

# UMRA U NEWSLETTER

*A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association*

MARCH 2012

## U President Eric Kaler to visit with UMRA members at luncheon on March 27

What is it like to head a university with more than 25,000 employees, an annual budget of \$3.3 billion, and almost 70,000 students on five campuses? What is next for the U of M? Find out this month when we welcome University President Eric Kaler and his wife Karen Kaler to join us for our March luncheon. President Kaler will talk on “The University of Minnesota: Why It Matters.”



Eric Kaler became the 16th president of the University of Minnesota on July 1, 2011, but he is no stranger to the University; he

received his Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Minnesota in 1982 after completing his undergraduate degree at Cal Tech. Some might not be surprised that Kaler ended up as president given that while he was a graduate student, he served as a student representative to the Board of Regents.

After his graduate work at Minnesota, Kaler went to the University of Washington (1982-87), then on to the University of Delaware (1989-2007) where he served as department chair and subsequently dean of the College of Engineering. In 2007 he moved to Stony Brook where he was provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs and vice president for Brookhaven National Laboratory Affairs.

Eric and Karen Kaler first met at the University of Tennessee where Eric was doing summer research after graduating from Cal Tech. He proposed to her at Jax Café in northeast Minneapolis. They have two sons and own two Spanish water dogs. Karen Kaler has worked as a graphic designer, operating her own design firm, and working primarily with nonprofits and social service agencies. She has always been extensively involved in volunteer work.

Describing his time as a graduate student, Kaler has said, “It was the experience of being absolutely on the front lines of my research field. People from all around the world visited us. It was my first real, day-to-day experience with science at the highest level, and it was inspiring. It was an eye-opening experience.”

While a grad student, Kaler was a research and teaching assistant working with Ted Davis and Skip Scriven, his Ph.D. advisors. Kaler had thought he would end up as a researcher in industry, but he changed his mind, referring to teaching a class for Ted Davis as “transformative.”

Kaler holds 10 patents, was one of the first NSF Presidential Young Investigators, and in 2010 was elected to the National Academy of Engineering. He has authored or co-authored more than 200 peer-reviewed papers and supervised 37 Ph.D. students.

Come meet the Kalers and enjoy the opportunity to hear the new president speak about his views and plans for the U of M.

— Craig Swan, Program Committee

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MARCH  
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday

March 27, 2012

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Featured Speaker

University President Eric Kaler  
“The U of M: Why it Matters”

Location

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

Reservations Required

Cost: \$14 per person when prepaid (see below); \$16 at door for reservations that are not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, March 22

To reserve your place(s) by prepaying, send a check, payable to UMRA, to UMRA Reservations, c/o Frank Miller, 979 18th Ave. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55414. Or, arrange to pay at the door by contacting him before the deadline at 612-331-2145 or mille005@umn.edu.

Please honor the reservation deadline date; if cancellations are necessary, please let us know by noon March 22.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage, with UMRA's membership discount coupons—\$6 for the entire day. (Coupons will be available at the meeting.)

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mark your calendars!

One of the pleasures of this office is the opportunity it affords of witnessing, close up, the enthusiasm and productive energies of the people of UMRA. There is nothing “retiring” about the retirees who make up its membership.

A case in point includes our president-elect, Ron Anderson. Under the auspices of UMRA, Ron and a steering committee consisting of fellow UMRA members Nancy Eustis, Pauline Boss, Ted Litman, and David Wark have organized an exciting new workshop series, “Living Well in Later Life.”

The workshops will be scheduled from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the afternoons following the regular UMRA luncheons and talks. Most of the workshop speakers will be retirees, who have the greatest expertise in the topics under discussion. The sessions will aim to be more than informative, offering participants the opportunity to get better acquainted as well.

Ron, speaking as chair of the steering committee, says, “The main theme of these workshops will be strategies for flourishing in later life, and the format will include time for round-table discussions of issues raised by the

speaker, so it will be more informal than our luncheons.” Workshops will alternate between serious topics such as caregiving and lighter topics such as humor and volunteering. Some workshops will feature a single speaker but many will use a panel of two or three on a common topic.

