

Tower Talk

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



UTRA President
Dr. Lance Talmage

Hopefully we will leave the Winter doldrums soon. The prolonged cold weather has slowed everyone to a crawl and canceled a few events. As always, UTRA has persisted with the breakfast club, walking adventures, book buddies' discussions, and lectures that it offers to its members. It is time to move on

now with the annual meeting in a new format and the monthly activities our Program Committee has planned. Our summer bus trip to Boston, Salem, and Cape Ann looks exciting and educational, and the price should be affordable to UTRA members.

UTRA members have stepped up again to donate to the scholarship funds, including the UTRA scholarships for descendants of our members, and the Health Science retirees scholarships that support outstanding students enrolled in the HSC colleges. Both funds now have balances of over \$100,000 for the first time. This issue of *Tower Talk* includes the announcement of the deserving HSC recipients, and a story on UTRA scholarship funding. The scholarship fundraising campaign launched last year to celebrate the 30th anniversary of UTRA was a success, and I want to thank everyone who donated.

Go Rockets!

Lance

TOWER TALK TIMES TWO

By Barbara Floyd

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then UTRA should be proud of its long-standing newsletter *Tower Talk*. In September, The University of Toledo Foundation began a new podcast also called "Tower Talk." The two are not related, but their goals are the same — to provide information about the University to a wide variety of audiences.

The first episode of the video podcast "Tower Talk" featured President James Holloway discussing his views on philanthropy as it relates to higher education. As the president explained, to him philanthropy is a meaningful way for people who have been successful in life to give back and pay it forward. Holloway noted that all successful people owe their success at least in part to others, and when you achieve that success, it is important to help those who follow.

Holloway said one of the keys to making philanthropy work for UToledo is to identify how the interests of donors align with what the University is doing. For example, people who are interested in assisting the medical center can support it through donations to fundamental, cutting-edge research into healthcare issues, and this can save lives not only in Toledo, but around the world by developing new kinds of treatments. "Discovery within healthcare has far-reaching possibilities," Holloway stated.



President Holloway is interviewed about his views on philanthropy in the first edition of the video podcast "Tower Talk." Pictured along with the president are: Brad Rieger, the Honorable Nancy Miller, and Tiffany Cavanaugh.

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NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

By James Lapp

At the STRS Ohio February board meeting, Makita, investment consultant, presented its quarterly performance report. For the 10-year period ending December 31, 2025, STRS posted a total fund net return of 9.44%, which put the system in the top decile of all peer plans. STRS also posted a top decile performance over the 5- and 20-year periods as well. Investments also outperformed the benchmark by 25 basis points in the one-year period ending December 31, 2025.

Cheiron, board outside actuary, presented its annual review of the economic assumptions for both the pension and the healthcare funds. This includes the discount rate, inflation, salary scale, and payroll growth assumptions. Cheiron shared its opinion on the rationality of the assumptions as they are used to measure STRS's long-term liabilities. No changes were recommended as part of this year's review. The discount rate, also used as the expected rate of investment return, remains at 7%.

Also at the February meeting, the board established a new human resources committee whose purpose is to support the board and executive director in advancing policies and strategies that ensure fair and transparent decision making based on objective criteria, communicated openly and applied consistently. These efforts enable the attraction, retention, and engagement of highly skilled professionals, in accordance with the laws of the state of Ohio and consistent with board policies.

STRS has released its latest annual financial reports, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2025 and the abbreviated Popular Annual Financial Report 2025, that provide a detailed look at the financial, investment, actuarial, and demographic details of the pension system. Information included in the reports (available at strs.org) shows that:

- The total net fund return was 10.42% in fiscal 2025. Five- and 10-year total fund net annualized returns were 10.29% and 8.52%, respectively. Net returns are net of all internal and external investment management fees and costs. Net investment income was \$10 billion. Investment performance for 2025 was above the board's long-term investment return assumption of 7%.

- The total fiduciary net position increased 5.9% from the prior fiscal year, ending at \$101.8 billion.

- Member and employer contributions totaled \$4 billion for the year, an increase over the prior year because of payroll growth. Investment income was \$10 billion.

- The June 30, 2025, valuation shows that the amortization period for the unfunded accrued liability increased to 11.8 years from 10.1 the prior year, and the ratio of fair value assets compared to accrued liabilities decreased to 80.9% from 82.8% in FY 2024.

- The healthcare fund net position was \$5.5 billion as of June 30, 2025. Its actuarial valuation showed the funded ratio of the plan at 128.3%.

- Total STRS membership stands at 549,348. Current active members equal 172,506, inactive members (eligible for refunds only) equal 162,049, and retirees and beneficiaries (currently receiving a benefit) equal 158,399.

