

University of West Georgia Association of Retired Faculty and Staff

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**Submitted by
Kathryn Grams, Past President
January 22, 2021**

Introduction

On March 22, 2019, The University of West Georgia (UWG) Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS) Coordinating Council amended its Bylaws to state that the President of the Council should “prepare a report of ARFS activities to submit annually to the Vice President of Advancement and other administrative offices as appropriate.” (Article 5, Section 2, (h)). Annual Reports for 2017-18 and 2018-19 were submitted to and approved by the Coordinating Council. This third ARFS Annual Report represents September 7, 2019 to August 22, 2020, the period between the 2019 and 2020 ARFS Annual Reunions.

During this reporting period, a worldwide pandemic of SARS-CoV-2, commonly referred to as COVID-19, reached Carroll County. It affected ARFS members and activities beginning in March 2020 and continuing through the end-date of August 22, 2020. Notations regarding how the pandemic impacted ARFS activities are identified as appropriate.

ARFS Overview

The purposes of the UWG Association of Retired Faculty and Staff are to:

- promote the well-being of its members
- support the University of West Georgia retiree community
- foster continued involvement of retirees in the mission of the university
- facilitate communication between the university and its retirees
- seek to promote the scholarly, social, and cultural interests of the retiree community
- address matters related to benefits and resources for retirees

Active membership includes faculty and staff who have retired from UWG and meet the established Board of Regents retirement criteria. There were 486 members at the time of the 2020 Reunion. Officers of the association include a president, vice-president, past president, secretary and treasurer who are elected by the membership at the ARFS Annual Reunion held each fall. The officers and at least six active members (elected at the Annual Reunion) comprise the Coordinating Council, which provides leadership for the association and directs its activities on behalf of the members.

Contributions of Retirees to the University and the Community

Denice King-Perdue reported that in the Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020), UWG retirees gave a total of \$95,216 in donations (cash, pledges and in-kind) to the University. Many retirees have given and continue to give generously to UWG. Since 2004 retirees have given \$1,303,730.

Individual retirees continue to be involved with UWG in many ways, including giving talks to student groups, serving on University committees, and volunteering for special projects.

Endowed Retiree Legacy Scholarship

ARFS created and endowed the UWG Retiree Legacy Scholarship to benefit for perpetuity deserving University of West Georgia students who are direct descendants or an immediate family relation of retired faculty or staff members. The scholarship was awarded in 2020 to Allen Ledbetter, son of retiree Lisa Ledbetter. Information about the scholarship and award criteria can be found at: <https://www.westga.edu/hr/arfs/retiree-legacy-scholarship.php>

ARFS Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council is composed of elected retirees and a UWG staff liaison member. Denice King-Perdue (Assistant Director, Alumni Relations). 2019-2020 Council members elected at the 2019 Annual Reunion included:

Officers with terms beginning in 2018 and continuing:

- Kathryn Grams, President (term 2018-2020)
- Vice President: Linda Picklesimer (term 2018-2020)
- Past President: Mitch Clifton (term 2018-2020)
- Secretary: Bruce Lyon (term 2018-2020)
- Treasurer: Jimmy Drew (term 2018-2020)

Members-at-Large with terms beginning in 2018 and continuing:

- Tom Mackel (term 2018-2020)
- Karen Smith (term 2018-2020)

Members-at-Large with terms beginning in 2019:

- Bonnie Bar (term 2019-2021)
- Meg Cooper (term 2019-2021)
- Bobby Powell (term 2019-2021)
- Frank Pritchett (term 2019-2021)
- Sally Roberts (2019-2021)
- Francie Taylor (2019-2021)

Current members of the Council are listed on the ARFS website at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/arfs/coordinating-council.php>

ARFS Structure and Activities

ARFS supports the University's mission and values and seeks to foster closer relations between retirees and the University. ARFS 2019-2020 activities that meet the purposes of the association are highlighted in this report.

➤ **ARFS Bylaws:**

The ARFS Bylaws were ratified, adopted and amended in 2014. They were revised this year to permit virtual meetings and online voting and approved on June 12, 2020, and can be found in the Document Center on the ARFS website at

https://www.westga.edu/assets/arfs/doc/uwg_arfs_official_bylaws_amended_6-12-20.pdf.

➤ **ARFS Coordinating Council Meetings:**

Four meetings were held during the period of this report, two face-to-face meetings on campus in the UWG Alumni House Conference Room and two online meetings (due to the pandemic).

Meetings were open to all members of ARFS and were scheduled as follows:

- September 20, 2019 - on campus (11 council members in attendance; 1 ARFS member)
- January 10, 2020 - on campus (12 council members in attendance; 1 Alumni Office staff; 1 ARFS member)
- May 15, 2020 - online (7 council members in attendance; 1 ARFS member)
- June 12, 2020 - online (9 council members in attendance; 1 ARFS member)

The meeting minutes are available online in the Document Center of the UWG ARFS webpage at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/arfs/document-center.php>.

