



## Northern Illinois University

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### Nominations Sought for 2019 Civil Service Outstanding Service Awards

Do you know an employee who goes above and beyond the call of duty? Please consider nominating these individuals for the OSC Outstanding Award. This award is presented each year to recognize individual Civil Service employees who demonstrate outstanding service and who make significant contributions to the university and to the community. Up to four awards are given out each year and will be presented at the annual Operating Staff Service Awards Banquet in the spring. Eligible employees must be full- or part-time status civil service employees who have been continuously employed at NIU since Feb. 1, 2012, or before. The nomination form and additional information can be found at: [go.niu.edu/service-award](http://go.niu.edu/service-award). Deadline for nominations is 4:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 22.

# Northern Staff News

JANUARY 2019

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## President's Corner



Happy New Year!

If your resolution in 2019 is to get more involved at NIU, we have plenty of opportunities for you! You can join a university committee ([go.niu.edu/university-committees](http://go.niu.edu/university-committees)) to represent civil service employees in shared governance. Operating Staff Council has several committees as well that are open to any civil service staff, including the Civil Service Celebration planning committee, Workplace Issues committee and Employee Morale committee. You can see a full list and access the Committee Interest Form at [go.niu.edu/OSC-committees](http://go.niu.edu/OSC-committees). OSC's member election is coming up later this spring – we hope you'll consider running for a place on council as well.

You can also make your voice heard by sharing your ideas to improve NIU services, processes and programs through the virtual suggestion box at [go.niu.edu/suggestions](http://go.niu.edu/suggestions) or letting another NIU employee know they are appreciated through the Applaud a Colleague program at [go.niu.edu/applause](http://go.niu.edu/applause). Or, even better, nominate a co-worker who goes above and beyond for an Outstanding Service Award ([go.niu.edu/service-award](http://go.niu.edu/service-award)).

At the end of the month, watch for a survey regarding an update to NIU's mission. A committee, which I am co-chairing, was formed by President Freeman and tasked with freshening up the mission, vision and value statements. We will be releasing a draft to campus by February and would appreciate and value your input. Updates will be made available at [go.niu.edu/mission](http://go.niu.edu/mission).

Professional development opportunities abound here as well. Watch the Monday Morning Announcement emails and NIU Today for seminars and brown bag workshops to attend. You can now get help with career planning and explore your educational opportunities through the Employee Assistance Program's new Career and Education Development Services – call 753-5802 to talk with the training and development specialist, Susan Swegle.

I hope you are able to make the most of this new year, and that you have a fulfilling and happy spring semester.

**Holly Nicholson, president**  
Operating Staff Council, 2018-2019

## HURRY! Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship Deadline is Jan. 31

The window of opportunity for your dependent to apply for scholarships is closing at the end of January! It is so easy to apply for scholarships now – just go to [go.niu.edu/y14bse](http://go.niu.edu/y14bse) and complete the general application. The system will match your dependent to appropriate, available scholarships universitywide. When applying for the Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship, the dependent will need to enter their parent's name and department where they work. Last year the Operating Staff Council awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to dependents! It only take a few minutes to apply – please encourage your Huskie dependent to do it.

## Huskie History



John Williston Cook

Williston Hall has the unique distinction of being NIU's first residence hall. According to Glen A. Gildemeister's *Castle on a Hill*, construction began on June 3, 1914, and the building housed some 119 women students when it opened in September 1915. According to Gildemeister, women could serve as waitresses in the dining room to reduce the cost of their living expenses.

The building was named after NIU's first president, John Williston Cook, who served from 1899-1919. Gildemeister writes that, "Trustees used President Cook's middle name ... because Illinois State had already named a building Cook Hall in his honor."

According to the NIU webpage, "Cook organized the structure of the school, hired the faculty, established a two year curriculum and secured the training method for teachers based on the educational philosophy of Charles A. McMurry."



Williston Hall then



Williston Hall now

## "Awesome Workday" Questionnaire Results

In the last Northern Staff Newsletter, we asked for feedback on how your office celebrates each other, or ways you (or your department) have created to enhance your work environment. We are excited to report that we have received several responses. We will begin sharing these responses in each issue of the newsletter. More feedback is welcome, so please keep your stories and ideas coming.

This issue spotlights the Department of English:



The Department of English recently had a new Office Support Specialist start, so pictures were taken. From left to right, Jane Pretkelis (new OSS), Angie Gasero, Jodi Long and Dawn Sibley.

Angie Gasero shares that the English department has always been a very good group of employees who respect each other as individuals no matter what their individual jobs are. The faculty consider the office staff invaluable, which makes them feel appreciated, and in turn helps them to enjoy working in English. They feel that the work they do is truly a team effort.

