



The Retired Faculty of  
the University of Florida

Spring 2026  
Volume 50 Issue 2

# RFUF Newsletter

## OFFICERS 2025-2026

### President

Pushpa Kalra

### President-Elect

Robin Poynor

### Immediate Past President

Rick D'Alli

### Secretary

George J. Hochmuth

### Treasurer

Henry T. Frierson

### Directors

Diana Boxer

Don Goodman

Anna Calluori Holcombe

Pradeep Kumar

Paul Gibbs

Jacqueline Basha

### Communications Chair

Steve Lodle

### Membership Chair

Susan Cooksey

### Membership Records

John Foltz

### Summer Events

Barbara McDade Gordon

Wishing you and your loved ones joy and happiness in 2026.

Despite a somewhat uncertain start due to the unavailability of the Harn Museum for our Wednesday morning meetings, we enjoyed a wonderful fall semester at the TREOO center. The facility was beautiful, offering ample parking and staff willing to help us prepare our morning coffee. A special thanks to our dedicated volunteers Regina Bussing, Ann-Marie Rizzo and Barbara Rothstein, for providing the delicious carbs to accompany our coffee. The speaker schedule, organized by President-Elect Robin Poynor, was truly delightful. Attendance, both in person and on Zoom, was consistently high.



Regrettably, the TREOO Center will not be available for our Winter/Spring Semester meetings. Instead, we will convene at the beautiful Straughn Center, an IFAS Facility, located at 2142 Shealy Drive. This location, just off the Old Archer Road behind the Veterinary School, is quite central. However, parking may pose a challenge since it is on campus. We have requested that Traffic and Parking reserve a block of parking spots for us every Wednesday morning, ensuring that members with and without UF parking permits can park there. Nonetheless, carpooling is encouraged wherever possible.

During the fall semester our elected Treasurer moved out of town leaving his position vacant. We are thankful to Henry Frierson for agreeing to take on this responsibility.

Looking ahead, take a look at the appended list of expert speakers curated by Robin Poynor for this semester. A field trip to the Powell center to learn about wind tunnels is scheduled for March 11. Additionally, we will once again plan field trips and lectures during the summer thanks to the organizational efforts of Past President Barbara McDade Gordon. Stay tuned for details.

When I began my term as President of this esteemed organization, my goal was to ensure our voices would be heard on issues affecting our university. However, we will be judicious in selecting the issues we address and cautious in how we raise our voices. Our focus this semester will be on community service. Board member Paul Gibbs has proposed several volunteer opportunities for members to make a difference in the community. These will be presented to you through the semester by Paul Gibbs, past President Rick D'Alli and past Treasurer Bram Hartzema. We hope many of you will participate.

I am looking forward to meeting and greeting you this semester. I am open to your suggestions and opinions to keep RFUF a vibrant and active organization.

- Pushpa Kalra, RFUF President

**RFUF Speakers Schedule: Spring Semester 2026**  
**UF Straughn Center, Wednesdays, 10:00 am**  
**Preceded by social gathering at 9:30 am**

January 7: Judy Skinner, Executive Director for Dance Alive National Ballet,  
Title: "KEEP MOVING! Building for the Arts"

January 14: Liangfei Qiu, Price Waterhouse Coopers Professor of [Information Systems & Operations Management](#) (ISOM) and [University Research Foundation Professor](#), Warrington College of Business. Title: "Generative AI and Human Knowledge Sharing"

January 21: Larissa Lidsky, Raymond & Miriam Ehrlich Eminent Scholar Chair in U.S. Constitutional Law at Florida Law. Title: "Censorship and Academic Freedom"

January 28: Diego L. Guarin, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Physiology and Kinesiology. Title: "Harnessing AI for Early Detection of Motor Function Changes in the Progression of Parkinson's Disease"

February 4: Sadie Ryan medical geography. Title: "Mapping the Shifting Geography of Mosquito Borne Diseases: Tools, Not Scare Tactics"

February 11: by Zoom David Morton, History and Media Studies (University of Central Florida). Title: "A Motion Picture Paradise! A History of Florida's Film and Television Industry"

February 18: Rebecca Nagy, Director Emeritus, Harn Museum. Title: "The Contemporary Art Scene in Ghana – Why It's So Hot"

February 25: Patricio Munoz, Associate Professor, Blueberry Breeding and Genomics, and Horticulture Crop Breeding Endowed Chair. Title: "Blueberry Genetics"

March 4: Sally Ann DeNotta. Clinical Associate Professor, Large Animal Clinical Sciences. Title: "The Large Animal Hospital and Horse Treadmill Tour"

March 11: **Field Trip** Jennifer Bridge, University Term Associate Professor, Department of Civil & Coastal Engineering. Tour: Wind Tunnel and Powell Family Structures & Materials Laboratory.