- Total benefit payments were \$8.2 billion. STRS paid benefit recipients \$7.7 billion in service retirement, disability, survivor, and other benefits, plus \$357 million for healthcare coverage net of healthcare premiums during fiscal 2025. The average monthly retiree benefit for fiscal year 2025 was \$4,625.

- Administrative expenses were \$80.7 million for the year. Investment expenses for internal investment management were \$48.2 million, and external asset management fees were \$275.8 million.

On February 19, 2026, Franklin County Judge Karen Held Phipps ruled that Rudy Fichtenbaum, who was serving as STRS board chair, must be removed from the board for violating his fiduciary duty to the pension fund. Additionally, Fichtenbaum and former board member Wade Steen are prohibited from serving on the board again. "In the end, the evidence provided in this case showed that Steen and Fichtenbaum were essentially acting as agents for their undisclosed principals: QED, [Seth] Metcalf, and [Jonathan] Tremmel," the judge said, referring to private investment firm QED and its two leaders. "Indeed, multiple exhibits demonstrate that Steen and Fichtenbaum acted on behalf of QED, Metcalf, and Tremmel in their dealings with the board, during board meetings, and in attempting to undermine public confidence in the STRS investment staff." Attorney General Dave Yost had filed the lawsuit against Fichtenbaum and Steen in May 2024.

According to the lawsuit, the pair sought to invest as much as 70% of STRS assets, about \$65 billion, with a "shell company that lacks any indicia of legitimacy and has backdoor ties to Stein and Fichtenbaum themselves."

Board Vice Chair Pat Davidson has taken over as acting chair. Fichtenbaum's now vacant seat will be filled by the board, who will elect a new retiree member at the board's April meeting. That member will serve through August 31, 2027.

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UTRA SCHOLARSHIP FUND TOPS \$100,000

By Peter Papadimos, Scholarship Committee Chair

Thanks to the generous contributions of UTRA members, the UTRA Scholarship Fund has exceeded \$100,000 for the first time. As of December 31, 2025, the fund stands at \$102,447 with \$75,981 of this amount endowed. This is an increase of \$28,016.62 to the total fund balance over five years. This does not include the recent donations from Rocket Forward Day of Giving 2026.

University of Toledo students who are direct descendants of University faculty and staff who are dues paying members of UTRA or direct descendants of deceased retirees who were active members at the time of their death are eligible for the UTRA Scholarship. Fourteen scholarships have been awarded over the last five years.

The Scholarship Committee would like to remind UTRA members that donations to the UTRA Scholarship Fund are accepted by the UToledo Foundation at any time. Recent donations have permitted us to increase the total amount of dollars awarded to \$3,500 per year. If your children or grandchildren are attending UToledo, please encourage them to include the UTRA scholarship as one of the financial aid programs on their annual application.

A special thank you to Augusta Askari, Celia Regimbal, Jim Lapp, and Andy Jorgensen for serving on the Scholarship Committee. And a heartfelt thank you to all the UTRA members who have contributed to this worthwhile UTRA Scholarship Fund.

HEATH SCIENCE CAMPUS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

By Keith Schlender, HSC Scholarship Committee Chair

The Health Science Campus (HSC) Retirees Scholarship endowment was established in 1999. Each year the proceeds from the HSC Retirees Scholarship Fund and contributions from HSC retirees designated for current use fund scholarships for 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, we have now joined the "\$100,000 Endowment Club." Our endowment is more than \$104,000, and the total balance including earnings is \$160,000.

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 Jenna Maruskin and Bivek Timalsina. Maruskin is in the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences Physician Assistant Degree Program. Bivek is a PhD candidate in the Medical Microbiology and Immunology Program.

The recipient from the College of Medicine and Life Sciences is Matthew Kunas, a fourth-year medical student.

The recipients from the School of Nursing are Dina Kassem and Jessica B. Walter, who are both enrolled in the MSN Graduate Entry Program.

The recipients from the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences are Ahmed Alotaibi and Gillian Gallagher. Gallagher is in the Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Science/Master of Science in Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics Program. Alotaibi is a PhD candidate in Experimental Therapeutics.

All of the recipients are outstanding and deserve the scholarship support we were able to provide them.

Later this spring, the HSC Scholarship Committee will review the endowment earnings and contributions for current scholarship support. HSC retirees may contribute to the HSC Scholarship Fund by going online to tol-edo.org/hscset and indicate in the comments section how they want their gift allocated: endowment fund, current scholarships, or both. We hope to be able to increase scholarship support for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The HSC Scholarship Committee members are Augusta Askari, PhD; Ernest Brookfield, MD; Donna Haar; A. John McSweeney, PhD/JD; Carol Okenka, RT-T/MR; Roberta Raeder, PhD; and Keith Schlender, PhD.

