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2024-2025

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM RFUF PRESIDENT RICK D'ALLI

Welcome back to the new 2024 - 2025 academic year, an especially meaningful and exciting time. It was exactly 50 years ago, during the 1974-1975 academic year, that the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida came into being as a nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching life in retirement not only for those who enjoyed a distinguished academic or staff service career at UF, but also for those retirees of other academic institutions who have settled in Gainesville. Thanks to the efforts of RFUF Secretary George Hochmuth, who tirelessly digitally captured documents of the birth and early years of RFUF archived in the Smathers Library, I was able to review the founding principles and projected goals of our organization. So, before we look ahead at this celebratory year, let's take a brief look back to the beginnings of RFUF's 50-year journey to the present.



AN AUSPICIOUS LUNCH

It was mid-May 1973 when UF president Stephen C. O'Connell (whose name appears on my two UF diplomas and perhaps some of yours) and his special advisor professor Rae O. Weimer hosted a luncheon attended by 25 UF faculty and administrator 1972 retirees. During the luncheon, wrote Weimer, there arose "a popular demand for a permanent organization of retired faculty members of the University of Florida." The goals of such an organization would be to establish in perpetuity robust communication channels between retired faculty and University administrators to promote and ensure continuing contributions by retired faculty to UF programs as well as their participation in sponsored activities toward a more meaningful retirement. A committee of five of the luncheon attendees were tasked with building such a retired faculty organization from the ground up. In early 1974 professor Weimer retired from UF as Dean Emeritus of the College of

Journalism and Communications. At a meeting of retired UF faculty members on November 18, 1974, preliminary articles of incorporation and bylaws were drafted, adopted, and Rae O. Weimer was elected president of the nascent RFUF. These documents and an application for incorporation, signed by President Weimer, Secretary-Treasurer Elsie C. Jones, and President-elect W. K. McPherson, were formally accepted by the Florida Department of State on January 14, 1975. On April 15, 1975, Florida Secretary of State and UF alumnus Bruce Smathers signed the Certificate of Incorporation, officially declaring the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida, Inc, a not-for-profit corporation.

Today's mission, bylaws, and goals of RFUF have remained remarkably true to our founders' vision and principles. Some of the organized activities initiated by President Weimer bear resurrecting, while our current Harn Museum Wednesday morning seminars across the entire academic year evolved over 5 decades into weekly life-long learning opportunities. Unlike the founders, we have extended the welcome sign of membership not only to UF retirees, but also to their spouses, retirees from other colleges and universities, and to members of the Gainesville community. A restrictive requirement for a specified number of years of service to UF for RFUF membership eligibility was eliminated.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS As I write, the officers and members of the Board of Directors are actively making plans to celebrate our 50th anniversary with a special early evening event to be held on December 5th, 2024, at Emerson Alumni Hall, home of the UF Alumni Association. The event will be a social mixer from 6 pm to 8 pm to enjoy hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, the soft sounds of a string quartet, and the pleasure of connecting, if not forging new connections with past and present RFUF members. We will be inviting special guests from the leadership of colleges, UF administration, and the city of Gainesville to help us mark this occasion with words of appreciation and support for a bright future. Safe, protected, nearby parking will be provided by the UF Transportation and Parking Service, while the UF Alumni Association will provide a very limited number of disability parking spaces behind Emerson Alumni Hall. We will be asking for a \$20 contribution per person to attend this gala event. So, save the date for this once in a lifetime collegial gathering to honor ourselves.

FORGING CONNECTIONS Over the scorching hot summer Robin Poynor and Anna Calluori Holcombe have brought to fruition a cool creation they call the RFUF 50th Anniversary Year Book. This compelling collection of memories of the academic careers and retirement experiences submitted by more than 80 RFUF members will be unveiled in the fall, but when and how are Robin's tightly guarded secrets (nah, just kidding), but we will get the word out when it is ready. As a matter of fact, Robin is still accepting late submissions as of this moment in the form of an emailed Word document, so now is your chance to reconsider sending in your memories, if you have not already done so, to expand the Year Book as much as possible. Here's how: just create a single Word document with your name, a 100-word summary of your academic career (no c.v.'s please!) and a 300-word description about your retirement experiences. Put "50th Anniversary Year Book" in the email Subject line (to help Robin sort it out from junk) and send it to rpoynor@arts.ufl.edu. Let's set a new deadline for completion of the Year Book by October 31.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR This year our exciting weekly speaker series begins on September 4, 2024, at the Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida, with, as usual, a social half hour starting at 9:30 am in the Camellia Court Café just across from the seminar classrooms. President-elect Pushpa Kalra has labored to put together a fascinating schedule of talks for the fall semester. A peek at a few samples includes a discussion of Florida key constitutional amendments on the November general election ballot, a tribute to the mother of Social Security, revealing an ecological crisis threatening our manatees, and a "field trip" to Gainesville's Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center. Our traditional fall luncheon and first business meeting of the year will be held on Wednesday, September 18, at Oak Hammock at the University of Florida beginning at 11:30 am. The fall luncheon replaces the seminar at the Harn that morning. As

