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## President's Corner



Greetings Operating Staff,

A significant goal Lisa Freeman established for the university is creating a framework for a culture of shared leadership. Shared leadership occurs when the focus of defining leaders is moved away from the hierarchy of organizational charts to encouraging people from different areas of the university and from all levels of reporting structures to do work that influences processes and policies and solves problems.

There are several reasons why shared leadership is important. In this time of mounting pressures for higher educational institutions, this type of leadership will allow us to be more flexible, responsive and innovative. We will all receive opportunities to amplify our voices and develop solutions that will work for everyone who is affected by them. We will feel more ownership over shared goals and decisions.

I am co-chairing a group with Rena Cotsones charged with developing capacity for shared leadership at NIU. The group will recommend strategies that leadership can implement to support employee growth and development that leads to strong shared leadership, which will include professional development opportunities. We'll identify existing opportunities and barriers. We'll suggest the most effective practices to accomplish these goals as well as a timeline for next steps.

On a related note, the Office of the President is creating NIU's first **staff professional development academy**. This will be a cohort-based program open to all nonacademic, full-time civil service and SPS employees with at least three years of university service and will involve 10 four-hour meetings over the course of one year. Each of the 15 participates will be matched with a mentor as well. The academy is open to all levels of employees, so please **consider applying**. You'll need a résumé, letter of interest and approval from your supervisor. You can email **[mholtz@niu.edu](mailto:mholtz@niu.edu)** for more information.

I hope you all have an enjoyable and restful summer.

Forward together,

Holly Nicholson

President, Operating Staff Council 2021-2023

**[hnicholson@niu.edu](mailto:hnicholson@niu.edu)** | **[osc@niu.edu](mailto:osc@niu.edu)**

# Confessions of a Rookie

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## Rookie: Miriah Ranken

Human Resource Services

Hire date: Nov. 20, 2017

Good day, everyone. Thank you for joining us for this edition of Confessions of a Rookie.

Good morning, Miriah! Let's begin by asking what pie-in-the-sky thing you would want an unlimited supply of and why?

*Flat White from Starbucks. With six kids ages 12 and under in the house and a full-time career, need I say more?*

Oh, dear! That's a lot of — chaos?

We all know a bit of chaos isn't necessarily bad. It could lead to some fun adventures. Tell our readers what the best concert you've ever attended, and why?

*A very long story short, my friends and I thought we were attending a Billy Joel concert only to arrive and realize it was a Billy Idol concert. Somehow this mix-up turned into the best concert ever.*

Woah! From Piano Man to White Wedding — that's a big stretch. Sometimes things just work out, right? Like how you came to be at NIU. Tell us, what's your favorite thing about your current position?

*My favorite thing is working with multiple departments and colleagues across campus, including some of my favorite individuals here in HRS.*

How sweet! It's nice to know there are people like you there. But what's the one thing about your job you know now that you wish you knew sooner?

*This is a tough one. I feel I am constantly learning something new, but if I had to identify just one, I would say work-life balance is key to finding success both professionally and personally.*

I absolutely get that. With six kids under 12, I would want to find balance at work, too.

So, there are benefits to working. What is the best job perk you have ever had at a job?

*Remote work flexibility. This is a huge benefit to those who can do so. I often find that flexibility allows me to work longer hours, as there is no longer a commute and there are fewer distractions — minus the fridge, of course.*

(We won't mention the six kids here being a distraction — I'm pretty sure Miriah knows this already.)

Last question: What is one important work skill everyone should have?

*I think everyone should have effective communication skills as it is vital to build relationships and to move forward, both professionally and personally.*

Something tells me Miriah's six kids are negotiators.

Well, that's it for this edition of Confessions of a Rookie.

Join us next time — where it could be **you** who's picked to be the rookie. We also accept volunteers. Contact [RMeyer@niu.edu](mailto:RMeyer@niu.edu).

## What is Kaltura?

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Kaltura is a comprehensive, robust, campuswide video platform available to all faculty, staff and students at NIU. With Kaltura, users can upload, publish, share and edit videos, as well as create screen recordings, in-video quizzes and other kinds of interactive learning experiences.

### Features of Kaltura

- Upload, store and share your existing video content created outside of Kaltura (PowerPoint to MP4, smartphone video, tablet recordings).
- Create and share quick webcam/microphone videos for introductions, microlectures or video feedback.
- Create and share screen recording videos by recording webcam, screen and/or narration. This is useful when creating recordings of anything on your screen such as software demonstrations of data analysis tools, coding interfaces, design tools and website tours; narrated document reviews (detailed project document, course syllabus); and a workflow for creating a narrated presentation using PowerPoint or another presentation tool.
- Incorporate YouTube videos into your Kaltura media library, and embed and play through the Kaltura player in Blackboard.
- Take advantage of excellent automatic closed captioning, with simple caption editing and video transcripts.
- Edit videos in Kaltura, create video quizzes and branching video experiences.

