

## **Georgia Perimeter College/DeKalb College Retiree Association**

### **Best Practices**

Established in 2009, our RA is open to all faculty and staff who have retired from the college. Associate membership is offered to spouses, employees within one year of retirement, and those who have left the college without taking official retirement. Annual dues are \$15.

#### **Goals for the year**

- Deliver amazing value through our many exciting programs and events
- Help with all aspects of retirement, including pre-retirement planning
- Provide avenues for participation and camaraderie
- Reinstate RA webpage through GSU (with online dues payment), start a Facebook page

#### **Theme for the year: Health & Wealth**

- Quarterly meetings with programs on financial planning (tax changes), nutrition and fitness, a speaker from the Emory Brain Center
- October benefits meeting and December holiday luncheon have the best attendance.
- Field trips for a ballroom dance lesson and visit to the Federal Reserve Museum
- Volunteer participation in Read Across America (read to children in elementary schools)

#### **Dynamic Officers, Board, Committees, Board**

- The President helps set goals and tries to find active members willing to help the RA.
- The Vice President organizes these wonderful programs.
- The Secretary keeps superb records, also serves on the college Faculty Affairs Committee (emeritus status for recent retirees).
- The Media Coordinator produces excellent communications.
- Development Director (liaison) attends meetings, handles operating and scholarship accounts, works with HR on communications. Perimeter College Development office pays for printing and mailing.
- The Past President provides institutional memory and a sounding board for consideration of ideas.
- Now if only we could recruit members for committees, such as membership, events, ...

#### **Printed material, postal mailings**

- Valued by our generation, generates greater response than email
- Semiannual newsletter with articles and pictures showcasing retirees, their activities, years-long relationships and our interests now. Features on our scholarship recipients, highlights of meetings, field trips, upcoming events. The value of membership and opportunities to donate.
- Letters and flyers are mailed in advance of events and meetings.

#### **Monthly Book Club**

- Older than the RA and going strong, a useful source of new members
- Meets for lunch at a local restaurant or member's home

#### **Retiree Association Scholarship**

- Popular with retirees over the years, the endowment is over \$30,000.
- Income more than covers a \$1,250 scholarship to a nontraditional student.
- Possibly we can increase the award amount or mount a drive for a second scholarship.

#### **Association memberships in GA-HERO, AROHE, USG Retiree Council**

- We got some of our best ideas right here.
- We aspire for greater coordination, joint participation with GSU Emeriti Association.

Best Practice  
A Free Membership for Retirees to our Campus Center  
Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS)  
University of West Georgia (UWG)  
Mitch Clifton, ARFS President - 4/25/18

During an ARFS Coordinating Council (CC) meeting in October, 2016, a motion was passed asking the ARFS President to write a letter to the UWG President requesting that UWG retirees be given a free membership to the Campus Center exercise facilities (a benefit that had recently been made available to UWG employees). With help from CC members, I wrote a letter and sent it to the UWG President in November, 2016.

The President responded to me by email, in early December, 2016, saying that he would like to provide such a benefit to retirees, but that the potential cost to the University and the impact of increased usage on the Campus Center (which is paid for with student fees) had to be carefully considered. He asked if we had done any surveys of retirees or had any other way of anticipating the expected participation by retirees. After discussing the President's response with a number of CC members, we decided we should design such a survey and distribute it to all of the retired faculty on our retiree listserv. I informed the President by email of our intent to conduct such a survey.

We started working on the survey in January, 2017. It took us a couple of months and many exchanges of emails to agree on the number of questions and get the wording right. It then took a few weeks for our University Alumni IT representative to get the time to prepare an online survey with our questions. The online survey was announced on a retiree listserv in April, 2016, and retirees had a few weeks to complete the survey.

In May, 2017 our University Alumni IT representative prepared a report on the survey results, which was forwarded to all of our Coordinating Council members and to the UWG President's office. Of the approximately 300 retiree email addresses on our listserv, 94 retirees took the survey. Among the survey responses, the most interesting results were these: In response to the question, if a free membership were granted to retirees, would they be interested in using the Campus Center exercise facilities the number of responses were: Definitely Yes - 28 responses (30%), Probably Yes - 34 responses (36%), Probably Not - 24 responses (26%), Definitely Not - 8 responses (8%). Also, about 2/3 of the respondents said they would be most likely to use the facilities during the morning (the time when the students use of the facility is the lightest), and about 3/4 of the respondents said they would most likely use the facilities two or three times a week.

Over the summer our University Alumni representative was informed that a trial, one year, free membership in our Campus Center would be made available to UWG retirees beginning in the fall semester. All interested retirees had to do to secure this benefit was get a new retiree ID card to replace their former employee ID card and complete some paperwork with the Campus Center Recreation Facility staff. We announced this benefit to retirees using our retiree listserv, our quarterly newsletter, and at our Annual Reunion. In August, 2017 the free Campus Center membership became available, and within a month, nine retirees had signed up for this benefit.