The workshops are intended to offer more opportunities for UMRA members to interact and to share their professional accomplishments and expertise with other members. In addition to providing information, stimulation, and inspiration for individual members, the workshop series may enable UMRA to develop partnerships with community and University organizations for purposes of discounts or joint projects.

Admission to the workshops is free. UMRA members are encouraged to bring guests. And members and guests who choose not to attend the luncheon are also welcome. More detailed information about the series will be included in UMRA’s April Newsletter.

Much thought has gone into the planning of these workshops. I hope you will consider attending one or more of the workshops in this series.

— Calvin Kendall, UMRA President  
kenda001@umn.edu

## UMRA will offer new series of “Living Well” workshops to debut following April luncheon

Later life comes with new challenges, completely unlike anything we have experienced before. How we meet those challenges has a lot to do with whether or not we feel that we are “living well.”

Responding to member interest in acquiring skills, practical knowledge, and strategies for later life, UMRA will launch series of workshops, “Living Well in Later Life,” beginning in April and continuing in the fall months. The workshops will be scheduled to follow UMRA’s monthly luncheon meetings in the Campus Club.

### Pauline Boss to Headline April 24 UMRA Workshop

On April 24, Pauline Boss, University of Minnesota professor emerita of Family Social Science, will lead participants through the topic, “Surviving the Psychological Journey of a Loved One with Memory Loss.” She is the author of *Loving Someone who has Dementia* (2011) and *Ambiguous Loss* (1999). With her groundbreaking work as a scientist-practitioner, Dr. Boss is the principal theorist in the study of ambiguous loss. Her training programs on ambiguous

loss are used around the world. Her latest book, which has received rave reviews, outlines proven strategies for managing the ongoing stress and grief while caring for someone who has dementia.

The committee has planned a format for the workshops that will support learning and encourage the most interaction among participants. Each session will start with about a 30-minute presentation from a speaker or panel, after which participants will divide into small groups around tables to get better acquainted, to discuss thoughts stimulated by the presentation, and to prepare questions for the speakers.

After a hiatus in May to allow for our annual end-of-the-year celebratory luncheon, the series will resume in September with three fall workshops scheduled.

Tentative future presentations include such diverse topics as “Self-Caregiving,” “The Role of Poetry in Later Life,” “Volunteering in Retirement,” “Community Services for Living in Later Life,” and “Kairos Dance and Movement in Later Life.”

## Could you use a little computer training? This one's for you!

### Attend workshop following March 27 luncheon

Reed Munson, a computer consultant in the CLA Office of Information Technology for 16 years, has offered to give interested UMRA members a free 90-minute workshop on computer basics including the latest features of Windows and Mac OS. The workshop will be held following the luncheon program on Tuesday, March 27, 1:30 to 3 p.m. You do not have to attend the luncheon to attend the workshop. Bringing a laptop is suggested but not required.

Reed does group presentations for faculty and staff. He also provides troubleshooting and coaching on an hourly or project basis. Several UMRA members know him well and speak very highly of his skills and services.

Reed wants to adapt the workshop to the needs of UMRA participants, so if you e-mail him with questions before the workshop, he will come prepared to address your questions.

**If you plan to attend, please RSVP by e-mail to [reed.munson@gmail.com](mailto:reed.munson@gmail.com) or call him at 612-865-1992.**

## Grants committee begins fundraising effort to sustain research grants program for retirees

With the goal of ensuring longer term financial support for the grants program UMRA initiated four years ago for retirees, the association's officers, board, and grants committee have begun an ambitious fundraising effort.

With several years of funding from the University's Central Administration, the Professional Development Grants for Retirees program has been very successful. Over the course of the past three years, 35 grant proposals have been funded and the recipients are proving that University retirees are "Still Driven to Discover."

Last year's nine grant awards, printed in the April 2011 UMRA Newsletter, went to individuals representing a broad number of disciplines from the sciences to the arts to cultural history. Retirees from all campuses are eligible.

The call for proposals customarily goes out each October to all eligible retirees with a deadline in December. A team of University retirees reviews the applications in January, recommendations are made to VP Mulcahy in February, and in March, grants are awarded by the Office of Research.

