

UMRA UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

MAY 2011

Celebrate closure and new beginnings at UMRA's Annual Gala Luncheon, May 24

UMRA members are invited to enjoy the May 24 Gala Luncheon (with your choice of three enticing entrees —see page 3), to participate in the organization's Annual Meeting, and to celebrate achievements with the University's departing First Family as they prepare to enter "civilian life."

As our featured speakers, Dr. Robert Bruininks and his wife, Dr. Susan Hagstrum, will reflect on their experiences over their nine years as the University's president and first lady in remarks titled, "Seeking the Bright Horizon: Aspirations and Achievement at the U of M."



Both Drs. Bruininks and Hagstrum have made notable contributions along similar but separate paths. With Ph.D. degrees in education, they became leaders in their field: Dr. Hagstrum devoted 27 years to pre K-12 public education and Dr. Bruininks, in more than 40 years at the University, worked also in pre K-12, centering on child and adolescent development, in policy

research, as well as higher education. In November 2002, he succeeded Mark Yudof as the University's 15th president, crowning his career as a professor, dean, and executive vice president and provost.

Dr. Bruininks has committed his presidency to positioning the University to become one of the top three public research universities in the world. Accordingly, he refocused both academic and capital investment strategies, and organizational structure and operations. With affordability for students his primary concern, he initiated two major scholarship programs: U Promise, guaranteeing aid for all low- and middle-income Minnesota students; and Promise for Tomorrow, raising more than \$340 million.

Recognized nationally and internationally, Dr. Bruininks is a leading advocate for responsible stewardship and reform in higher education. He recommitted the University to be more publicly engaged, more involved in economic development, and more sustainable through renewable energy.

Leading by example, Dr. Bruininks and Dr. Hagstrum are the commitment to the University and community that they inspire in others. When she became the U's first lady, Dr. Hagstrum put her own business (helping non-profit organizations improve results) on hold to become one of the University's foremost ambassadors and chief volunteers.

Besides hosting events at Eastcliff, she raises funds for the University and serves on many University boards, including three major museums. In the larger community, she

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MAY LUNCHEON AND
ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday

May 24, 2011

11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Featured Speakers

**U President Robert Bruininks
and his wife, Susan Hagstrum**

"Seeking the Bright Horizon:
Aspirations and Achievement at
the University of Minnesota"

Location

Conference Room ABC
Campus Club, Fourth Floor
Coffman Memorial Union

Cost

Prepayment: \$30 per person;
\$33 at door if not prepaid. **Please
indicate your choice of entree
with your reservations. See p. 3.**

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, May 19

To reserve your place(s) send a
check, payable to UMRA, to
UMRA May Reservations, c/o
Frank Miller, 979 18th Ave
SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414.
Contact him at 612-331-2145 or
mille005@umn.edu.

Please honor the May 19 reserva-
tion date; if cancellations are nec-
essary, please try to let us know
by noon May 19.

Parking

Parking is available in the East
River Road Garage for \$5,
UMRA's membership discount.

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The end of this academic year and our UMRA year is fast approaching! We look forward to the final luncheon meeting and a special celebration of President Bruinink's presidency. It will be a great opportunity to thank him and Dr. Hagstrum for their unstinting efforts on behalf of the University and for his support of the Professional Development Grants for Retirees program.

Last month's Newsletter announced the awardees of the grants. That these were the third group of awardees named over as many years indicates that this program is now quite well established, due to the guidance of the PDGR committee headed by John Howe. Funding thus far has come from several units within the University, but the committee is working toward a more permanent funding base with perhaps an endowment fund to generate sufficient income for ten grants each year.

The Retirees Center initiative, which began several years ago, finally appears to be gaining traction. Jack Lam, a sociology graduate student, will serve as half-time assistant this summer researching organizational arrangements of other institution's centers. Already underway is increased collaboration of UMRA and URVC with the Office of Human Resources on matters of communications and web site development.

