**FEBRUARY 2021**

**Abolish, defund, reform? The future of policing in Minneapolis**

The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer was a heartbreaking event that riveted the attention of the world on the thorniest issues of racial inequity and justice, public safety, and a community’s relationship with the police.

What does a community need to be safe? Why didn’t many prior attempts at police reform prevent what we witnessed on May 25? What do city leaders need to do to address the systemic problem? If we’re going to continue to need public servants who have to put their lives on the line, how can their work be supported, humane, and sustainable?

The initial response of nine Minneapolis City Council members was to declare their intent to “begin the process of ending the Minneapolis Police Department.” Many police officers resigned and about 120 left making disability claims. At the same time, a citywide rise in violent crime not seen in 25 years began. Left to respond was a depleted and demoralized force.

How can we make needed change without putting the public in danger?

Greg Hestness is an UMRA member with life and career experiences like no one else among us. Having served as a law enforcement officer and police chief in Minneapolis and at the University of Minnesota, he has a unique perspective on and deep feelings about the evolution of our cities and the way we see police. He is a U of M graduate and lifetime Minnesotan. As he has observed, we are at an uncomfortable crossroads in our choices about how to maintain public safety.

You are invited to join Greg Hestness for UMRA A.M. at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, February 9, via Zoom.

Hestness served 28 years in nearly all positions with the Minneapolis Police Department, from patrol officer, detective, and precinct commander to nine years as deputy chief. He joined the University of Minnesota as assistant vice president for public safety and chief of police in 2003. He retired and became a proud member of UMRA in 2015, and currently serves as our treasurer.

Before the forum, I encourage you to read his recent OpEd, published in the Minneapolis *StarTribune*: [Do police really make us safer?](https://www.startribune.com/news/opinion/655779431/)

Please register and join us for UMRA A.M. on February 9.

—Jan Morlock, UMRA president-elect and Program Committee chair

**FEBRUARY 16 WORKSHOP**

**How not to sound old**

Did you know that the part of your body from which your voice emanates is as small as your thumbnail, and the tissue is as soft as the inside of your cheek? No wonder it can become worn out as we age.

Wrinkled hands and loss of height are among the more unflattering physical signs of aging, and hearing loss, especially if unaddressed, can have a profound impact on one’s ability to thrive in later years. But so, too, can a weakening voice, which is another normal part of the aging process worthy of our attention.

See [WORKSHOP](#) on page 8 ...
Retiree plan retirement tier. The Retirement Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, including Ken Larson, UMRA representative, is considering a retirement tier in the University's retirement plan, adding both investment and planning tools and products. Deputy Chief Investment Officer Andrew Parks, CFA, has been invited to give a presentation to the UMRA Board at its January meeting. The Retirement Subcommittee will continue its deliberations at its February 2021 meeting.

Maroon and Gold Rising. A few former members of the Board of Regents have formed a new organization, Maroon and Gold Rising. They are active at the Minnesota Legislature on behalf of the University. There is interest in collaborating with UMRA. Regent Richard Beeson agreed to give a presentation regarding Maroon and Gold Rising at the UMRA Board meeting in January. A summary of that presentation will be reported in the next issue of this newsletter.

Honoraria for UMRA speakers. A person who was invited to speak at an UMRA event inquired about an honorarium for such participation. As a matter of policy, UMRA does not provide an honorarium for any speaker participation.

Zoom update. UMRA is planning to continue using Zoom for its events well into 2021 and to purchase OIT technical support services when needed; hence, the plea for a $20 voluntary donation per member via the UMRA website. The UMRA Zoom Team, organized by Virgil Larson, is preparing to phase in technical support by UMRA volunteers. More information will be forthcoming on this effort.

PDGR campaign. The donation site records current contributions of $6,045. The matching funds are still available. Please consider making a donation to support our Professional Development Grants for Retirees program at z.umn.edu/PDGR-2020-campaign.

Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (CHAI). CHAI, a new center in the School of Public Health, is committed to the aging population and its well-being. It invites participation from across the University and beyond in its Education, Research, and Equity and Community Engagement services. Read “Committed to healthy aging” on page 3 in this newsletter to learn more.

