is survived by Gertrude Robertson, former UT faculty member and administrator.

Elouise J. (Forquer) Cousino, Maumee, who worked in the UT Bookstore for a time, died Jan. 10 at age 92.

Carol A. (Clark) Crum, Waterville, who worked at the University 27 years, died Feb. 22 at age 77. She joined the staff in 1984 and, over the years, held several positions, including custodial worker, account clerk, and executive residence administrator. Crum retired in 2011.

Sharon B. Dickerson, Toledo, died Nov. 29 at age 77. She joined the University staff in 1997 and worked

as a secretary and was named a records management officer in 2008 in Financial Aid. Dickerson retired in 2009.

JoAnn (Beck) Dixon, Sylvania, who worked in the UT Financial Aid Office from 1996 to 2013, died Nov. 18 at age 94. She received a bachelor of arts degree from the University in 1993.

Sylvia J. (Vargo) Goeke, Rossford, former UT instructor, died Oct. 31 at age 85.

Dr. Vijay K. Goel, Toledo, a researcher known for his medical device innovation and professor at the University for more than 20 years, died Aug. 22 at age 79. He joined the UT faculty as professor and chair of bioengineering in 2000. Six years later, Goel became the McMaster-Gardner Professor and Endowed Chair of Orthopedic Bioengineering, and co-director of the Engineering Center for Orthopedic Research Excellence. In 2009, he was named Distinguished University Professor of Bioengineering. While at the University, Goel founded the Spine Research Center, the Engineering Center for Research Excellence, and the Center for Disruptive Musculoskeletal Innovation. He retired from UT in 2023 and was named Distinguished University Professor Emeritus. His research led to several patents and was recognized with four lifetime achievement awards and, in 2016, the American Society of Biomechanics created the Goel Award to spotlight accomplishments in biomechanics research, entrepreneurship and societal benefit.

Joanne Solon Green, Taylorsville, Ky., who retired as a senior purchaser at MCO, died Jan. 11 at age 94.

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IN MEMORIAM

Matthew C. Gretzinger, Toledo, a theatre instructor from 2011 to 2013, died Sept. 24 at age 53. The UT alumnus received a bachelor of arts degree in theatre in 1997.

Dr. David L. Grossman, Bradenton, Fla., an internal medicine physician and infectious disease specialist who had a ProMedica practitioner appointment as a clinical assistant professor at UTMC from 2015 to 2017, died Jan. 30 at age 75. He led the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department from 2000 to 2016 and served as its medical director from 2016 to 2020. The advocate for public health received a doctor of medicine degree from MCO in 1974.

Martin Hames, Maumee, died March 6 at age 78. He joined UT as an audio-visual specialist in 1978, was named an instructional media specialist in 2003, and retired in 2005. Hames took classes at the University.

Clark W. Hamilton, Toledo, died Nov. 24 at age 76. He received a bachelor of arts degree in political science from UT in 1980 and returned to his alma mater and worked as a coordinator of financial aid for a time.

Robert W. Hansen, Toledo, who worked at MCO/MUO/UTMC for three decades, died March 6 at age 55. He joined the staff as an x-ray technician in 1994 and later served as picture archiving and communication system administrator in the Cardiovascular Lab for 20 years. Hansen received a bachelor of science degree from UT in 2012.

Dr. Craig B. Hatfield, Chelsea, Mich., professor emeritus of geology, died Feb. 23 at age 90. In 1964, he joined the faculty and received the University's

Outstanding Teacher Award in 1972. Hatfield's research sounded an early alarm on global oil shortages. He retired in 1999 and was granted emeritus status.

George W. Hayes Jr., Toledo, a longtime UT employee, died Nov. 26 at age 68. He was hired in 1993 and retired as an electrician journeyman 2 in 2021. During his time at the University, Hayes served as CWA union steward. Believing in the power of bowling to bring people together, he started the Cops & Kids Build-a-Trust Bowl-a-Thon. Hayes was a Rocket fan and attended many UT women's basketball games.

Carol S. (Pawlowicz) Hendrzak, Maumee, died Oct. 16 at age 81. She joined the MCO staff in 1989, was named an administrative assistant in 1999 and a clerkship coordinator in 2006. Hendrzak retired from the University in 2011.

