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President's Corner



Greetings Operating Staff,

I am humbled, excited and grateful to have been selected by the Operating Staff Council (OSC) to serve once again as president for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 years. Having your confidence in me as a leader means so much to me, and I am looking forward to working together to do the work that

needs to be done.

Joining me on the executive committee this year are Jay Monteiro (Procurement Services and Contract Management), vice president; Nicole Adams (Psychology), secretary; Kathy Mosher (Computer Science), treasurer; and Cindy Kozumplik (Division of Information Technology), parliamentarian. Please feel free to reach out to us with any great news, comments, concerns or to say hi.

To be effective as the leadership team, we need to hear from you. Please take a moment and complete our 2023-2024 OSC Priorities survey, so we can be sure to represent you in the things that matter to you. This survey is open until Monday, July 31.

In the meantime, I hope you can enjoy your summer and relax a little before we head into fall. I am looking forward to all the activities and engagement that will occur through the participation of multiple departments and lead by Week of Welcome to welcome our students. Don't forget a smile goes a long way when welcoming anyone to our campus.

Natasha Johnson
President, OSC 2023-2025

The Huskie Den: A great place to beat the heat, avoid the rain and stay active

The Huskie Den is open this summer with summer special pricing. Would you like to come bowling but are embarrassed because you believe you are “not a bowler”? Have you bowled in the past but want to get the rust out of your game? Did you bowl with us this past year but want to have a chance at the Staff and Faculty League’s traveling trophy?

Or if you are looking for a place to take a break from the great outdoors, come and hang out at the Huskie Den. The den is open this summer from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and for special events that can be scheduled outside of our posted opening hours and on weekends. Please email Mike Newman, Huskie Den event coordinator, if you are interested in having a get-together with friends, family reunion, birthday party or department social hour.

For the summer we have lowered our prices to \$1.50 for all NIU staff, faculty and students (you must present a valid OneCard to receive this price), and \$2.50 for community members and guests per game with \$1.50 shoe rentals (children six years old and under are not charged for shoes). If you prefer to rent a lane, we charge \$10 per hour for up to six people on a lane (plus shoe rental).

In addition, we are running two full day specials: Dollar Tuesdays and Throwback Thursdays. For Dollar Tuesdays, all games and shoe rentals (for those above six years old, six and under are still free) are only \$1. How far has the Den thrown back? Even my folks were surprised with the price — only 50-cents per game and 50-cent shoe rentals. So low they don’t even have the cent symbol (¢) on the keyboard anymore. The best thing about these two specials is that they are for everyone who comes into the Den, staff, students, faculty, community members and guests.

We have a third special, but it is only for incoming Huskies on orientation days. After orientation’s “Hidden Gems” in the Den with free (and yummy) sorbet and ice cream, our incoming Huskies and their families can bowl for \$1 a game and \$1 shoe rentals (every Freshman Orientation Day except Thursdays, when all prices are 50 cents).

Just two notes: The HSC is locking all entrances at 5 p.m. **except** for the south entrance by the hotel desk (facing the library by Starbucks). Anyone without their OneCard, all community members and unenrolled students can enter there while the building is open (the HSC closes at 10 p.m.). Also, no one under 18 is allowed to be in the Den without someone over 18 accompanying them for the entire time they are in the Den (this is true all year long). Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis for anyone under 18 who is either on a K-12 bowling team, bowls in youth league(s), or is trying out for their school’s bowling team. The key criterion is that they are coming in to practice their game.

So please, come on down to the Den this summer. We have air conditioning (possibly the coldest place on campus according to my student workers), Starbucks just upstairs and down the hall, and the Grill also has limited opening hours over the summer.

We hope to see you soon.

Confessions of a Seasoned Huskie

Seasoned Huskie: Rebecca Rahe
Department: Registration and Records
Title: Office Administrator
Hire Date: April 16, 2011

For our second installment of Confessions of a Seasoned Huskie, we have with us Rebecca Rahe, an admission/record officer from Registration and Records. If you're in an academic unit, chances are you know Rebecca. You might know her even if you're not.

Let's get this party started, shall we?

Hey Rebecca, working in R and R, what's the biggest misconception people have about your current position at NIU?

That I have all the answers. I only know a little about a lot. I've been on campus since 2006 as a student, and even then I was working on gathering knowledge. It helped when I got my first job in my department in 2011. I kept building my knowledge base from there. I try to have the answers when I can and help to get the answers I don't have.

Well, speaking from experience, you do know a lot! Anyone scheduling classes can tell you that you are the calming voice during times of class-scheduling hysteries. Which reminds me, if you could add one thing to your office/position/department, what would it be and why?

Dog visits for the staff, PD, Mission, Therapy, does not matter. I think that sometimes we all get so bogged down in what is going on, it's good to stop and take a minute to enjoy something fun. What better way to do that than getting some love from a furry baby?

