

UMRA U NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

JANUARY 2008

Neuroscientist Apostolos Georgopoulos will be January program speaker

Speaking at the January 22 UMRA meeting on “A New Brain Test for Neurological and Brain Diseases” will be neuroscientist Apostolos Georgopoulos. Dr. Georgopoulos is Regents Professor of Neuroscience, holds the McKnight Presidential Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience, and also the American Legion Brain Sciences Chair at the University of Minnesota.



He is director of the Center for Cognitive Sciences and also director of the Brain Sciences Center at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Dr. Georgopoulos is making fasci-

nating discoveries about how the neural networks of the brain produce behavior. He is perhaps best known for a hypothesis he and his colleagues formulated more than 20 years ago that fundamentally changed the way we think about cerebral cortical function. The hypothesis successfully explained how populations of motor cortex neurons encode movement direction. This basic discovery has now been extended to show how movement is planned at the cortical level, allowing investigators to use recorded cortical activity to actually direct the movements of a prosthetic arm.

Dr. Georgopoulos received his medical degree and Ph.D. in physiology at the University of Athens in Greece. There he realized that scientific research was his real love, and

that led him to the laboratory of Vernon Mountcastle at Johns Hopkins University where he devoted himself to brain electrophysiology and to understanding how behavior is produced by neural networks. The Mountcastle laboratory's premiere research on cerebral cortical function had a profound influence on the career of this young investigator. Joining the faculty at Johns Hopkins, he rapidly rose to rank of professor of neuroscience. In 1991 he left Johns Hopkins to take a position as director of the Brain Science Institute and professor of physiology at the University of Minnesota.

Here at Minnesota, his laboratory has been a world leader in experimental psychological studies, neurophysiological recordings, functional magnetic resonance imaging, and, most recently, magnetoencephalography (MEG), and neural network modeling. Some of his latest work using MEG has allowed a glimpse into the synchronous dynamic interactions of the active brain.

A study, recently published in the *Journal of Neural Engineering*, and covered in the lay press (including the *Financial Times* and *The Economist*), reports on his discovery of a novel test to identify distinct patterns, or functional biomarkers, for various brain diseases including Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia, multiple sclerosis, and others. This test holds great promise for the early diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of subjects with brain disorders.

His talk will provide first-hand insights into this remarkable new work.

— Richard E. Poppele

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

JANUARY
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday

January 22, 2008

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Apostolos Georgopoulos, Regents Professor of Neuroscience, University of Minnesota
“New Brain Test for Neurological Diseases”

Location

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

Cost

Prepayment \$12 per person;
\$14 at door for those not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, January 17

To reserve your place(s) and take advantage of prepaid price, send a check, payable to UMRA, to Pat Tollefson (in Ben Zimmerman's absence), 4210 Polk St. N.E., Columbia Heights, MN 55421.

Contact her at 763-781-9747 or e-mail her at p-toll@umn.edu.

Reservations requested after Jan. 17 will be on a waiting list. Cancellations must be received by noon, January 17.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA's membership discount, \$4.50 for the entire day.

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

On Belonging

The proposal we originated in UMRA just about a year ago as “Proposal for Enhanced Recognition of Retirees” passed the University Senate on November 29, 2007.

It had gone through the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA) as presented last winter by Past President Frank Miller and me, it was approved by SCFA, and forwarded to the Senate through the Senate Consultative Committee as “Resolution on Retiree Issues.” While the action still has to be accepted by the University administration, we are pleased and hopeful that all we retirees will have a more evenly distributed, fair, and equitable set of University ties, and appropriately honored standing in our University when this legislation becomes policy. Frank Miller, President-elect Hal Miller, and I have met with Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Arlene Carney about these policies to be carried out through her office. A staff member there is working with the three of us from UMRA.

Major benefits like pension plan fund distribution and health care insurance arrangements for retirees are in place in the University and were not a part of the new proposal. And UMRA does have a voice and vote in the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and on the Benefits Advisory Committee governing these matters.

This new proposal, therefore, deals with more subtle recognition and appreciation of retirees. It fills in gaps where some retirees have experienced being left out, unlisted, or written off, even though most likely without malice or even forethought by University persons making such decisions. Still, suffering slights, or simply erasure,

has occurred for some retirees by actions taken in offices responsible for their fate as University members.

The proposal’s points include systemwide University oversight of uniform delivery of benefits, rather than departmental and college final authority over retiree status. It asks for the University to make use of retiree skills and services in a more deliberate way; and it asks for full implementation of Regents’ policy already in place for “listing in directories” of all retired faculty, civil service, and professional and administrative retirees. It asks that “achievements and honors of retirees” be lifted up in University publications, that an annual reception be held for all University retirees of the previous year, and that the establishment of a “University-supported retiree center” be considered. (A fully detailed copy of the resolution can be seen on the UMRA Web site.)

What the proposal is, finally, is an assertion that all we retirees are members of the University for our entire lives. It is about belonging. Just as our active careers were not about income only, but were about belonging to a great university and helping to do its work of education, community service, and research, as well as our own work as individuals. Our names are linked with the University of Minnesota, and the University of Minnesota’s name is linked with ours. Ours is mutual membership in each other’s destiny.

Retirees are not “formerly” of the University. We belong to the University of Minnesota. Our membership of belonging is professional, collective, emotional, personal, relational, and lifelong.

—Gayle Graham Yates, President

Go to the UMRA Web site,
www.umn.edu/umra,
to read the full text of “Proposal for
Enhanced Recognition of Retirees” and the Resolution
on Retiree Issues accepted by the University Senate.
See photos from past events including the November
luncheon meeting.

