President’s Message

Greetings to TURFA’s 106 members. It has been a busy and exhilarating year. And it isn’t over yet! We have more exciting events and activities ahead in May and June. Jane Wolfson and her committee (Jim Paulsen, Alan Clardy, John Manlove, and Bob Hanson) have done a terrific job planning a variety of activities this year, including excursions, speakers and cultural events. The book club and the writing group have met regularly this year and are always looking for new TURFA members.

You won’t want to miss any of these upcoming events. Please mark your calendars for the following:

- **Bird Walk** - May 8, Dave Larkin and Peter Lev have scheduled a “Bird Walk.” Registration information will be forthcoming.
- **Flower Walk** - May 16, Jim Hull has scheduled a “Flower Walk.” Rain date for this event is May 23.
- **Technology Tune-Up** - on May 30 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Office of Technology Services will provide a Workshop for TURFA members. The workshop will include an overview of technology services for retired faculty, identifying security threats, and a visit to the Computer Science Interactive/Active Learning Center. In early May, a sign-up link will be sent to TURFA members.
- **Invitation to Hidden Waters** - TURFA members have been invited to tour Hidden Waters, the home of Chancellor Robert Caret and Dr. Elizabeth Zoltan on Monday June 3 from 2:30 to 5:00p.m. Dr. Zoltan will give a tour of the house and gardens and showcase some of the artifacts in the home.
- **Annual Retired Faculty Brunch** - The Retired Faculty Brunch will be held on June 28 from 9:30 to noon in the South Pavilion. The morning festivities will include a time to meet and greet colleagues (some newly retired), have brunch, and hear from President Kim Schatzel and Provost Melanie Perreault.

Members of the Executive Committee and TURFA have been significantly involved in the prescription drug plan controversy. In this issue of The Advocate, Tracy Miller, President-Elect of TURFA, gives a comprehensive look as to what has ensued over the past several years regarding the prescription drug plan. In addition, we are delighted to have continued our association with Osher. This year we partnered with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University on several events and Osher has continued to give TURFA members a 50 percent tuition discount. Session II for Osher classes begins April 8. Call Shelby Jones at 410-704-3688 to learn which courses are still available.

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure for me to serve as President of TURFA and I am grateful to have had this opportunity. I must admit that I accepted the Presidency of TURFA with some trepidation, especially since I would be following three TURFA Presidents who were impeccable leaders: Don Forester, Annette Chappell and Martha Siegel. The Executive Committee has made my job easy. I could not have done it without the support, encouragement and continual assistance of the Executive Committee, TURFA members, the Office of the Provost and most especially Dominique Ramey. I thank you for all of your help. I am so pleased that TURFA is a recognizable entity at Towson University.
TURFA’s Fall Meeting: Insights on White House Communications and Transitions (With Refreshments)

Florence Newman

On October 10, 2018, TURFA held its Fall Meeting at the Auburn House Pavilion. The guest speaker was Martha Kumar, Professor Emerita of Political Science and author, most recently, of Before the Oath: How George W. Bush and Barack Obama Managed a Transfer of Power. The audience for Kumar’s remarks, consisting of both TURFA members and non-members, was welcomed by Fran Bond, who invited those eligible for membership to visit the TURFA web site to learn more about our benefits. TU President Kim Schatzel followed, with a summary of ongoing campus construction and renovations.

TURFA Past President Martha Siegel introduced Prof. Kumar, who began by observing that she had been dubbed “the Jane Goodall of the White House Press Corps” for her first-hand study of the behavior and social organization of White House officials. Kumar credited Towson University for setting the course of the rest of her life: “I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing today if I hadn’t come to Towson.” She explained that upon joining TU’s faculty she was recruited to co-author a book on President Ford’s press secretary, a project that was later broadened to include White House communications more generally. She succeeded in embedding herself among the White House press corps, she said, by “being helpful” and “not getting in anybody’s way.” In fact, rather than occupying a chair during press briefings, she would sit on a step ladder to one side of the room so that she didn’t displace a news reporter. Whereas previous scholars of the presidency relied primarily on presidential libraries, Prof. Kumar made use of interviews and direct observation to find out how things work in the White House, not taking a position on right or wrong. Kumar’s discretion and constant presence have paid off by giving her a front-row perspective on White House communications and press corps reporting over the course of seven presidencies. While certain things have remained consistent over that period—for instance, the job of reporting who/what/when/where—Kumar emphasized the changes, particularly under President Trump, such as the fact that reporters have to cover multiple stories in a day and that the day starts not with the president’s official meetings in the West Wing, but with the president’s tweets from the East Wing in the early morning hours.

