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**A huge thanks to our former editor, Rave Meyer,** for all her wonderful contributions over the years. If you have any suggestions for future articles, please send an email to [tjipson1@niu.edu](mailto:tjipson1@niu.edu).

**OSC Meetings and Minutes** can be found on our [OSC website](#).

## President’s Corner



Greetings Operating Staff,

’Tis the season to be grateful! Can you believe it is already November? As the holidays are fast approaching for some of us, this means we may spend more time cooking, cleaning and shopping. And all of this could come with a bit of added stress. We have some great benefits at NIU, and I encourage you, if you have vacation time, to plan to take some

time off. Taking some time off helps reduce burnout, provides a better work/life balance, increases productivity and can provide a more positive work environment. I hope you can spend the upcoming holidays with the folks who matter most to you.

The results are in from our 2023-2024 OSC priorities list survey. Many of the votes indicated that civil service workers were concerned with internal equity/wage compression, enrollment, recruitment and retention, and job classification/desk audits. The Operating Staff Council completely understands that the top three items all have a connection to wages and budget, and we will come up with some additional methods to get a better understanding of these items that matter most to you. We will also be in conversation with senior leadership to determine how we can provide more clarity and understanding on these topics as we continue to look for ways to retain our students and employees.

I encourage you to attend our hybrid OSC meetings that are open to the public. Meetings are held at 9 a.m. the first Thursday of each month via Teams and in Altgeld Hall, Room 203. You can find the link at [niu.edu/osc](http://niu.edu/osc) on our homepage under Upcoming Meetings.

Stronger together,

**Natasha Johnson**  
 President, OSC 2023-2025  
[Njohnson11@niu.edu](mailto:Njohnson11@niu.edu)

## A Time of Giving

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Please consider donating to our Civil Service Emergency Fund which was created to assist employees in times of economic crisis. There are three ways to donate:

- You may donate online by visiting the [NIU Foundation website](#) and selecting the Civil Service Emergency Fund in the “available designations” dropdown.
- You can mail a check made out to the “Northern Illinois University Foundation” to:  
Northern Illinois University Foundation  
Altgeld Hall 138  
DeKalb, IL 60115-2882  
Please write, “Civil Service Emergency Fund” on the memo line.
- You can set up a payroll deduction using the [Payroll Deduction Authorization form](#) and designating a portion to go to the Civil Service Emergency Fund. The form can be returned to the NIU Foundation located in Altgeld Hall 138. Contact [cs-fund@niu.edu](mailto:cs-fund@niu.edu) with any questions.

## Confessions of a Seasoned Huskie

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**Employee Seasoned Huskie:** Connie Weaver  
**Department:** College of Business Dean's Office  
**Title:** Office Manager  
**Hire Date:** June 1968

Today we are honored with a true seasoned Huskie with over 50 years of experience working at NIU. It's exciting to meet our fellow Huskies, especially when they have so much experience to share with us. Let's get started. Connie Weaver currently works as an office manager in the College of Business Dean's Office.

How did your working path cross with NIU?

*As a senior in high school, I participated in the work study secretarial program and was assigned to the personnel office (now human resources) at NIU. I worked afternoons doing clerical duties in various offices on campus. After high school graduation, I attended NIU and was a student worker in a division of the Graduate School. A year later, when a vacancy opened, I applied for the secretarial position and was hired. And that's the story of my life.*

So, you basically grew up here. You must've felt right at home. I can totally relate. What has kept you here at NIU?

*I've worked in only two offices on campus, the first being in the Graduate School area and then [I] took a promotion and moved to the College of Business Dean's Office. Love the team I work with here. I currently have six co-workers who respect one another. We truly are a work family. My current “boss” treats each employee with respect and as an equal.*

That is definitely a great reason to stick around. Out of all your experiences, describe the one thing you will never do again?