always, guests are welcome. The cost of the luncheon set by Oak Hammock is \$20 per person. As usual our fall speaker series ends on December 4 and resumes after the winter holidays on January 8, 2025.

TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP As a reminder, annual membership dues for the 2024-2025 academic year are now \$35. The deadline for payment as noted in the current Bylaws is September 30. The RFUF fiscal year officially runs from October 1 to September 30. Treasurer Bram Hartzema will be thrilled to accept payment in the form of a check in the amount of \$35 made payable to RFUF either given to him personally, mailed to PO Box 141592, Gainesville, FL 32614, or by electronic transfer to routing number 263178478, account number 2167551-0090. If your bank requests the destination, it is Campus USA, 14007 NW 1st Rd, Newberry, FL 32669. For your amusement, the founding RFUF Bylaws stated that the annual dues effective July 1, 1975, were \$3 at a time when only two meetings a year were held (no more than 3 special speaker presentations a year occurred before 1980!). By the way, if you need a name tag for the first time or need to replace a lost one, please contact Bram at hartzema@cop.ufl.edu so that he can order one for you. The deadline for ordering a name tag is September 30 and the cost is \$18.

TOWARD FINANCIAL STABILITY We are continuing to explore ways to make our financial footing more secure. The first modern step toward this goal occurred under Past President Barbara McDade Gordon's leadership when Barbara and I first met with Provost Scott Angle in the spring of 2024. Barbara described the financial hardship imposed on RFUF by a significant and overly burdensome post-Covid increase in cost to rent weekly classroom space at the Harn Museum for our speaker series. The Provost responded spontaneously and immediately with an offer to provide a \$7,500 direct payment to the Harn in each of two years (the first of which we are enjoying now) to offset this financial challenge. In the interval since our final meeting and luncheon of the 2023-2024 academic year I am pleased to announce that in response to RFUF letters of outreach three Deans from the College of Engineering, College of Medicine, and IFAS have each committed \$2,000 in support of our operational and future programming expenses. Past President Barbara McDade Gordon's "\$50 for 50th" campaign has already brought in, as of this writing, over \$2,000 from our members. In the coming months I will ask interested members to meet with these Deans and others in UF college leadership positions to discuss pathways for our retired "brain trust" to participate more actively in ongoing UF research and service in areas of mutual interest, especially in student centered programs, as well as fiscal support for such efforts.

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM I cannot say enough about the friendship, collaboration, and encouragement I have received from our leadership team. Barbara McDade Gordon, our immediate past president, has been my inspiration, creative talent, and head cheerleader since she stepped down as last year's outstanding president. Bram Hartzema stayed on for another year as Treasurer and has kept me laughing during moments of frustration as well as being a wellspring of new ideas and partner in developing them. George Hochmuth, who has stayed on for another year as Secretary, always provides leveling perspectives and words of guidance so helpful to me, as well as expert documentation of every meeting imaginable. Pushpa Kalra, our new president-elect, keeps me in awe with her depth of knowledge of just about everything UF and RFUF and promises to keep us enthralled with her speaker's bureau for 2024-2025. I am also so grateful for the members of our Board of Directors and committee chairs who have contributed at a moment's notice with wisdom and history that I would be lost without.

In our second half-century let us celebrate not only how far we have come but also how much farther we may go toward expanding life-long learning experiences, continuing academic engagement and recognition of those members who continue to thrive in that pursuit, and increased collegiality among our intellectually active and diverse group of more than 250 retired and emeriti faculty.

Rick D'Alli, RFUF President



Provost J. Scott Angle's Message to RFUF



Warm greetings!

I want to underscore how much I appreciate retired faculty and your continued involvement with our university community.