The White House Transition Project, of which Dr. Kumar is the director, began in 1997 when two dozen scholars compiled information from interviews of presidential assistants and from their briefing materials to create a guide for the new presidential team. The volume White House World: Transitions, Organizations, and Office Operations, edited by Kumar and Terry O. Sullivan and published in 2003, reflects that effort and has been described as “a veritable how-to manual . . . on the dynamics of White House operations.” The Bush to Obama transition was a “great transition,” according to Prof. Kumar, because things such as security clearances were in place well ahead of time and because lots of people were committed to making sure the transition was seamless and safe.
That one of the best presidential transitions was followed by one of the worst occurred in part, she said, because the incoming administration wanted to change government rather than to learn how it operated and because so many governmental positions were left vacant or had a rapid rate of turnover. The current administration has too few employees to keep track of the reams of information produced daily by the White House; fortunately for future historians, Kumar keeps records that the Trump White House is not keeping. Kumar’s experience and that of the White House Transition Project as a whole has led to her working with foreign governments and their transitions, such as Brazil’s in 2001 and Nigeria’s in 2012. At the time of her talk, Dr. Kumar was planning for a November conference on “Effective Democratic Transfers of Executive Power,” convening representatives from 22 countries and co-sponsored by the WHTP.

Following her address, TURFA members attended a private reception for Prof. Kumar in the historic Auburn House, where they socialized with her and with each other, enjoying delicious catered hors d’oeuvres as well as the abundant food for thought she had provided.

She was far from idle outside of the academy in the interim, however. In the early ‘70s, she became involved in the Baltimore Women’s Liberation Movement and, among other work there, gave many talks as part of its “Speakers Bureau.” On Aug. 26, 1970, she addressed a crowd of 1,000 assembled in Charles Center for Women’s Strike Day, the 50th anniversary of the Suffrage Amendment, calling for an end to racism and an end to the war in Vietnam. Wait, there’s more! “One of the most significant experiences of my life,” says Dr. Pilardi, “was the three years—’70, ’71, ’72—that I worked as part of a collective that published a
journal out of Baltimore, *Women: A Journal of Liberation*, established to publish in-depth articles advancing the cause and ideas of women’s liberation. During that same period, she developed and taught one of the first Philosophy courses in the nation focusing on women, “The Idea of Woman in Philosophy,” and she served from the start on the Women’s Studies Committee that Elaine Hedges and Sara Coulter of the English Department formed to develop a women’s studies program (which became official in 1973). In the late ‘70s, she gave academic papers on the teaching of women’s studies and on the founding political documents of socialist-feminist organizations around the country. She also lobbied for benefits for adjunct faculty as a member of the AAUP Subcommittee on Part-Time Faculty. Prof. Pilardi served as chair of Women’s Studies for nine years, beginning in 1995; under her tenure, the program officially became a department, hired its first full-time faculty members, and began offering an applied Master’s degree. Oh, and in 1999 she published *Simone de Beauvoir Writing the Self: Philosophy Becomes Autobiography*, the culmination of Pilardi’s long-standing scholarly interest in the French feminist philosopher and her groundbreaking work, *The Second Sex*.

Today, Towson’s Women’s Studies Department has 34 undergraduate majors. The growth of interdisciplinary studies in general was one of the changes that Dr. Pilardi observed over the course of her 38 years at Towson. “The College of Liberal Arts has had a lot of important interdisciplinary studies programs, including Cultural Studies and International Studies, as well as Women’s Studies,” Pilardi comments. Many subjects cannot be adequately studied through the lens of a single discipline, she points out: “To truly understand women historically and culturally, you need to look at politics, health, education, art,” and beyond. Another, less positive, change that has taken place recently at Towson University and elsewhere, according to Dr. Pilardi, is “a narrower and more pragmatic approach” to what used to be a liberal (i.e., broad and idea-oriented) education. The emphasis falls on “educating students to step right into careers,” which is ultimately misguided, Pilardi says, since studies have shown that “an education in the humanities is actually excellent, possibly the best, preparation for many careers,” even in fields like finance, management, and technological innovation. We have an even greater need for skills such as critical thinking and communication, Pilardi argues, as the world becomes more digitized.