*Ride on Space Mountain at Disney World. I think that helped to cure me from most rides at amusement parks.*

I can totally relate! My daughters “forced” me to go on most of the roller coasters at Great America last year. I'm good now. LOL! What about any other trips? Have you had the opportunity to visit other countries?

*I was fortunate to visit Rome, Paris and Venice for just a short couple of days each back in 2019. A friend and I caught all the high touristy sites.*

That sounds super exciting, even for a short trip. What would you do if you won a million dollars? Would you spend it all on traveling?

*I would take care of my family's major expenses related to home ownership, college expenses, and make donations to church and other special health organizations.*

How very sweet! I'm sure they would greatly appreciate your help. Now that the holidays are coming up, describe your favorite family tradition.

*Enjoying Thanksgiving with family and digesting the feast by looking at Black Friday ads.*

Ah, the Black Friday ads. That's definitely the new tradition. Do you have any final wise words of advice that you've ever received or would like to share?

*Take a deep breath and tackle one challenge at a time (when possible). Put your best effort into your work, always be helpful to others and respect the phrase that ultimately is at the end of everyone's job description — "other duties as necessary."*

Well, there you have it. Thanks, Connie, for opening up and sharing your experiences with us. We truly appreciate our seasoned Huskies as there are many (as evidenced by our service awards section).

If you would like to volunteer to be featured as our next seasoned Huskie or rookie, please send an email to me at [tgipson1@niu.edu](mailto:tgipson1@niu.edu).

## Scholarship Opportunities

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The annual MyScholarships application opens Nov. 15, 2023. This single general application is used for multiple 2024-2025 NIU-offered scholarships. A common deadline for these scholarships is Jan. 31, 2024. Although some scholarships may have later deadlines, we recommend that students complete the MyScholarships general application prior to Jan. 31 to be considered for most NIU-offered scholarships. Please encourage students to visit the [MyScholarships](#) page for more information on this campuswide scholarship application opportunity.

In MyScholarships, students can apply for multiple competitive scholarships, usually with a single application. MyScholarships makes applying for the [Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship](#) easy. This is a scholarship opportunity for 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. Eligible students should complete and submit the general application, search for "Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship," and then answer one additional question to be considered for this award for the 2024-2025 academic year. For more information, visit the [Operating Staff Council Dependent Scholarship](#) page.

While the majority of NIU's scholarships can be found in MyScholarships, you can encourage students to also check with their academic department to see if there are other opportunities not available on this system. Students can also visit the [Outside/Private Scholarships](#) page to find additional scholarship opportunities and resources. Keep in mind that winter break is a great time to apply for many scholarships.

Please be aware that the 2024-2025 FAFSA and Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid will be available in December 2023. This later timeline is only for the 2024-2025 applications to accommodate changes intended to simplify the financial aid application process. Encourage students to check their NIU student email for updates on availability. Once the financial aid application is available, students should complete their application as soon as possible to be considered for the maximum financial assistance for the next academic year.

For additional assistance with the MyScholarships application system, students can contact the [Scholarship Office](#) via email at [scholarships@niu.edu](mailto:scholarships@niu.edu).

If students have questions about how to maximize their financial resources or how to create a financial plan for the upcoming academic year, encourage them to schedule a virtual, phone or in-person appointment with the [Student Financial Advising Services](#) team or email [financial-advising@niu.edu](mailto:financial-advising@niu.edu).

## New NIU Employee Advisory Committee Member

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Congratulations to Chris Doe (Administration and Finance) for becoming NIU's [Employee Advisory Committee member of the State University Civil Service System](#) effective Jan. 1, 2024. Members of the committee are elected by civil service employees at each of the universities and agencies served. Committee members represent their constituents by functioning in an advisory capacity to the merit board on "all matters pertaining to the university system." To be eligible for nomination and election to membership, a civil service employee must be a certified status employee at Northern Illinois University. Employees must have at least three years of consecutive civil service employment at NIU or at any other Illinois institution served by the State Universities Civil Service System.

