CAMPUS RETIREE ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff at SUNY Fredonia

by Barbara Mallette, Co-Chair

Emeritus faculty and staff at the State University of New York at Fredonia have been an active group – The Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff – since 1977. The association consists of a diverse group of individuals, some of whom may not be considered emeriti on some campuses. Our philosophy is inclusive, with group membership open to faculty and professional staff who have served Fredonia. Minimal dues are collected annually and a lifetime membership fee based on age is also available.

The association’s newsletter, Emeritus News, is published quarterly through coordination within the President’s Office, Graphic Designer Lori Deemer, and Editor Dan O’Rourke (Emeritus). The newsletter always includes a piece by the University’s President as well as news items submitted by members. Our Secretary, Carolyn Briggs, prepares minutes for each gathering; these minutes appear in subsequent newsletters. Although some members receive the newsletter electronically, mailed newsletters are available to a number of individuals. More than half of our group resides in Chautauqua County, which is relatively close to the University. The rest of our membership is spread across 28 states, Canada, and Finland.

The Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff sponsors an Emeritus Scholarship in the Fredonia Foundation from membership dues and donations.
Two students, Kerri Williamson, a senior dual major in biology and dance, and David Stedge, a senior in music education and music performance, received Emeritus Scholarships this past fall. The students submitted information about themselves; the biographical summaries and photographs were included in their spring newsletter.

Currently, Barbara Mallette, Emeritus Professor from the College of Education, and Cathe Kilpatrick, Emeritus Professional in the Office of Sponsored Programs, are co-chairs of the association. They follow Dr. Kevin Fox, Emeritus Professor of Biology, who provided leadership to the group for over seven years. Kevin also developed a summary of the history, purposes, and policies of our association, which has been helpful to the new officers.

The Fredonia Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff meets four times annually. Traditionally, a luncheon is held around St. Patrick’s Day at a local country club. Spring and fall luncheons are booked in June and early October either at the College Lodge or a local restaurant. If her schedule permits, Dr. Virginia Horvath, University President, joins us at our luncheons to update us on University initiatives. The University President hosts a holiday Open House for us each December. This event is the perfect way to wrap up the year. At President Horvath’s suggestion, members bring canned goods to donate to the local food pantry. In December 2016, Emeritus members donated over 100 pounds of canned goods.

Members report that they enjoy the social aspects of our gatherings. Peter Komada, resident photographer for the group, captures pictures of those attending each gathering. These photographs highlight each newsletter and chronicle the maturation of our association as time progresses.

A number of our members remain active on campus and in the greater community. Mac Nelson (English) regularly pens an article for the UUP retired members newsletter. Cathe Kilpatrick works in the School of Music scheduling auditions, while Barbara Mallette is closing a five-year Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition project with Holly Lawson of Chemistry. Minda Rae Amiran (English) has been active in the local Literacy Volunteers Association in Dunkirk, NY. David Tiffany (Fredonia Foundation) just ended a stint as grants writer for the village of Fredonia. Carol Blanchard-Rocheleau is a part-time faculty member in the School of New Learning at DePaul University. Tom Regelski (Music) lives in Finland, where he retired again from teaching but still consults and advises students. Steve Rees served as the Project Shepherd for the Rockefeller Arts Center Addition and Renovation Project at SUNY Fredonia. Steve’s work on this project has produced significantly more space for faculty and students in the Visual and Performing Arts. The Phillips-Ulrich Community Trail on the University’s campus was named this past summer for two Emeriti faculty and coaches: Jim Ulrich and Everett Phillips. This 1.5-mile loop is a regular on locally-scheduled track events as well as for local hikers.