JOIN UTRA MEMBERS ON TRIP TO MASSACHUSETTS

UTRA's annual bus trip this year will take members to historical sites in Massachusetts, including Boston, Lexington and Concord, Salem, and Gloucester.



UTRA members enjoyed learning about the history of one of the country's most important historical sites, Williamsburg, during the 2025 bus trip. The history lesson will continue this year with a trip to Boston and surrounding sites.

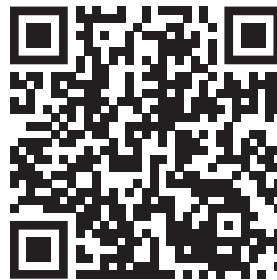
Departing on August 6 from the Center for Alumni and Donor Engagement, the trip package will feature motorcoach transportation, with five nights lodging (three nights in Boston), and five breakfast and three dinner meals. Highlights will include a full-day guided tour of Boston, including Trinity Church, Boston Commons, the

former Hancock Tower, the *USS Constitution*, and Cambridge. Additional sites in Boston will include Faneuil Hall and Quincy Marketplace, and the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Exhibits that can be viewed at the library include those on First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and the Space Race.

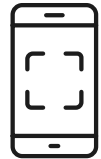
After visiting the sites around Boston, the tour will depart for a full-day guided tour of scenic coastal Massachusetts. Other activities will include a tour of Lexington and Concord (the birthplace of the American Revolutionary War) and a visit to the Minute Man National Historic Park. Other tours will include the town of Salem and Gloucester, America's oldest seaport located on Cape Ann.

The price of the trip is \$739 per person for double occupancy (\$1,006 for single and \$719 for triple). This trip is contingent on there being a minimum of 30 participants and is open to UTRA members and one guest.

Full payment is due June 6.



Scan the QR code for more information.



UTRA Pathfinders

Members of UTRA's Pathfinders group pose by the statue of the late noted local marathoner and University of Toledo faculty member Sy Mah in Olander Park in Sylvania.

TEDD TALK: LONG RECOUNTS HISTORY OF TOLEDO AND PROHIBITION

By Barbara Floyd

Tedd Long, who describes himself as a “history storyteller,” recounted the colorful history of Toledo during the Prohibition era to a capacity audience of UTRA members and guests on January 13 in the Center for Alumni and Donor Engagement.

Long, the author of several books as aspects of Toledo history and curator of the *holytoledohistory.com* website, focused his talk on the actions of Toledo prosecutor Frazier Reams to bring members of the bootlegging Purple Gang to justice during a famous trial in 1934.

Long began his talk by recalling how Toledo became a key location for gang activity by those seeking to control the illegal alcohol rackets even before Prohibition was enacted nationally. One of the reasons for this was that Michigan outlawed the sale of alcohol two years before much of the rest of the country, including Ohio. With liquor still being bottled in Canada just across the river from Detroit, U.S. Route 24 (known today as the Dixie Highway) became the Avenue of Booze as people transported it through Michigan to Ohio.

In 1919, Congress passed the Volstead Act, which nationalized Prohibition. While much of the illegally produced alcohol was made by small-time producers in the beginning, it did not take long before powerful gangsters like Al Capone working out of Chicago took over. In Detroit, the illegal import of liquor was controlled by the Purple Gang, run by the Licavoli family.

The Licavoli gang, under Yonnie Licavoli, moved into Toledo and was able to take control of alcohol distribution by paying off members of the Toledo Police Department. There were few of the violent gang wars in the city like there were in Chicago,

Long explained, because rival gang leaders cooperated with Licavoli — that is, all but one. Jack Kennedy, who was a bootlegger and nightclub owner, refused to pay Licavoli protection money and started to undercut Licavoli on the price of beer he sold illegally at his club. On July 7, 1933, Kennedy was shot dead in front of many witnesses in Point Place. Licavoli was suspected as being behind the killing.

While Prohibition ended in December 1933, the trial of members of the Licavoli family for the murder of Jack Kennedy did not begin until 1934. Frazier Reams and his team of prosecutors were able to make the case that while Yonnie Licavoli may not have pulled the trigger that killed Kennedy, he controlled those who did, one of the first times a conspiracy charge had been successful in convicting a gang leader.

Yonnie Licavoli was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Kennedy and three others. But, as Long noted, that was not the end of the case. In 1969, Governor James Rhodes commuted Licavoli's sentence, making him eligible for parole. He was released from prison in 1971.

Long recounted there were accusations that the governor had been paid off for the commutation, but this was never proven. Regardless, the case of the Licavoli family and bootlegging is one of the most colorful chapters in Toledo's history, with its elements of gang violence, murder, conspiracy, and corruption. Just like in the movies.

For more information on Tedd Long's books and historical tours that he offers, visit **holytoledohistory.com**.



The jury in the Yonnie Licavoli trial visit his home on Pemberton in Old Orchard, just blocks away from the UToledo main campus, 1934. Photo courtesy Ohio Memory.