Dr. Patricia A. (Hendley) Hogue, Toledo, longtime MCO/MUO/UT faculty member in physician assistant studies, died Nov. 2 at age 70. She joined the faculty in the College of Medicine in 1997, was named assistant professor in 1999, chair and associate professor in 2004, and added associate dean of diversity and inclusion to her title in 2015. She helped create the Physician Assistant Program at the University. Hogue retired in 2018. She received a doctoral degree in public health education from UT in 2007.

Robert J. Hopperton, Sylvania, professor emeritus of law, died Oct. 30 at age 83. He received a master of business administration degree from UT in 1969. Hopperton joined the faculty at his alma mater in 1978 and taught law until his retirement in 2010. He continued to teach part time until

2015.

David R. Hufford, Perrysburg, former instructor in the College of Education, died Dec. 18 at age 89. He taught classes in curriculum and instruction. A UT alumnus, he received bachelor and master of education degrees in 1972 and 1974.

Dr. Jerzy Kamburowski, Sylvania, a UT faculty member for 30 years, died Aug. 27 at age 70. He joined the College of Business as an associate professor in 1989 and retired as a professor of information operations and technology management in 2019.

Donald A. Kotnik, Holland, an influential coach of the men's golf team for 17 years, died Dec. 23 at age 80. Kotnik received a bachelor of education degree in 1967 from the University, where he was a member of the Rocket football and golf teams from 1962 to 1966. He returned to coach golf at his alma mater from 1974 to 1991. During that time, he mentored and inspired young golfers. Kotnik was the PGA professional at the Toledo Country Club for more than 40 years and co-founded the Toledo Junior Golf Association in 1973. He earned the PGA Master Professional title in 1980, only the 17th in the nation at the time, and received the PGA's Golf Professional of the Year honor in 1993. During his career, Kotnik taught more than 100 state, regional and city champions and was the founder of the Northern Ohio PGA Assistants Championship. Twice he was named one of Golf Magazine's top 100 teachers in the country. In 1995, Kotnik was inducted into the University Varsity T Hall of Fame. Ten years later, he was inducted into the PGA National Golf Professional Hall of Fame.

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IN MEMORIAM

Mary B. (Clark) Kulczak-Sollmer, Saline, Mich., died Oct. 2 at age 85. A secretary in the Learning Resource Center, she retired in 2003.

Janet M. (Wick) Landwehr, Perrysburg, died Dec. 17 at age 78. For several years, she taught more than 20 social work classes. Landwehr also served as coordinator of the Mental Health Technology Program and adjunct coordinator of the Social Work Technology Program.

John N. MacKay, Toledo, former instructor in the College of Law, died Jan. 4 at age 78.

Eileen (Piatt) Macrina, Maumee, who worked in the UT Registrar's Office for a time, died Sept. 17 at age 80.

Genevieve "Bonnie" (Buyer) Mandly, Delta, Ohio, a former secretary in the MCO College of Nursing, died Nov. 17 at age 93. She was a member of the UT Retirees Association.

William A. Mayhew, Turlock, Calif., a former faculty member in the College of Law, died Nov. 5 at age 84.

Carol A. (Scherf) McCormick, Sylvania, a former business lecturer, died Jan. 7 at age 78. She received a bachelor of education degree from the University in 1988.

Elaine I. Miller, Waterville, a longtime faculty member who taught mathematics, died Jan. 29 at age 81. She brought her passion for math to campus in 1984 as an instructor. In the Department of Technical Science and Mathematics, she was promoted to assistant professor in 1988 and associate professor in 1994. She joined the Department of Mathematics in 1999. Miller was active with the UT chapter of the

American Association of University Professors, and she served on several department and University committees and boards. In 2005, Miller received the UT Outstanding Teacher Award. She retired in 2014.

Luanne (Mack) Momenee, Monclova, who worked at UT for several years, died Jan. 1 at age 87. In 1996, she joined the staff and served as director of the Learning Enhancement Center from 2005 until her retirement in 2013.

Helen (Lunz) Myers, Toledo, a former instructor who taught psychology and sociology, died Sept. 10 at age 81. The UT alumna received bachelor's and master's degrees in 1979 and 1980.

Dr. Edward J. Nussel, Sylvania, professor emeritus of education, died Jan. 24 at age 92. He joined the faculty as an assistant professor in 1964 and four years later was named professor. In 1975, he was appointed associate dean of special services and development in the college. Nussel served on numerous UT committees, boards and faculty organizations. He was a longtime advocate for area public and parochial education systems, playing integral roles in accrediting several local high schools for the former North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Nussel retired in 1987 and received the emeritus designation and continued to teach for several years on campus.

