Emerities Newsletter, Spring 2015

Georgia State University Emeriti Association

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We Give Scholarships

Lorene C. Pilcher, Professor Emerita, College of Education

Two years ago, I left the chores and annoyances of the large house and yard I had occupied for many years and moved into a comfortable two-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath apartment at Canterbury Court. This retirement community is conveniently located on Peachtree Road between Phipps Plaza and Brookhaven, and residents must be at least 65 years old and healthy.

Eight other retired Georgia State faculty members live here: Barbara (Bebe) Cheshire, Joen Fagan, Diane Fowlkes, Frances Harrold, Dabney Hart, Gene Groff, Jean Ellen Jones and Walda Lavroff. Retired faculty from other colleges in Georgia and around the country live here as well, and all the residents are well educated. Is it any wonder that we want to make scholars out of the employees?

Before I moved here, a resident proposed funding employee scholarships. Shortly after I arrived a year and a half ago, I agreed to select, convene and chair the first scholarship committee. To find out which employees were interested in scholarships, we devised a survey for the administration to distribute with the staff’s paychecks. Survey returns indicated that employees from the dining, security, maintenance, nursing and housekeeping departments were interested.

Next, we gave interested employees applications that required them to write essays about themselves. From those essays, we discovered we had some very interesting employees. For example, while just eight years old, a dining server walked with her mother and young brother from Somalia to Kenya where the family joined a refugee group and came to the United States. Her goal is to return to Africa and teach girls. She is now attending Georgia State. There was also a maintenance worker from Myanmar whose goal was to become an engineer. A Georgia Tech alumnus on our committee took him to see an adviser at Tech, who informed him that Tech would be required to accept him if he attended Georgia Perimeter College for two years and maintained a B average. That maintenance worker finished his first year at Georgia Perimeter with straight A’s.

We are grateful to our employees. They cook our food, wash our dishes, serve us in the dining rooms, clean our apartments, provide maintenance and security, lead us in exercises and water aerobics, arrange activities and entertainment for us and care for the residents who may eventually need assisted living or nursing services. Because employees are not allowed to accept tips, we show our appreciation by contributing to a fund that provides them bonuses. Extra money contributed to this fund goes toward scholarships. The residents are very enthusiastic about funding scholarships, and we always have a surplus after providing scholarships to everyone who applies.

During the past year and a half, we have awarded 56 scholarships, which pay all expenses for the courses employees take at accredited colleges. We will continue to fund their scholarships until they finish their educations and move on. We know they will eventually leave Canterbury Court for better jobs, and we are pleased with that outcome.

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There are more identity-theft scams than we could possibly imagine. In my latest experience, my AOL account and email were compromised, and many of my emeriti friends were notified I had been assaulted and stranded in the Phillipines [sic] and needed $2,400 to get back to Atlanta. The hackers obtained my friends’ addresses and then prevented me from warning them about the hoax.

Most of us have received similar emails asking for personal information, such as bank account numbers, names, addresses, Social Security numbers and other personal items. For example, I received an opportunity to split $18.5 million with the Bank of Africa if I provided my name, address, email address, bank name, account number, account holder’s name and bank branch. There was another from “Mr. Uddin” of the Foreign Remittance Department at the African Development Bank offering an abandoned sum of $15.5 million. There was $19.6 million from West Africa, $7 million from Libya, and $1.7 million from Nigeria—all of which supposedly required only a notarization fee. The best one was from Mrs. Anita Parker (Thank You and Be Blessed) indicating all other letters were scams and that I should deal only with Barrister Richard Blanc, Esquire. She required only $398 for paperwork.

All of these emails came to me directly with official-sounding names like the Office of Auditing of some government or bank. Most seem to originate from Africa or Third-World countries, and they all demand money upfront. No matter what, do not respond, and do not send personal information.

Scammers also try to obtain personal information through telephone solicitations or job offers for easy cash. The caller always asks for your address, phone number and credit card number—often under the guise of making a donation to a charity. As a general rule, banks or financial institutions never ask for personal information over the phone. Monitor all of your accounts regularly, and pay especial attention to your credit and debit cards. Your personal data may have been compromised from doing business with a big-box retailer like Target or Home Depot, or even Anthem, the parent company of the University System of Georgia’s health insurance carrier, which have all experienced security breaches.