UT CREDIT UNION SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The University of Toledo Federal Credit Union is seeking volunteers to serve on its Supervisory Committee and Board of Directors. The credit union may be a perfect opportunity for UTRA members to put their unique talents to work.

The UTFCU has been in business for more than six decades serving the financial needs of the UToledo community. Founded on March 24, 1961, by 13 members under the name T.U.T. Federal Credit Union, the institution expanded beyond the main campus to include the Medical College of Ohio employees as well as students, alumni, retirees and their immediate families. Today, the credit union manages roughly \$100 million in assets. Membership requires a simple \$5 deposit, and once you join, you are a member for life.

The main branch is located at 5248 Hill Avenue, with branches on the Main and Health Science campuses (and growing later this Spring) to make banking convenient for members of the University community.

The UTFCU is always looking for volunteers to serve in various roles in overseeing services. According to Tom Trimble, UToledo retiree and chair of the Board of Directors, retirees bring a special focus and attention to the work through their backgrounds and dedication.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of UTFCU, approving policies, reviewing financials, and overseeing operational issues. The Supervisory Committee is limited to five people, and this group keeps an eye on activities by reviewing expenses,



The main branch of the University of Toledo Federal Credit Union, 5248 Hill Avenue.

staffing, closed accounts, credit purchases, branch audits, and meeting with the contracted auditor for the annual financial audits.

The Board of Directors consists of seven people, and Trimble said there are usually two-three members elected to the board each year. The Supervisory Committee currently has two vacancies. Both groups meet once a month.

In addition to the volunteer positions, the UTFCU is operated on a day-to-day basis by a permanent staff and is overseen by President and CEO Gary Cook.

There are several UToledo retirees serving as volunteers for the credit union. In addition to Trimble, others are Richard Springman, Laurie Flowers, Mary Morrison, and Deb Driscoll.

For more information on getting involved with UTFCU, call 419.543.3770, or email UTFCU@utoledo.edu.

'T'WAS THE SEASON



UTRA members show off their creative talents after making Christmas wreaths at Hoen's Nursery in December. Members also enjoyed additional holiday cheer at the holiday reception in December.

CANCER RESEARCH INSTITUTE ESTABLISHED

By Nicki Gorny, UToledo Media Relations Specialist

The University of Toledo is launching the Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute, bringing together an expert roster of researchers to advance treatment of one of the most pressing public health challenges in Ohio and across the United States.

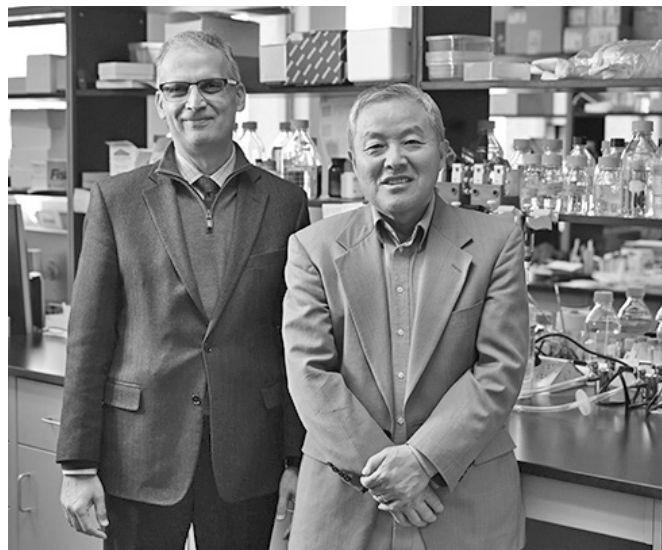
“Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide. The Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute aims to unite the strengths of UToledo and our partners to advance scientific discovery, improve patient outcomes and reduce the burden of cancer in and beyond northwest Ohio,” said Dr. Jian-Ting Zhang, a professor in UToledo’s College of Medicine and Life Sciences and inaugural director of the Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute.

The institute will support interdisciplinary collaboration among clinicians and researchers specializing in biology, chemistry, engineering, medicine, pharmacy and physics at UToledo as well as partners including ProMedica and the Toledo Clinic. More than 60 experts have been identified for inaugural membership, including more than 50 UToledo faculty whose active cancer research is supported by nearly \$13 million in grants from federal agencies like the National Institutes of Health.

These clinicians and researchers will collaborate across campuses, colleges and institutions as members of the Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute, including developing innovative projects and competing for large-scale grants to advance their work.

They also will collaborate through working groups established to specialize in breast, pancreatic and prostate cancer, as well as through three service cores designed to support high-impact cancer research. These service cores include a biorepository to collect and catalog biological samples and associated clinical data for use in cancer research as well as resources to accelerate the development of anti-cancer drugs and related treatments that will impact not only patient care but also the economy in northwest Ohio.