"It would be a shame to see such a successful and worthy program falter for lack of funding," said Jan Hogan, who has taken on the leadership for the new grants funding committee. "If we move now to prepare for long-term financial support, we can ensure its success for years to come."

## Refugee services need your help; volunteer through the U volunteer center

The University Retirees Volunteer Center endeavors to seek meaningful activities we may have overlooked in serving the community. Refugee services seem terribly obvious and yet, while having supported one-time projects for this effort, we have not promoted on-going projects for such an important service integral to American goodwill. Examples are:

- Interns to assist case managers for refugees
- Assistants for citizenship preparation at a Friday class
- Mentors in resettling process: arrange for appointments and accompany refugees
- English language tutors
- Tutoring in computer basics (early or late afternoon)

In a world continually fraught with social and political unrest there is much good you can do. If you are interested in one of these weekly projects, we will connect you with the specific coordinator. E-mail us at [urvc@umn.edu](mailto:urvc@umn.edu) or call the URVC office: 612-625-8016.

—Alan L. Kagen, Project Director for URVC

Contributions from members to date, plus the Board's initial investment, have raised more than \$32,000, which is secured in an account with the U Foundation.

See below for further information about making your donation or establishing a future estate gift.

### Please support funding for UMRA's Professional Development Grants Program for Retirees

Please consider making a gift to the Professional Development Grants for Retirees Fund that supports faculty, P&A, and civil service retirees who are engaging in scholarly projects. Our goal is to award 10 to 12 small grants each year. An account at the U of M Foundation has been established to receive your gifts.

You can give by:

- Credit card, online at the website [www.giving.umn.edu/umra](http://www.giving.umn.edu/umra)
- Check payable to the **University of Minnesota Foundation** [CM 3854, PO Box 70870, St. Paul, MN 55170-3854]. **Indicate UMRA Fund 4867.**

Did you know you can also support this UMRA fund with a future estate gift? For more information or if you have questions, please contact Lynn Praska, Planned Giving Officer, U of M Foundation, 612-624-4158; [lpraska@umn.edu](mailto:lpraska@umn.edu) or Jan Hogan, UMRA PDGR committee, 651-770-9603; [jhogan@umn.edu](mailto:jhogan@umn.edu).

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Info \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Welcome new members to UMRA

Please give a hearty welcome to new members who have recently joined UMRA. Greet them at the next lunch program, and add them to your UMRA 2011-13 Directory.

Susan M. Goll, Benefits Special Circumstances, P&A  
10039 Cove Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55305  
goll0031@umn.edu

Karen Lilley, U of M Extension, P&A  
2079 Dudley Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108-1416  
651-644-3927; kll@umn.edu

## In Remembrance

We report the passing of UMRA members as we learn of losses to our UMRA community. Our condolences to the family and friends of:

Donald Z . Woods, retired associate dean, Extension Services, passed away December 13, 2011. He had been an UMRA member since 1978.

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Keep current on UMRA news, programs, and discounts with a visit to the association's new and ever-improving web site: [www.umn.edu/umra](http://www.umn.edu/umra)

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## Upcoming programs — Mark your calendars

**March 27** – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Luncheon Program:  
Eric Kaler, 16th and current president, U of M

**March 27** – 1:30 to 3 p.m. Computer Coaching workshop. Get your questions answered with Reed Munson, computer consultant for the CLA Office of Information Technology for 16 years.

**April 24** – Luncheon Program: Ira Reiss, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, on the topic of his recent book: *An Insider's View of Sexual Science since Kinsey*.

**April 24** – 1:30 p.m. "Living Well in Later Age" workshop

**May 22** – Gala Luncheon and Annual Meeting:

Lori Sturdevant, Star Tribune columnist and author, will talk about University history: *All John's Children* (John S. Pillsbury, "father of the University").

## Book Club invites new members, 3rd Fridays

The UMRA Book Club meets on the third Friday of every month at 2 p.m. at 1666 Coffman near the St. Paul campus. March and April's books for discussion are: *The Girl in the Blue Beret* by Bobbie Ann Mason, and *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot.

New members are always welcome. Contact Pat Tollefson (p-toll@umn.edu) for more information.