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# President's Message



(Imagine Kathy Reed's smiling face here!)

Your EIUAA chapter is off to a busy start for 2025! We are in the process of engaging a few new board members as three board members had to resign for various reasons. Dave Kidwell and Mona Davenport have accepted the remainder of the terms of two of these members. We know they will be great additions to our board and hope they will enjoy participating on the board and elect to stay for a full term. If you are interested in becoming a member of the board, please contact one of our current board members, listed on our website, <https://eiu.edu/annuitants/>. An additional way you can participate in EIUAA without committing to a board position is to join a committee. The committees are listed on our website, simply contact the chairperson for the committee you would like to join. We welcome new participants and new ideas!

You likely received an email within the past week outlining plans for the upcoming SUAA Annual Conference. Rather than the typical chapter leaders/delegates only conference as has been available in the past, the conference is now open to all SUAA members (which all members of EIUAA are) and will be similar to other conferences with a variety of sessions and interests. We hope several of you will choose to attend.

The change in leadership at SUAA has certainly made a difference. Engagement of all members and chapters is readily apparent as you've likely experienced with the increase in emails and updates from SUAA. This year the leaders of each chapter are having quarterly meetings with

the SUAA leaders. Besides being a listening session for the SUAA leadership, networking and sharing among the chapters is facilitated.

Thomas Martin, the Director of Strategic Partnerships for SUAA, will be our guest speaker at the July EIUAA Chapter meeting. It is scheduled for July 10th at the Neal Welcome Center, 8:30 a.m. We hope to see many of you there, providing an enthusiastic welcome for Thomas.

Our membership committee has been actively participating in events. EIUAA hosted an information table during the recent SURS On-campus event. We will participate in EIU's Giving Day, April 22nd, hosting an information table in the Doudna concourse. Employees/retirees stopping at our table will be able to receive information regarding the mission of EIUAA as well as register for a drawing. Future Spring plans include sharing information at the EIU retirement dinner in May.

Information and reminders of upcoming events are posted on our website and our Facebook group, Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association. We hope to see you at our event on May 2nd at Douglas-Hart Nature Center. It should be a great way to enjoy Spring!

Kathy Reed  
EIUAA President

## EIUAA Upcoming Special/Upcoming Events

### EIUAA Get-together at Douglas-Hart Nature Center May 2, 2025

**Save the Date!**  
**EIU Annuitants Association**  
**Get-together**  
**Friday May 2, 2025**  
**at Douglas-Hart Nature Center**  
**2204 Dewitt Ave. E, Mattoon**

830 am: Coffee/Social  
9 am: Educational Program  
930-10 am: Tour & Bird Watching



RSVP Gloria Leitschuh  
Text: 217-549-3206  
OR  
gleitschuh@eiu.edu

## EIUAA Fall Social – Save the date!!

The EIUAA Third Annual Fall Social will be held September 18, 2025 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Charleston Country Club. Come and meet old and new friends. Appetizers will be served and there will be a cash bar. Door prizes will be awarded and we will have the return of the putting contest for those who would like to participate.

Please RSVP by September 10 to Gloria Leitschuh. [gleitschuh@eiu.edu](mailto:gleitschuh@eiu.edu) or text 217-549-4206

Hope to see you there!!!

## October Chapter Meeting

The Chapter has a special Guest Speaker scheduled for the October 16th Chapter meeting. Katie Anselment, EIU Legislative Relations Director, will be our guest speaker at the October EIUAA Chapter meeting at the Neal Welcome Center, 8:30 a.m.

Watch the EIUAA website, email communications, and/or the EIUAA Facebook page. (information for joining the Facebook page is below!) for any additions or changes to these events!

## Academic Regalia Closet Initiative (ongoing)

In partnership with the EIU Foundation and the Office of the President, the EIU Annuitants Association is pleased to continue with the academic regalia closet initiative. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that any faculty or staff members wishing to walk in graduation ceremonies have access to regalia. Being part of a graduation ceremony is an important way to show support for EIU students on their special day. So, if you have a gently used academic cap-and-gown set stored away and not being used, please consider donating it to the new regalia closet. Donations will be accepted at the Neal Welcome Center, 860 West Lincoln Avenue, Charleston IL 61920 (217-581-3313). **If you wish to borrow your own regalia back in order to participate in the Commencement ceremonies, you certainly may do that!** Lastly, if you need a donation confirmation receipt, the EIU Foundation can provide one. Thank you for supporting this initiative.