Reminder. UMRA events occur on the second (UMRA A.M.), third (Living Well Workshop), and fourth (UMRA Forum) Tuesdays of the month. The UMRA Executive Committee meets on the third Monday and the UMRA Board on the fourth Mondays of the month.

Stay safe and well and consider getting the COVID vaccine when it is offered to you.

—Frank Cerra, MD, UMRA president

Explore Paris with Road Scholar

Due to the modest response to the Road Scholar “Art & History of Paris” tour the UMRA Travel Committee announced in November, and thanks to the flexibility afforded by virtual travel, Road Scholar has decided to add three more dates for participating in this tour: Monday through Friday, January 25–29, 2021; Monday through Friday, February 8–12; and Monday through Friday, March 22–26. The cost is the same: $499 for five days.

To learn more and to reserve a spot for any of the three dates, please see Adventures Online: The Art & History of Paris on the Road Scholar website or call 1-800-454-5768.

Road Scholar has an actual tour on hold for October 28 to November 7, 2021, “Discoveries Along the Douro: Portugal’s Best-Kept Secrets.” Sail along the winding Douro aboard a chartered riverboat, exploring medieval towns and sampling some of the region’s most spectacular wines while touring the wineries. Detailed information will come when travel is allowed.

If you would like to suggest future virtual or actual tours or have any questions, please contact Cherie Hamilton at pimentalamageta@hotmail.com.

—Cherie Hamilton, chair, Travel Committee
UMRA FORUM

The University in a new era
In May 2020, Myron Frans, as Minnesota’s commissioner of management and budget and our UMRA Forum speaker, told us about the financial challenges facing the state. Four months later, University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel invited him to help the University, in a year of crisis and change, to address what is projected to be a $166 million budget shortfall.

How will the University fare during this crisis? How might things look and work differently when we come out at the other side? What further challenges lie ahead? What resources can we use to help guide us to a new model of efficiency and transparency? For answers to these and other questions, we thought it would be good to visit with Frans again.

You are invited to the UMRA Forum with Myron Frans at 12 noon on Tuesday, February 23, via Zoom.

Today, as the senior vice president of finance and operations, Frans is also chief financial officer and treasurer of the University, with accountability to both President Gabel and to the Board of Regents. As the chief operations officer, he has systemwide responsibility for nearly all of the big and little parts that support the University’s main academic mission: finance, information technology, investment and banking, the budget, and university services that maintain about 22 million square feet of facilities on five campuses and operations all over the state.

His early career was as a tax lawyer, before he served under two governors as Minnesota’s commissioner of revenue for four years and commissioner of management and budget for six.

Please register and join us on February 23.

—Jan Morlock, UMRA president-elect and Program Committee chair

Welcome new members to UMRA
Please give a hearty welcome to 11 new members who have joined UMRA since early October.

- Janis Batt, College of Design, director of human resources
- Ann Bode, The Hormel Institute, professor
- Mary Christensen White, Intercollegiate Athletics, executive administration specialist
- Paula M. Goblirsch, Office of Information Technology, user services specialist II
- Michael Matejcek, College of Continuing and Professional Studies, associate director of undergraduate programs
- Thomas McGowan, Minnesota Supercomputing Institute, software developer
- Scott Meyer, College of Liberal Arts, Office of Institutional Advancement, chief marketing officer
- Anne Obst, Carlson School of Management, external relations coordinator
- Michele Schermann, College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences, Department of Horticultural Science, researcher
- Julie Sweitzer, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, College Readiness Consortium, director
- Jean Wyman, School of Nursing, professor and Cora Meidl Siehl Chair in Nursing Research, and co-program director, Minnesota Northstar Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program
- William Seefert, Office of Information Technology, IT professional
- Catherine Statz, Medical School, Department of Surgery, infection surveillance
- Jamie C. Tiedemann, Student Affairs, Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education, director

For contact information, visit the Member Login page at umra.umn.edu (login required).

CHAI
Committed to healthy aging
The Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation, or CHAI, a new center emanating from the Center on Aging (founded in 1994 by the late Professor Robert L. Kane), resides in the University of Minnesota School of Public Health and is led by Joseph A. Gaugler, PhD, and a team of experts.

See CHAI on page 6...
HELLO, my name is Dorothy Marden

Hometown: Born in Boston.

When did you join UMRA? My husband, Al Marden, a professor of math, retired in May 2018. That is when he/ we became eligible for membership.