Dr. Pilardi took a two-year hiatus from teaching after she retired from Towson in 2007, but then began offering Osher courses, where she re-discovered how much she enjoyed teaching, without the pressure of grading and, especially, with students self-selected for interest in the subject and for cultivating a life of the mind. She has taught six Osher courses at TU, and two at Hopkins Osher. She also started taking jazz piano lessons, which, she says, opened up a “parallel universe,” where expression takes place not through words (as in the universe she primarily inhabited) but through improvisational music. Retirement freed up time for going to the theater, concerts, and films—indulgences that, as a person who is hyper-conscientious in fulfilling professional responsibilities (“Thank you, nuns,” she quips about her Catholic schooling), she allowed herself infrequently when she worked full time. She travels to New York City, to Montreal, and elsewhere to visit her family.

Pilardi has not given up her activism, however. She belongs to a “left-wing” study group, “Talkfest,” that meets once a month to discuss articles on current political topics. She also organized TURFA’s nonfiction reading group, because she believes that people today seem to have a hunger for fact- and argument-based media, such as
histories and documentaries. Pilardi’s own piece “The Immigration Problem is About Us, Not Them,” which originally appeared in the June 7, 2006, Baltimore Sun, has been reprinted in three editions of the Norton Critical Reader and is used in high school courses as a model for rhetorical analysis.

When asked why she chose to “retire” (relatively speaking) when she did, Dr. Pilardi says that she realized that she wouldn’t remain in good physical health forever and that she wanted to do other things with her life while she still could. She had this realization, she admits, while trekking from a distant parking lot to Linthicum Hall one morning when the new Liberal Arts building was under construction: “How much more of my knee cartilage am I going to give to TU? I need to keep some for myself!” Pilardi has certainly made the most of her cartilage—and her brain and her heart—throughout her life, pre- and post-retirement.

The 2018 AROHE Conference

Don C. Forester, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus

When the Towson University Retired Faculty Association (TURFA) was officially chartered in 2015, it was placed under the auspices of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. One of the first things that the Provost did was to purchase a membership for the organization in The Association of Retired Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE). AROHE supports campus-based retiree organizations, which in turn support the intellectual, social and physical well-being of retired faculty and staff as they continue to make valuable contributions to their academic communities and to society at large.

AROHE meets at a member university in alternate years and the 2018 iteration (the Ninth Biennial AROHE Conference) was held October 7-9 on the campus of Emory University in Atlanta, GA. The focus of the conference was “Re-Creating Retirement: Connect, Serve, Celebrate!” There were two keynote speakers: on Monday, Dr. Stephen Tipton, Professor Emeritus of the Sociology of Religion at Emory University, gave an address entitled “The Life to Come: Dreams and Doubts of Retirement; and on Tuesday morning Dr. Rodger Baldwin, Distinguished Chair Emeritus in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State, presented a review of his recent book entitled “Reinventing Academic Retirement: Where are we now?” Both addresses were well attended and stimulated insightful questions from the audience.

Each day, there were concurrent breakout sessions on various topics ranging from “Celebrating Successful Programs and Services” to “Starting, Sustaining and Growing Retirement Organizations” to “Integrating Faculty and Staff in Retirement Organizations.” In the latter category, UMBC presented the history and evolution of the Wisdom Institute—an integrative association of retired faculty and staff. The presenters, Diane Lee (Director of the Wisdom Institute) and Diana Smith (Program Management Specialist) have agreed to visit the TURFA Center in April to describe the evolution and unique structure of the Wisdom Institute, and to discuss topics of mutual interest to our two organizations.
This year, AROHE established an inaugural “Innovation Award” and the TURFA Oral History Project was one of nine nominees. Although we did not win, we were invited to present our project at the Resource Exchange Fair on Tuesday afternoon. During the Exchange Fair, I had the opportunity to discuss the project with a number of conference attendees, some of whom are considering instituting their own oral history projects in the near future.

What became evident to me from attending selected presentations during the AROHE Conference is that the size, structure, and level of institutional support for retirement organizations in higher education are remarkably variable and amazingly transitional (i.e., dependent on temporal changes in institutional focus and resources). As a consequence, it is incumbent upon each retirement organization to remain relevant to the mission of its institution. This is only possible through the continued support and involvement of the association’s membership.

