Association of Retired Rice University Faculty Annual Report for 2018-2019

Through the Association of Retired Rice University Faculty (ARRUF) retired faculty can maintain close contact with the University and its associated community, including colleagues from many academic departments. ARRUF champions the power of purposeful retirement. It celebrates the continued value of retired faculty in several university functions, such as teaching, scholarship, and preserving University history; and it creates new roles for retired faculty through community engagement and civic service. It marshals retired faculty members’ efforts in achieving the University’s aims as part of the wider local, national, and international community. It sponsors events offering intellectual and social opportunities for members as well as information of practical use, for example on housing and health insurance. It invites speakers to address issues that have not been widely discussed at Rice but are relevant both to retired faculty and to the university at large. ARRUF also plans to engage a wider community: An initial project involves arranging for members’ excess books to be donated to a Rotary International program which ships containers of books each year to developing countries. Simultaneously, ARRUF provides opportunities for managing decisions and deriving satisfactions associated with older persons’ life situations. ARRUF’s work is discussed more fully in the accompanying annual report of ARRUF’s activities committee.

ARRUF has had a successful and productive year in academic year 2018-2019 (FY2019), which has been only its second year of sponsoring events and activities. During two half-day conferences, prominent invited speakers and Rice panelists explored the role of retired faculty in the university. On October 3, 2018, Professor Emeritus Roger Baldwin of Michigan State University presented results of his survey of some 200 retired faculty organizations at US colleges and universities, then joined a panel of senior and retired Rice faculty and administrators to discuss possible applications of the survey’s results to Rice and ARRUF. On March 21, 2019, Dr. Paul Irving of the University of Southern California and the Milken Institute’s Center for the Future of Aging spoke on purposeful aging and the longevity economy and similarly joined a panel of Rice personnel to consider how ARRUF might participate in the new economic and social landscape. ARRUF plans at least one similar event for FY2020, likely focusing on how new or developing technologies can improve health and lifestyle of not only retired faculty but also all other persons suffering from challenges such as hearing loss.

ARRUF’s remodeled room in Fondren Library has been available in FY2019 for the first time, allowing for more activities with greater variety than in FY2018, as described in the activities committee report. The room has videoconferencing capability using ZOOM, and remote participation has occurred for some activities and ARRUF committee meetings. The room is available to individual members for work or reading except during scheduled ARRUF activities.

In addition to the two conferences, FY2019 activities included a workshop on health insurance options for seniors; a special arts lecture by ARRUF member Bill Camfield and his colleague Candace Clement, an independent scholar; an academic memoirs group that met monthly; group discussions on various topics such as influential books in attendees’ respective lives; and a holiday lunch at the faculty club. With this full schedule of activities, total expenditures were
approximately $13,800, not unexpectedly exceeding ARRUF’s annual allotment of $10,000 from the Provost’s office. The difference was covered by unspent funds from previous years. Although the scope of ARRUF activities for FY2020 will remain about the same as for the current year, efforts will be made to reduce costs by, for instance, having local speakers if a second conference is held. Moreover, some of the FY2019 expenditures were one-time costs for computer software/accessories and other items for the room in Fondren library. The budget committee estimates total expenses of $12,000 for FY2020 and a small positive balance (contingency fund) for the ARRUF account on June 30, 2020. A copy of the full budget report may be requested from the Budget Committee co-chairs, Ahmad Durrani and Clarence Miller.

Finally, ARRUF has initiated interaction with (1) Rice University Centennial Historian Melissa Kean to assist her in identifying individuals in photographs, interpreting other archival materials, and otherwise adding to knowledge of past Rice events; (2) Professor Tom Killian and non-profit company Station Houston to explore possibilities for ARRUF members to be volunteer mentors to local startup companies associated with the Houston Innovation Hub to be located in the ION building, currently being renovated; and (3) other local universities to explore possible cooperation with their retired faculty on suitable events or projects.