As Provost, I am particularly grateful that current faculty can turn to you for expertise, guidance and context that is often unavailable to them from any other source. But I am also grateful for your influence on our institution: Your familiarity with our traditions. Your understanding of our history. Your knowledge and experience not just with the ways that we've flourished, but also our missed opportunities and wrong turns. When thinking about our goals and planning next steps, I'll continue to listen and do my best to learn from you, and I hope my colleagues and fellow faculty members do the same.

Congratulations to the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida on your 50th Anniversary. It's great having you as our wise partners, whether counseling caution, providing encouragement — or just joining us in cheering on the Gators. I wish you many more years of continued success.

Dr. J. Scott Angle, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

As you probably have heard, Dr. J. Scott Angle is stepping down as UF Provost on September 6, 2024. Former UF Provost Joe Glover will be returning to UF as interim Provost, while Dr. Angle returns to IFAS as Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dr. Glover will not start as interim Provost until after September 6. Therefore, it is appropriate to include this message from Provost Angle to RFUF members in our August 2024 newsletter.

RFUF Speaker Schedule: Fall Semester 2024
Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, UF (lower-level classrooms) and via Zoom
Wednesdays*, 10:00am preceded by social gathering, Camellia Court Café, Lower Level, 9:30 am

- September 4 **Brian Jose**, Director, UF Performing Arts
"The 24/25 Season and How We Got Here"
- September 11 **Kristen Stoner**, Professor, UF School of Music
"New Sounds for the Flute: 21st Century Women Composers"
- September 18 **Fall Luncheon at Oak Hammock beginning at 11:30 am**
Katie Sieving, Professor, UF IFAS Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
"Birdsongs"
- September 25 **Carmen Diana Deere**, UF Distinguished Professor Emerita, Latin American Studies and Food and Resource Economics
"Women's Rights and the Reform of the Marital Regime in Early 20th Century in South America"
- October 2 **Andrew Warren**, Former Federal Prosecutor, US Dept. of Justice, State Attorney, Tampa
"Abortion and Marijuana: An Objective take on November's Constitutional Amendments"
- October 10* **Nancy Denslow**, Professor and Acting Chair, UF Dept of Physiological Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, Center for Environmental and Human Toxicology
(Thursday)
"The Impact of Exposures to Environmental Contaminants"
- October 16 **Field trip: The Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center**, 837 SE 7th Ave, Gainesville
Vivian Filer, Narrator and Chair, Board of Directors
- October 23 **Kenneth H Rand**, Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases and Global Medicine, UF College of Medicine
"COVID-19: Should we still be worried in 2024?"
- October 30 **Paul Broadie II**, President, Santa Fe College
"Impact: The Power of Education"
- November 6. **Adebola T Adesogan**, Director, Global Food Systems Institute, UF IFAS
"Improving Global Food and Nutritional Security"
- November 13 **Barbara Oberlander**, Professor, Retired, Santa Fe College
"The Mother of Social Security: Frances Perkins"
- November 20 **Gerald Kirkpatrick**, U.S. Navy Captain and Attorney at Law, Retired
"Great Power Competition and How to Manage it in the 21st Century"
- November 27. Thanksgiving Week - no meeting
- December 4 **Robert Virnstein**, Environmental Scientist, St. Johns River Water Management District
"Ecology of Seagrasses in the Indian River Lagoon: Why Should We Care?"

New Members

Name	Institution	Department
Sheila Allison-Wells	UNC Medicine	Obstetrics/Gynecology
Bertha Cato	UF HHP	Tourism, Recreation, and Sports Management
Cynthia Moore Chestnut	UF CLAS	Speech and Hearing
Marion Colburn	UF Spouse	
Pamela Ginn	UF Vet Med	Comparative Diagnostics & Population Medicine/Anatomic Pathology
Marité Rodrigues Haynes	Clarion U. of Pennsylvania	Psychology
Vernon Haynes	Youngstown State U., Ohio	Psychology
Marcia Isaacson	UF Fine Arts	School of Art and Art History
Robert H. Jerry	UF Law	Insurance Law
Jodie V. Johnson	UF CLAS	Chemistry
Karen G Johnson	UF Spouse	
Juliette Liesenfeld	RFUF Associate	
E. Jane Luzar	UF CALS	Environmental Economics
Michael G. Perri	UF PPHP	Clinical and Health Psychology
Pierre Ramond	UF CLAS	Physics
Charles E Riggs	UF Medicine	Medicine
Christine Weston Riggs	UF Spouse	
Marc Smith	UF Building Construction	Affordable Housing

IN MEMORIAM

We regret to announce the passing of these esteemed, retired colleagues. We extend our deepest condolences to their family and friends.