“The Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute will provide the infrastructure to turn laboratory discoveries into patient-centered care innovations,” said Dr. Imran Ali, dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences. “Our members



Dr. Imran Ali, left, is dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences, while Dr. Jian-Ting Zhang, right, is a professor in UToledo’s College of Medicine and Life Sciences and the inaugural director of the Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute.

will be well equipped to accelerate the translation of their research discoveries into innovative prevention strategies and improved detection, diagnosis and treatment of cancer for patients regionally in northwest Ohio as well as across the United States and worldwide.”

The new institute leverages the research strengths of UToledo, which was recognized as one of the country’s top-tier research universities through the prestigious R1 Classification in the latest Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

It also reflects University priorities to support growth in experiential learning, innovative research and community health championed by UToledo President James Holloway. These priorities are organized around three launch pads that outline UToledo’s path to advance the future of Toledo and northwest Ohio: Advantage Toledo, Innovate Toledo and Healthy Toledo.

“The Northwest Ohio Cancer Research Institute is a unique opportunity to advance all of these launch pads as we advance medical research and positively impact the health and well-being of our region,” Holloway said. “The institute will position us as a regional leader in translational cancer research, elevating the visibility and impact of the innovative work of our faculty and partners while establishing new opportunities to train the next generation of cancer researchers and physician-scientists.”

TOWER TALK TIMES TWO *Continued from Page 1*

The president noted that educating donors about what the University is doing is key. The first step in this educational process is for community members to engage with the University and become familiar with where it is headed.

Karlie Paige, director of advancement communications, said the purpose of the podcast is to offer members of the UToledo community a unique perspective on what is happening in some key areas of the institution. "Listeners can hear firsthand from leaders about how they play a role in University advancement as well as upcoming projects, initiatives and goals," Paige said.

Episodes of "Tower Talk" can be found on YouTube, or by typing "Tower Talk University of Toledo" in your search bar.



This year's UTRA Annual Meeting is getting a makeover! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, June 10, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the CADE Café.

Stay tuned for all the details!

NEW RETIREES

Debra Banks
Bonadine Berry
Dr. Sarit Bhaduri
Amy Both
Janelle Canard
Karen Coehrs
Dr. Deborah Coulter-Harris
Theresa Cummins
Nancy Dimasso
Jean Drenner
Susan Edinger
Dr. Lawrence Elmer
Dr. Christine Fox
Tony Gibson
Tamara Goettemoeller
Dr. Mohamed Hefzy
Donna Hise
Deborah Jennings
Teresa Keefe
Gerald Lammon
Dr. Clinton Longenecker

James Metzger
Debra Middleton
Subodh Mital
Douglas Perry
Irena Pietrzak
Theresa Richter
Elizabeth Smotherman
Sandra Stahl
Shelia Stewart
Carol Sukalo
Violet Townsend
Nancy Vollmar
Lisa Wilson
Jacqueline Zibbell
Robin Zubke

LIFETIME

Dr. James Anderson
Dr. Johnnie Early
Dr. Mary Powers



PROGRAM COMMITTEE CONTINUES ITS SERVICE TO MEMBERS

By Kathy Wilson, Program Committee Member

If you thought the program committee's schedule was busy in the first half of this year, you will be intrigued by what's coming next.

- Take a guided tour of Toledo Memorial Park with Pathfinders walking group, scheduled for April or May (exact date to be announced).
- Set sail with the J&M Boat Cruise to the Lighthouse in June or July (date to be confirmed).
- Join us at the Purple Rose Theater on July 22nd for a performance of "Emma's Wedding."

Known for consistently outstanding productions, the Purple Rose Theater promises an unforgettable experience. Registration details, including the cost of attending, will be available soon on the UTRA website. Please stay tuned for updates and further information.

- Hop aboard our Annual Bus Trip to Boston, Salem, and Cape Cod from August 6-11. Check the UTRA website for information on cost, trip details, etc.

IN MEMORIAM

Colleen (Gallant) Adler, Toledo, who worked at the University more than 20 years, died Nov. 26 at age 83. She joined the staff in 1984 and over the years worked in the UToledo Bookstore, Carlson Library and the College of Law. Adler retired in 2007.

Dr. Raj Aggarwal, a former instructor of economics and finance at the University, died Aug. 17 at age 78.

Robert L. Bell, Toledo, a former faculty member in the Music Department and president emeritus of the Toledo Symphony, died April 15, 2025. He was 86. He joined the Toledo Symphony as a musician in 1957 and served as managing director of the orchestra for many years. In 2010, Bell retired as president and CEO of the symphony. He received the Governor's Award for the Arts in 1994.