## SUAA News

As a member of the Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association (EIUAA), you also become a member of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA). Watch your email for regular legislative updates and special events hosted by SUAA. The 2025 SUAA “Legislation Platform in Action” has recently been released. Watch your email for updates to these action items. **If you are NOT receiving emails from SUAA, please reach out to any of our Committee Members so that we can make sure we have your correct email address!** Some of this information can also be found by logging into [suaa.org](http://suaa.org). See the Legislative Committee report below for some of the specific issues SUAA is currently working on.

**“Like” us on Facebook** 

**Group name: Eastern Illinois University Annuitants Association**

The EIU Annuitants Association Facebook group is an additional way of keeping in touch with our members and sharing key association and university-related updates, news and events with everyone. All you need to do is find us on Facebook; you can readily access us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/961164987992076> **This is a private group, so please make sure to answer the two questions presented when you request to join!**

## FAREWELLS

*Following are brief notices only. To read a full obituary or leave condolences, visit [Legacy.com](http://Legacy.com)  
[www.jg-tc.com](http://www.jg-tc.com) [www.mitchell-jerdan.com](http://www.mitchell-jerdan.com) [www.adamsfuneralchapel.com](http://www.adamsfuneralchapel.com)*

**Pamela Schenke Hadwiger Atteberry**, (Admissions Counselor/Honors College), age 79, of Charleston, Ill., passed away March 31, 2025. She is survived by her loving husband, Keith.

**Mary Eleanor Durkin**, (Journalism), 76, Evanston, IL, passed away April 1, 2025. Mary is survived by her son Todd Toby Wohlrabe (Adrienne Huddlestun) of Charleston, Illinois.

**Dianna Lynn Ensign**, (Financial Aid), 73, of Charleston, Illinois, died November 27, 2024. Dian is survived by her husband, Dan, daughter Kim (Todd Yurs), son Jake Ensign and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Gerald Fuller**, (Math Dept), 94, of Mattoon, IL died October 22, 2024. He is survived by his wife of over 54 years, Dorothy; his son, Bret (Linda) Fuller of St. Peter, MN; and one granddaughter.

**Donald Ray Griffith**, (Grounds maintenance), 80, of [Greenup, IL](#) passed away November 29, 2024. Survivors include his wife, Norma; daughters Tina (Heith) Beam and Tracy Morgan; and 3 grandchildren.

**Gloria Huffman**, (Food Service), 87, Monroe, WI, died Friday, February 7, 2025. Gloria was born on February 27, 1937. She is survived by two sons, Tim (Nancy) Huffman of Hollandale, WI, Mark (Jill) Huffman of Bluffton, SC; four grandchildren, She is further survived by a sister, and several nieces and nephews.

**Walter Sylvester Lazenby, Jr.**, (English Dept), 94, Waynesboro, Virginia, died on December 13, 2024 Walter is survived by his partner Paul Oakley.

**David J. Maurer**, (History Dept.) 89, formerly of Charleston, Illinois, passed away on December 24, 2024. David is survived by two children, Elizabeth (Kenneth) Friedman of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and William Maurer of Columbus, Ohio, 6 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and his brother William J. Maurer of Florence, South Carolina.

**Jagdish "Jack" L. Nanda**, (Math Dept.), 92, Wilmette, IL died January 28, 2025. He is survived by his son, Ranjeev Nanda of Wilmette, IL, daughter Rettu Nanda (Eric) of Orange Beach, AL, granddaughters Macy Blyskal (Josh) and Leigh Nanda, and many nieces and nephews.

**Elmer Maurice "Jack" Pullen**, (Financial Aid), 81, Lexington, KY died Friday, March 21, 2025. Jack is survived by his wife of 56 years, Frances Payne Pullen; one son, Jahmal Pullen of Raleigh, North Carolina; one daughter, Janelle McNeal of Lexington, Kentucky; two grandsons; one sister. Diane Payne of Lexington, Kentucky; and other relatives.