Name	Institution	Department	
Tony Barbet	UF CVM	Infectious Diseases and Immunology	Died 29 Feb 2024
Gordon G. Bechtel	UF Business	Marketing	Died 15 Jun 2024
Kenneth I. Berns	UF Medicine	Molecular Genetics and Microbiology	Died 26 Jan 2024
Gene Brigham	UF Business	Finance	Died 17 Mar 2024.
Xinguang “Jim” Chen	UF PHHP	Epidemiology	Died 17 Feb 2024
Edward M. Copeland III	UF Medicine	Surgery	Died 31 Mar 2024
Linda M. Crocker	UF Education	Human Development and Organizational Studies	Died 4 Jan 2024
Haig Der-Houssikian	UF CLAS	African & Asian Languages & Literature	Died 11 Apr 2024
Nicolae Dinculeanu	UF CLAS	Mathematics	Died 29 Mar 2024
Deborah Burr Doss	UF CLAS	Statistics	Died 19 Dec 2023
Peter A. Drew	UF Medicine	Pathology	Died 8 Jan 2024
F Eugene Dunnam	UF CLAS	Physics	Died 18 Apr 2024
Carl Feldherr	UF Medicine	Anatomy and Cell Biology	Died 11 May 2024
Eileen B Fennell	UF PHHP	Clinical & Health Psychology	Died 23 Sep 2023
Leonard Furlow	UF Medicine	Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	Died 26 Feb 2024
Paul Gader	UF Engineering	CISE	Died 6 Jun 2023
Mike Grier	UF Pharmacy	Chronic Pain	Died 25 Oct 2023
Frank Harris	UF CLAS	Chemistry	Died 9 Mar 2023
Kenneth M. Heilman	UF Medicine	Neurology	Died 15 July 2024
Ann “Nancy” Horowitz	UF CLAS, Business	Economics	Died 2 Mar 2024
Simon Johnson	UF Education	Recruitment, Retention, and Multicultural Affairs	Died 2 Jul 2023
Hazel Ann Jones	UF Education	Special Education	Died 16 Apr 2024
Robert L. Kendall	UF Journalism	Public Relations	Died 17 May 2024
Thomas Kunisaki	UF Medicine	Emergency Medicine, Health Toxicology	Died 13 Dec 2023
Stephen A. Lind	UF Law	Tax Law	Died 15 Feb 2024
Ross McElroy	UF Medicine	Psychiatry	Died 9 Mar 2024
Marvin R. McMillin	UF Education	Administration	Died 6 May 2024

Michael E. Moseley	UF CLAS	Anthropology	Died 8 July 2024
Wayne Nicholson	UF IFAS	Microbiology and Cell Science	Died 8 Jun 2023
Cheryl Palm	UF IFAS	Agricultural and Biological Engineering	Died 24 Jan 2024
Winfred M. Phillips	UF Engineering	Fluid Dynamics, Biomedical Engineering	Died 24 Feb 2024
Thomas Porter	UF Dentistry	Community Dentistry	Died 23 Feb 2024
Dan E. Purcifull	UF IFAS	Plant Pathology	Died 16 Jan 2024
Barbara Ann Purdy	UF CLAS	Anthropology [Archeology]	Died 1 Jun 2024
Arlan L Rosenbloom	UF Medicine	Pediatrics	Died 20 Jan 2024
Gerold Schiebler	UF Medicine	Pediatrics	Died 2 Mar 2024
Gregory S. Schultz	UF Medicine	Wound Healing	Died 11 Apr 2024
Michael A. Schwartz	UF Pharmacy	Pharmaceutics	Died 28 Mar 2024
W. John Starr	UF Journalism	Advertising	Died 6 Apr 2024
Jack Van Horn Jr	UF IFAS	Dairy Science	Died 18 Mar 2024
Glenda Warren	UF IFAS	Family, Youth, and Community Services	Died 13 Sep 2023
Rod Webb	UF Education	Center for School Improvement	Died 18 Jul 2023
Roger L. West	UF IFAS	Animal Science/Beef Production	Died 11 Feb 2024
Buna Joe "B.J." Wilder	UF Medicine	Neurology	Died 21 Nov 2023
David Wright	UF IFAS	Agronomy	Died 14 Jul 2023
Martha Wroe	UF Shands	Physical Therapy	Died 24 Apr 2024