**Programs and Events Report**

Jane Wolfson

TURFA has been busy with events throughout the fall and winter. In October, we were fortunate to be able to hear from Martha Kumar, a Political Science professor emerita and a scholar of the presidency and the media who covers the White House. She is also director of the White House Transition Project. She has spent two decades documenting the relationship between journalists and the presidency. Dr. Kumar shared with us anecdotes both informative and numerous from her times behind the scenes (or “from the basement,” as she put it).

In November, Jim Paulsen organized and led a very memorable and rewarding trip to the Goddard Space Center, a NASA space research laboratory. TURFA members and guests, about 15-20 in all, were led on a tour of the site by helpful and gracious personnel from the visitor center. We saw a demonstration of the live monitoring system of near planets as well as the buildings that housed the James Webb telescope, the telescope that will replace the current Hubble telescope, while it was undergoing part of its testing at Goddard.

---

**TURFA Election Nominations**

Nominations are now being accepted for positions on the Executive Committee of TURFA. The following positions are available: President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member-At-Large. The term of all but the President-Elect is two years (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021). The President-Elect serves one year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020), becomes President for one year (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), and serves as Past-President the following year. All terms begin on July 1. Elections will take place at the Retired Faculty Brunch on June 28.

The TURFA Nominations Committee members are Annette Chappell, James Dilisio, and Martha Siegel. Send all nominations to Martha Siegel, msiegel@towson.edu, by April 5.
We were given detailed explanations of the extensive testing procedures that have been and will continue to be implemented prior to launch of the new telescope. (The “astronaut” is Ray Castaldi, TURFA treasurer.)

On December 11, 2018, some TURFA members were invited by UMBC's Wisdom Institute to attend a pre-game reception and the TU/UMBC men's basketball game. The Wisdom Institute at UMBC is a group of retired faculty and staff. TURFA is reaching out to them to see in what ways we might work together.

The pre-game reception was attended by Wisdom Institute representatives as well as TURFA members Dion Forester, Tracy Miller, Ron Matlon, Robert Hanson and their guests. Also in attendance were Chancellor Robert Caret, UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski, and several other notables from the Board of Regents, state legislature and local politics. (By the way, Towson won the game!)

Towson theater provided two treats for TURFA in the past months. Through the initiative of John Manlove, TURFA members were privileged to participate in after-the-play discussions with play directors and members of the cast for two performances. In the fall we saw and discussed the “Lie of the Mind” and in the spring, ‘The Electric Baby.” About 35 members of the audience (John always invites other members of the audience to stay and enjoy the discussion too) participated in this extra treat.

In February, TURFA members and members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute were privileged to have Dr. Patricia Welch, recently retired Dean of Education at Morgan State University join us for a viewing of “Voices of Baltimore: Life under Segregation,” produced by Towson faculty members Gary Homana, Morna McDermott McNulty, and Franklin Campbell-Jones. Dr. Welch was a major contributor to the film, one of those sharing their stories through extensive interview. About 100 people saw this powerful film and participated in the discussion that followed.
Jim Paulsen also arranged for a tour of the recycling Center for Baltimore County on Beaver Dam Rd. that was both exciting and quite informative. We were equipped with ear phone radios, hard hats, and goggles. Our tour started in a classroom where we received some information about different types of waste and where everything goes after it leaves our homes. All of our many questions were answered thoroughly. We then went single file into a large building called the Material Resource Recovery Facility (which was the size of a field house). Here we saw a massive collection of multiple conveyer belts taking all manner of materials. The materials went along a journey past many employees who sorted plastic from metal from cardboard, etc. At the end, separate materials of aluminum, cardboard, steel and plastics were bound into bales to be shipped out and sold to make new products. The whole process was most impressive. Everyone really enjoyed our visit!

Students will have their own governing body, and the University Senate will be dissolved.

The Academic Senate Constitution and By-Laws can be found at https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/senate/proposed_constitution_for_the_academic_senate.pdf.

We note that Section B of the Constitution of the Academic Senate includes provision for a representative of TURFA to serve as a voting member:

6. A representative or alternate representative elected annually by members of TURFA (Towson University Retired Faculty Association) shall serve as a senator in a voting capacity.

