President’s Corner

Greetings Operating Staff,

The Operating Staff Council held its officer elections July 11. Congratulations to our new President Jeffry Royce (HSC), Vice President Jay Monteiro (Campus Dining Services) and Parliamentarian Rebekka Ayres (Holmes Student Center). Congratulations also to our new Secretary Stacey Bivens (University Libraries) and Treasurer Patricia Wielert (College of Education) who were reelected for second terms.

It was an honor serving staff over the past year during my third term as OSC president. The new executive committee is very experienced, and I am confident they will do a fantastic job representing all of you in shared governance.

Be sure to mark your calendars for our upcoming Civil Service Celebration Aug. 8. We are very excited to offer a fundraising opportunity for our Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship – “Change a Student’s Future.” Bring your spare change to add to our coin jug to support our students – last year we were able to give $1,800 in scholarships to dependents of civil service staff. There will be other donation options as well, including signup for payroll deduction. Thank you in advance for your support. For more details about Civil Service Celebration, please visit go.niu.edu/csc and make sure to RSVP by July 19.

I hope you all are having a wonderful summer! I wish you all the best in the upcoming year.

Holly Nicholson
President, 2018-2019

Save the date!

Fall Kickoff Aug. 23

NIU is ready to roll out the red and black carpet for incoming Huskies during the annual Fall Kickoff set for 5 p.m., Friday, Aug. 23.

NIU’s marching band leads the procession to Huskie Stadium for the annual Huskie Fall Kickoff.

NIU faculty, staff and student volunteers are needed to help welcome new students and their families as we celebrate NIU’s traditions and show our Huskie pride! Kicking off at 5 p.m. from Neptune Central, NIU’s marching band will lead the procession that culminates at Huskie Stadium where students will form a giant “NIU” on the field for a photo.

Volunteers are needed from 3:45-6:15 p.m., Aug. 23 to welcome and direct new students and their families, hand out T-shirts and help new students form the “NIU” on the turf. A brief volunteer training will take place Aug. 22.

Watch for formal volunteer sign-up coming soon. For questions about this event, please contact James Huizenga at huizenga@niu.edu.
Here are the recipients of this year’s Outstanding Service Award. The award is given each year to NIU civil service employees, recognizing their outstanding service and significant contributions to the university community.

**More about our recipients:**

**Ron Barshinger** – Libraries
It’s not uncommon to see Ron Barshinger staying well past his work day at the library to help a student find a book in the stacks, or spending his lunch hour assisting a retired professor dig up old articles, or tracking down the day Lent began in the year 1610 for someone who absolutely needs that information, his colleagues say. Barshinger, who has been with the university library system since 1989, goes out of his way to help others, even if it is outside of his scripted job duties. For example, he’s taken on the workload of critically ill colleagues, escorted students to financial aid when they’re panicking about college funds, and done everything he can to help people he encounters daily in his job at NIU, especially the hundreds of students he’s supervised in the library over the years.

**Ellen Cabrera** – Public Administration
It’s hard to stump Ellen Cabrera when it comes to the Department of Public Administration. If prospective students have any questions, even the most obscure, you can bet that Cabrera has an answer for them. And if she doesn’t know it off the top of her head – which she usually does – she will immediately research and find out what they need to know. Over the years, Cabrera has often been the first contact prospective and enrolled students in NIU’s Master of Public Administration program have with the department. She greets them with patience and knowledge. Cabrera is always there to help them through the process of applying, following up and starting them off right once they enter the program, which her colleagues say makes her an integral part of the success of the program. Her colleagues say she is more than deserving. She is dedicated, knowledgeable and a leader who deserves the high praise.

**Marj Holliday** – Psychology
At any given time, Marj Holliday is helping to keep track of nearly 150 graduate students in the department of psychology. She helps see them through from application through graduation, and all the paperwork, worries, questions and issues in between, all the while working with them with patience and professionalism. Holliday has been in the Psychology Department for 18 years and has worked at NIU for 31 years. Just this past year, she delayed her retirement to help keep the department on track, as it transitioned Directors of Graduate Studies.

**Patricia Kee** – Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations
Patricia Kee puts in countless hours to ensure both students and faculty have everything they need. And then, once the workday is over, Kee continues working hard to ensure others have all they need – from hungry students to needy children — she is there to help. Her colleagues nominated her for the honor, saying her professionalism and kind heart help make NIU a better place. She is determined to help her department succeed. Recently, it has gone through many changes with retirements, sicknesses and departures. Kee has taken on extra tasks, worked well beyond her assigned hours and maintained the professionalism needed to ensure there has never been a gap of service within the department to either students or faculty. In addition, she works to help employees in other departments, and rallies for fellow administrative professionals. Many years, she is on campus helping with Huskie move-in days and College of Education Appreciation Days. Kee helps with the Huskie Food Pantry. She organizes coat drives at NIU and at her church, purchasing new coats and often crocheting matching scarves. And she’s provided a toy drive drop box location in her department for needy children. Each Christmas, she also spends hours upon hours after work baking cookies for homeless families.
May 2019

Welcome New Employees:

Charles Alnburg, Building Service Foreman – Building Services

Alan Clay, Equal Opportunity Officer – Chief Diversity Officer

Asabe Dawodu, Business/ Administrative Associate – Development Administration

Maria Dominguez, Program Coordinator – P-20 Center

Sharon Duchaj, Procurement Officer Supervisor – Procurement and Strategic Sourcing

Nathan Foster, Test Specialist – Testing Services

Silvia Ginting, Program Coordinator – Faculty Development

Lauren Grimm, Financial Aid Adviser Coordinator – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Payton Gustafson, Grounds Worker – Grounds

Morgan Haas, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety

Carissa Hunt-Gioe, Food Court / Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Services

Leslie Lantow, Human Resource Assistant Manager – Human Resource Services

Sarah Limon, Office Support Specialist – Testing Services

Lorriane Marshall, Office Support Specialist – Theatre and Dance

Erica McFarland, Program Adviser – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

Tammy McFeely, Office Support Specialist – Counseling and Consultation Services

Lydia Mueller, Office Support Associate – Chemistry and Biochemistry

Paula Rader, Office Manager – Morgridge Chair Office

Travonna Rhodes, Maid – Holmes Student Center

Miles Rinchart, Accounting Associate – Human Resource Associate

Maria Rodriguez, Program Assistant – P-20 Center

Gloria Rosales, Educational Program Evaluation Coordinator – P-20 Center

Amy Secor, Office Support Specialist – School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions

Amber Shafer, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Gary Smith, Program Director – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

Amanda Smothers, Program Coordinator – Faculty Development

Chanel Suggett, Office Manager – Environmental Studies

Lynn Mallory, Business/ Administrative Associate – Development Administration

Stephen Siebler, Arena Facilities Supervisor – Convocation Center

Sheila Skinner, Medical Assistant – Health Services

Anthony Van Slyke, Copy Center Operator IV – Integrated Media Technologies

Separations:

Jacob Atkinson, Security Guard – Public Safety

Jonathan Cain, Residence Hall Attendant – Public Safety

Christopher Collins, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Stacey Cooper, Health Education Coordinator – University Recreation and Wellness

Heather Freet, Food Court / Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Services

Kathleen Henry, House Attendant / Housekeeper – Presidents Office

Dominique Johnson, Residence Hall Attendant – Public Safety

Siobhan Kelsie, Residence Hall Attendant – Public Safety

Sigpradh Mounivong, Culinary Worker I – Campus Dining Services

Kristine Murphy, Stores Supervisor – Chemistry and Biochemistry

Rebecca Nates, Medical Office Specialist – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders

Joshua Silvius, Food Service Administrator II – Campus Dining Services

Tina Varney, Administrative Assistant – DoIT Admins - Business Finance

Adam Vicencio, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Rhysce Williams, Residence Hall Attendant – Public Safety

June 2019

Welcome New Employees:

Destiny Bons, Maid – Holmes Student Center

Kay Caster, Program Coordinator – Curriculum and Instruction

Charles Cherry, Housing Administrator – Housing and Residential Services

Vincent Civitello, Main Desk Attendant – Holmes Student Center

Caleb Cox, Office Manager – Nonprofit and NGO Studies

Marcella Cox, Survey Interview Supervisor – Health and Human Science Survey Research Laboratory

Erin Elder, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration

Mary Evans, Program Coordinator – Nursing

James Fitzjarell III, Senior Engineer – Architectural / Engineering Services

Reina Franco, Program Assistant – P-20 Center

Sarah Goshko, Main Desk Attendant – Holmes Student Center

Jose Guerrero Jr., IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Taylor Hayden, Public Information Associate – Office of Institutional Communication

Desmond Jesu, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Constance Kalsch, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Sarah Masson, Child Development Associate – Child Development and Family Center

Jennifer Mattingly, Program Coordinator – Faculty Development

Xica McClain, Security Guard – Public Safety

Peter Medlin, Radio Television Producer Announcer I – Northern Public Radio

Claire Mogren, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration

Isabelle Osborn, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Jason Reed, Institutional Research Data Coordinator – Institutional Research

Eva Richards, Editorial Writer – Alumni Services

Ramona Ruiz, Administrative Aide – Marketing

Srínivasam Samula, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Chimarre Spivey, Food Service Administrator II – Campus Dining Services

Crystal Sturgeon, Office Support Specialist – Libraries

Trent Thompson, Security Guard – Public Safety

Conner Vague, Program Assistant – eSports Network

Kira Walker, Admissions / Records Representative – Registration and Records

Death:

Vicki Blevins, Clerk – Bursar

Retirements:

Dana Ditrichs-Kunkel, Administrative Assistant – Executive Vice President and Provost

KarenFrazer, Medical Records Administrator II – Health Services

Mary Hamell, Chief Clerk – College of Business

Sherry Pritz, Publicity Promotion Specialist – EIGERLab

Kristin Rinehart, Program Assistant – College of Education

Mary Rose, Chief Clerk – Registration and Records

Randy Skinner, Steam and Power Plant III – Heating Plant

Janet Smith, Administrative Aide – Center for Governmental Studies

Elizabeth Zarek, Campus Parking Manager – Campus Parking

Death:

Gregg Gieffler, Budget Analyst II – Controller

Jonathan Lehuta, University Network Specialist II – Operation Services

Retirements:

Fran Bomar, Office Support Specialist – Testing Services

Paulette Bowman, Administrative Assistant – P-20 Center

Janice Clausen, Accountant I – Physical Plant

Cathy Craddock, Administrative Assistant – Vice President Research and Innovation Partnerships

Brenda Hart, Administrative Aide – Marketing

Constance Kalsch, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Sarah Masson, Child Development Associate – Child Development and Family Center

Jennifer Mattingly, Program Coordinator – Faculty Development

Xica McClain, Security Guard – Public Safety

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Elizabeth Zarek, Campus Parking Manager – Campus Parking

Death:
Confessions of a Rookie

Rookie: Natasha Johnson

Business/Administration Associate,
Recreation and Wellness, hire date: 11/16/14

Natasha says the one thing that surprised her working for NIU is how much faculty and staff truly care about student success. I have seen first-hand the lengths teachers, graduate assistants, staff and administration will go to help a student in need. She notes that if she could add one thing to her office it would be a window! Adding one thing to the department? That would be new lockers for the students followed by a climbing wall! Up, up and away! Natasha says the title of her autobiography would be, “How I persevered through life learning how to do more with less.” I would use this title because we all go through trials and tribulations. The road is not always easy. However, with a positive mindset, perseverance, determination and a little laughter, I have seen that anything is possible. The most important thing is to not give up! When the going gets tough, just remember, “this too shall pass.” Words of wisdom right there! So, Natasha, what’s your secret talent no one knows about? If I told you it would no longer be a secret! Touché

Good job, Rookie!

If you would like to be in a future installment of Confessions of a Rookie, please email your interest to Rave at RMeyer@niu.edu with your name, title, and hire date.

Service Awards

May 2019

15 Years
Amy Buhrow – College of Business
April Kaiser – Child Development and Family Center
Debra Woolbright – Economics

20 Years
James Barry – Building Services
John Schlieben – Infrastructure Services

25 years
Neil Colwell – Web and Internal Communications
Noor Harrison – Human Resource Services
Nathan Johnson – Infrastructure Services
Jeffrey Montgomery – Physical Plant

30 Years
Kenneth Kamm – Libraries
Elizabeth Zahek – Campus Parking

June 2019

5 Years
Jennifer Meier – Communications
Gus Panourgias – Building Services
Donna Siegmeier – Bursar

10 Years
Larry Fay – Lorado Taft Operations
Nancy Prange – Health Studies
Nathan Rice – Communication

15 Years
Pamela Roesner – Development Operations

20 Years
Margaret Abbott – Libraries
Phuong Yung Cong Huyen – Application Services
Emily Cronauer – Marketing
Michael Wilhelm – Institutional Research

25 Years
Gaylen Parker – Physical Plant