**Mary Ann Cammin White**, (Education Dept), 88, Stillwater. FL died January 5, 2025. Mary Ann is survived by her loving children, Robin (Sergio) Darmon and Mark (Karen) White; her 4 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee is Chaired by John Willems. Andy McNitt, Jill Nilsen, and Rich Wandling are also members of the committee, and they bring a wealth of experience to our

mandate to follow legislative issues facing EIU retirees and employees. The Legislative Committee plans to invite Katie Anselment, EIU's Legislative Relations Director, to the October 16th meeting of the EIUAA.

The SUAA pays careful attention to the concerns affecting retirees and employees. The messages that the SUAA sends out serve as a reminder of the value of SUAA membership. Examples include SUAA support for Pritzker's "100% by 2048" pension funding plan, and SUAA advocating for fixes to address inadequacies in Tier 2 benefits in comparison to Tier 1 benefits. One small improvement is indicated by the SUAA's support for HB 2332. HB 2332 provides a Tier 2 member with at least 20 years of service in SURS as a police officer or fire fighter to receive their pension upon written application on or after having turned 55 instead of 60. The SUAA's Legislative Platform also advocates for exceeding the SAFE Harbor "Match", raising higher education funding more than the 2% increase that is currently proposed, increasing "Access to Choice" for SURS Retiree Healthcare, and a supporting a SURS "Retiree Appreciation Day" on June 13, 2025.

If you are interested in being part of the Legislative Committee of the EIUAA, please let me know at [jrwillems@eiu.edu](mailto:jrwillems@eiu.edu). The committee would be glad to have you join the team.

### **Scholarship Committee**

The Committee is pleased to report that it was able to award two \$1000 scholarships this year, thanks to our generous donors.

### **2025 Scholarship Winners**

#### **Elijah Kubicek**

Elijah is a junior majoring in English with a minor in Film Studies. He plans to graduate in May, 2026. His future plans include working as an editor. He is related to several EIU employees.

#### **Myah Wright**

Myah is a junior majoring in Accounting and Management. She plans to graduate in May, 2026. Her future plans include sitting for the CPA exam. She has obtained an internship at the company she hopes to continue with in the future.

Kathy Reed  
EIUAA Scholarship Committee

## Membership Committee

We have approximately **504** active members, 15 of whom are current employees. These figures have remained steady through the last several months.

On March 5, EIUAA was outside the SURS counseling sessions at the MLK Union. We spoke to every employee after their session with the counselors regarding the benefits of joining EIUAA/SUAA. We were well received and gave to each an updated EIUAA business card (now including a QR code to link directly to the SUAA website). We made a list of the 15 employees who were considering retirement soon. I recently contacted each of them individually via private email to determine if they have joined or plan to join SUAA (through our updated live SUAA link on our on-line membership form, or our paper form) and to determine if there might be anything else we can do for them.

Steve Lane  
Membership Committee Chair

## EIUAA OFFICERS

Kathy Reed	<a href="mailto:ksreed@eiu.edu">ksreed@eiu.edu</a>	President
TBD		President-Elect
Nora Pat Small		Past President
TBD		Secretary
Margaret Messer	<a href="mailto:grammarga7@gmail.com">grammarga7@gmail.com</a>	Treasurer

**Web Page:** <https://www.eiu.edu/annuitants>

## BOARD MEMBERS - 2025

Lisa Dallas, Mona Davenport, Dave Kidwell, Steve Lane, Gloria Leitschuh,  
Margaret Messer, Marita Metzke, Melanie Mills, Kathy Reed, Chuck  
Titus, John Willems

## COMMITTEES

**Communications:** Melanie Mills (Chair), Wendy Long

**Events:** Gloria Leitschuh (Chair), Kathy Reed, Freddie Hall

**Legislative:** John Willems (Chair), Rich Wandling, Andy McNitt, Jill Nilsen

**Membership:** Steve Lane (Chair), Judy Gorrell, Wendy Long, Marita Metzke

**Scholarship:** Kathy Reed (Chair), Melanie Mills, Margaret Messer

## CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
May 22, 2025	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
July 10, 2025	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
September 11, 2025	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
<b>September 18, 2025*</b>	<b>Special Event</b>	<b>3rd Annual Fall Social</b>
October 9, 2025	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
November 13, 2025	Board Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
<i>Note: Chapter meetings at the Neal Welcome Center begin with an 8:30 a.m. social time and come to order at 9 a.m. Watch your email or Facebook for any updates!</i>		
* Details for Special Events can be found either elsewhere in this Newsletter, on the EIUA website, email communications or on the EIUA Facebook Page!		