7. The President of the TU-AAUP shall serve as a senator in an ex officio voting capacity.

8. Faculty senators, except for the President of the TU-AAUP and TURFA representative and alternate, shall be elected for three-year terms.

Students will have their own governing body, and the University Senate will be dissolved.

The Academic Senate Constitution and By-Laws can be found at https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/senate/proposed_constitution_for_the_academic_senate.pdf.

We note that Section B of the Constitution of the Academic Senate includes provision for a representative of TURFA to serve as a voting member:

6. A representative or alternate representative elected annually by members of TURFA (Towson University Retired Faculty Association) shall serve as a senator in a voting capacity.

7. The President of the TU-AAUP shall serve as a senator in an ex officio voting capacity.

8. Faculty senators, except for the President of the TU-AAUP and TURFA representative and alternate, shall be elected for three-year terms.

Members of TURFA will elect a Representative to the Senate and an Alternate, each with a one-year term [in this election, July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020]. The TURFA elections take place at the Annual Retired Faculty Brunch, scheduled for June 28th this year. The Nominations Committee welcomes suggestions for these Senate positions. Contact the chair of the committee, Martha Siegel, at mlsiegel@towson.edu by April 10. Meetings usually will be held on the first Monday of the month from 4-6 p.m., and the Senate also may convene during the summer to address specific issues as they arise.

In order to facilitate communication and to insure true representation, it is expected that the Senate Representative and the Alternate will report regularly to the TURFA Executive Committee. An addition to the TURFA By-Laws is required if either or both of these individuals are to serve as members of the TURFA Executive Committee. If proposed, that addition will also be on the ballot on June 28.

THE ACADEMIC SENATE: A NEW GOVERNANCE BODY WITH TURFA REPRESENTATION

Martha Siegel

In a move to strengthen faculty and student participation in shared governance, the University Senate submitted a Constitution and By-Laws for a new governance body, the Academic Senate, to replace the current faculty representation on the University Senate. By a recent vote of more than 2/3 of the faculty, the Constitution and By-Laws of the Academic Senate were approved. The new Academic Senate will begin meeting this coming fall.
Oral History Project Update

Don Forester

To date, oral histories featuring the careers of three retired faculty as well as a 15-minute compilation video have been completed and accessioned into the Towson University Archives where they may be viewed by the public (towson.edu/turfaoralhistories). During the Fall of 2018, the TURFA Oral History Committee submitted a grant to the University Foundation requesting funds to interview six retired Towson University faculty at a cost of $1500 each. Despite a good deal of positive feedback, our grant was unsuccessful.

In late January, representatives of the TURFA Oral History Committee met with CBE Dean, Shohreh Kaynama, who agreed to dedicate the time and resources of her college videographer, Jeremy Farkas, to film and edit an oral history of Professor Emeritus Ray Castaldi, during the spring semester of 2019. Dr. Castaldi joined the Towson State College faculty in 1970 and was a founding member of CBE. In addition, he served as the first chairperson of the Accounting Department. The photo (left) is from the Tower Echoes (1979).

The committee continues to seek funding from both intra-mural and extra-mural sources. In addition, we are exploring a possible collaboration with Dr. Michael Masatsugu of the TU History Department. Dr. Masatsugu is interested in offering an undergraduate course focused on the production of oral histories. Contributions to support the Oral History Project may be sent to the TU Foundation with the designation “for Oral History support.”

Our Prescription Plan Debacle

Tracy Miller (with Del. Brooke Lierman)

It’s complicated.

In 2011, the Federal and State legislatures were adapting to the effects of the Affordable Care Act and tried to develop a plan that made State-funded medical coverage for employees and retirees sustainable for the long term.

As part of a pension reform bill, the plan moved Medicare-eligible retirees onto Medicare Part D (prescription coverage), a change made possible because the Affordable Care Act closed a coverage “doughnut hole” that was threatening to impact those relying on Medicare. Since Maryland State retirees would be eligible for comprehensive drug coverage through the federal government, it was believed that there was no necessity for those who had Medicare to use State subsidies for prescription costs. Implementation of the plan was accelerated when the doughnut hole was closed earlier than anticipated. The change from State coverage to Medicare Part D for Maryland State retirees would take effect in Jan., 2019, with open enrollment in the fall of 2018.