Thanks are due many people for their work in helping UMRA to have a busy and vibrant year. Among these are our volunteer reservationists—Judy Leahy Grimes, Betty Radcliffe, Ben Zimmerman, Pat Tollefson, and Frank Miller—and Jan Hogan, who has led a superb menu committee. Virgil Larson has faithfully recorded our

membership rolls. With considerable editorial skills, Ginny Hanson has done excellent work assembling our UMRA Newsletter. Ron Anderson and, more recently, David Naumann have enlivened the UMRA web site and kept it up to date. Thanks, too, to Ted Litman, Rod Loper, and Vernon Eidman for their service representing us so well on key University Senate committees that deal with retirement and benefits issues.

During this year Ron Anderson has guided a new UMRA camera club, arranging interesting presentations each month. A book discussion group, under the leadership of Pat Tollefson, was established this spring. Thanks to Ron and Pat for their involvement and initiative. If anyone else has an idea for organizing an interest group, please contact a board member or send an e-mail to umra@umn.edu.

Thanks to Bob Holt and the nominating committee for recruiting nominees for our votes at the May meeting and thanks to those who are stepping forward to lead UMRA. Retiring from the board will be Past President Bob Holt, Secretary Corrine Ellingham, and board members Meredith Poppele, Earl Scott, and Pat Tollefson. Thanks to all for their many years of service. Calvin Kendall, currently serving as president-elect and chair of the Program Committee, will be UMRA president for 2011-12. Calvin hails from the English Department. Please welcome and support him as he takes over the reins!

This has been an enjoyable year for me, and it has been my pleasure to be involved with such an interesting and cooperative group of people. Have a great summer!

— John Anderson, UMRA President, ander049@umn.edu

Annual Meeting business includes elections, proposed bylaw amendment

Among the items in the short business portion of the Annual Meeting is the election of officers and new board members. The Nominating Committee recommends the following for your consideration.

Officers: President-Elect Ron Anderson
Treasurer Richard Skaggs (second term)
Secretary Julie Medbery

Board of Directors:
Jan Hogan (for second three-year term)
David Naumann
Judson Sheridan
Julia Wallace

A proposed amendment to the UMRA Bylaws was considered by the board at its April meeting and the revision is printed here for your vote at the annual meeting in May.

Article XI. Quorum (for the Annual Meeting)
An assembly of fifty-one percent of the current members [change this to fifty members] shall constitute a quorum.

Rationale: A quorum of fifty-one percent of current members is unachievable. UMRA annual meetings routinely draw fewer than 100 people, which is nowhere near fifty-one percent of the current membership, 450 (singles and couples) or 575 people. The required quorum effectively means UMRA would be unable to conduct business; the board wishes to remedy that with this change to the bylaws.

Mark your calendars for special UMRA event at The Goldstein, Saturday, June 18

If you have never been to the Goldstein Museum of Design in McNeal Hall on the campus in St. Paul, you are in for a treat. And, you'll want to visit again and again.

Join us for a special reception and tour at The Goldstein on June 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. Enjoy refreshments and an exhibit of artisan samples of handcrafted textiles of India. UMRA member Donald Clay Johnson traveled to India for his research, supported by an UMRA Professional Development Grant. He will talk about the crafts of that region as members and guests tour the exhibit. Plan now to invite fellow retirees and soon-to-retire U faculty and staff so they can sample one of many interesting activities UMRA offers.

Goldstein's "Smart House" exhibit ends May 22

The Goldstein offers a wealth of interesting exhibits. Currently showing (closing May 22) is "Smart House," featuring intelligent design in products specially geared toward the growing popularity of homes that allow for aging in place. See more at goldstein.design.umn.edu.

University cutbacks expected to affect future health and retirement plans

In response to impending cuts in the state's appropriations to the University, the administration is proposing changes in both the faculty retirement and employee health benefits plans. These include reducing the University's contribution to the retirement plan for newly hired faculty from 13 to 10 percent. By increasing faculty contributions from 2.5 to 5.5 percent, this would retain the total employer and employee contribution at its current 15.5 percent.

On the health benefits side, faculty and staff will be asked to absorb a 5 percent reduction in their benefits package for a projected saving of about \$12 million per year in the 2012/13 biennium. As always, of course, the devil is in the details, and at this writing these are still being worked out. What is known is that the University's contribution to the cost of coverage will drop and employees will need to contribute more. Increases in the premiums are preferred over higher co-pays and an effort is favored to protect lower paid employees.