March 18: **Spring break**

March 25: Ted Bridis, Michael and Linda Connelly Senior Lecturer in Investigative Reporting, Department of Journalism. Title: "The Essential Role of Investigative Reporting in a Free Society"

April 1: Francesca Enea, Gator Softball, Assistant Coach. Title: "Legacy in Motion: The Florida Softball Impact"

April 8: Mary Christman. ILR student poster presentations

April 15: Spring Luncheon, The Village. Entertainment: Gainesville Big Band Swingtet.

## Welcome New Members

New Member	Institution	Department/Discipline
Patti Anderson	FDACS DPI	DPI Herbarium
Grenville Barnes	UF Forestry, Fisheries and Geomatic Sciences	Geomatics
Dawn Bowers	UF PHHP	Neurology-Movement Disorders
Mark Brantly	UF Medicine	Pulmonary
Tim Brophy	UF Admin	Institutional Assessment
Kathleen E Colverson	UF IFAS	Animal Sciences/Gender and Ag Systems
Wendell Cropper	UF IFAS	Forest, Fisheries and Geomatics Sciences
Paul W Davenport	UF Vet Med	Physiological Sciences
Karen Fagin	Associate Member	Internal Medicine & Infectious Diseases
Doris D Hargrave	Associate Member	
Martin Heesacker	UF CLAS	Psychology
Birgitta K Kimura	Santa Fe College	Perry Center for Emerging Technologies
Jane Polkowski Levy	Associate Member	
Rudolf Liesenfeld	Associate Member	
Thomas H. Mareci	UF Medicine	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology / Biophysics

Joan C McTigue	UF Medicine	Rheumatology
Marni F Most	Wright State U.	Student Affairs
Joseph Vincent Ortiz	Auburn U.	Theoretical Chemistry
Eric Potsdam	UF CLAS	Linguistics
Mercedes Quiroga	New World School of the Arts	Arts Administration
Churchill Roberts	UF Journalism	Media Production, Management, and Technology
Kay E Selman	UF Medicine	Anatomy & Cell Biology
Jonita Stepp-Greany	Associate Member	
David M Wilson	U Kansas	Public Broadcasting
Maureen Keller Wood	UF Pharmacy	Pharmacodynamics

## LINKS OF INTEREST

**Past and present RFUF weekly lectures:**

<https://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu/meetings/>

**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/>

**RFUF Weekly Zoom Meetings**

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99476690144?pwd=1qpyOQ9XSaS41qiOEmlZf2CJcHFtDw.1>

## 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	Died
Robert M. Abrams	UF Medicine	OB/GYN Developmental Physiology	Died 11 Dec 2025.
Jerry F. Butler	UF IFAS	Entomology	Died 13 Nov 2025.
Hank Conner	UF Journalism	Communications	Died 14 Aug 2025.
Charles R. Glagola	UF Engineering	Civil Engineering	Died 29 Nov 2025.
Paul A. Hargrave	UF Medicine	Ophthalmology & Biochemistry	Died 10 Feb 2025.
Sidney R. Homan	UF CLAS	English	Died 1 Dec 2025.
Lucinda S. Lavelli	UF Arts	Theatre + Dance	Died 24 Nov 2025.
Thomas William O'Brien	UF CLAS	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	Died 27 Sep 2023.
Jacqueline B. Orlando	UF Medicine	Psychology	Died 13 Nov 2025.
Alice Primack	UF Libraries	Marston Science Library	Died 28 Feb 2025.
Joseph J. Sabatella	UF COTA	Fine Arts	Died 8 Sep 2025.