Juan M. Gonzalez Beltran, Wauseon, died Oct. 22 at age 54. He joined the UToledo staff in 2018 as a student loan manager in Enrollment Management. In 2023, he was named associate director of Rocket Solution Central; he held that position until July 2025.

Maryann E. (Tank) Brown, Toledo, who worked at the University for more than two decades, died Oct. 27 at age 79. She joined the staff in 1988 and was a records manager in the College of Education. Brown retired in 2012.

Charlene (Dauer) Burdge, Maumee, a nurse at MCO/MUO/UTMC for more than four decades, died Nov. 20 at age 65. She joined the staff in 1982 and retired in 2025.

Julie Inglis Christy, Toledo, died Aug. 18 at age 72. She joined MCO in 1994 and retired as director of the Division of Clinical Informatics in 2012.

Lawrence A. Cousino, Holland, a former machinist in the College of Engineering from 1994 to 2003, died Dec. 22 at age 92.

Dr. Karen E. Csengeri, Toledo, who was a faculty member in the Honors College from 2002 to 2013, died Aug. 31 at age 77. A recipient of the Honors College Faculty of the Year Award, she retired in 2014. The UToledo alumna received a bachelor of arts degree in mathematics in 1970 and a master of arts degree in English in 1974.

Patricia A. (Haladyna) Dachnowski, Toledo, who worked at the University 26 years, died Dec. 24 at age 79. She joined the staff as an administrative assistant in the Office of Accessibility in 1985. She also worked in Student Affairs before retiring in 2011.

Donna J. (Loch) Darr, Toledo, who was a volunteer with the Satellites Auxiliary, died Dec. 19 at age 74.

Jack R. Decker, Piqua, Ohio, who worked at the University for 20 years, died Feb. 2 at age 83. He joined the staff as a custodian in 1987 and retired in 2007. He is survived by Suzi Decker, who was a student account specialist in the UToledo Treasurer's Office from 1986 until her retirement in 2008.

Susan Fay El Anani, Bowling Green, who was a surgical nurse at MCO/MUO/UTMC for three decades, died Jan. 24 at age 71. She joined the staff in 1982 and retired in 2012.

Margaret E. (Foster) Fritz, Toledo, died Feb. 18 at age 83. She was a UToledo graduate assistant in 1984; after receiving a master of arts degree in history from the University, she was hired as an instructor of history and reading in 1986. After three years in the classroom, Fritz became the on-site coordinator at Jeep/UToledo

Connection in 1990. One year later, the UToledo alumna was named an instructor in the Community and Technical College. For a time, Fritz served as interim chair of interdisciplinary and special programs in University College. She retired as an assistant professor in 2013. Her husband was Dr. Paul Fritz, UToledo professor of communication, who passed in 2022.

Dr. Anthony R. Gerace died Sept. 17 at age 89. He was a clinical assistant professor of medicine in 1987 and 1988.

Dr. Judith C. Hanneken-Henry, Toledo, professor of English, died Oct. 13 at age 82. She joined the faculty in 1967 as an instructor of English at the Community and Technical College. She was promoted to assistant professor of general studies in 1971. Hanneken-Henry retired around 2001. The UToledo alumna received a bachelor of education degree in 1965 and a doctorate in 1975.

Victoria L. (Thompson) Hayes, Toledo, a former nurse at MCO, died Nov. 21 at age 73.

Marcia L. (Shore) Hess, Holland, a former UToledo instructor, died Oct. 15 at age 88. The UToledo alumna received a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in 1967.

Sara "Sally" J. (Scameheorn) Hinkle, Kansas City, Mo., a former UToledo employee, died Dec. 25 at age 89. The UToledo alumna received a bachelor's degree in 1980.

Dr. Karen L. Hoblet, Perrysburg, a faculty member for nearly 20 years in the College of Nursing, died Aug. 23 at age 70. She was a professor of nursing and director of the Graduate-Entry Master of Science in Nursing Program from 2006 to 2025. Hoblet was a

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IN MEMORIAM *Continued from Page 9*

member of Faculty Senate and served on numerous University and college committees. For her work, she received several honors, including the Dr. James Hampton Outstanding Teaching Award in 2015 and the Alice H. Skeens Outstanding Woman Award in 2022.

Dr. Cletus U. Iwuagwu, Holland, professor of medicine, died Dec. 25 at age 71. He joined the MCO faculty in 1999. Iwuagwu was a physician in the Comprehensive Care Center.

Theresa M. Langenderfer, Toledo, who worked at MCO for more than three decades, died Dec. 1 at age 89. In 1978, she joined the staff in the Physician Assistant Graduate Program, where she stayed until her retirement in 2009.

Eileen A. (Rokicki) Lewandowski, Swanton, who worked at UTMC, died Dec. 3 at age 71. She was a medical billing specialist from 2009 to 2019.