NOTE: The changes proposed above will not apply to current retirees with the exception of possible changes in the dental plan co-pays, which would only apply to those of us who have retiree-only or retiree-plus-spouse or domestic-partner coverage through the University.

—Ted Litman, UMRA representative to the Benefits Advisory and Faculty Affairs Committees

continued on page 3

...speakers Bruininks and Hagstrum

continued from page 1

serves on several boards, including the Guthrie Theater. Dr. Bruininks, known and respected by Minnesota businesses, counts among his many prestigious awards the Kellogg Foundation National Leadership Fellowship.

We look forward to visiting with Drs. Bruininks and Hagstrum on May 24. And we hope they will find time also to

Annual Meeting Festive Luncheon features your choice among 3 entrees

(Please, be sure to indicate your selection when you send in your reservations.)

Social

Come early and mingle with friends and colleagues.

Wine and refreshment cash bar opens at 11:30;

The gala lunch will be served at noon, and the business meeting and program will follow.

Menu

Opener: Salad of mixed local greens with seasonal fruit, U of M blue cheese, and champagne vinaigrette

Then, it's your choice from among three entree choices:

- (1) **Chicken Breast** on Beluga Lentils with Madeira demi-glace, seasonal vegetables
- (2) **Canadian Walleye**, pan-seared, topped with lemon butter and lemon, steamed herbed potatoes
- (3) **Penne Pasta**, with seasonal vegetables

Finale: Seasonal Fruit Shortcake, (freshly baked scones topped with seasonal fruit and whipped cream)

Please rush your reservations with entree selections to May reservations c/o Frank Miller, 979 18th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414. See page 1.

Retirement funds report high ratings

For those whose retirement funds are invested in Securian Financials, we have good news— this spring they reported improved financial strength for the end of 2010 in their annual report to the University of Minnesota Retirement Committee. Assets under management and equity both increased, exceeding the previous highs reached at the close of 2007. They also maintained their high ratings of financial strength from A.M Best (superior), Fitch (very strong), Standard and Poor's (very strong) and Moody's (excellent).

— Vernon Eidman, UMRA representative to U of M Retirement Committee

University of Minnesota
McNamara Alumni Center
Room 264, Suite 250
200 Oak Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
Minneapolis, MN.
Permit No. 155

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

1. Print new information below.
2. Cut out this form **and address label**.
3. Mail both to the address above.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____
Other Info _____

Opportunities: participate in research study and summer volunteer projects

The University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) is seeking volunteers for the study, *Timing Matters: The role of memory for time in thinking and memory*.

This is the second phase in a study supervised by Professor Wilma Koutstaal of the U of M Department of Psychology and conducted by graduate students. If you participated in the first phase you are not eligible for this session.

The study requires from 90 to 120 minutes for completion. You will receive \$10 per hour for your time. Eligibility requires these criteria: 1) 60 to 80 years of age; 2) normal or corrected-to-normal vision (eye-glasses or contacts); 3) Native speaker of English or learned before 6 years of age; 4) Completed elementary school up to at least Grade 5.

Participants will be asked to complete health and medical screening questions to ensure they do not have sensory, motor, or medical problems that could adversely affect cognitive performance. The study will be conducted in Elliott Hall (75 East River Road), and URVC will coordinate with participants to arrange for parking nearby.

The URVC will register you for the study. Contact urvc@umn.edu or call our office 612-625-8016 to respond. After

you have registered your interest in the study, the Psychology Department will contact you for an appointment.

The URVC has a variety of other summer volunteer projects to fit your interests and time commitment. Let us help you make a start. For information, call 612-625-8016.

Coming UMRA events for your calendar

Saturday, June 18 — UMRA reception at The Goldstein Museum of Design; see page 3 for more details.

Wednesday, September 28 — First fall luncheon meeting (note change of week day) Speaker: Lyndell King

Watch for your membership renewal letter

Your UMRA cards are dated but remain valid for discount benefits until they expire in August. Watch for your letter, with news of next year's discounts and the opportunity to renew your membership, to arrive in your mailbox in July.

In Remembrance

Word has been received of the deaths of Forrest Moore, February 28, 2011, and Betty Robinett, January 13, 2011. Both were members of UMRA until recent years.

Keep current on UMRA news, programs, and discounts
with a visit to our web site: www.umn.edu/umra