What was your very first job? Looking back, I was big on packaging. First, I packaged and sealed packets of peanut butter crackers. Also, I boxed, arranged, and wrapped purchases at Filene's in Boston. My title was “Bundle Girl.” I assume that is passé now.

What was your occupation when you retired from FT work? I retired as associate vice president at RBC Wealth Management. Prior to that I was controller of the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

If you could learn a new skill, what would you like it to be? We bought our first TV only in the past year. Really! My new coveted skill, therefore, is all of the following: A producer and/or director and/or writer and/or performer in the likes of Mrs. Maisel, Mozart in the Jungle, The Sopranos, House, and numerous others.

Do you have a favorite place on the U of M campus? The campus was our go-to destination as a young family. I think of Mrs. Lampe and her wonderful swimming lessons. The Williams Arena reserved Sunday mornings for families. Cooke Hall family times. The numerous U of M summer programs, also for the children. The preschool led by Child Development staff and students. Dinkytown (the old Dinkytown) … and, last but not least, Prospect Park-East River Road, as it was known then.

What is a fun fact about you we might not know? In I run for fun, and I participate in competitions, from road races and triathlons to full marathons (36 completed to date). Also, I am somewhat of a Yiddishist and, with others, have produced Fiddler on the Roof, My Fair Lady, Death of a Salesman, etc., all in Yiddish.

PDGR program needs more contributions, and mentors

The Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program received only one application for 2021. Perhaps this is another of the countless adverse effects of the pandemic. Trying to create a positive spin, I shall consider this an opportunity for us to replenish our program fund.

To date, UMRA members have contributed just over $6,000 since UMRA launched a fundraising campaign with the University of Minnesota Foundation (UMF) last August to raise support for the grant program. But that still leaves us well short of the $20,000 in matching funds that are available. More contributions are needed.

If you would like to make a contribution to the PDGR program, please give online through our UMF crowdfunding page, or contact Lynn Praska, UMF senior planned giving officer, at lpraska@umn.edu or 612-624-4158. Please note that making a tax-free gift from your IRA to the grant fund is also possible. Lynn can share more details with you if interested.

In another development, there is a move afoot to encourage future PDGR applicants to include as part of their proposals a plan to provide mentorship for an undergraduate University of Minnesota student. The University has a great need for more mentors, and many of us in UMRA have more time available for this now than we had earlier in our careers.

Moreover, providing mentors for students who need them may help create incentive for the University administration to eventually restore its funding for our PDGR program. More to follow on this later.

—John Bantle, MD, chair, PDGR Committee
Mentoring URS students: Our brief but spectacular take

Over the last four years, with my spouse as co-investigator, I have benefited greatly from having outstanding Undergraduate Research Scholarship (URS) students on our team for two research projects supported by UMRA’s Professional Development Grants for Retirees program: one focused on improving the outcomes for Minnesota youths with HIV/AIDS and the second analyzing all the deaths and transitions (cremation, burial, both) in Minnesota over seven years. Our success was solely dependent on our students.

URS scholarships are offered by the University Admissions Office to prospective freshmen as part of the admissions award package. Those students who accept are awarded $1,700, half upon matriculation and the remainder after completing a mentored research project.

How does a retired faculty member recruit URS students? Simple; your research abstract is posted on the URS web site and students respond—rapidly.

After reviewing resumes and interviewing exciting candidates, we chose four students per PDGR project. With our mentoring, each student successfully developed a unique research project. Research Team meetings were held in the Campus Club, perfect for treating students to lunch as they were always hungry.

Mentoring URS students, of vastly different backgrounds, was a pleasure. All were incredibly bright and remarkably effective in getting the information and analysis needed for their projects.

Full of surprises

Our mentorship experience was more than just data management. URS students were full of surprises: one student from Romania had the best use of the English language we’ve ever encountered; another, from Lebanon, read a statistics book overnight and applied his learnings the next day.

Yes, a few students had a tough time adjusting to the University workload, and one immigrant student’s family needed help coping. But we did enjoy dinner with another student’s mother (a professor from the Middle East), and we marveled at the daily change in hair color of another superb student.

After many mentorship meetings, all our URS students successfully completed their research plans and presented outstanding posters at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. To date, three have been accepted for outstanding STEM graduate programs and one at the U of M Medical School.

What an incredible and satisfying relationship. Marcie and I would be delighted to discuss this mentoring opportunity with anyone interested.

—Jonathan I. Ravdin, MD, adjunct professor of medicine, and Marcie Christensen Ravdin, former Medical School administrator

UMRA joins Gold Mind

UMRA is growing its partnership with the University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA) by offering our webcasts to Gold Mind, UMAA’s expanding library of video presentations curated from 20 University colleges and units.

Because Gold Mind is a listed YouTube channel, accessible to the public, it should make both UMRA and our presentations more visible to the outside world.

The Alumni Association’s academic version of Netflix, Gold Mind is a streaming video service that UMAA promotes as an alternative way for individuals to “access University and expert talks on a variety of topics.” Gold Mind already includes a dozen UMRA videos, each labeled “Presented by the University of Minnesota Retirees Association,” and more are being added monthly.

—Will Craig, UMRA Board member and liaison to UMAA
Volunteering to discover

The 20th century writer Zora Neale Hurston once defined scientific research as “poking and prying with a purpose.” Alliterative and pithy as that quip may be, we saw during 2020 how relevant scientific research endeavors are and may merely wonder at the inestimable value of having volunteers willing to be research participants.

In recent months, the University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) has offered a number of opportunities for retirees to participate in one-time or on-going medical studies at the University. These include:

**Body Awareness Study** (Rehabilitation Medicine)

**Chronic Lower Back Pain Study** (Rehabilitation Medicine)

**COVID-19 research** (Division of Infectious Diseases)

**Exergame Study to Prevent Alzheimer’s** (School of Nursing)

**Research on aging** (Medical School)

**Spinal Cord Injury Study**, with both injured and healthy participants (Rehabilitation Medicine)

The Exergame Study tests the effects of exercising on community-dwelling older adults with memory loss complaints.

The studies mentioned here all take place virtually—online via Zoom, with electronic surveys, and/or phone and video interviews. Participants use their home computers or tablets. When minimal in-person assessments are required, COVID-19 precautions are strictly applied. Some studies provide a small stipend.

As this writer learned by joining the Body Awareness Study, being involved in research does indeed have “purpose,” which includes the motivational bonus of new experience and self-discovery for the volunteer. To learn more about research opportunities at the University, please email URVC at urvc@umn.edu or call 612-625-8016.

—Marva Sullivan, URVC communications

... CHAI from page 3.

Given our membership’s interest in aging, UMRA is a supporting organization, and Lynn C. Anderson represents UMRA as a member of the Age-Friendly University of Minnesota Council, one of the CHAI initiatives.

Established in October 2020, the mission of CHAI, as noted on the center’s website, is “to advance interdisciplinary aging science; create meaningful and immersive educational experiences in aging; build and sustain innovations in care and services; and establish vibrant community, governmental, business, and individual collaborations to promote healthy aging for Minnesotans and people across the country.”

To achieve its mission, the center supports research, education, and equity and community cores. The Research Core, led by Tetyana Shippee, PhD, is designed to advance programs of scholarship in aging, including dementia, long-term care, technology, and determinants of health and resiliency. There could be opportunities to participate in these research programs and to develop new areas of mutual interest with funding from UMRA’s Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program.

The Education Core, led by Rajean Moone, PhD, provides academic programs and courses and opportunities for student support, and includes a graduate group in aging studies and the Age-Friendly University initiative. The Equity and Community Engagement Core, led by Robbin Frazier, builds relationships with communities, government, and business. Together, these two cores provide avenues for professional development and research with resources for educators, health professionals, and students interested in improving care for older adults.

I participated in a CHAI Aging Assembly in December that reviewed the center’s mission, core programs, and interest in engaging the University community and beyond. I found their commitment to the aging population and its well-being to be inspirational and the continuing development of the center’s services, programs, and opportunities, briefly described here, to be information UMRA members would like to know.

Please visit the CHAI website for more detailed information.

—Frank Cerra, MD, UMRA president
In remembrance

As we learn of the passing of UMRA members and University leaders, we share this information with our community. We send our condolences to the families and friends of these colleagues.