Dr. James W. Linden, Sylvania, a UToledo faculty member for more than four decades, died Nov. 21 at age 86. He joined the Political Science Department in 1967. Lindeen taught and conducted research on legislative behavior, public opinion, and political economy. He was a longtime director of the Political Science Master of Arts Program and served as department chair from 1995 to 2000. Lindeen was involved on campus, serving on the Council of the College of Arts and Sciences, Faculty Senate, and the University Athletic Committee.

Dr. Paul D. Longenecker, Westerville, Ohio, who taught at UToledo from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, died Aug. 26 at age 67. The University alumnus received a bachelor of science degree in nursing in 1982 and a master of business administration degree in healthcare administration and management in 1989. He is

survived by his brother, Dr. Clinton O. Longenecker, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus.

Dr. Donald E. McHugh, Toledo, former dean of the Division of Continuing Education, died Jan. 16 at age 92. The former Owens-Illinois Inc. vice president of human resources was named dean in 1987. He served on the UToledo Business Advisory Council.

Dr. Gail S. Mirrow, Toledo, an instructor who taught for several years in the College of Education, died Jan. 13 at age 83. The UToledo alumna received a doctorate in education in 1977.

Diane R. (Chinni) Mize, Toledo, who worked at MCO/MUO/UTMC for 20 years, died Dec. 30 at age 84. She joined the staff in 1988 and worked in Central Supply and Food Service before retiring as a switchboard operator in 2008.

Mary F. (Nally) Moawad, Newport Beach, Calif., a former instructor at the University, died Nov. 27 at age 81.

Laura A. (Cole) Mossing, Toledo, a nurse at MCO/MUO from 2004 to 2006, died Jan. 10 at age 67.

Kathleen E. O'Neil, Islamorada, Fla., a nurse at MCO/MUO from 2004 to 2005, died Oct. 27 at age 81. She volunteered at David's House, an AIDS service organization in Toledo.

Donna J. (McClure) Ortyl, Perrysburg, a former instructor at the University, died Jan. 26 at age 80. The UToledo alumna received a master of education degree in 1967. Ortyl was a member of the Dancing Rockettes.

Judith (Garn) Pidcock, Toledo, a longtime UT employee in Continuing Education, died Oct. 28 at age 84.

James A. Poure, Holland, a devoted UToledo benefactor and

Rocket fan, died Oct. 28 at age 88. The successful entrepreneur was dedicated to philanthropic and civic causes in the Northwest Ohio community, and he was a member of The University of Toledo Foundation Board. After serving as chair of that board, he was named trustee emeritus. Poure was a founding member of the UToledo Family Business Center, and he shared his wisdom with future generations of business leaders. He documented those lessons in his 2021 book, "Poure it on: The Making of a Successful Entrepreneur." Poure's lifetime achievements earned numerous recognitions, including the UToledo Family Business Center's Excellence Award, and he received an honorary doctorate from the UToledo College of Business. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Tartaglia-Poure, who worked for the University and UToledo Foundation as a fundraiser for many years, retiring as executive director of development. The couple have an area of the Larimer Athletic Complex named in honor of their generosity.

Dr. Manorama Rao, Holland, assistant professor of pediatrics from 1999 to 2004, died Aug. 23 at age 80. She received a doctorate in health and physical education from the University in 1996. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Subba Rao, UToledo professor emeritus of information operations and technology management.

Dr. Shirley Ferguson Rayport, Canton, Mass., professor emerita of psychiatry, died Sept. 17 at age 102. She was a faculty member at MCO/MUO/UTMC from the early 1990s into the 2000s. With her teaching, she integrated neurological and psychiatric assessment, and she introduced students to ethical and legal dimensions of mental

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IN MEMORIAM *Continued from Page 10*

health through conferences and casework while collaborating with UToledo law faculty.

Ila R (Culler) Sarno, Maumee, a former administrative assistant in the Geology Department, died Jan. 17 at age 94.

Richard "Tabb" Schreder, Toledo, who worked at the University for 27 years, died Aug. 20 at age 81. He joined the University in 1986 as associate professor and director of the mechanical engineering technology undergraduate program in the College of Engineering. Schreder retired in 2013.

Tessie Mae Seamon, Chelsea, Mich., a longtime UToledo employee, died Jan. 23 at age 92. In 1970, she joined the staff at the University, where she worked in the College of Education and the Student Services Division. While on campus, Seamon was active in the National Association of Academic Advising. She was a recipient of the University Women's Commission Outstanding Woman Award. Seamon retired from counseling in the Community and Technical College in 1999.

Linda (Bach) See, Ottawa, Ontario, who worked at the University from 2004 to 2009, died Jan. 6 at age 78.

