

# UMRA UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

*A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association*

MARCH 2006

## Foundation exec Gerald Fischer looks at private support for a public university

During the early 1940s, annual undergraduate tuition for full-time study in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota was about \$100. At that time, tuition income constituted 7.5 percent of the University's overall operating budget; 30.5 percent of the University's operating budget came from the Minnesota State Legislature's appropriation;



and private gifts, grants, and contracts provided 5.2 percent. In today's University (for the years 2000 to 2005), these same three sources contribute, as a percentage of the operating budget: tuition, 19

to 20 percent; legislative appropriations, 25 percent; and gifts, grants, and private contracts, 8.5 percent. From these data, it is clear that a larger share of the cost of maintaining the quality of the University has been shifted to tuition and borne by students and their families.

But percentages can be deceptive because they mask actual dollar amounts, so here is an example. For a full-time undergraduate in the Institute of Technology in 2004-05, expenses were: tuition, \$7,570 (resident), \$19,200 (non-resident). Other costs (estimated by the Institute of

Technology Office of Student Affairs) are \$6,400, residence hall; \$820, books and supplies; \$2,400, miscellaneous, which amounts to a subtotal of \$9,620 and a grand total of \$17,190 (resident) and \$28,820 (non-resident). Although these remain "bargains" compared to the cost at highly selective private institutions, the costs can be formidable obstacles for parents who look to the state's premier public institution of higher education for the education of their children.

The University of Minnesota Foundation, which has been a source of private funds for the University since 1962, has responded to this challenge of maintaining access to the University by increasing its support for undergraduate scholarships. This is but one of a host of programs that the Foundation supports, touching nearly every aspect of the University—supportive grants for research, scholarship, and artistic creation; recognition of faculty achievement and honors; and programs of public service.

Our March speaker, Gerald Fischer, president and CEO of the University of Minnesota Foundation, will provide an overview of its programs, their scope, and the growing importance of private support to the University.

Mr. Fischer has led the Foundation since May 1990. His career includes 20 years with Ford Motor Company in its financial offices, and assignment as senior

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MARCH  
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday

March 28, 2006

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### Featured Speaker

Gerald Fischer, president and CEO for the University of Minnesota Foundation  
"Private Support of our Public University...Past, Present and Future."

### Location

Conference Room ABC  
Campus Club, Fourth Floor  
Coffman Memorial Union,  
East Bank Campus, U of M

### Cost

\$12 per person (tax included)

### Reservation Deadline

**Thursday, February 23**

To reserve your place(s) send a check, payable to the University of Minnesota Retirees Association, to Ben Zimmerman, at 2225 Folwell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108; call him at 651-645-1662; or e-mail him at [zimme003@umn.edu](mailto:zimme003@umn.edu).

Reservations requested after Mar. 23 will be on a waiting list. Cancellations must be received by noon Wednesday, March 22.

### Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA's membership discount, which is \$4 for the entire day.

**Board Meeting at 10 a.m.**

UMRA NEWSLETTER

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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At its February meeting the UMRA Board discussed plans for the new reception we are planning for prospective members on April 21, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., in the Dale Shepherd Room of the Campus Club. This will be the association's first opportunity to meet with recent retirees as prospective members. As plans proceed, we may have occasion to contact some of you, our faithful members, to assist with the reception, but please feel free to contact us if you are interested.

The Board continues to explore other programs which would serve and be of interest to UMRA members and to retirees generally. One of these may be seminars that could address, for example, such topics as financial management; maintaining the integrity of retirement funds; estate planning; wills, trusts, probate, and estate issues; choices for housing arrangements during retirement; volunteer service opportunities for retirees; and continuing education and elder-learning activities.

To be of further service to all retirees, we have discussed in a preliminary way the creation of a handbook for retirees, which would provide information and resources about important issues that concern all of us.

If you have thoughts or suggestions on membership recruitment, topics for seminars, or ideas for a retirees' handbook, please contact me or any member of the UMRA Board.

Cordially,

Warren Ibele  
President, UMRA

## Many volunteer opportunities available with University Retirees Volunteer Center

Whatever your skills and interests, the Volunteer Center will welcome you to join in our many ongoing projects. Please call the Volunteer Center office at 612-625-8016 for more information or to register your interest.

—Helen Briggs, URVC Communications Chair

## Take note, women retirees, there's an organization just made for you!

As a complement to the activities you are enjoying at UMRA, the University of Minnesota Women's Club would like you to know that additional opportunities for growth and friendship await you.

The University of Minnesota Women's Club (formerly Faculty Women's club) was founded in 1911. Open to all women who have an interest in the University of Minnesota, the club's purposes are both social and educational. It presents more than 130 programs and luncheons a year. Activities are organized around 19 interest groups (such as international affairs, hiking, women's health, modern literature, art, to name just a few), and participation is both affordable (\$25 per year) and time-flexible.

It is the perfect venue for the just-retired or those who are looking to pursue new interests. To learn more about the opportunities the Women's Club offers, and for membership information, please call Flossie Caldwell 651-636-2499 or Janet Weiss 612-922-5352.

## Want to help manage UMRA's website?

Needed: a volunteer who is interested in keeping the UMRA website up to date or interested in making improvements to it. We use DreamWeaver for the updating and have assistance from the University Relations Office where our website is housed. If interested, please contact Judy Howe at 651-645-2584, [j-howe2@umn.edu](mailto:j-howe2@umn.edu).