Directors and Executive Committee*

**2018-2019 Directors**

C. Sidney Burrus, Professor Emeritus, Electrical and Computer Engineering, co-Director

Robert F. Curl, Professor Emeritus, Chemistry, co-Director

Victoria Arbizu-Sabater, Retired Senior Lecturer, Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication, co-Director

Clarence Miller, Professor Emeritus, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, co-Director

**2018-2019 Executive Committee**

Linda Driskill, Professor Emerita, English, Activities Committee co-Chair and Communication Coordinator

Ahmad Durrani, Professor Emeritus, Civil and Environmental Engineering - Budget Committee co-Chair

Priscilla Huston, Retired Director, Rice University Computing Center - Membership Committee co-Chair (on leave)

Anne Schnoebelen, Professor Emerita, Shepherd School of Music - Nominations Committee co-Chair

Mary Tobin, Instructor, retired, Department of English - Benefits and Privileges Committee co-Chair

**2019-2020 Directors**

C. Sidney Burrus, Professor Emeritus, Electrical and Computer Engineering, co-Director

Ahmad Durrani, Professor Emeritus, Civil and Environmental Engineering - Budget Committee co-Chair, appointed to fill the rest of Victoria Arbizu-Sabater’s unexpired term because she is moving to Spain and has been appointed an ARRUF International Ambassador to explore possible ARRUF interaction with retired university faculty in Spain.

Clarence Miller, Professor Emeritus, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, co-Director.

*Directors are elected for three-year terms; usually one director is elected each year. In the first year, individuals were elected for staggered terms. Professor Curl’s term ends in June 2019. A new director will be elected by ARRUF members in May 2020 to replace Professor Burrus, whose term ends in June 2020.
Addendum: Annual Report of the ARRUF Activities Committee for 2018-2019
Co-Chairs: Victoria Arbizu-Sabater and Linda Driskill
Members: Clarence (director) and Hilary Miller, Bas Poulos, Hiroko Sato, Mark Kulstad

Activities Theme: The general theme for ARRUF’s 2018-2019 activities and newsletters was “Retired Faculty Members’ Role in the Changing Institutional and Demographic Contexts.”

General Summary of Activities: Activities can be classed into three classes: First, those that create value for the University:
- Events that extend the scope of the intellectual work of Rice,
- Showcase academic accomplishments of retired faculty (Bob Curl and Bob Brito offered a preliminary report on their research: a new model of automation and employment; and Bill Camfield and Candace Clements discussed their catalogue raisonné on Francis Picabia),
- Support Rice’s influence and leadership in the community,
- Conserve University history by assisting University Historian Melissa Kean with archives projects to conserve University history and writing academic memoirs,
- Foster the creation of retired faculty organizations at other universities.

Second, Activities that create value for individual members:
- Monthly discussions on various readings, such as planning for purposeful retirement and well communicated end of life decisions,
- Conversations in Spanish and Japanese,
- Meetings of a group writing academic memoirs,
- A workshop on choosing healthcare insurance in retirement
- A bird walk to view migratory birds.

Third, service projects: Working with the Office of International Students and Scholars (volunteers served as U.S. Friends for international students) and collecting members’ excess books for the Rotary Club “Books for the World” project.

Selected Highlights of the Year

The Fall Conference: The Role of Retired Faculty in Universities — October 3
The Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies co-sponsored the fall conference, which was held there. The guest speaker, Professor Emeritus Roger Baldwin of Michigan State University, presented the results of a study of retirement organizations at universities around the country. An innovation, the Emeritus College, has been formed at four universities to support retired faculty members’ scholarship and service. A panel of ARRUF members, Rice faculty, and administrators commented on the implications of his talk for small universities, such as Rice. Luncheon and round table discussions followed.

General Meeting – November 12
The General Meeting focused on members’ preferences for future activities. Groups examined unidentified photos from Rice Centennial Historian Melissa Kean’s work in the Rice Archives.

The Holiday Luncheon – December
A reception beginning at 11 a.m. in the Faculty Club lounge warmed everyone’s spirits, and luncheon in the Cohen Room attracted a full house of members and associate members. Holiday lanterns and blue ribbons graced the tables.

GrandArts Talk: Constructing the Ultimate Francis Picabia Resource - April 17
ARRUF member Bill Camfield and his colleague Candace Clements, an independent art history scholar, described the challenge of creating a four-volume catalogue raisonné of the works of the prolific French artist and poet, Francis Picabia.

Read more about our events under “News” on our website at arruf.rice.edu.
The Spring Conference: Purposeful Aging and the Longevity Economy — March 21

The Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business co-sponsored the spring conference, which was held at the business school. The guest speaker, Paul Irving, Chairman of the Milken Institute’s Center for the Future of Aging, reviewed the expected impact of a larger proportion of older persons in the U.S. and world economies. A panel of ARRUF members, Rice faculty, and administrators commented on the implications of his talk for small universities, such as Rice. Luncheon and discussions followed.

Academic Memoir Writers Reunions – Sept. 21 and March 22

June Ferrill flew from Santa Fe to lead reunions and workshops for members of ARRUF’s academic memoir writing group, which has 11 members. During the session new drafts by several people were read and discussed. Each was engaging and insightful. Lunch at the Faculty Club followed.