## RFUF Annual Dues for 2025-2026

Annual dues of \$35 per person are past due for the membership year that runs September 1 to August 30. Former members who are in arrears will receive a separate email with the membership form and payment instructions. Membership communications will no longer be sent to those who are still in arrears as of January 31.

## 2026 RFUF Kudos

Once again we highlight with “Kudos” several members who have received special recognition or awards from professional or private organizations for their service.

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**Vivian Filer** received the Alachua County Branch of the NAACPs Dr. Thomas A. Wright Award for Extraordinary Service to the Community on October 26, 2025. The award was presented to Queen Mother Vivian Filer.

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This past fall **Fred Gregory** created an AI generated 7-part Podcast based on his history of science textbook, *Natural Science in Western History*. Members curious about it can hear a 4-minute trailer describing the podcast at: <https://rss.com/podcasts/natural-science-in-western-history-the-podcast/2354913/>.

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**Alan Agresti** delivered the Keynote lecture at annual conference of Argentine Society of Statistics, Posadas, Argentina

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**Barbara McDade Gordon's** high school, Booker T. Washington High School in Shreveport, Louisiana, marked its 75th Anniversary in October with a 2-day celebration. She was honored to be nominated and selected as one of the 75 Most Influential BTW Alumni. Her high school Class of 1965 held its 60th Reunion in December. As Class President & Valedictorian, she was invited to serve as the keynote speaker on the program.

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**Mike Conlon** recently wrote a book, *The Next Hundred Years*, which contained science-based stories of humanity solving problems of hunger, our physical world, AI, and our ability to live with each other. The book is available on Amazon (Kindle and print). <https://www.amazon.com/Next-Hundred-Years-Michael-Conlon/dp/B0GD2MYMWR>

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Several of **Carmen Diana Deere's** former Ph.D. students put together a special issue of the *Journal of Agrarian Change* in her honor. The hard copy of the special issue is scheduled for publication in the coming months.

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**Dawn Bowers** was selected as Chair of the Fellows Committee for the American Psychological Association (APA), effective January 1. This is the largest professional organization of psychologists in the country. In this role, she will direct the committee who makes decisions about fellow status across the 54 divisions of APA. Dawn was also elected as an *inaugural* Fellow of the International Neuropsychological Society; this will be bestowed February 2026 in Philadelphia.

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**Jacob U'Mofe Gordon** recently published the biography of Dr. James Emma Kwegyir Aggrey entitled "Aggrey of Africa and the Americas: 1875-1927." Born in the Gold Coast, West Africa in 1875, young Aggrey left his homeland to study in the US to become a Wesleyan Methodist Missionary. He arrived at Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina, in 1898. He married an African American woman, Rosebud from Virginia. They had four children, the youngest of whom, Rudolf, became a US Ambassador to Europe and Africa before he passed in 2016. Aggrey and the Phelp-Stokes Fund shaped African educational systems. He established the first co-educational institution in Africa, " Achimota College" in the Gold Coast. He is credited for his role in Pan-Africanism, and Global Racial Harmony.

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President Emeritus **Bernard J. Machen** was honored by having an endowed professorship in the University of Michigan School of Dentistry named after him. Before coming to UF, Dr. Machen served as Dean of the School of Dentistry and Provost at the University of Michigan.

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### **Statement from Barbara McDade Gordon**

**AROHE (Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education) [www.Arohe.org](http://www.Arohe.org)**

*We know that higher education retirees are assets of society who **reinvent**--not retire from-- life; positively impact their communities; and contribute to the greater good."*

AROHE, founded in 2002, supports all phases of faculty/staff retirement through a dynamic member network that links retired faculty/staff associations, retiree and emeriti centers, and campus offices that engage retirees such as human resources, academic affairs, alumni, and advancement/development. AROHE provides resources and connections to increase retirees' value to their colleges/universities, communities, and professions in the areas of philanthropy, advocacy on behalf of the institution, volunteerism, and institutional knowledge and commitment.



The Fall 2025 meetings of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida were held in the classroom of the UF IFAS TREEO Center located in southwest Gainesville.



RFUF Website:

[Retired Faculty Organization | University of Florida](https://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu)  
<https://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu>