Greetings Fellow Operating Staff,

I find myself reworking this letter to adequately include and reflect on the whirlwind of changes that have occurred since originally writing it a couple of weeks ago. Each of our work, home and family lives have been utterly upended; and in the spirit of confidence that we will all persevere and eventually return to a more familiar version of normal, I'd like to share my opening paragraph as it was originally written.

After hearing from my colleagues that I was a bit long-winded in my last President’s Corner, I will endeavor to keep this one brief! As I write this on the first day of spring break, I find myself looking forward to nice weather and enjoying a short respite before gearing up for the madness which comes with springtime events at the HSC. Keep an eye out for the 125th Anniversary events in particular — every one I’ve attended has been top-notch; a testament to all those involved in the planning and execution.

I can’t help but chuckle at the fact that every single sentence in that paragraph became entirely inaccurate a mere two days later! Whether we are working remotely, engaging in professional development, still on the campus, or some combination thereof, our operating staff have truly let shine their versatility, adaptability and value to NIU these past couple of weeks. I have been extremely impressed with our administration’s communication and dedication to keeping staff members whole as we continue to explore this uncharted territory. Surrounded by family and friends facing unemployment and lapses in health insurance, I am more grateful than ever to call myself a Huskie.

For my usual personal note: since my last President’s Corner I’ve had the honor and privilege of performing both my sister’s wedding ceremony down in Champaign, as well as my brother’s wedding in Las Vegas. That makes four ceremonies for me in total, and they are each among the most rewarding experiences of my life. In fact, I am anxiously expecting a baby nephew from each couple any day now, and the thought of not being able to be present in person for either of them is surreal to say the least!

As we move forward, it is important to recognize that it is OK to be a proud and grateful Huskie while continuing to have questions, concerns, and doubts. Multiple resources for questions, guidance and advocacy remain available to you:

• OSC representatives and workplace issues subcommittee members.
• John Hulseberg, Operating Staff personnel advisor.
• Employee Assistance Program.
• Office of the Ombudsperson.

We want to hear from you.

Endure and persevere together,

Jeffry Royce
President | Operating Staff Council
jroyce@niu.edu | osc@niu.edu
Confessions of a Rookie

Rookie: Julie Yarmolovych
Office Support Specialist, Department of History
Hire date: Feb. 17, 2020

This edition of Confessions has us speaking with a true newbie! Julie Yarmolovych is less than a week old at NIU. If you look up “NIU rookie” in the dictionary, it figuratively says “see Julie Yarmolovych”!

Let’s get this game started, shall we? Okay Julie, what is your favorite place in the world? “It’s hard to decide my favorite place because I love to travel. Favorites can change. Right now, it’s Prague in the Czech Republic. This city is filled with coziness and warmth, tiny streets, good food, amazing beer, open people and unforgettable experiences!”

You make that sound so inviting, Julie. Tell me, have you done anything crazy there? Or anywhere else? *The craziest thing I’ve ever done is leave my settled life and family to move across the globe by myself. It is quite scary and adventurous! I am genuinely happy I did it.**

That does take courage. You must be brave like a superhero! Speaking of superheroes, do you have a least favorite one? *Batman. He’s creepy, too sad, and dramatic!*

Got it. So, no sadness or drama for Julie. Let’s be a little tamer then. Have you read any good books lately? *Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot. I really enjoy reading and I read it over the weekend. If you ask me next week, the answer could be different.***

We might just do that! In the meantime, name three people, living or not, with whom you would like to share a meal.

Arthur Conan Doyle and we would have shepherd’s pie. Jane Austen where we must have Beef Wellington. And lastly, Angela Merkel for some simple schnitzel.

Wow, I can feel my waistline growing already!

Well, that’s it for this edition of Confessions of a Rookie. If you would like to be featured in a future edition, please contact Rave at RMeyer@niu.edu with your name, title and hire date.
Employment Changes

January 2020
Welcome New Employees:

Asontawa Cleveland, Police Officer – Public Safety
Serena Davenport, Facility Operations Coordinator – Regional Center Operations
Allyn Davis, Office Support Specialist – Housing and Residential Services
Nicholas Gough, Multimedia Technician – Holmes Student Center
Nicole Mertens, Police Officer – Public Safety
Jose Rabelo, Snack Bar Attendant – Campus Dining Services
Yvette Wright, Human Resource Assistant – Human Resource Services

Retirements:

Emilia Gamino, Food Service Sanitation Laborer – Campus Dining Services
Mary Kain, Administrative Aide – Nursing
Eena Lundberg, Culinary Worker I – Campus Dining Services
Willia MacVenn, Office Support Specialist – Giorgi Law Clinic
Leslie Scarpae, IT Technical Associate – DoIT-Admin-Business-Finance

Separations:

Darla Cook, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Mary Evans, Program Coordinator – Nursing
Nicholas Bourke, Office Support Specialist – Orientation and Family Connections
Curtis Grimes, Information Technology Assistant Manager – Housing and Residential Services
Joanne King, Grounds Worker – Grounds
Kristen Lash, Senior Library Specialist – Libraries
Rachelle Wilson, Anthropology Curator III – Anthropology

February 2020
Welcome New Employees:

Karina Deegan, Events Coordinator – Registration Services
Ashley Flesher, Snack Bar Attendant – Campus Dining Services
Alexandra Galindo, Business/Administrative Associate – Center for Governmental Studies
Melanie Griegoliet, Program Assistant – Orientation and Family Connections
Mitchell Huftalin, Program Assistant – Orientation and Family Connections
Yakisha Merritt, Human Resource Assistant – Human Resource Services
Randall Moore, IT Technical Associate – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Sarah Moskal, Health Education Coordinator – University Recreation and Wellness
Katie OBrien, Office Manager – Educational Technology Resource and Assessment
Marcel Rice, Snack Bar Attendant – Campus Dining Services
Catherine Schaff, Program Coordinator – Educor Licensure and Preparation
Jennifer Simenson, Collection Assistant Manager – Bursar
Niti Srivastava, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Julie Yarmolovych, Office Support Specialist – History

Separations:

Tiena Bialis, Admissions/Records Representative – Admissions and Records
Tyler Christopher, Campus Planner I – Architectural and Engineering Services
Mark Framke, Food Service Administrator IV – Campus Dining Services
Josef Garcia, Snack Bar Attendant – Campus Dining Services
Nathaniel Gravlin, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Jonathan Krengel, Police Officer – Public Safety
Amanda Mitchell, Office Manager – College of Education
Ivan Rodriguez, Financial Aid Adviser – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Death:

Kenneth Wiese, Procurement Officer – Materials Management

Retirements:

Tammy Shelton, Business Manager II – P:20 Center
Carl Simonson, Resident Hall Attendant – Public Safety

Notice from the Office of the Ombudsperson

The Office of the Ombudsperson is OPEN!

Due to the stay-at-home order restrictions, we are working remotely. However, you can either call (815-753-1414) or email ombuds@niu.edu and we will get back to you promptly.

If you need a confidential, neutral, informal and independent resource to help you navigate all things NIU (general conflict, grade concerns, personal interactions, policy concerns, executive coaching, etc.), please reach out.

We look forward to talking with you!
One key female figure in our history from 1918-1947 was Celine Neptune, who joined NISNS as an assistant instructor in domestic science and taught in both the elementary and high school classes at the training school in McMurry Hall. After NISNS became Northern Illinois State Teacher’s College in 1921, Neptune became department chair of the newly formed Home Economics Department, which offered several four-year programs. During Neptune’s 26-year tenure as department chair, she expanded the program to include “teaching, dietetics, nutrition and courses that fit the changing tempos of the day.” As a result, our Home Economics department earned a reputation as “one of the most progressive in the Midwest.”

Neptune’s younger sister Katharine came to NISTC in 1926 and served students as a librarian until 1945. According to the 1929-1930 and 1930-1931 faculty-student directory, the sisters shared an apartment at 336 Augusta Avenue. Celine died Jan. 7, 1949, at age 62, and found eternal rest at Maple Lawn Cemetery in her hometown of Thorntown, Indiana. President Leslie Holmes eulogized Neptune’s impact: “Miss Celine Neptune... was dearly loved by students as well as faculty. Her dedication and philosophy made her an outstanding person.”

In the 1950s, a new “Residence Hall Complex for Women” was named after Celine Neptune. Construction began on Neptune North Jan. 8, 1954, almost exactly five years after Neptune’s death, and opened to students in September 1955. Construction began on Neptune West, East and Central in May 1958. West opened in September 1959, while East and Central opened in February 1960. Each section of the complex is 70,000 to 83,000 square feet in size, and in total, the complex cost nearly $5 million.

As further proof of Neptune’s lasting impact on students, alumna from the Class of 1931 created a plaque in her memory that has been prominently displayed in Neptune Hall since Oct. 25, 1974.

Special thanks to the Regional History Center for research assistance, and to those who have made digital copies of the Norther (NIU yearbooks) available online.

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**Service Awards**

### January 2020

**5 Years**

- Matthew Cabrera – Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications
- Damien Cavazos – Campus Dining Services
- Michael Cobert – EGERLab
- Thomas Handschuh – Building Services
- Stuart Henn – Art Museum
- Matthew Hook – Grounds
- Tina Leombruni – EGERLab
- James Lopez – Building Services
- Michael Lyle – Building Services
- Jeffrey Metters – EGERLab
- Jeffrey Schmerbach – Physical Plant

**10 Years**

- Kurtis Lassard – Lorado Taft Operations
- Virginia Meo – Student Affairs
- Arielle Sherman – Psychology

**15 Years**

- Denise Franklin – Campus Dining Services
- Daksha Patek – Biological Sciences

**20 Years**

- Mary Chepulis – Center for Child Welfare and Education
- Stephanie Kruizenga – Human Resource Services
- Brain Timms – Physical Plant

**25 Years**

- Michael Reynolds – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
- Marcus Roccaforte – Public Safety
- Derrick Smith – Center for Black Studies
- Richard Twombly – Physical Plant

**10 Years**

- Adam Baie – Heating Plant

**15 Years**

- James Barker – Integrated Media Technologies
- Christopher Becker – Physical Plant
- Diane Fitzhugh – Center for Child Welfare and Education
- Jennifer Howard – Faculty Development
- Daniel Mojica – Public Safety
- Mercedita Sawyer – Building Services

**20 Years**

- Tammie Pulak – Building Services

**25 Years**

- Patricia Adams – DoIT-Administration-Business-Finance
- James DeForest – Building Services

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**February 2020**

**5 Years**

- Leanne Kulchawik – University Recreation and Wellness
- Mary Riggs – Housing and Residential Services
- Elizabeth Squires – Health Studies