➤ **Council Committees and Events:**

- The following committees were organized to complete the work of the Council:
 - *Communications* – maintains the email listserv and contact with members
 - *Programs/Events* – organizes the annual reunion and prepares the Tribute Booklet
 - *Scholarship* – oversees the awarding of the Legacy Scholarship
 - *Nominating* – prepares a slate of officers and members-at-large for election

Both council and general ARFS members participated in committee activities.

- UWG Benefits Fair – October 22, 2019
 - Bonnie Bar, Mitch Clifton, Anne Richards, and Francie Taylor staffed the ARFS table from 10 am to 3 pm and spoke with dozens of University faculty and staff about ARFS and matters relating to retirement. They also handed out copies of the ARFS pamphlet “Steps to Retirement for Faculty/Staff” that was produced jointly by Human Resources and Coordinating Council members. A copy is available in the Document Center of the ARFS webpage at: https://www.westga.edu/assets/arfs/doc/arfs_brochure_steps-to-retire.pdf.

- The ARFS brochure was also distributed at the Benefits Fair. It was prepared in fall 2018 to provide information about what ARFS is, how one becomes a member, and the activities and benefits of membership. It can be found in the Document Center of the ARFS webpage at https://www.westga.edu/assets/arfs/doc/arfs_brochure_final_2018.pdf.

➤ **Interface with National and State Retiree Organizations:**

- Georgia Higher Education Retiree Organization (GA-HERO)
 - ARFS is an official voting member of the Georgia Higher Education Retiree Organizations (GA-HERO), the University System of Georgia Retiree Council (USGRC), and a member of the International Association of Retired Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE).
- International Association of Retired Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE)
 - Anne Richards, Mitch Clifton and Kathryn Grams attended an AROHE Idea Exchange: “COVID-19 – Adapting Events During Physical Distancing” via Zoom on May 28, 2020.
 - Website: <https://www.arohe.org/>
- University System of Georgia Retiree Council (USGRC)
 - Kathryn Grams is the official UWG representative for the USGRC
 - Kathryn Grams attended the November 1, 2019 meeting at Middle Georgia State University. Anne Richards attended via phone.
 - The Spring 2020 meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic.
 - Kathryn Grams served on the USGRC Nominating Committee to select candidates for 2020-21 offices. Meetings were held online.
 - Website: https://www.usg.edu/committees/view/usg_retireecouncil
- Georgia Association of Higher Education Retiree Organizations (GA-HERO)
 - Mitch Clifton is the official UWG representative for GA-HERO
 - Anne Richards is the Secretary
 - UWG was the host institution for the November 8, 2019 meeting. Kathryn Grams, Anne Richards, Mitch Clifton and Denice Perdue attended the event at the Newnan Campus.
 - The Spring 2020 meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic.
 - Website: <http://ga-hero.org/>

➤ **Activities Related to Maintaining Communication with Retirees:**

- **Email Listserv:**
 - Membership on the ARFS listserv provides retiree members with important reminders and university news. Members may also use the listserv to send information,

questions/concerns, and announcements. The listserv had approximately 420 members at the end of this reporting period.

- **Newsletter, *The Rejuvenator*:**

- Two issues of the ARFS Newsletter, *The Rejuvenator*, were published and distributed to retirees via electronic and regular mail as follows:
 - January 2020 (No. 37)
 - June 2020 (No. 38)

These issues were assembled by Denice King-Perdue and her staff, with articles written by Denice and Coordinating Council members. The issues can be seen on the UWG ARFS website at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/arfs/rejuvenator-newsletter.php>.

Annual Reunion and General ARFS Meeting:

- The 2020 Annual Reunion was held virtually on August 22, 2020 and can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzGJkYizqs>. The video includes a welcome by ARFS President Kathryn Grams and UWG President Brendan Kelly and an introduction of the Legacy Scholarship winner by Allyson Bretch. A PowerPoint presentation was narrated by Denice Perdue and recognized 33 new retirees.
- The Reunion was followed by the ARFS General Meeting conducted virtually via GoToMeeting. Members approved the slate of candidates for Coordinating Council officers and members-at-large.
- At past annual reunions, each honored retiree received a medallion and a Tribute Booklet, which included individual tributes. Preparation of the *2020 Tribute Booklet* is ongoing. Distribution to each retiree will be conducted via mail or at an in-person event when it can be safely held. The booklet is being prepared by Meg Cooper and Francie Taylor and will soon be published and placed on the ARFS website.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathryn Grams, Past President
University of West Georgia
Association of Retired Faculty and Staff