Be very protective of all of your account and password information. If you truly desire to give money away, I will provide my email address and a P.O. Box in West Africa for your convenience.

S
pring is the season for change. We mark that change with celebrations at the end of the academic year, culminating in graduation ceremonies. This is a serious milestone for our new alumni. In the summer, students and faculty travel, pursue scholarly activities and take jobs that will change their lives. We all watch the campus and surrounding Atlanta neighborhoods turn green and bloom. Change is all around us.

For the most part, we welcome spring changes. They illustrate renewal — one of our greatest gifts. But change can be unsettling too. This is the case with potential changes to our benefits. Our healthcare options are always being “updated.” These changes are not just for retirees. It is likely we will see benefit changes throughout the Univerity System of Georgia (USG) as the state tries to manage healthcare costs. Managing and coping with change are skills that require solid information, and we will update you as we receive information on the proposed changes.

Several retiree organizations can help us work through these changes — the USG Retiree Council, Georgia Higher Education Retirees Organization and the Georgia State Emeriti Association. For most of us, Medicare will be
YOUR EMERITI EMAIL ACCOUNT: MORE THAN JUST EMAIL

Cassie Wilcox, Assistant Director, Marketing & Communications

As emeriti of Georgia State University, you probably already know that you have access to a free Office 365 email account. What you may not know is that there’s a lot more to Office 365 than just email.

• **Five Free Copies of Microsoft Office Suite Software**
  From inside your Office 365 account, you have access to download and install up to five free copies of the Microsoft Office Suite, including full versions of Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint and more. You can install the Microsoft Office Suite on your home computer, laptop or even mobile devices such as a tablet or smartphone. The Office Suite is available for Windows and Mac computers, Android devices, iPhones and iPads.

  You can get started installing Microsoft Office Suite at technology.gsu.edu/microsoft. Simply choose which version of the software you’d like to install, click the red Download button for your computer’s operating system and follow the instructions to install the software right from your Office 365 email account.

• **OneDrive Online Storage and Collaboration Tools**
  Need a place to back up your computer files, a way to transfer files from one computer to another, or a way to co-edit documents with someone else? OneDrive is your solution. OneDrive is Cloud storage accessible from your Office 365 account. A sync client allows you to back up documents automatically to your computer’s hard drive. OneDrive provides more storage than comparable services, and also allows you to edit documents, spreadsheets and presentations collaboratively online. Get started with OneDrive at technology.gsu.edu/onedrive.

For more information about the benefits of your Office 365 account, visit technology.gsu.edu/office365.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**DR. BONNIE FRITZ**, an adjunct professor at the College of Staten Island in New York, was honored last fall as one of Staten Island’s Top Women in Business. Over her 30 years in higher education, Fritz has focused on high-impact programs designed for student success and dedicated herself to the most at-risk students.

You may recall reading about Fritz’s volunteer efforts when Hurricane Sandy hit the east coast and caused enormous damage to New York City. Fritz also helped establish the Emeriti organization at Georgia State University where she was chair of the steering committee and an early editor of the Emeriti Newsletter.

Fritz has worked with her husband, William J. Fritz, president of the College of Staten Island, as a geology field assistant in Montana and Wales and has managed an organic cattle ranch in Georgia. In her spare time, Fritz enjoys writing poetry, whitewater kayaking, flying airplanes and spending time with her family and grandchildren.

**DR. STANLEY J. SMITS** is one of several emeriti who continue to publish after retirement. Last year, in a collaboration with Dawn Bowden of Johnson & Johnson, Judith A. Falconer of the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University and Dale C. Strasser of the Emory University School of Medicine, Smits published a paper entitled “Improving Medical Leadership and Teamwork: An Interactive Process.”

The paper presents the results of a two-decade effort to improve team functioning and patient outcomes in inpatient stroke rehabilitation settings. The U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provided support for the nine-year research project, which was conducted in 50 VA hospitals across the United States. Researchers developed a comprehensive team-based model and tested it in a series of empirical studies. For better leadership in medical treatment settings, the paper recommends using teams to meet the customized needs of their patient populations.