USEFUL LINKS OF INTEREST

Past RFUF weekly lectures: <http://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu/meetings/>

Gainesville for All: <http://gnv4all.org/>

Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR), based at Oak Hammock at UF:

<https://www.oakhammock.org/ilr>

Senior Recreation Center of Gainesville: <https://eldercare.ufhealth.org/senior-recreation-center/>

Sister City Program of Gainesville, Inc.: <https://steve4994.wixsite.com/sistercityprogram/>

United Nations Association-USA, Gainesville chapter:

<https://www.una-usagainesvillefl.org/>

Welcoming Gainesville: <https://welcominggainesville.org/>

OPTIONS FOR PAYING RFUF ANNUAL DUES

This fall you will have new options for paying our annual dues. Watch your inbox for the Membership form and full details of the payment options.

Traditional Options: Mail Membership form and payment to PO Box 141592 (note the new number), Gainesville, FL OR

Hand deliver form and payment to the Treasurer at the Wednesday meeting OR

Electronic Transfer Options

Step 1: Email membership form to RFUF-Membership@cox.net

Step 2: Send electronic payment

Option 1 – Campus USA member-to-member transfer

Option 2 – Bank-to-bank ACH transfer

UF IT Microsoft 365 License Change: A Solution to the Problem

Many of our members who are academically active and still publishing were dispirited to see upon opening Word, PowerPoint, or Excel (Microsoft 365 apps) recently a notification that “your school license will be deactivated soon and that most features of Word will be disabled on September 2, 2024.” UF IT explained that effective in early August the Microsoft Office 365 A1 Plus license which included all apps useful for publication was being retired and was automatically being replaced by the Microsoft Office 365 A1 free license which does not include desktop-installed, useful publication apps. The result: an abrupt loss of a courtesy, especially to our emeritus members, that was not only unwelcome, but also disruptive to members in the midst of submitting work for publication. Several members, including Kathy Ewel, Carmen Diana Deere, Marianne Schmink, Robin Poynor, Paul Gibbs, Whit Curry, and John Foltz, contacted me about this turn of events and went to work to query IT managers for a solution. Below is a solution summarized in brief by Kathy Ewel, with many thanks!

Step 1: When you are alerted that your Microsoft A1 Plus license will be terminated, contact your academic unit’s IT professional immediately. Argue that you are still academically active, especially if you are still publishing, and request to be **upgraded to the A3 license** as your work is **official business of the University of Florida**. Make clear that a web version of Microsoft apps, which IT will attempt to suggest, is not acceptable for your status and your work.

Step 2: If that doesn’t work, go to the UF IT Service Desk and tell them you want to submit a letter requesting an **upgrade to the A3 license**, arguing in writing that you are still academically active and publishing, which is **official business and to the benefit of your academic unit and the University of Florida**.

Step 3: When notified of approval, **verify** by clicking on, using your Gatorlink credentials, the following link: <https://portal.office.com/account#subscriptions>

Step 4: Click View Subscriptions. If you see that you have an A3 license, you can move ahead.

Step 5: You may need to click Activate on any previous banner or warning.

Step 6: Enter your email account, which now has a valid license.

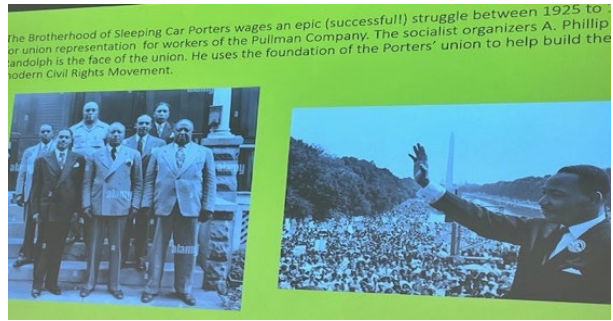
Several of our colleagues listed above have successfully been transitioned to the Microsoft A3 license with a wee bit of sweat and effort.