Ronald “Ron” Anderson, professor emeritus of social sciences (1968–2005), died on December 21. During his childhood, he lived for nine years in Ethiopia, where his father started a hospital and served as personal physician to the court of Emperor Haile Selassie—an experience Ron shared recently for an UMRA Armchair Traveler program. Upon his “retirement,” Ron established the Foundation for Relief of Suffering. Ron served as president of UMRA, as chair of the Membership and Cares committees, and was a founding member of the Photo Club. His leadership and participation made UMRA a more active, inclusive, and vibrant organization. Ron is survived by his wife, Nancy Kehmeier, and son, Evan.

Betty Berman, the widow of U of M Professor Emeritus Hy Berman, died on November 28. A holocaust survivor, she immigrated to the United States after World War II and graduated from The City College of New York, where she met Hy. They moved to Minneapolis when he joined the faculty in 1961. In her professional life, Betty worked as a librarian. She is survived by their daughter, Ruth Strother, and son, Steven Berman.

Roderick Frye, the husband of Vicki Field, retired administrator in the Office of the Vice President for Research, died November 10. Roderick had a long career as a mentor and educator in the St. Paul Public Schools. He is survived by his wife.

Judith “Judy” Leahy Grimes died on January 8. She served as executive assistant to the dean of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs (1983–92) and to Samuel L. Myers Jr., professor and Roy Wilkins Chair of Human Relations and Social Justice (1992–2002). Judy was a gracious, welcoming person, a lifelong learner active in the UMRA Book Club, and known to UMRA members for her skillful coordination of UMRA luncheon reservations at the Campus Club. Judy is survived by her sister, four daughters, and nine grandchildren.

Christopher “Chris” Honda, professor emeritus of neuroscience (1989–2018), died November 5. A native of California and graduate of the University of North Carolina, Chris was a specialist in pain and the treatment of skin injuries and diseases. He is survived by his wife, Glenda Honda.

Roger Martin, professor emeritus of landscape architecture, died December 21. In 1965, the University regents established the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree and recruited Roger to lead the program. Over his 40 years on the faculty, he built the program, taught and mentored students, and conducted creative design work. He is survived by wife, Janis Martin.

William “Bill” Stewart died November 3. Born and raised in Michigan and a graduate of MIT, he was appointed executive director of the Model Cities Program in St. Paul in 1969 and then the Model Inner City Community Organization in Washington, D.C. In 1973, he returned to Minnesota to lead the U’s minority student program, eventually moving to the U of M Morris as vice chancellor for student affairs. Bill and his wife, Ida Belle Wilcox (who died in 2011), developed “World Touch Heritage Week” at Morris to honor the cultures and contributions of every ethnic group—an annual celebration that continues. He is survived by their four children and their families.

Cecil “Jake” Waddington, professor emeritus of physics (1957–96), died October 1. Born and raised in Cambridge, England, he was recognized as the world’s leading expert in fragmentation of relativistic heavy nuclei. He published more than 190 scientific papers and mentored many graduate students, taking particular pride in his mentorship of women graduates into careers in physics. Jake Waddington is survived by his wife, Jean Waddington.

—Kathleen O’Brien, UMRA Cares Committee
A soft, raspy, or hoarse “old age” voice requires extra effort to be understood. Chronic throat clearing while speaking is another problem that can put a damper on conversation.

The good news is, there are things we can do to build and maintain our vocal strength and, along with it, our ability to communicate with others.

Peter Watson, PhD, an associate professor in the U of M Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, will be the featured speaker for our Living Well Workshop on Tuesday, February 16, starting at 11 a.m.

Helpful strategies
His presentation will include an overview of voice production and changes that occur with the voice as we age. In addition, he will offer us strategies that may be helpful to producing and maintaining a stronger and clearer voice.

Watson's special appreciation for the human voice is evidenced by the fact that he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in vocal performance. He earned his PhD in speech and hearing sciences from the University of Arizona in Tucson, and taught at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland before joining the U of M faculty in 2003.

He currently teaches Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanisms, and Voice Disorders and Cleft Palate. His research emphasis has been in studying neuromuscular speech disorders such as Parkinson’s disease and ALS. He also continues to study the professional voice user.

Please register and bring your questions to what promises to be a fascinating and helpful workshop. The voice you save may be your own!

—Kristine Mortensen, editor