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RFA Newsletter

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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'The opposite of people'

"Acting and teaching are two different things. Just because you can do one doesn't mean you can do both." **—Ray Dooley**

Ray Dooley, professor of acting in the UNC department of dramatic art and actor with PlayMakers Repertory Company, clearly demonstrated that he could do both during his presentation "The Opposite of People: Reflections on the Art of Acting" at the fall general RFA membership meeting. He led us through a wide-ranging exploration of the art of acting and illustrated its application through his recitations from Shakespeare as well as in the video of his performance in

"Addendum" by Mark Perry, one of PlayMakers' online "Stuck Monologues."
To view Ray's full presentation, including his video performance, open this file:
You may watch it there or if you want to download it, click the download button on the top right and choose "direct download" to save it to your computer.
Our next general membership meeting will be Nov. 12. Further details will follow. ***—Donna Falvo***

A teacher, a mentor and an actor 'as good as they come'

At the Retired Faculty Association's meeting on Sept. 17, President Donna Falvo presented this year's Jonathan B. Howes Lifetime Achievement Award to professor Ray Dooley of the department of dramatic art. This award recognizes a retired faculty member "whose service and achievements, both within the University and beyond in the wider community, have consistently exceeded the professional expectations for faculty, and has been recognized by faculty and administrative colleagues for his or her judgment, ethical values and courage in the pursuit of worthy goals." Dooley joined the UNC faculty in 1990, was promoted to associate professor in 1996 and full professor in 1999, and began phased retirement in 2019.
As President-elect Pete Andrews noted in introducing him, live theater in a university setting inherently combines academic teaching and scholarship with engagement of the public. During his 30 years at UNC, Ray has acted in more than 100 PlayMakers productions, as well as in leading roles nationally and internationally. In each case, he has demonstrated unusual ability to bring the character fully to life by creating an imagined life story that would lead to their actions in the play. In the words of Joseph Haj, former artistic director of PlayMakers, "Ray is one of the country's finest actors by any measure you care to apply. … He's as good as they come."
In addition to acting and directing, Ray has been an outstanding teacher and mentor, and has led UNC's Professional Actor Training Program to an exemplary level: according to *Hollywood Reporter* in 2019, seventh best in the English-speaking world. Ray's acting also has been an important factor in PlayMakers' being named by New York's

Drama League as one of the “best regional theatres in America.” Not least, Ray’s acting has consistently brought exceptionally high-quality live theater to the people of North Carolina. He has performed at numerous schools, retirement centers and matinees for schoolchildren from all over North Carolina; collaborated with the North Carolina Symphony on a musical version of “Amadeus”; and recently recorded several “Think Like an Actor” video master classes on Shakespeare’s tragedies and comedies. All these activities have made Ray one of UNC’s most outstanding ambassadors to the people of North Carolina. The Retired Faculty Association was delighted, therefore, to honor Ray with the 2020 Howes Lifetime Achievement Award, in recognition of his consistent exceeding of professional expectations both within and beyond the University and of his exemplary judgment, ethical values and personal courage.

— Pete Andrews

Taking a break on an almost empty campus. (Photo by Johnny Andrews/UNC-Chapel Hill)

The President's Letter

Zooming through the pandemic

Welcome to the new academic year ... which, with the pandemic still in full force, hasn’t started quite as we hoped, but still provides opportunity to stay active, involved and connected. Many things have changed, and we’re all attempting to adapt to what now seems to be the new normal. Although many of RFA’s programs and volunteer opportunities are on hold for the time being due to the pandemic, the RFA Executive Committee continues to meet regularly through Zoom meetings to plan activities and programs for this academic year.

We continue to strive to keep our members connected and informed, not only through the newsletter, but also with our general meetings, the first of which was held as a webinar Sept. 17 with a record number of registrants.

We feel fortunate and offer special thanks to the technical support of media services at the Friday Center for their expertise and support and to those RFA members who through their donations helped to make our first webinar a success. Our speaker, Ray Dooley, who also was presented with the Howes Award, made the general meeting truly special.

As we move into this academic year, we are acutely aware of the many challenges our academic community faces, but challenge isn't always bad. We're encouraged by the efforts of our colleagues who stand up to the challenges and make their voices heard through various committees and organizations. Concerns of faculty, students, staff and the community about student re-entry and the impact on safety at the University and the community are being heard through the Campus and Community Advisory Committee.