Smits says he really enjoys renewing teamwork with colleagues from earlier research ventures. Published in 2014, Smits’ article can be found in Vol. 27, No. 4 of *Leadership in Health Services*, a leading healthcare journal.
We Give Scholarships
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Starting the scholarship program was very rewarding, but I have completed two terms as chair, and now Jean Ellen Jones, a professor emerita from Georgia State’s School of Art and Design, is the new scholarship committee chair. I remain a committee member, and I look forward to continued progress with Jean Ellen at the helm.

Canterbury Court scholarship recipients.

CHAIR’S COLUMN
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our primary payer, and our USG coverage will be secondary. That USG coverage will involve selecting policies that supplement our Medicare benefits. The future will likely bring a new system where we select our supplements from a private health insurance exchange for retirees. We do not have details about this potential change, but we will share them when we do.

Another change coming to the Georgia State Emeriti Association is a change in leadership. Our new board will be in place by the end of June, as required by our bylaws. Please welcome Harry Dangel, chair; Lynn Hogue, vice-chair; Anne Page Mosby, secretary; and Harvey Newman, treasurer. I have enjoyed serving as your chair and look forward to seeing you at future programs.
St. Valentine’s Day Luncheon

Emeriti enjoyed a nice Valentine luncheon where they met with friends, former colleagues, and current deans and administrators. They enjoyed a beautiful performance by School of Opera Professor Carroll Freeman with students Katie Oates and Nicholas Yaquinto, accompanied by pianist Daniel Solberg.

Upcoming Events

We will send all emeriti invitations with complete information about each event closer to the event dates. Updated information will also appear at emeriti.gsu.edu.

- MAY
  
  Author Series
  Wednesday, May 20
  11 a.m.
  Library South, eighth floor, Colloquium Room
  
Poem
Eugene Hollahan, Professor Emeritus, College of Arts and Sciences

A.T. AND T.
She styled the A.T. the A.T. and T. Appalachian Trail and Trouble.

Honeymooned there with hard knocks, hard rows, downfalls, a moon-calf with aching calves.

Now a breath of the fresh seemed in order, but two thousand more miles of grief.

Keening through greens and whites and blues, from Katahdin to Springer? Late-winter swan song?

He smuggled and brooded end-time wordhoards: last lap, last gasp, crack of doom, bitter end.

He checked out each jump-off place. She lilted tune, aria, lay, melody.

Snatching airs out of the air, catch-as-catch-can catches of old songs,

Wild sounds embellished and gamuted. She composed turmoil to a concerto.

Shaping airs out of trees, rocks, cloudscapes, heedless if warbler or cuckoo.

Her blithe Fool to his long-faced Lear, taking a last look but making it last.

Stretto, stretto, more lively toward the end, prodding him toward futurity.

The rest of the story? No time to rest, aiming for Springer in early spring.

RECAP: AUTHOR SERIES
By Anne Page Mosby, Associate Professor Emerita, University Library

WILLIAM COTTERMAN
Book: “Improbable Women: Five Who Explored the Middle East”

William Cotterman, professor and chair emeritus of his department, enjoyed a distinguished career in Georgia State’s Department of Computer Information Systems, and developed a fascination with the Middle East during various assignments in the region. After retirement, he traveled, researched and wrote extensively about several extraordinary women who had explored the Middle East in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The result was the fascinating book, “Improbable Women,” a title in the Syracuse University Press’ Contemporary Issues in the Middle East series.

Cotterman’s emeriti author presentation highlighted five women who defied the conventions of their day, rejecting narrow female roles for the allure of exploration. They were Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope (1776-1839), “First Lady of England” as hostess for her uncle, Prime Minister William Pitt; Lady Jane Digby El Mezrab (1807-1881), who was driven by romance and scandal; Isabel Arundell Burton (1831-1896), wife of adventurer and writer Richard Francis Burton; Gertrude Margaret Lowthian Bell (1868-1926), called “daughter of the desert” by sheikhs and recruited by Winston Churchill to draw the boundaries of Iraq; and Dame Freya Madeline Stark (1893-1993), who was knighted for her work in the British Foreign Service during World War II. These women were drawn to the Middle East for different reasons but were united in their investigation of the legend of Zenobia, the third-century Syrian queen who had rebelled against Roman rule.