Rick D’Alli, President, RFUF

Highlights from Spring Semester 2024 Speaker Presentations



Dr. Thomas Pearson, Epidemiology
The Epidemiology of Chocolate



Dr. Paul Ortiz, History
How America Got Its Groove Back



Dr. Tongyun Yin, Harn Museum of Art
Gateway to Himalayan Art



Dr. Joann Mossa, Geography
Some Secrets of Southern Rivers



Dr. Scott Rivkees, Public Health, Brown Univ.
Public Health in the Face of Denialism and Politics



Ms. Darby Guyn, Director
Sweetwater Wetlands Park



Dr. Juan Gilbert (Center), CISE
Computing for the Social Good



Dr. Scott Angle, Provost, IFAS
UF and Its Role in Feeding a Hungry World

2023-2024 RFUF Kudos

A new Newsletter section we call “Kudos” highlights any and all members who have received special recognition or awards from professional or private organizations for their service.

Marianne Schmink was part of the Florida Energy Equity Coalition team that received a **2023 Champions of Change award**, from the UF Office of Sustainability and the Healthy Gators Coalition, which recognizes individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to the UF community in the areas of sustainability – for work in partnership with UF IFAS Extension to expand home energy efficiency programming throughout the state of Florida.

Anna Calluori Holcombe received one of only two **Excellence in Teaching Awards** at the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) 2023 Conference in Cincinnati OH. NCECA engages and sustains a community for ceramic art, teaching and learning. It currently has approximately 6,000 members from the United States from more than 20 foreign countries. This award is given to someone *“near or at the end of a career dedicated to excellence in the practice of teaching as evidenced by a commitment to the rigorous ongoing development of their own work, as well as former students who are actively engaged in the field.”*

Donald L. Rockwood, UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences, and his wife donated land to the Alachua Conservation Trust to create a park named, appropriately, **Rockwood Park**. This is an urban nature park in NW Gainesville that provides the perfect place for individuals and neighborhood groups to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life and enjoy a Little Free library, a guided plant walk and exercise loop.

Robin Poynor was one of only two individuals in the world presented with the **2024 Triennial Leadership Award** of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association during their triennial conference in Chicago on August 9, 2024. Recipients of this award are distinguished for their innovative contributions to the advancement of the field of African and African diasporic expressive arts, as measured by a lifetime of accomplishments in teaching, mentoring, curating, publishing, artistic production, management and service along with notable generosity of spirit and collegiality. The Awards program cited Robin's exemplifying excellence in scholarship, curatorial practice, and leadership in the field, in his scholarship as broad reaching, and in his mentorship reaching students in a range of disciplines including art history, history, anthropology, and historic preservation.

AROHE Statement from Barbara McDade Gordon

AROHE: A Strong Supporter of Retired Faculty

The **A**ssociation of **R**etirement **O**rganizations in **H**igher **E**ducation (AROHE) is comprised of 110 retirement organizations in six regions in the United States and Canada, and an international region. The mission of AROHE complements and strengthens the mission of RFUF: It supports all stages of faculty and staff retirement, the mutually beneficial engagement of retirees with one another and with their institutions, and continuing contributions to campus and community life. The RFUF Board approved our becoming a member in 2023. We joined these other retiree organizations in Florida who are members: Florida International University, Florida State University, and Tallahassee Community College. In Spring 2024 many of us attended via Zoom the three-part seminar, Reimagining Retirement: Exploring Your Life Plan. It provided inspiration to consider planning our own seminar specific to RFUF as part of our 50th Anniversary programs and activities.

RFUF recently increased our annual dues from \$25 to \$35. By comparison, annual dues in AROHE member organizations range from \$0 to \$100. The number of members across the 110 organizations varies considerably. Several AROHE member organizations have as many as 2,000 members! FSU has over 1,000 members. RFUF currently has about 250. The AROHE membership directory allows us to compare ourselves with other university retirement organizations (ROs) and find ideas for enhancing our activities and services to our members, to UF, and to our community.

Many universities maintain representation of retired faculty on the university senate and other university committees. Some universities provide designated office space for their ROs. Also provided are discounts at campus venues such as performing arts, bookstores, and athletic events, as well as use of library facilities, computer services, and health benefits. The AROHE research report, Retired Faculty and Staff Engagement Programs (2012), showcased programs at

36 AROHE universities with successful practices for assisting retirees and involving them in university and community life.

I think RFUF will benefit from our involvement in AROHE and its member organizations.

Barbara McDade Gordon, Immediate Past President, RFUF



August 2024

Dear RFUF Members,

As you know, this year we're celebrating our 50th Anniversary!

Thank you for your ideas on how to commemorate this milestone and for your suggestions for moving forward into the future. We hear you! And, working together, we will continue to progress.

This past year you called for greater presence on campus and in the community.