I could not agree more! Fur babies are stress relievers. We could all use some de-stressing, that's for sure. Life is tough enough. Speaking of life, if you could write a book about your life, what would be the title?

"A Bit Broken, but Still Good."

Aww, we are all a bit broken, I think. The good news is the broken areas are where the light gets in! Any further comments on this?

I think it's a little bit of everything. I'm not perfect, some things went down in my life, I try to bounce back. Sometimes it's unbelievable, but I can't make this stuff up. At the end of the day, I'm just trying to make my way through the world like everyone else.

Aren't we all! We all work at our jobs, careers, family and we even work on ourselves. Given all that, how did you end up working at NIU?

I was a student worker in 2006, I knew I wanted to stay and work on my graduate degree. I was on the list for office support, but then I got a notice to interview for Registration and Records. I jumped, the interview went great and then I went back to work at the Student Association. Next thing I knew I was getting ready to close out my time in SA and move on to the real world.

Life happens pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you'll miss it, that's for sure. Tell us — what is the most spontaneous thing you've ever done?

Tried to follow the NSYNC tour bus. It didn't work. We lost them.

Wow. Would you do it again?

Of course!

Since we are in-depth about living life, what is at the top of your bucket list?

Going to Bora Bora. That won't happen and I know it. I'm content with just being on the beach in Clearwater.

Is that where you go on vacation, Clearwater Beach, Florida?

Yes.

And what do you do there?

Sit on the beach and find shells and drink! Going to Frenchy's, then chilling on the beach some more and having Mermaid Water till the sun goes down.

OK — Let's do a lightning round.

If you had a warning label, what would it say? *Danger ahead!*

Chocolate or vanilla? *Chocolate.*

Which sport would be funniest with mandatory alcohol? *UFC.*

Ever sung karaoke? *No way!*

Which zoo animal do you relate to? *Sloth, I'm slow.*

No karaoke? Well, let's get you some Mermaid Water and see what happens.

Any last words, maybe on tips or tricks that helped you make it at NIU for so long?

Think about the bigger picture. What can you contribute that will improve things later. It does not have to be huge; it can be something that will make your job easier in some way. I can continue to improve on queries that I use to help identify issues. It's the little things that can matter the most.

Thank you, Rebecca. I couldn't have said it better myself.

For those of you reading along, if you want to be the next rookie or seasoned Huskie, email RMeyer@niu.edu We are always looking for interesting people.

NIU's Operating Staff Council Teams Group Open to All

We have created an [OSC group in Teams](#) open to everyone at NIU. You can ask questions, access upcoming agendas and previous meeting minutes, as well as calendar appointments for council meetings. Please provide feedback to help us make this group as effective as possible.

Feedback and Concerns Anonymous Suggestion Box

Do you have feedback or concerns but are worried about being identified? Please send us your input through our anonymous [virtual suggestion box](#). It's open to operating staff, SPS, students, administration and faculty.

Donate to the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship

Our [Dependent Scholarship](#) provides financial assistance to NIU students who are the children of NIU operating staff (civil service) employees.

This scholarship is made possible by the fundraising activities of civil service employees. Last year, OSC gave three students scholarships when we used to give four. Due to numerous factors and the pandemic, donations have decreased.

We need your help.

You can [donate several ways](#): By filling out and mailing a check and the donation form; by using a payroll deduction; or by calling 1-877-488-2648 or 815-753-1652.

How can your student apply to receive a scholarship?

Visit our [OSC Dependent Scholarship Awards](#) webpage for more information.

Employment Changes

May 2023

Welcome New Employees

- Nathan Aurand, Painter – Physical Plant
- Karen Baker, Business/Administrative Associate – Procurement Services and Contract Management
- Kendall Brenneman, Program Assistant – Orientation and Family Connections
- Bindu Chowdarapu, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
- Jason Cregier, Media Writer/Producer/Announcer II – Northern Public Radio
- Charles Cronauer, Carpenter – Physical Plant
- Heather Gerken, Office Administrator – Kinesiology and Physical Education
- Adan Gonzalez, Police Officer – Public Safety
- Jessica Guo, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
- Kasturi Hyderkhan, Financial Analyst/Planner Specialist – Budget Office
- Brian Jones, Inventory Specialist – Materials Management
- Srinivas Katakam, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
- Spencer Mendel, Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service
- Azarias Murillo, Painter – Physical Plant
- Cassia Perry, Program Advisor – Precollegiate Programs – Upward Bound
- Justin Richardi – Carpenter – Physical Plant
- Stephanie Robinson, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety
- Nicholas Stauber, IT Support Associate – College of Health and Human Sciences
- Jordynn Stohr, Accounting Specialist – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
- Brittny Tewksbury, Accounting Officer – Building Services
- Mark Toms, Parking Services Agent I – Campus Parking
- Martha Villagomez, Senior Library Specialist – Libraries
- Molly Walker, Office Manager – School of Art and Design
- Jabari Worsham, Facilities Operations Specialist – University Recreation and Wellness