Marjorie A. (Merhab) Patterson, Toledo, died Jan. 20 at age 96. She received a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University in 1950 and worked at her alma mater for several years.

Reuben R. Peters Jr., Toledo, a

custodial worker at MCO from 1991 until his retirement in 2004, died Nov. 27 at age 85. He returned to work as a courier at the hospital. died June 18 at age 79.

Dr. Carol S. Plimpton, Toledo, professor emerita of early childhood, physical and special education, died Jan. 5 at age 75. She joined the faculty in 1985 as an assistant professor of exercise science and physical education. Plimpton taught undergraduate and graduate classes in physical education, specializing in motor development. She was chair of the Health Promotion and Human Performance Department from 1996 to 1999 and interim chair of the Developmental, Technological and Special Area Education Department from 1999 to 2000. During her career, Plimpton served on numerous department, college and University committees. For the College of Education, she was coordinator of the Teacher Education Program Advisory Committee from 1987 to 1990 and was the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education coordinator from 2001 to 2002. Plimpton was known for her promotion of health and wellness; in 1995, she was appointed as a member of the Ohio Department of Education's Advisory Committee for the Development of a Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Model. In 2005, the Ohio governor tapped her to be on the Ohio Advisory Council for Physical Fitness, Wellness and Sports, and the Toledo mayor selected Plimpton in 2006 to be on the Get Fit Toledo Committee to convene local health professionals to promote wellness initiatives.

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IN MEMORIAM

(Dr. Carol S. Plimpton continue)
A longtime member of the Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, she served as president and trustee of the organization. She was an avid fan of UT women's basketball. Plimpton received the professor emerita designation in 2014.

Jeffrey S. Reynolds, Perrysburg, an electrician at MCO from 1989 to 2000, died Dec. 4. He was 53.

Eileen M. (Schunder) Roll, Ocean Springs, Miss., who was a member of the Satellites Auxiliary, died Oct. 13 at age 87.

Frank Schmidlin, Toledo, a former MCO employee, died Jan. 14 at age 97.

Irene L. (Kettunen) Schubert, Fairfax County, Va., a former reference librarian at the University, died Nov. 17 at age 85.

James V. Shindler Jr., Sylvania, died Feb. 25 at age 85. He received a law degree from the University in 1966 and was an instructor at his alma mater in the Division of Continuing Education from 1965 to 1967.

Michael T. Stark, Bowling Green, who was a medical technologist at MCO/MUO/UTMC, died Oct. 21 at age 78. He joined the staff in 2000 and retired in 2012. One year later, he returned and worked until 2015.

Carolyn J. Stone, Toledo, a longtime nurse at MCO, died Nov. 18 at age 90. In 1955, she joined the staff at the Maumee Valley Hospital and continued her nursing career there when it became MCO Hospital. Stone was a trauma and neurosurgical

nurse and worked in the operating room. She retired in 1999.

Elaine (Fruchey) Valois, Kauai, Hawaii, professor emerita of dance, died Dec. 25 at age 96. She started several area dance schools before joining the UT faculty in 1966. Three years later, Valois helped launch the theatre/dance major in the College of Arts and Sciences; she developed the dance curriculum that featured three undergraduate majors: dance education, theatre dance and dance therapy. She was the founder and artistic director of the Valois Company of Dance at the University in 1974. Valois retired in 1997.

Kathleen "Kay" A. (Trembath) Van der Veer, Toledo, a former faculty member from the late 1990s to early 2000s, died Oct. 21 at age 93.

Paula Jo Vasko, Dekalb, Ill., a University staff member from the 1990s to 2003, died Jan. 28 at age 60. A UT alumna, she received a bachelor of business administration degree in accounting in 1986 and a bachelor of music degree in 2000.

Doris (Kramer) Wagar, Sylvania, a nurse at MCO until her retirement, died Jan. 3 at age 90.

Jack A. Wallington, Gettysburg, Pa., who taught as an instructor at ComTech, died Oct. 7 at age 89. The UT alumnus received a bachelor of education degree in 1964 and a master of education degree in 1979.

James K. Weekly, Henderson, Ky., died June 19, 2024, at age 90. He joined the business faculty as an associate professor of economics in 1968 and was promoted to professor of marketing in 1972.