While the General Assembly endorsed this plan, it was not well publicized, so that it came as a great surprise to some retirees last year when they were told about the need to enroll in Medicare Part D, with the possibility of increased premiums and co-pays for prescription coverage. In the case of TU employees or retirees, a meeting was held in August, 2018, to explain the new procedures; for many other retirees, it was a shock coming totally out of the blue.
Recognizing that employees needed more time to plan, Governor Hogan moved the effective date of the new plan from 2019 to 2020, later stipulating that it will go into effect July 1, 2021.

Concerned about the effect of the change on TURFA members, the TURFA Executive Committee performed a mock drill using 2019 Medicare D plans, trying to determine what plan each would choose if it became necessary. Each person was asked to consider the alternatives that covered their current prescription drug needs. Results, as reported back to the Executive Committee, showed that all choices cost the retiree more than what he/she currently spends on our State-subsidized prescription plan and some plans required almost $4000 more annually.

During the current legislative session, legislators put forward a bill, SB 193, that would have essentially returned retirees to their original prescription coverage through the State. The cost, however, was considered prohibitive. According to Michael Rubenstein, Legislative Analyst who prepared the fiscal note, restoring full State benefits would cost the State more than $8 billion over 30 years ($187 million in the first year, and increasing amounts each year thereafter due to rising drug costs and increasing retiree participation): “The challenge is maintaining the coverage over time as it gets more expensive. The cost of prescription drugs is growing much faster than State revenues, plus we have the Baby Boomers retiring and joining the plan. Over time, the cost of maintaining the coverage will begin to squeeze out other State priorities, including public education, public safety, and State employee compensation.”

TURFA President Fran Bond, Past-President Martha Siegel, and I prepared testimony on HB 193, which I delivered by hand to Senate and Delegate committee offices. In this testimony (click the link at the end of this article to see the testimony document), we reminded the legislators that we have worked for many years, in part because of the salutary health benefits.

I will let Del. Lierman of Baltimore City bring you up to date on what has transpired since: “On March 26, the House passed [a different bill] SB 946/HB1120 . . . which establishes three programs to limit out-of-pocket prescription drug costs for State retirees who began State service before July 1, 2011 (the date the benefit sustainability reform legislation took effect). It also requires personal customer service for retirees and ongoing reporting by DBM to ensure transparency and to ensure that retirees’ needs are being met. The key provisions of SB 946 are below:

As under the 2011 law, Medicare eligible retirees must move to a Medicare Part D Plan. However, now the State will limit their out-of-pocket costs in a manner that is similar to current practice. The limit on out-of-pocket costs will depend when the employee retires, but the program for those who need life-sustaining drugs that are unaffordable in Medicare will be available to everyone at any time (i.e. you do not need to wait until open enrollment to enter it.

NEW PROGRAMS:

1. The first program is for Medicare eligible retirees who retire by May 31, 2019. This program will reimburse participants for any out-of-pocket prescription drug costs that exceed the costs in the State prescription plan, which currently are $1,500 for an individual and $2,000 for a family.

2. The second program is for Medicare eligible retirees who began State service before July 1, 2011 and retire on or after June 1, 2019. This program will reimburse participants for out-of-pocket prescription drug costs after the participant enters catastrophic coverage under the Medicare Part D plan, which is approximately $2,500 in prescription drug costs.

3. The third program is for Medicare eligible retirees who are enrolled in Program 1 or 2 and need certain life-sustaining prescription drugs. This program will reimburse participants for out-of-pocket prescription drug costs for a life-sustaining prescription drug that is not covered by Medicare Part D, but is covered by the State prescription plan.
One-on-one customer service will be available to help each and every retiree access the plan that is right for them. DBM will explore giving debit cards to retirees to help pay for drugs over the limit. In addition, the Joint Committee on Pensions is requiring DBM to send quarterly reports detailing its progress in meeting the requirements in this bill and reporting publicly on how it will carry out the programs. We will hold at least one hearing a year and allow public comment as well. In that way, I hope to ensure that there are no surprises to retirees.

An important caveat: Last year, a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction in an ongoing lawsuit to keep state retirees from being moved to a Medicare Part D plan during last year’s open enrollment period. The judge’s decision provided the legislature time to work in tandem with the Governor to determine a solution to maintain prescription drug coverage. Though SB 946 was passed by the legislature this week, the courts will still need to determine whether a state employee may be required to change to a Medicare Part D plan. Then, there would need to be at least nine months before open enrollment to process the change. So we are still months if not years away from any change to current law.”