You can find [more information about Kaltura](#) on the NIU website.

# Office Phones Moving to Teams

Matt Parks, chief information officer in the Division of Information Technology, visited with the Operating Staff Council where he talked about NIU's decision to use the Microsoft Teams (Teams) Voice application. Teams VoIP will replace the 1980s telephone system at NIU. All 753 numbers will be moved to the Teams Voice application within Microsoft, which can also be used on mobile devices.

Some areas and services still require traditional telephone service (i.e. elevators, emergency call boxes, etc.). Parks urges all employees to [peruse the website for more information](#).

## Microsoft Teams Helpful Tips

For the past two years, NIU has been using Teams for most communications between team members and connecting coworkers across campus. Here are some of helpful tips.

- Join meetings on mute.
  - Minimize the noise when joining a meeting.
  - Stay muted when you are not talking.
- Blur backgrounds when using a camera.
  - Use your camera as often as you can.
  - Blur the background or use provided backgrounds to create professional appearance.
- Ask before calling someone.
  - Ask permission to chat before calling them.
  - Just because someone's status is "available" doesn't mean they are not busy working on something.
- Limit use of @Mention for the entire channel.
  - Use only when needed.
  - Could be helpful when you have a team that does not review information in the Teams environment often.
- Raise your hand when possible.
  - Like in a regular face-to-face meeting, use the "Raise your hand" feature.
  - With new updates to Teams, the "Raise your hand" feature is now numbered.
- File Sharing in Teams.
  - All Teams have a file share options.
  - Add necessary files for the team to this area.
- Searching for conversations.
  - There is a search option available.
  - Use this feature to find conversations with team members.
- Using emojis.
  - They are a quick way to respond to a comment or request.
  - Use the commands as needed.
- Update your status.
  - Under your profile picture, you can change your status.
  - If you do not want to be disturbed, change to that status.
  - Whichever status you use, if it is not "available," make sure you change back when finished.

These are just a few that will be helpful for better communication between you and your team members across campus.

## Service Awards

### March 2022

#### 5 Years

**Donald Coffman** – Physical Plant  
**Jayne Holley** – Alumni Services  
**Julie O'Brien** – Accounts Payable and Travel  
**Rita Veron** – Vice President International Affairs

#### 10 Years

**Matthew Lave** – Public Safety  
**John Quillman** – Public Safety  
**Karyn Smith** – Application Services

#### 15 Years

**John Holmes** – Building Services  
**Katie Mowers** – Sponsored Programs Administration  
**Holly Nicholson** – Web and Internal Communications  
**Susan Phelps** – Building Services  
**Tracey Ward** – Physical Plant

#### 20 Years

**Marianne Spring** – Office of Institutional Communications

#### 25 Years

**Susan Cagle** – Materials Management  
**Amy DeRose** – Holmes Student Center

### April 2022

#### 5 Years

**Robert Brienne Jr.** – Infrastructure Services  
**Catherine Dancy** – Academic Advising Center  
**Xavier Lewis** – Regional Center Operations  
**Jessica Nunez** – Campus Parking  
**Kevin Weber** – Infrastructure Services

#### 10 Years

**Jon Chapman** – Physical Plant  
**Lisa DeRango** – Intercollegiate Athletics  
**Robert Feldacker** – Development Operations  
**Amy Hernandez** – Registration and Records  
**Amy Schmidt** – Intercollegiate Athletics

#### 15 Years

**Gerald Bonnell** – Physical Plant  
**Mark Diedrich** – Physical Plant  
**George Fredholm Jr.** – Heating Plant  
**Tammy Lexa** – Human Resource Services  
**Ellen Olsen** – Health Studies  
**Kristine Sipe** – Application Services  
**Agesilaos Vasilopoulos** – School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions

#### 20 Years

**Joseph Przybyla** – Public Safety

# Employment Changes

## March 2022

### *Welcome New Employees:*

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**Jehona Ajeti**, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services  
**Amanda Baum**, Program Coordinator – College of Education  
**Trey Borgrud**, Senior Event Coordinator – Convocation Center  
**Dawn Cook**, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services  
**Cathy Craddock**, Program Coordinator – President's Office  
**Martha DeLancey**, Customer Service Assistant – Human Resource Services  
**Caden Fairless**, Steam and Power Plant I – Heating Plant  
**Lester Flaherty III**, Maintenance Repair Worker – Lorado Taft Operations  
**Samuel Hawkins**, Auditorium Technical Director – Holmes Student Center  
**Brandon Hill**, Office Administrator – Campus Parking  
**Briean Myrick**, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety  
**Jennifer Parker**, Events Coordinator – Convocation Center  
**Stephanie Reed**, Culinary Worker III – Lorado Taft Operations  
**Stephanie Robinson**, Culinary Worker III – Lorado Taft Operations  
**Brockton Shipley**, Food Service Administrator I – Campus Dining Service  
**Brian Smith**, Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service  
**Joshua Turner**, Office Manager – Gender and Sexuality Resource Center  
**Kimberly Wedoff**, Business/Administrative Associate – College of Health and Human Sciences

### *Retirements:*

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**Dennis Barringer**, Building Service Worker – Building Services  
**Dawn Highstreet**, Building Service Worker – Building Services  
**Tamera Lawson**, Printing Production Coordinator – Integrated Media Technologies  
**Susan Lietz**, Office Manager – Management  
**Denise McRoberts**, Building Service Worker – Building Services  
**Brenda Simms**, Clinical Practice Data Analyst – Regional Technology Services

### *Separations:*

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**Nadia Anaya**, Residence Hall Attendant – Housing and Residential Services  
**Caleb Cox**, Office Manager – Nonprofit and Non-governmental Organization Studies  
**Rodolfo Galindo**, Assistant Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service  
**Jose Guerrero Jr.**, IT Technical Associate – Application Services  
**Taylor Hayden**, Public Information Associate – Office of Institutional Communication  
**Crystal Hill**, Office Administrator – Libraries  
**Yoon Jae Jeon**, Program Coordinator – Asian American Resource Center  
**Christina Jerals**, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Service  
**Lisa Johnson**, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service  
**Astrid Larson**, Library Specialist – Libraries  
**Maria Lopez**, Building Service Worker – Building Services  
**David Prim**, Assistant Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service  
**Stephanie Robinson**, Culinary Worker III – Lorado Taft Operations  
**Lewis Rule**, Program Coordinator – Precollegiate – UPWARD Bound  
**Charles Stark**, Police Officer – Public Safety  
**Dorothea Stipetic**, Office Administrator – Public Administration  
**Dana Walker**, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Service  
**Cassandra Young**, Program Director – College of Business

### *Death:*

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**Bradley Dohlen**, Building Service Worker – Holmes Student Center

## April 2022

### *Welcome New Employees:*

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**Sara Callahan**, Accounting Officer – Development Operations  
**Elbia Del Llano Menendez**, Program Coordinator – Latino Resource Center  
**Reese DeNure**, Campus Recreation Coordinator – Intercollegiate Athletics  
**Shelby Holtz**, Program Assistant – Art Museum

**Sarah Korinek**, Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service  
**Wendy Marshall**, Program Adviser – Special and Early Education  
**George Nunez**, Parking Service Agent I – Campus Parking  
**Heather Reedus**, Building Service Worker – Holmes Student Center  
**Kimberly Stallworth**, Office Support Associate – Military Science  
**Nathaniel Voss**, Arena Physical Facilities Supervisor – Convocation Center

### *Retirements:*

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**Cindy Carlson**, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety  
**Lynn Schmitz**, Program Adviser – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

### *Separations:*

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**Jehona Ajeti**, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services  
**Cynthia Bosanac**, Assistant Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service  
**Denise Halverson**, Program Coordinator – Executive Vice President and Provost  
**Danielle Hernandez**, Housing Administrator – Housing and Residential Services  
**Sandra Jakubiak**, Human Resource Assistant Manager – Human Resource Services  
**Jared Lash**, IT Technical Associate – Application Services  
**Kelsey Mark**, Admissions/Records Officer – Registration and Records  
**Anthony Velazquez**, IT Support Associate – Libraries  
**Brandon Wiley**, Building Service Worker – Building Services  
**Jessica Williams**, Office Support Specialist – English

### *Death:*

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**Joyce Keller**, Program Coordinator – Career Services

## Do You Know?

The NIU website offers a one-stop shop for [resources faculty and staff may need](#). This page can help you find information on leadership, governance and important updates. The NIU faculty/staff page also contains a section for assistance with human resources, technology, communications, facilities, and professional development and training. Check it out today!

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