Weekly was named chair of the department in 1976. He also served as director of the International Business Institute.

Joy J. (Goldsworthy) Whitt, Sylvania, who worked at the UT Bookstore for 20 years before her retirement, died Oct. 8 at age 81.

Lisa A. (Carter) Williams, Toledo, who was a counselor and case worker at MCO, died Feb. 4, 2024, at age 64.

UTRA MEMBERSHIP—GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH?

A recent article in the *New York Times* reported on several studies of retirees that indicate cognitive decline and depression often follow retirement.

“There is some evidence out there that retirement may be bad for cognition, because when you retire you don’t challenge your brain enough,” said one of the authors of the study. In addition, “suddenly going from a busy work life to a lack of engagement can exacerbate feelings of worthlessness, low mood, and sadness.” “People may have felt their purpose was contributing through work, and when that is taken away, they have to invent something else to take its place,” according to a professor at Columbia University Medical Center.

The solution? The article suggested that retirees replace workplace socialization with other types of socializing. “The best activities are ones that challenge your mind and foster meaningful discussions with others; things like book clubs.”

UTRA’s book club may be one way for members to continue to engage their brains, as are the many other interesting programs such as lectures and the Breakfast Buddies gatherings.

So when you receive your notice to renew your membership, remember: UTRA is good for your health.

HSC SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

By Keith Schlender

In 1999, the Health Science Campus (HSC) Retirees Scholarship endowment was established. Each year the proceeds from the HSC Retirees Scholarship Fund and contributions from HSC retirees designated as spendable are used to award scholarships to master’s and doctoral students in the colleges located on the HSC (Graduate Studies, Medicine and Life Sciences, Nursing, and Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences). Due to the generosity of the HSC retirees, our endowment now exceeds \$97,500 and our endowment plus earnings exceeds \$130,000. We hope to soon become a member of the \$100,000 Endowment Club. HSC Retirees may contribute to the endowment by going online to tol-edo.org/hscnet.

This year we were able to grant \$2,000 in scholarships in each of the four colleges. The recipients are recommended by the colleges based on academic excellence and valuable contributions to the campus and the community. The recipients from the HSC College of Graduate

Studies are Ben French and Sachin Aryal. Both Ben and Sachin are Ph.D. candidates in the Molecular Medicine Program. The recipient from the College of Medicine and Life Sciences is Saira Khan, a fourth-year medical student. The recipients from the College of Nursing are Josalyn Woodruff and Uhunoma Aguebor. Both are enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. The recipients from the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences are Syed Abdul-Moiz Hassan and Chase Morse. Syed is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, and Chase is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Medicinal and Biological Chemistry. All the recipients are deserving of the scholarship support we were able to provide them.

The Health Science Scholarship Committee members are Augusta Askari, Ph.D.; Donna Haar; A. John McSweeney, Ph.D., J.D; Thomas Mehelas, M.D.; Carol Okenka, RT-T, MR; Roberta Raeder, Ph.D.; and Keith Schlender, Ph.D.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Below is a list of some of the programs planned for UTRA members this spring, summer, and fall. Check your email for details on registration to take advantage of these opportunities. Events for remaining 2025 months are in the planning stages.

June 11

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Belmont Country Club

Annual Meeting

September 1-6

Annual Bus Trip

VIRGINIA/WILLAMSBURG/
NORFOLK (fee required)



Left, outgoing UTRA President Andy Jorgensen and Philanthropy Committee chair Lynn Hutt check out the stuffed animals donated by members attending the Holiday Reception at the Center for Alumni and Donor Engagement in December.

The toys are given throughout the year to comfort children being treated at the University of Toledo Medical Center. Below, President Jorgensen welcomes UTRA members to the reception, where winners of scholarships funded by UTRA members were honored.





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UTRA Tower Talk

CELEBRATE 30 YEARS OF UTRA WITH COMMEMORATIVE APPAREL!

The University of Toledo Association of Retirees is proud to offer another meaningful way to give back. In honor of our 30th anniversary, you can now purchase limited-edition commemorative apparel from Jupmode!

Not only will you be showing your Rocket pride, but a portion of the proceeds will go directly toward supporting UTRA student scholarships.

Scan the QR code or visit the shop at jupmodesupply.com/collections/ut-retirees-association-utra25