The Creation of Value for the University

Because in the past the legal change in employment status at retirement has often been seen as a severing of all relationships between the University and faculty, there has not been a consensus about what the relationship between retired faculty and the University might be or become. Earlier discussions of ARRUF’s mission have reaffirmed that ARRUF must create value for both Rice University and for its members. The Activities Committee has therefore examined the possibilities through its conferences, readings, and formal discussions, and experimentally, through its events.

While some may interpret “value for the university” solely in financial terms, the Activities Committee has taken a broader approach to this issue: raising awareness of retired faculty as a University resource. As summarized above, ARRUF’s activities accomplish this purpose in several ways:

- Extend the scope of the intellectual work of Rice,
- Showcase academic accomplishments of retired faculty,
- Conserve University history,
- Support the University’s activities in the community (such as the Ion Center), and
- Foster the creation of retired faculty organizations at other universities.

The half-day conferences have brought to the campus distinguished speakers with national reputations to talk about (1) the role of retired faculty organizations at other universities and (2) the changes that a growing proportion of older adults will have on university faculty, education, healthcare, employment, transportation, products and services. The panels responding to the principal speakers’ presentations have reflected on the implications of these topics for small universities such as Rice.

Further, administrators from other universities in the region have been invited to the conferences, bringing attention to Rice University’s involvement with these issues. Only a few administrators have
been able to attend, but ARRUF’s additional efforts to encourage the formation of retired faculty organizations may produce groups of individuals who could collaborate on projects of concern to universities across the region. Our next step is for the Executive Committee to arrange for a luncheon with Dr. Higgs and deans from the University of Houston and the University of Houston Downtown.

Conversations between the principal speakers and other ARRUF members and panelists may result in new collaborative research projects, particularly for Paul Irving, Chairman of the Milken Institute’s Center for the Future of Aging, and the Kinder Institute’s Stephen Klineberg and Department of Psychological Sciences Associate Professor Margaret Beier and her graduate student Jackie Torres. The discussion between Irving and Beier suggested research on aspects of the projects at the new ION Center. The fall conference’s principal speaker, Roger Baldwin of Michigan State University, is interested in following ARRUF as a possible case study in addition to his national surveys. Thus, ARRUF’s conferences are benefiting Rice University by fostering discussion of significant topics not covered extensively by Rice’s other departments, and they may be opening up new avenues and possibilities for collaborative research involving both regular and retired faculty.

ARRUF’s activities frame or position retired faculty as a resource on which Rice can draw and extend its reach. For example, ARRUF engineers and administrators David McStravick, Ahmad Durrani, and Mark Kulstad have begun supporting Professor Tom Killian’s work with the Innovation District and Station Houston. Housed in the former Sears building that Rice has acquired, this project needs the participation of scientists and engineers that retired faculty organizations could help supply. In doing so, they would join faculty from other universities and colleges. Later on, if other schools develop retired faculty organizations, this kind of project could be bolstered through significant retired faculty participation and a newly important phenomenon: intergenerational learning.

Because many of the thousands of items in the University Archives are incompletely identified, University history is in jeopardy of being lost. In working with University Centennial Historian Melissa Kean’s archive research projects, ARRUF members have assisted in identifying individuals in photographs and significant events in University history that will become the subject of Dr. Kean’s next book. The preparation of academic memoirs, a monthly writing group event, will eventually supply context for incidents and developments now evidenced by reports, faculty minutes, proposals, and other transactional documents that need to be set in organizational history. ARRUF could advocate for more resources for Dr. Kean and her position.

Retired faculty are a resource for the University in its function as an international center for learning and research. While courses and degree programs are the formal structure for international students to participate in the University, the social and cultural dimension of the experience is important as well. As volunteer U.S. Friends for International Students at Rice, seven ARRUF members and associate members have welcomed and supported international students. These students have expressed gratitude for the hospitality and friendship offered, and some have reciprocated by cooking meals with recipes from their own cultures for ARRUF members. Viqui Arbizu-Sabater worked closely with Adria Baker of the Office of International Students and Scholars in developing training for ARRUF members and actively promoted this work, which should grow in the future.

As these activities create value for Rice University, most also create value for individual members. Memoir writing, for example, is a gratifying reconstruction of one’s experiences at Rice. Workshops facilitate life decisions. Discussions create bonds among participants and shared understandings. The pickup of excess books helps faculty trim their libraries AND aids the Rotary International Books for the World Project. Lectures enable scholars to share their progress and accomplishments—all good!