They make a point to celebrate birthdays for the administrators and the clerical staff. They bring in goodies and share them with anyone who comes into the office for their mail or copying. They also have a table in their main office where they share goodies. In the summer, they have even had people bring in vegetables from their garden to share.

They decorate the office for every season/holiday. It makes the department feel like a homier and more comfortable place to visit and feel welcome. When things slow down, and the students are gone, they find time to gather the staff for a lunch together and sometimes play Scrabble, which everyone loves because they all love words.



One of the English Department birthday parties that had a tea party theme.

## In the Know...?

As we become enveloped in our day-to-day jobs, we sometimes forget about our available benefits and services; policies and procedures; expectations; and how to go about finding resources when we need them.

Here are some important links to get you started:

- State University Civil Service System (SUCCS) website: [succs.illinois.gov/](http://succs.illinois.gov/)
- State University Retirement System (SURS) website: [surs.com/](http://surs.com/)
- NIU Annuitants Association: [niu.edu/annuitants](http://niu.edu/annuitants)
- Human Resources: [hr.niu.edu](http://hr.niu.edu)
- IT Tech Skills Hub: [go.niu.edu/techskills](http://go.niu.edu/techskills)
- Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC): [niu.edu/apac](http://niu.edu/apac)
  - Complimentary office supplies list
  - List of campus notary publics
  - Who to call
  - Special offerings



## Employment Changes

### NOVEMBER 2018

#### Welcome New Employees

Zachary Birch, Housing Administrator — Housing and Residential Services  
Maya Croslow, Housekeeping Supervisor — Holmes Student Center  
Allyn Davis, Building Service Worker — Building Services  
Stephanie Horgan, Program Adviser — Management  
Kuen Lee, Information Technical Associate Director — Financial Aid and Scholarship Office  
Shawn Olinyk, Snack Bar Attendant — Campus Dining Services  
Clinton Rosebrough Jr, Program Services Specialist — Center for Child Welfare and Education  
Stephen Samuels, Program Adviser — College of Engineering and Engineering Technology  
Stephen Swed, Storekeeper II — Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Kamariah Wilkerson, Culinary Worker II — Campus Dining Services  
Melody Winter, Office Support Specialist — Mathematical Sciences  
Linda Yates, Laboratory Manager — Biological Sciences

#### Retirements

Deborah Albion, Culinary Worker I — Campus Dining Services  
Mark Scott, Furniture Restorer — Materials Management  
Mary Vonzellen, Culinary Worker II — Campus dining Services  
Charles Whittaker, Building Service Worker — Building Services

#### Separations

Shea Bernard, Housing Representative — Housing and Residential Services  
Kathi Gehrke, Program Adviser — Nursing  
Taylor Honeyman, Admissions/Records Officer — Graduate School  
Keith Lessert, Information Technology Director — Operation Services  
Maribel Montelongo, Office Support Specialist — English  
Karen Pickett, Grants and Contracts Associate — Sponsored Programs Administration  
Phylicia Williams, Residence Hall Attendant — Public Safety

### DECEMBER 2018

#### Welcome New Employees

Courtney Cochrane, Food Service Area Supervisor — Conferences Event Management  
Heather Hastings, Office Support Associate — Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Sandra Jakubiak, Human Resource Assistant — Human Resource Services  
Kevin Meyer, Media Writer/Producer/Announcer II — Integrated Media Technologies  
Regina Parnell, Program Services Specialist — Center for Child Welfare and Education  
Melissa Robles, Program Assistant — Center for Governmental Studies  
Francesca Ruscetti, Program Assistant — School of Intradisciplinary Health Professions  
Shelby Savory, Chief Clerk — Family Violence and Sexual Assault Center  
Erica Schermerhorn, Account Technician II — Bursar  
Anthony Solorio, Multimedia Technician — Holmes Student Center  
Kenneth Wiese, Procurement Officer — Materials Management

#### Retirements

Candace Buie, Administrative Aide — Registration and Records  
James Latimer, Maintenance Equipment Operator — Grounds  
Collen Leonard, Publicity Promotion Specialist — Alumni Services  
Charlotte Marx, Locksmith Foreman — Physical Plant  
William Nixon, Mailing Services Supervisor I — Integrated Media Technologies  
David Rogers, Furniture Restorer — Materials Management  
Tammy Stevens, Business/Administrative Associate — College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