Concerns about racial injustice and inequality are being heard through the Committee on Community and Diversity. How can RFA make your voice be heard? What are your particular concerns during this time? What particular initiatives, programs, actions would you like to see RFA engaging in now to better meet your needs, or to meet the challenges we currently face? Contact us at rfa@unc.edu and let us know your thoughts.

Although activities are altered, they continue. University Day will be celebrated this year virtually on Sunday, Oct. 11, rather than Oct. 12, with the installation of Kevin Guskiewicz as UNC's 12th chancellor. RFA's next general meeting will also be held virtually Nov. 12. Details will follow.

In the meantime, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Remember, challenges can also offer opportunity. Stay informed, stay involved, and stay safe!! **— Donna Falvo**

Friday Center facing 'difficult decisions'

What programs are running at the Friday Center? None, thanks to the pandemic. That would be the sum total of this article except that the Friday Center has its share of potential issues.

The University projects a shortfall of $300 million. As Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz has said, "We will have to make difficult decisions in the coming months." The specifics of those decisions are all speculation at this point. Clearly, though, the University faces serious cutbacks. It's quite possible that the center's funding will be cut. Of course, at this point no one knows what form those cuts might take and how deep they might go.

As Annette Madden, the center's director of professional development and enrichment programs, wrote me, it's "difficult to gauge the public comfort level with returning to a classroom environment, particularly given the complexity of the virus, the timeline on securing a credible vaccine, and whether folks want to be in an enclosed environment with others for any period of time." Certainly, future center programs will need to follow social distancing protocols, which, as Annette says, will probably "mean fewer classes and fewer participants in each class."

When Todd Nicolet, vice provost for digital and lifelong learning, spoke at an RFA lecture last year, he addressed the University's growing focus on virtual learning — a focus made all the more important given COVID-19. How this emphasis will affect the center's future programming and the balance between in-person and distance learning is unknown right now. What's very likely, however, is the Friday Center of 2021 will not be the same as it was last year.

A new way the RFA will continue to have direct involvement with the Friday Center is via the Enrichment Advisory Board, which will conduct its first meeting this fall. Members are Annette Madden, Jill Conrad (a UNC staff retiree and proponent of enrichment programs), Donna Falvo and me, plus at least one more person to be identified soon.

—Ned Brooks

Responses show many find problems entering retirement

At many as 30% of all UNC faculty encounter one or more difficulties during their transition into retirement.

Others reported an unpleasant, unanticipated last-minute decision to retire completely because of serious disagreement with a chair or dean about required duties during a previously expected

This concerning finding is suggested by recent reports from faculty who retired between 2011 and 2019. Some problems they reported were truly serious, others frustratingly stressful, while the remaining are continually annoying.

These responses were received recently after the RFA sent its June draft version of a "Retirement Planning Guide for UNC Faculty" to all 2017-2020 faculty retirees and others who in 2017-19 had participated in retired faculty seminars at the Institute for the Arts and Humanities. Each was asked for feedback and personal experiences that could help improve the guide's content.

The most serious difficulty faculty reported were a temporary loss of health insurance upon retirement. phased retirement period. Many respondents found it difficult to obtain detailed information about the required administrative steps in UNC's faculty retirement process. They reported difficulty in finding answers to their questions, either by searching online or by consulting human resources personnel within their own unit. Some of these HR personnel provided incomplete, or even incorrect, information, causing faculty to lack the needed timely guidance. By contrast, faculty who attended pre-retirement informational HR seminars or arranged to meet with personnel in the Benefits Division of the Office of Human Resources usually reported few or no problems in executing their retirement transitions.

—Tom Clegg

Awards, remembrances at the Faculty Council

The Faculty Council met in a Zoom meeting Sept. 11, and Faculty Chair Mimi Chapman opened it by singling out the extraordinary services of two recently deceased faculty members, Jenny Tone-Pah-Hote, American studies, and Randall Kenan, English and comparative literature, at the start of Faculty Council's Zoom meeting Sept. 11.

Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz then presented the 2020 Thomas Jefferson Award to Ada Adimora, professor of medicine and public health. Her award citation was read by professor Gail Henderson.

Guskiewicz also announced the three Hettleman Prize recipients for this year: professors Mohit Bansal, computer science; Andrea Bohlman, music; Angela Smith, urology; and William Sturkey, history.

Guskiewicz and Provost Robert Blouin led a lengthy discussion centering on the state of the campus in terms of the COVID-19, the current budget outlook and the formal planning for the spring semester.