The following are ideas that YOU suggested to President Rick D'Alli and our Board of Directors:

- Mentoring Undergraduates from our wealth of experience and expertise
- Supporting some publication costs for post-retirement research
- Creating short-term summer enrichment activities
- Members Yearbook: Who We Are & What We're Doing (*it's in progress!*)
- Seminar Series: "Creating the Life that You Love" in retirement

RFUF can accomplish these goals with your commitment. Now more than ever—we need funding to sustain our presence and expand our involvement. Therefore...

**We are reaching out to you today to Kick Off the \$50-for-the 50th Campaign.
Each RFUF member is asked to donate \$50 during our 50th Anniversary.**

"\$50 for the 50th"

Thank YOU,

Barbara McDade Gordon, Chair, *\$50 for the 50th Campaign*

Past President, RFUF Questions or need more information: Email me at bmcdade07@gmail.com

Payment Options

1. **Check:** Write check to: *RFUF \$50 for 50th*. Mail to: RFUF, P O Box 141592 Gainesville FL 32614

2. **ACH bank-to-bank transfer.**

Enter this Recipient ID: Retired Faculty of UF, POB 141592, Gainesville FL 32614

Enter Routing Nbr: 263178478. Account Nbr: 2167551-0091

•Note: If your payment is not acknowledged in 2 weeks, send an email to: ***RFUF-membership@cox.net***

An Open Letter to the University of Florida Administration Concerning Recent Student Suspensions and Rights of Free Speech: Submitted on July 19, 2024, by the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida, Inc.

We, the members of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida, are writing to express our shock and dismay at the unilateral action taken by the UF Dean of Students to impose extreme suspension sentences on UF students who were exercising their fundamental rights of free speech on campus in the Plaza of the Americas on April 29, 2024. Particularly disturbing is that the Dean's sentences far exceed the recommendations of the Student Conduct Committee, which includes faculty, staff, and student representatives who thoroughly reviewed evidence, testimony, and police footage of the events and recommended more rational, titrated consequences. We strongly urge that the Student Conduct Committee's recommendations be reinstated and that the one dimensional, harsh, unsupported, and unexplained penalties imposed by the new Dean of Students be withdrawn.

To summarize, the UF Dean of Students imposed unjustifiably excessive three-to-four-year suspensions of six UF students involved in the April 29 public demonstration. To complicate matters, the six students are being prosecuted in court after being arrested on the University of Florida campus during the event. The UF Police Department initially threatened to arrest the students for sitting on folding chairs and expressing political opinions in the Plaza of the Americas. Many of the students are being charged with resisting arrest without violence. They are pleading not guilty and alleging they did not resist arrest. Although these students are still awaiting trial, all remain banned from university property. The Dean neither made public his justification for the uniformly excessive and harsh penalties he imposed, nor cited relevant precedents for his decisions. A three- or four-year suspension from UF is equivalent to expulsion because students suspended for more than three semesters must reapply for admission to the university before returning. Expulsion from UF can also be viewed as an acute, traumatic interruption of the students' social, emotional, and intellectual developmental trajectory, the longer-term mental health consequences of which were likely not considered.

In great contrast, the Student Conduct Committee recommended sanctions that ranged from academic probation, a deferred suspension, one-year suspensions, and three-year suspensions. It is important to emphasize that the UF Student Honor Code explicitly highlights respect for fairness. The University of Florida has a long-standing tolerance for a range of expressions of opinion and for the objective of fairness. The Plaza of the Americas, on a routine basis, hosts diverse speakers and groups who express a wide range of religious, cultural, and political positions and announce events, often with the use of loudspeakers, folding chairs, tables, signs and other paraphernalia. There is no regulation that bans folding chairs or the expression of political opinion in the Plaza of the Americas.

We insist that UF must continue to value free speech and viewpoint diversity, and we believe that President Sasse has affirmed his commitment to these objectives. Although there is an understandably wide range of reactions among UF faculty, retired faculty, students, and staff to the deeply troubling human tragedy in the Middle East, we are united in our commitment to free speech and the non-violent expression of opinion. The extremely harsh punishments meted out to the six UF students involved are, in our opinion, wholly unsuited to a top tier American public university and will serve only to diminish UF's standing in the nation and world. We therefore call for the immediate reversal of these secondary, capricious, harsh, and unjustified suspensions.

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On Behalf of the Board of Directors, Retired Faculty of the University of Florida