#### Separations

Omobola Balogun, Business Administrative/Associate — Development Administration  
Kristopher Bishop, Resident Hall Attendant — Public Safety  
Vanessa Charles, Transportation Clerk — Transportation  
Brian Haynes, Senior Events Administrator — Convocation Center  
Jason Hayward, Program Adviser — Curriculum and Instruction  
Jamie Kenney, Child Development Supervisor — Family and Consumer Sciences  
Kazim Mohammed, IT Technical Associate — Report Cards  
Manoj Mukkamala, IT Technical Associate — Report Cards  
Joyce Pusateri, Administrative Assistant — Human Resource Services

## Service Awards

### NOVEMBER 2018

#### 10 Years

Dean Coyle — Infrastructure Services  
Craig Fritz — Application Services  
Katie Schnorr — Building Services  
Lisa Vargen — Latino Resource Center  
Mark Whitely — Convocation Center

#### 15 Years

Diana Caldwell — Admissions Tours and Events  
Derek Carter — Building Services  
William Kenney — Building Services  
Alexander McConachie — Northern Public Radio  
Leslie Schoo — Visual and Performing Arts External Programming  
Randy Skinner — Heating Plant

#### 20 Years

John Alamia — Integrated Media Technologies  
Russell Andres — Grounds  
Cara Carlson — Vice President Research and Innovative Partnerships  
Rebecca Ferrante — Development Operations

#### 25 Years

Constance Rhoton — School of Art and Design  
Victoria Wren — University Libraries

#### 30 Years

Marjorie Holiday — Psychology  
Donald Kozlowski — Campus Dining Services  
Alan Tody — Infrastructure Services

#### 45 Years

Connie Weaver — College of Business

### DECEMBER 2018

#### 5 Years

Jason Stiegman — Grounds

#### 10 Years

Johnathon Foster — Heating Plant  
Paul Wrezinski — Housing and Residential Services

#### 15 Years

Douglas Moore — Building Services

#### 20 Years

Varsenig Geisler — Health Studies  
Jin Wenjun — Application Services



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**Northern Illinois University**

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## Project Offering Free Hearing Tests and Compensation for Research Testing

Charles Pudrith, NIU assistant audiology professor, wants to find out if genetic variants explain susceptibility to acquired hearing loss and he needs your help – especially if you're a musician.

Pudrith is overseeing the new NIU Hearing Conservation Center, which has two components: service and research. The center is offering free hearing tests to all NIU students, faculty and staff, as well as collecting data for the research project.

Any NIU student, faculty or staff member may set up an appointment for a 20-minute hearing test that includes answering a few demographic questions, a check for wax, a middle ear screening, and then a pure-tone test where participants press a button when they hear a beep.

After the tests, which are conducted by NIU audiology students, the results are discussed. Hearing conservation efforts, like limiting noise exposure or a referral to a clinic for further testing could be some of the recommendations.

Pudrith encourages musicians and music students in particular to get tested.

"Early signs of hearing loss are hard to detect without a test. Musicians are particularly susceptible because their high noise exposure, plus their advanced listening skills hide the early warning signs," Pudrith said.

To support research, those between ages 18 and 25 years old can undergo an additional 20-minute test and receive \$10 or a pair of musician's ear buds. This test will gather research data.

"We will use that data to look at advanced techniques that detect hearing loss early," Pudrith said. "We're trying to identify genetic variants that could explain susceptibility to acquired hearing loss, and getting an idea of how the biology really works. If you have hearing loss at early age, you may have one of these genetic variants," Pudrith said.

As well as providing a great asset to the university and the DeKalb communities, NIU students also benefit, said Sherrill Morris, chair of the NIU School of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders.

"Students in the Doctor of Audiology program will expand their knowledge in hearing assessment and conservation under the guidance of Dr. Pudrith, while increasing public awareness of the impact of repetitive noise exposure on hearing acuity," Morris said. "Musicians will be particularly interested in the ongoing research of the center that focuses on the susceptibility of acquired hearing loss in that population."

Tests are conducted from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, Wirtz Hall, Room 314. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are prioritized. To schedule a hearing test, or to participate in the research study, visit [go.niu.edu/hearingconserve](http://go.niu.edu/hearingconserve) or call 815-753-6533 or email [hcc@niu.edu](mailto:hcc@niu.edu).

## Save the Date

The NIU 2019 Health and Wellness Fair, sponsored by Employee Assistance and Training Center will be held Wednesday, April 3, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Holmes Student Center in the Duke Ellington Ballroom and Capitol Room. All faculty, staff, students, dependents and community members are invited to attend and enjoy over 50 exhibits featuring a dimension of wellness. This is a free event.

Release time is given for employees to attend to allow enough time to participate in the many screenings, massages, assessments and educational activities provided by participating vendors.