The chancellor announced he would be creating a new committee to assist in the planning for the resumption of some in-person classes in January. (On Sept. 15, he announced the committee members, which include Chapman.) Questions and observations from the members of the Faculty Council made up a large part of this discussion.

If you'd like to see the Faculty Council session, click here.

(For a more complete summary of the meeting please consult the official minutes when they are posted at the Office of Faculty Governance website.)

The next meeting of the Faculty Council is scheduled for 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9.

— George Lensing

Meet an RFA member

Our RFA members are doing amazing things in retirement. Everyone has a story to tell. We want to know yours. Colleagues are interested in what you're doing in retirement, whether it be volunteering, writing, traveling, tutoring, mentoring, teaching, doing research ... or pursuing a brand-new interest. Send a brief, 250-word, summary of your accomplishments, adventures or activities in retirement. Send your summary to dfalvo@email.unc.edu or rfa@unc.edu.

Nancy C. Fisher

I retired from UNC in June 2020 as professor of microbiology & immunology, director of UNC Flow Cytometry Core Facility and associate director of core development in the School of Medicine. Flow cytometry is used for a number of applications, including measurement of biomarkers and functions of cells in the body, including the understanding of cancer biology and infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Before retirement I was also active in faculty governance, serving on the Faculty Council for two terms, and serving as chair of the Fixed-Term Faculty Committee for nearly five years. A theme to my work with the fixed-term faculty was the concept of inclusivity within the University and within departments. During my term as chair of the Fixed-Term Faculty Committee, we were able to finally obtain recognition for and acknowledgment of the professionalism and accomplishments of teaching faculty who have been contributing to the teaching mission of the University for decades by retiring the “lecturer” titles and replacing with “teaching assistant” and “associate professor” titles. This followed the replacement of “master lecturer” with “teaching professor” a year earlier. Based on results of a campuswide survey that we conducted in 2004, the Fixed-Term Faculty Committee developed a series of best practices for inclusivity of fixed-term faculty that has now been adopted by many departments and units across campus. My final effort before retirement was to convince the Office of Human Resources to include “emerita” as a title for retired faculty in the directory, whereas the masculine “emeritus” had previously been the only option. Life in retirement has not slowed down. I continue to serve as the representative of the Association for Biomolecular Resource Facilities (ABRF) on the Board of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), representing over 130,000 scientific researchers. I also consult for companies applying for Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Grants and serve on a National Institutes of Health review panel. In between, I completed a yoga certification this summer. I also enjoy taking trips to the mountains with my husband, camping in

our new teardrop trailer. We're waiting for the pandemic to pass to allow for further travels.

'Help Me' mask project needs help

When it became apparent last summer that effective medical treatment and a vaccine to prevent COVID-19 were many months away, two residents of Carolina Meadows, Charlie Lehmann and Don Stedman, and Carolina Meadows CEO Kevin McLeod created a project called "Help Me," designed to urge people to wear a mask to help prevent the spread of the virus and to speed reopening of our communities.

They then joined forces with Lauren Rivers and the Rivers Agency in Chapel Hill to launch the public service campaign. "Help Me - Wear a Mask," a series of public service announcements for commercial and public television and social media platforms. Sponsors recruited to help finance the project now include Carolina Meadows, The Forest at Duke, Southminster and Aldersgate - Charlotte, and United Church Homes and Services, as well as New Voices Foundation, the Autism Society of NC and several family and individual foundations and funds.

Plans are to air the PSAs in early October.

Additional sponsors are needed and welcome. Contact Don Stedman at Carolina Meadows (djsnvf@aol.com) for more information.

— Don Stedman

It's easy to give to the RFA

RFA appreciates the dedication and generosity of RFA members, which enable us to provide the general meeting programs four times a year. RFA has no revenue source other than our membership dues. Members have asked how they might contribute so that we may incorporate more activities. The Provost's Office may now receive funds that are designated for RFA use.

Gifts may now be received for the "Retired Faculty Association Support Fund." Donations may be made by check payable to the University of North Carolina with a note in the memo line: Retired Faculty Association Support Fund – 071341. Checks should be sent to:

Jim Miller
University Development Office

208 W. Franklin St.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
To donate online, go to https://give.unc.edu/ and select "Retired Faculty Association Support Fund – 071341" in the "Search All Funds" box at lower left.

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