## Parking Over the Holidays

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**Dec. 22, 2023 through Jan. 1, 2024:** Parking regulations that will be enforced during the holiday closure period include the following: reserved parking, no parking zones (including fire lanes) and handicapped spaces.

- **Note:** The visitor's lot will be open at no charge from Dec. 22, 2023 through Jan. 1, 2024. Payment will be required again on Jan. 2, 2024.

If you have any questions about parking during the holiday closure, please contact Campus Parking at 815-753-1045 or [parking@niu.edu](mailto:parking@niu.edu).

## Register for TIAA's Live Supplemental Retirement Planning Webinars

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[Learn how you can act for a more secure future](#). Reserve your spot now or visit [TIAA.org/webinars](https://TIAA.org/webinars) at any time to register. These webinars are part of your retirement plan benefits.

## Employee Well-being Training Schedule

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Employee Well-being Training Opportunities are available for the rest of this semester. For more information, please visit [go.niu.edu/eap-training](https://go.niu.edu/eap-training).

## Where's the Party?

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The annual President's Holiday Gathering will be held 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 30 in the Altgeld Hall Auditorium. Employees are granted release time to participate. Beverages and desserts will be provided. A photo station will be available to take holiday photos with colleagues and Mission III will make an appearance. You can also purchase our [2023 Pride with Purpose shirt](#), which would make a great holiday gift. Donations will also be accepted for the Huskie Food Pantry. You can view a full list of items needed by the pantry on the [Huskie Food Pantry website](#).

# Employment Changes

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## September 2023

### Welcome New Employees:

- Allison Amberg, Admissions/Records Representative – Registration and Records
- Chanel Bandele, Admissions/Records Representative – Registration and Records
- Sarah Brazeau, Office Support Specialist – Music
- James Dertinger, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Kurtis Donald, Pipefitter – Physical Plant
- Matthew Etchison, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Ian Gawron, Program Coordinator – Vice Provost
- Megan Gerken, Program Coordinator – College of Education
- Elena Giglio – Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Lia Gillet – Editorial Writer – Alumni Services
- Nathaniel Hansen – Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service
- Amanda Imthurn – Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
- Alazae Jaros – Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
- Kenneth Jerger – Program Coordinator – Integrated Media Technologies
- Una Lawrence, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Matthew McCanna-Molina, Cinematographer/Creative Video – Alumni Services
- Zachary Nichols, Sports Equipment Supervisor – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Demetra Pappas – Graphic Designer Associate – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Vanessa Poling, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration
- Jill Secor, Human Resource Officer – Human Resource Services
- Aljuwan Smith, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Ashlyn Straka, Program Coordinator – University Honors Program
- Gregory Thompson, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service
- Emilie Vanhaelst, Office Manager – Engineering Technology
- Brian Williamsen, Marketing Associate – Executive Vice President and Provost
- Dieter Zeschke, Building Service Worker – Building Services

### Retirements:

- Jeffrey Askins, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Stanley Erlien, IT Support Associate – Report Cards
- Richard Twombly, Electrician Foreman – Physical Plant

### Separations:

- Kailey Bednarek, Office Support Specialist – School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions
- Edward Bowie, Police Officer – Public Safety
- Bindu Chowdarapu, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
- Carolyn Clarke, Housing Administrator – Housing and Residential Services
- Krystal Collins, Program Adviser – College of Health and Human Sciences
- Bharath Erukulla, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
- Matthew Etchison, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Lucille Galpin, Office Manager – Giorgi Law Clinic
- Patrick Gerhardt, Senior Business Manager – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Elena Giglio, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Natalie Hall, Program Adviser – Student Athlete Academic Support Services
- Raymond Kimmons Jr., Distribution Clerk – Campus Dining Services
- Christopher Robinson, Program Coordinator – University Recreation and Wellness Center
- Roberta Schwarz, Office Support Associate – Public Safety
- Matthew Stark, Program Coordinator – Health Studies
- Matthew Varnadoe, Program Coordinator – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Sarah Varnadoe, Program Advisor – Academic Advising Center