Retirements

- Kathy Hodgkinson, Office Manager – Student Conduct

Separations

- Jonathan Anderson, Route Driver – Materials Management
- Kaitlyn Butler, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Allison Durante, Office Support Associate – Illinois Board of Examiners
- Weston Eaton, Sports Facilities Manager – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Walter Faber, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service
- Jonathan Handschuh, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Christy Houle, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Jennifer Howard, Program Coordinator – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Danell Jackowski, Accounting Associate – Controller
- Christina Jeralds, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Service
- Frank Judd, Locksmith – Physical Plant
- Brendan Kerschke, Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service
- Dillon Lynch, Police Officer – Public Safety
- Christia Provido, Child Development Supervisor – Child Development and Family Center
- Joseph Przybyla, Police Lieutenant – Public Safety
- Diane Swanson, Administrative Aide – University Honors Program
- Marianne Walker, Office Support Specialist – Kinesiology and Physical Education
- Jason Wilkinson, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service

Deaths:

- Julia Kaelin, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- William Leightly, Program Assistant – Health and Human Sciences Survey Research Lab

June 2023

Welcome New Employees

- Tierra Biggus, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Anne Cheney, Program Assistant – Human Resource Services
- Kristine Collin, Program Advisor – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office
- Wyatt Doubler, Building service Worker – Building Services
- Bharath Erukulla, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
- Ashley Ford, Office Support Specialist – Sociology
- Elizabeth Garcia Ramirez, Program Advisor – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office
- Taylor Geiseman, Grounds Worker – Grounds
- Kelly Gustafson, Accounting Officer – Accounts Payable and Travel
- Jensen Heldt, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
- Julia Hoelzer, Program Advisor – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
- Nichole Jackson, Office Administrator – Management
- Freyal Khan, Program Advisor – Academic Advising Center
- Parker Meadows, Financial Aid Representative – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office
- Tedra Mewhirter, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Bao Nguyen, Program Coordinator – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Sarah Petkunas, Accounting Officer – Accounts Payable and Travel
- Nicole Ruiz, Admissions/Records Representative – Registration and Records
- Krista Schaade, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Richard Smith, Graphic Designer – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Justin Stern, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Jeremy Stewart, Carpenter – Physical Plant
- Shelby Tomassini, Office Support Specialist – Communication
- Corbin Tyson, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Lindsay Vreeland, Program Coordinator – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Jayci Wagoner, Customer Service Assistant – Bursar
- Joseph Woolford, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

Retirements

- Cathy Hammett, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service
- April Kaiser, Child Development Supervisor – Child Development and Family Center
- Marianne Spring, Administrative Assistant – Office of Institutional Communication

Separations

- Tierra Biggus, Program Advisor – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Jason Bolles, Housing Officer – Housing and Residential Services
- Catina Caldwell-Mead, Business/Administrative Associate – Housing and Residential Services
- Matthew Downing, Grounds Worker – Grounds
- Justin Horner, Grounds Worker – Grounds
- Evan Klepec, Program Coordinator – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Angel Oplt, Human Resource Officer – Human Resource Services
- Nikkolas Shammas, Athletic Communications Specialist – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Laurie Slater, Office Support Specialist – Music

- Andrew Sotomayor, Police Officer – Public Safety
- Haniyyah Woods, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Service Awards

May 2023

5 Years

- Ewa Czaplinska – Building Services
- Mangaiah Garikapati – DoIT-Admin-Business-Finance
- Latrice Hudson – Operation Services
- Sarah Kimball – Controller
- Kimberly Wedoff – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders

10 Years

- Patrick Hickey II – Physical Plant
- Carlarta Ratchford – Illinois Board of Examiners

20 Years

- Jacque Brown – Campus Dining Service
- Cynthia Lund – Electrical Engineering
- Menelek Shaw – Public Safety

25 Years

- Tatita Kaus – College of Law
- Jay Monteiro – Procurement Services and Contract Management

30 Years

- Cathy Cradduck – President’s Office
- George Raetzke – Infrastructure Services

June 2023

5 Years

- Oliver Comacho – CHANCE Program
- Paul Knigge – Building Services
- Jeffrey Rexroat – Infrastructure Services
- Lisa Scott – Building Services
- Geoffrey Walls – Building Services
- India Washington – CHANCE Program
- Mary Ann Werman – Financial Aid and Scholarships

10 Years

- Matthew Gonzalez – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Mandy Kreitzer – College of Health and Human Sciences

15 Years

- Karen Eaton – Transportation
- Elfrida Gabriel – English
- Beatrice Kooken – Mechanical Engineering
- Lisa Williams – Integrated Media Technologies

20 Years

- Denise Hake – Residential Dining Service
- Shawna Kahn – Building Services

- Frederick Schwantes – Application Services
- Joseph Thomas - Libraries

25 Years

- Colleen Lynch-Barker – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

30 Years

- Steven Miklasz – Procurement Services and Contract Management

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