## Introduce your friends to UMRA — reception planned for April 21

Prospective members will have an opportunity to meet with active UMRA members at a reception at the Campus Club on Friday, April 21 from 2:30 to 3 p.m.

An invitation will be issued to all retiring and recently retired faculty, civil service, and P&A employees, but past retirees who have not yet joined UMRA are also welcome. And, as members, you will be key to communicating this invitation to them.

We all have much to gain by joining this effort. A growing membership will not only strengthen UMRA's ability to speak on behalf of all retirees. It will also allow us to provide vital services and programming for retirees and better serve the University.

Details about the reception will be forthcoming as planning goes forward. In the meantime, members interested in helping out on the venture should contact membership chair John Howe, 651-645-2584, [howex002@umn.edu](mailto:howex002@umn.edu).

## Retirees relate stories about their experiences and the joys of volunteering

*In January we began a series of articles written by retired colleagues who are sharing some of their experiences with the volunteer assignments they are enjoying. The volunteers made their connections with assignments through the University Volunteer Center. The third in this series is from Alexander A. Levitan, M.D, who has had many interesting experiences working with students to help them improve their English.*

### Partners in English offers a window on the world

The Partners in English program began in March 2005 at the request of Caroline Rosen, who is in charge of integrating new foreign language-speaking students into the University community and curriculum. Approximately 30 volunteers in small groups meet weekly with varying numbers of these students.

The purpose of the weekly two-hour sessions is to familiarize the students with idiomatic local speech and to afford them an opportunity to practice their English conversation skills in a relaxed and supportive environment. All of the students have passed their written proficiency language tests but are relatively unskilled in the use of spoken English. The students and volunteers meet in the lower level of the St. Anthony Park Library, near the University student housing.

The weekly afternoon sessions frequently result in interesting discussions of the cultural differences between their native countries and the United States.

Among topics discussed last spring was the reason for the involvement of the Easter Bunny in the Easter celebration and the associated resurrection of Jesus Christ. Students found it difficult to understand the relationship between Easter eggs and a profoundly religious celebration. Other topics included discussion of the Memorial Day celebration remembering those who have died in the defense of our country and relating it to holiday parties and family festivities. A Chinese student noted that China has a similar holiday, a most somber celebration, in which families visit and clean the tombs of their relatives and ancestors.

A Korean student found it most peculiar that Americans frequently use, "please" and "thank you" in their everyday conversations. In Korea these expressions are almost never used and are instead replaced with a nod of the head or a cursory bow. Students also remarked that in Korea relationships are reflected in the honorific titles used in routine conversation. In a similar vein, one student inquired if it was permissible to address his professor as "Dude."

Spouses and children are welcomed at these informal conversation sessions, which on occasion, are in volunteers' homes. The students very much appreciated the opportunity to see "typical" residences, which often were more spacious than in their home countries.

Occasionally, students encounter problems that require assistance from volunteers. An example of these involved differences between American and Korean ATM usage. In Korea it is customary to deposit cash into an ATM without first placing it into an envelope, and the student continued this practice in the United States. As a consequence, his deposits were not credited properly, and it was necessary to contact the banks involved in order to correct the error. Because of his difficulty with the spoken language, the student needed assistance.

Similarly, when health problems arise, students may find it difficult to navigate the medical bureaucracy involved. One student called a volunteer for assistance because his pregnant wife had been advised that their child-to-be might have a congenital heart abnormality and further diagnostic measures would be required. He was particularly concerned as to why a fetal echocardiogram could not be performed right away before it might be too late to terminate the pregnancy, should they choose to do so. The volunteer contacted the physicians and consultants and found that it was impossible to perform a fetal echocardiogram until 20 weeks when the fetal heart was of sufficient size to evaluate. The student was much relieved to learn that there was no undue delay involved, and appreciated having an expedited appointment to see the cardiac consultant.

No experience is required to serve as a volunteer for Partners in English other than a fluency in the English language and a willingness to be of service to others. The program is coordinated through the University Retirees Volunteer Center, which has an office in McNamara Center and may be reached by telephone, 612-625-8016, or e-mail ([urvc@tc.umn.edu](mailto:urvc@tc.umn.edu)). New volunteers are always needed.

There is no need to be a University retiree or even a University graduate in order to participate in this program. All persons with a little time to share with others are welcome. Those who have participated have found it most rewarding and gratifying to serve as cultural ambassadors to students newly arrived at the University.

## April Speaker—continued from page 1

vice-president for finance, for First Bank System (now US Bancorp) and, subsequently, executive vice-president, chief financial officer and treasurer. He holds degrees from the College of Wooster in Ohio (B.A.) and University of Michigan (M.B.A.).

He serves on the board of the University Gateway Corporation and on the board and advisory panels of the Association of Governing Boards of American Colleges and Universities. He will discuss with us: "Private Support of our Public University...Past, Present and Future." We look forward to Mr. Fischer's presentation at our March meeting.

--Warren Ibele

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For additional information about  
**UMRA** and its activities, visit the association's  
Web site at [www.umn.edu/umra](http://www.umn.edu/umra).

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 **UMRA**  
*Retirees Association*  
**University of Minnesota**

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