## October 2023

### Welcome New Employees:

- Angelica Flores, Program/Student Advisor – College of Health and Human Sciences
- Anthony Gomez, Program Advisor – College of Health and Human Sciences
- Jaime Huston, Medical Insurance Associate – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Katherine Hutto, Program Assistant – Holmes Student Center
- Linnea Kangas, Athletic Communications Associate – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Lenore Kay, Office Administrator – Finance
- Joseph Lathrop, Grounds Worker – Grounds
- Edan Liu, Accounting Associate – Controller
- Xica McCalin, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Susan Nordstrom, Administrative Aide – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Christine O'Reilly, Office Manager – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
- Lisa Pitney, Administrative Assistant – Educator Licensure and Preparation
- Nicholas Rodeo, Storekeeper II – Residential Dining Service
- Raul Rodriguez, Internal Auditor – Internal Audit
- Michael Rosas, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Dylan Rubeck, Building Service Worker – Building Services
- Kevin Shepke, Publicity-Promotion Associate – Housing and Residential Services
- Bonnie Shlifka, Customer Service Assistant – Conferences Event Management
- Kane Yates, Building Service Worker – Building Services

### Separations:

- Christine Buckner, Program Services Specialist – Family and Consumer Sciences
- Matthew Gibson, Police Officer – Public Safety
- Jessica Guo, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
- Christine Hoyle, Office Support Specialist – Lorado Taft Operations
- James Huizenga, Public Information Associate – Holmes Student Center
- Kimberly Johnson, Program Assistant – Huskie Academic Support Center
- Alexander Kramer, Program Coordinator – Esports Network
- Lyndell Newman, Building Service Worker – Building Services

# Service Awards

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## September 2023

### 5 Years:

- Maria Arguello Cortes – Conferences Event Management
- Andrew Clayton – Residential Dining Service
- Lisa Dienst-Thomas – Human Resource Services
- Jennifer Dolman – Regional Technology Services
- Caela Hinckle – Disability Resource Center
- Brett McCullough – University Marketing
- John Schleifer – Development Operations

### 10 Years:

- Jamie Brown – College of Education
- Amanda DeSimon – University Marketing
- Bonifacio Garcia – Building Services
- Benjamin Manning – Physical Plant
- Heather Oronia – Building Services
- Kennet Putzstuck – Building Services
- Linda Rains – Building Services
- Ryan Sedevie – Intercollegiate Athletics
- Michael Strunk – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

### 15 Years:

- Guy Faber – Materials Management
- Kouame Sanan – Integrated Media Technologies

### 20 Years:

- Larry Ellington – Public Safety
- Patricia Wallace – Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety

### 25 Years:

- Cindy Kozumplik – Application Services

## October 2023

### 5 Years:

- Matthew Brej – Building Services
- Kevin Brown – Development Operations
- Billie Calahan – Northern Illinois Center for Non-Profit Excellence
- Rebecca Cammuca-Vowels – Materials Management
- Kristine Collin – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office
- Kelsey Crawford-Scott – Student Conduct
- Rachel Hunt – Residential Dining Service
- Kristy Johns – Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center
- Lisa Johnson – Building Services
- Kent Namon – English
- Alyson Rains – Building Services
- Vivian Seki – Disability Resource Center
- James Slagstad – Residential Dining Service
- Michael Sloat – Residential Dining Services
- Elson Smith – Application Services
- Patrick Smith – Facilities Management
- Carissa Valenti – Building Services

10 Years:

- Shawn McGinn – Physical Plant
- Lora Oberg – Risk Management
- Richard White – Physical Plant

15 Years:

- Norma Laino – School of Art and Design
- Julie Lorang – School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions
- Stephanie Richter – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

20 Years

- Kristin Bigelow – Sponsored Programs Administration
- Alan Smith Jr. – Public Safety

30 Years:

- Rodney Neace - Libraries

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