Menu for the January luncheon

Fresh Salmon with Herb Butter
Shaved Potatoes, Fresh Vegetables
Coffee or Tea
Cranberry Steamed Pudding with Brandy Sauce

Vegetarian and gluten-free meals are available; please
make this request when making your reservation.

UMRA works through its committees and stays in touch through liaisons

This year the UMRA Board has tried to continue as well as revitalize liaisons with key University units and to establish new liaisons with University organizations and affiliates that might be fitting.

We currently have a liaison to our board from the University Office of Human Resources, Jacqueline Singer; and we have liaison participants from UMRA to the Regents, the University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA), the Campus Club, the Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators (CAPA), and 1666 Coffman, as well as voting member representatives on the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, the Subcommittee on Retiree Benefits, and the University Retiree Volunteer Center (and they to us).

We hope for these liaisons to be fully active and will evaluate them at the end of this year as to their effectiveness and continued usefulness to our organization. We would like to have a liaison representative to the Civil Service Committee, but so far have not found a volunteer. (Let GGY know if you are a candidate!)

As of this year, the current president is serving as Regents liaison with the president-elect attending Regents meetings when the president is unable to. Marty Rossman is the liaison to the UMMA, Hy Berman to the Campus Club, Earl Nolting to CAPA, and Burt Sundquist to 1666 Coffman. From time to time, there will be reports from liaison members, like the one to follow.

CAPA report —

Earl Nolting is serving as UMRA liaison to CAPA, a new liaison relationship as of this fall. He has been heartily welcomed to CAPA board meetings and fully engaged by them in consultation about what shared tasks our two organizations might have. CAPA took a prominent lead in supporting the UMRA “Retirees Issues” resolution before the Senate. Its chairperson, Pam Stenhjem, who is also on SCFA and the Senate, supported it fully, and they sent a fully supportive document to the Senate on behalf of UMRA’s proposal, lobbying for its passage.

UMRA Committees — reporting in

This year UMRA has a membership committee chaired by Pat Tollefson, a program committee chaired by Hal Miller, and a small grants committee that is a small working group within a larger committee on a retirees center, both chaired by John Howe. Soon, in the new year, we will have a nominations committee for next year’s officers and board members, chaired by Past President Frank Miller; and before

it meets, the board will consider expanding the number of offices or dividing some responsibilities. Stay tuned, for you may be asked to serve in some way! Committee reports will appear from time to time, as you can see below.

Retirees Center Exploration Committee

Last fall the UMRA Board appointed a committee to explore the need for and desirability of creating a Retirees Center on the Twin Cities Campus. At its first meeting on December 13 the committee began what is certain to be an extended discussion of the purposes such a Center might serve for faculty, P&A, and civil service retirees; the functions and programs it might house; and the ways it might promote the larger interests of the University. As our discussion continues, the committee seeks information about similar centers on other campuses and invites guidance concerning a prospective center here. Persons with suggestions or questions should contact chair John Howe (at howex002@umn.edu), or other committee members: Kim Munholland, Joanne Eicher, Sally Jorgenson, Cal Kendall, Hal Miller, Pat Tollefson, and Bob Scott. As the committee develops its agenda, three or four other members will be added to the committee.

—John Howe, committee chair

News - What Gray Gophers are doing

Jeanne Lupton, former dean of General College as well as many other University titles, is working on the General College Archives Project.

Richard C. Caldecott, former dean of the College of Biological Sciences and professor of genetics and cell biology, serves as a manager of a watershed district, as well as playing tennis, walking, and lifting weights at age 83. **Lucille Caldecott** and he celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on August 16, 2007.

Sunny Hansen, professor emerita of the College of Education, is a fellow of both the American Psychological Association and the American Counseling Association (ACA) and is a former president of the ACA. She was honored in the 45,000-subscriber national journal of that organization, the *Journal of Counseling and Development*, with a rare “Profile Article” prepared by her former chair, Tom Skovholt, and three of her former doctoral students.

URVC requests volunteers for school programs in the community

Gil Ward, a volunteer for the U Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) asks for volunteers for two programs in the Risen Christ School in South Minneapolis. In January and February, volunteers are needed for Junior Great Books, a lunch-time book discussion group at the Risen Christ School, located in South Minneapolis. In March and April volunteers are needed to bring the Minneapolis Institute of Arts Art Adventure program to the students.

Tutors are needed year-round Gil says. "This is a rigorous, value-based, safe school serving families in poverty and from diverse backgrounds. Risen Christ School needs volunteers who are enthusiastic, dependable, enjoy working with urban children, feel comfortable in a multi-cultural environment, and bring a positive attitude."

To join in this interesting and rewarding activity, contact the URVC office or Gil Ward at wardx043@umn.edu.

Speakers for upcoming programs

All speakers have now accepted our invitations for the remainder of the 2007-2008 year. The programs, which will be held at the Campus Club at 11:30 a.m., as usual, are:

February 26—Richard Kain, photographs from Ethiopia

March 25—Bill Dougherty on families

April 22—Ann Pflaum and Hy Berman on 150 years of Minnesota history

In May, Annual Meeting at the Weisman Art Museum

May 27—Annual Meeting and Festive Luncheon at 1 p.m. with a musical performance by tenor Clifton Ware, accompanied by Bettye Ware.

Reminder: lunch payments and reservations

Prepayment reaps rewards! Early birds, who send prepayment with their reservations, pay \$12 per person. For late deciders or those who wish to continue paying at the door after calling in or e-mailing a reservation, the payment is \$14 per person.

Have you changed your address, e-mail, or phone?

1. Print new information below.
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