As I said, it’s complicated.

https://www.towson.edu/retiredfaculty/documents/testimony_to_appropriations_committee_about_etiree_prescription_coverage.pdf

TURFA Bits

TURFA President Fran Bond was among five Maryland seniors to receive the prestigious Geri Award in October, when she was inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, which confers the award. The award honors Marylanders 65+ who have made exemplary contributions to society. Dr. Bond, an executive member of the Baltimore Commission on Aging, served for five years as Associate Director of the Peace Corps Fellows Program, which enrolls returning volunteers in graduate school while they work in underserved communities; for two years as Special Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Education, promoting early education across the country; and then as Director of Professional Development for the PBS children’s program Ready to Learn. Dr. Bond remains an active educational consultant, giving presentations to senior groups and publishing articles on grandparenting. Joanne Williams, former Director of the Maryland Department of Aging, commended her for her civic and humanitarian volunteer work: “Fran is most deserving of the Geri Award because of the magnitude of all she gives back to the community.”

In Memoriam

Clifford D. Alper, Music, Feb. 27, 2019. Dr. Alper received his Bachelor of Arts and Master’s degrees from the University of Miami, and he completed his doctorate in music education, which he began at Columbia University, at the University of Maryland, College Park. During the Korean War, he interrupted his academic career to serve in a clerical position in the Air Force. He joined Towson University in 1960, teaching courses in classical music literature and music education and creating a survey of opera course for the Music program. Dr. Alper published a number of articles on the German educator and philosopher Friedrich Froebel and was recently interviewed for a Froebel documentary. He also wrote scholarly articles on Giuseppe Verdi. According to Professor Emerita Ruth Drucker, Dr. Alper had a special love of opera: “Opera was his life . . . He knew every recording and all the singers. His courses were well received, and his enthusiasm got his students involved.” After retiring from Towson, Dr. Alper continued to share his passion for music, giving lectures at elder hostels, retirement communities, and senior centers, as well as in the Temple Oheb Shalon Joy of Opera series. He remained active as a student and patron of the arts up until the time of his death.
**Patricia Atkinson**, College of Business and Economics, Nov. 5, 2018. Ms. Atkinson joined Towson University as an administrative specialist in 1985. She was highly influential in establishing the CBE Student Center, now Student Academic and Career Services (SACS) and served as its director from 2004-2013. She developed many of the center’s programs, including academic advising, mentoring activities, college career fairs, and the Student Consultant Program. According to CBE Dean Shohreh A. Kaynama, “Patricia was a pioneer of using data and technology to streamline processes here at CBE and the university—teaching herself how to program information systems to help the college track admission to the major and more.” Dr. Kaynama also noted that Ms. Atkinson mentored and supervised more than 100 students during the first 15 years of SACS: “Patricia’s door was always open not just to students, but to faculty and staff members as well.” When Ms. Atkinson retired in 2013 after 28 years of service to the university, she left behind an “inspiring legacy” in her love for students, as reflected in her willingness “to lend a listening ear, guiding hand, and thoughtful encouragement.”

**Caryl E. Peterson**, Biology, Jan. 19, 2019. Dr. Peterson earned her Ph.D. in anatomy from the University of Maryland in 1977, having graduated as class valedictorian and Phi Beta Kappa from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) and after receiving her master’s degree in biology from Bryn Mawr College. Dr. Peterson served as TU Biology Department Chair from 1981-1984, as Acting Chair from 1987-1989, and as coordinator and chairperson of the premedical and pre-dental programs. Dr. Peterson was responsible for developing and teaching two courses that for the first time gave premed students and students in allied fields at TU valuable direct experience with human cadavers. In recognition of her professional accomplishments, in 1988 Dr. Peterson received the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences Outstanding Faculty Award, given for excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. According to Joan M. Schuetz, a longtime friend and Biology Department colleague, Dr. Peterson was a dedicated and influential educator: “Caryl focused on the success of students and provided, in the classroom and through one-on-one guidance, opportunities and support on an individual basis. She was a role model and mentor for many, but most especially for women, whom she encouraged to pursue goals to which they aspired.” Dr. Peterson served as a trustee for McDaniel College for nearly twenty-five years and, after retiring from teaching in 1996, became a home care volunteer for Gilchrist Center Towson.