Dr. Stefan Slak, Toledo, professor emeritus of psychology, died Nov. 1 at age 92. He joined the faculty as an assistant professor in 1967 and was named associate professor in 1971. Slak was granted emeritus status when he retired in 1995.

Dr. Christine M. (Keefe) Smallman, Delta, who worked at the University more than two decades, died Feb. 3 at age 67. She joined the staff in the College of Engineering in 1986. Smallman was senior manager

for marketing services and director of professional education programs in the college, retiring in 2013. She was honored by the University Women's Commission with its Outstanding Woman Award in 1993 and received one of UToledo's Outstanding Staff Awards in 2004. The UToledo alumna received a bachelor of arts degree in 2002, master of liberal studies degree in 2005, and a doctor of philosophy degree in 2015.

George R. Stamos, Toledo, a chef who prepared meals for the UToledo president and special events, died Oct. 17 at age 86. He worked at the University for 10 years.

Janet (Wozny) Duszynski Stoeckley, Monclova, who was a secretary at MCO for 17 years, died Nov. 4 at age 101.

Robert B. Sweney, Perrysburg, a former UToledo instructor, died Dec. 5 at age 82. The UToledo alumnus received a bachelor's degree in 1968 and a bachelor of engineering technology in 1983.

Dr. William J. Timmerman, San Antonio, adjunct assistant professor of rehabilitation sciences and physical therapy from the 1990s to the early 2000s, died Aug. 10 at age 89.

Frank J. Ward, Toledo, a UToledo retiree, died Oct. 5 at age 95. Born in England, he came to the United States in 1957 and eventually became a faculty member and administrator in The University of Toledo Libraries. He was also a 37-year member of the Cake Walkin' Jass Band, a Toledo institution known for its ragtime music.

Dr. William Williamson Jr., Knoxville, Tenn., professor emeritus of physics, died March 3, 2025, at age 91. He joined the faculty in 1965 as assistant professor

and was promoted to professor in 1969. He served on numerous committees on campus and published many scientific papers. His research on flat-panel displays led to the thin TV screens now hanging on walls everywhere. His summer activities took him to many diverse facilities, including the Manned Spacecraft Center in 1969 for the Apollo 11 moon landing and Sandia National Labs in California. A sabbatical year as visiting professor of physics at the University of Adelaide in South Australia broadened his international activities. He retired in 1997 and moved to Prescott, Ariz., where he enjoyed the mountains and playing his banjo. In 2024, he and his wife, Dotty, moved to Tennessee to be closer to their son and his family.

Harley L. Wulff, Toledo, a former proctor for the College of Medicine, died Nov. 27 at age 99.

Dr. Joel P. Zrull, High Point, N.C., professor emeritus of psychiatry, died Oct. 1 at age 93. He joined the MCO faculty in 1973. Two years later, he was named chair of the Psychiatry Department, a post he held for more than 20 years. During his tenure, Zrull oversaw the construction of the child and adolescent psychiatric hospital and the Kobacker Center. He was active with the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, serving as board examiner.



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NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

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The Ohio Public Retirement System posted strong investment returns for both the defined benefit and healthcare funds in 2025. Preliminary returns (as of mid-January 2026) indicated a gain of 14.71% for the defined benefit fund and a 16.39% gain for the healthcare fund. Those returns exceeded the assumed rates of 6.9% and 6%, respectively. These net-of-fee returns cover the calendar year January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. For the total plan, non-U.S. equity investments performed particularly well, returning 32.4%. Emerging-market debt returned 18.1%, while U.S. equities returned 17.1%. Investments in commodities, risk parity, and securitized debt also had double-digit returns.

OPERS's funding level at the end of 2025 was expected to decline about one percentage point from the previous year. Despite the favorable investment performance, the system's estimated funded ratio was expected to decline from 83 to 82%. That means OPERS has \$0.82 for every \$1 it owes in future liabilities. The forecasted time expected to pay off the system's unfunded actuarial accrued liabilities, defined as the

amortization period, is estimated to increase from 15 years to 17 years.

OPERS smooths its pension investment returns over a four-year period for funding purposes, which explains why the funded level is down slightly after a year in which OPERS outgained its assumed rate of return of 6.9%. OPERS expects to show an investment gain of about \$7.3 billion in 2025. Because of the four-year smoothing structure, it would recognize about \$1.8 billion of that gain in 2025. However, heading into last year, OPERS had an unrecognized net loss carryforward of \$2.4 billion that will be fully recognized this year, and thus the funded level is expected to decline by 1%. Going forward, OPERS expects to have a net unrecognized asset gain carryforward of about \$7 billion to be recognized over the next three years.

For the OPERS healthcare plan, the primary funding metric is the estimated years remaining of solvency. With a preliminary 12-month investment return of 16.39% last year, the plan's solvency is expected to improve to 32 years, up from 27 years at the end of 2024.