

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF UWM & THE UWM RETIREES ASSOCIATION (UWMRA) (FORMERLY the UWM RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION [RFA])

(March 2017)

UWM was formed from predecessor institutions in 1956. The Retired Faculty Association (RFA) was formed shortly thereafter in December 1961. Inspired by retired faculty who expressed a desire to stay engaged in the UWM community, the RFA's formation was supported by the UWM Faculty Welfare Committee. This committee met on several occasions in the Fall of 1961, had resounding support from then Chancellor J. Martin Klotsche, and on December 7, 1961 sponsored the first organizational meeting. The interim chair was John Lazenby (Director of Secondary Education-Retired). The first official meeting of the RFA was held on February 7, 1962. Here is a brief list of significant milestones for both UWM and the UWM RFA; readers are encouraged to read Bardell's (1986) monograph for more information on the first 25 years (see citation, below):

1956-1986 – UWM's First 30 Years and UWM RFA's First 25 Years

- During this period, UWM went through a rapid and substantial growth of property, buildings, programs, schools & colleges, staff and students—all had steadily increased. The 8,713 enrolled students and 613 faculty in 1961 had grown to 26,325 students and 800 faculty by 1986.
- The RFA membership grew as well from 63 members in 1964 to 174 by 1986-87.
- As the RFA developed, it published newsletters, maintained a bank account, provided scholarship support (initially funded to commemorate the passing of retired colleagues) and conducted programs of interest for its members.
- One of RFA's initial and continuing goals has been to support outstanding scholars. During this early period, the RFA's scholarship contributions were a modest \$100-\$150 per year.
- The initial UWM Liaison was George Richard, Director of News Services.
- The RFA was affiliated with the UWM Alumni Association from 1967-69.
- In January 1969, the RFA's UWM liaison became the newly formed Division of University Relations.
- In January 1978, the RFA created a Retired Faculty Economic Benefits Committee to monitor State of Wisconsin retirement benefits issues. After ascertaining that no other UW campuses had retired faculty organizations with whom to affiliate, the committee established liaison with the Wisconsin Retired Teachers Association in 1980.
- In 1981, the RFA commissioned Professor Emeritus Burton Potterveld (Art Department) to develop an RFA logo on the occasion of the RFA's 20th anniversary. This logo provides the "watermark" for this overview!

1987-1996

- The RFA document *Rights, Privileges and Opportunities for UWM Retired Faculty* was approved on July 17, 1989.
- In this decade, substantial new building was accomplished while student enrollment and number of faculty both decreased. The Architecture and Urban Planning building was completed in 1993, followed in the mid-1990's by Lubar Hall (School of Business Administration), the North Wing of the Meir library, and the Northern Enclosure addition to the Student Union. The Helene Zelazo Center for the Performing Arts (formerly the Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun) was acquired in Fall of 2000.
- In 1993, at the RFA's request, Sandra Hoeh-Lyon, Assistant Chancellor of University Relations, arranged for RFA members to continue receiving the *UWM Report* (the faculty/staff newsletter).
- By 1996, student enrollment had dropped to a low of 21,969 and the number of faculty, in a slower decline, to 729. UWM witnessed continued growth in academic programs, especially at the graduate level.
- The RFA continued its growth to 230 members, and the annual contribution for student scholarships was now about \$500.

1997-2006

- The number of UWM's faculty had decreased to a low of 673 in 1999 then increased again to 769 in 2006. Student enrollments also grew throughout this decade to a high of 28,356 in 2006.
- New buildings included: Sandburg East Residence Tower (2001), the Kenilworth Building (2006), completely remodeled into two buildings, and the Klotsche Center Pavilion addition (2006).
- RFA now had over 300 members. In 2001, the RFA raised its annual dues from \$2 to \$5 which, together with additional contributions by members, enabled the RFA to make contributions to the scholarship funds averaging about \$1350 per year.
- Several large endowments led to the renaming of several schools: the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and the Sheldon Lubar School of Business Administration. In addition, the Division of Outreach and Continuing Education-Extension was renamed the School of Continuing Education.
- The RFA requested that the UWM University Committee (UC) establish a policy that keeps emeriti faculty on department lists in the UWM Directories (both WEB & print). The UC expanded the request to include all WEB & print directory information for all retired, not just emeriti faculty; the Faculty Senate approved this request in October 2003.
- The UWM University Committee clarified the Emeritus/a Status – Faculty & Academic Staff document to include maintenance of email & WEB access for emeriti faculty & academic staff in 2004. See: <https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S20.pdf>.

2007-2011

- In 2009, the RFA established an “announcement” group email file (also called a “listserv”) to assist in more rapidly communicating important information to the membership with email accounts.
- Both student enrollment and number of faculty have remained high, 29,265 and 798, respectively, in 2008; this trend continues. To date, UWM has grown to 32 doctoral, 53 masters and 94 baccalaureate degree programs.
- The new buildings include two new student residences, RiverView Residence Hall (2008-9) and Cambridge Commons Residence Hall (2010). UWM is pursuing its “Master Plan” which involves three major facility venues to better support both research and academic programs in need of space.
- Two new schools have been approved for implementation, Public Health and Freshwater Sciences; they are currently filling their faculty lines and developing new programs.
- During the 2009/2010 academic year, the RFA developed its website which includes all general RFA information, official documents, news items, and important links. The website address (URL) is: <http://www.edu/uwmra>.
- To facilitate internet communication, the executive committee has established an Internet Communications Committee and has appointed Erika Sander to serve as Chair.
- At the May 2010 annual luncheon meeting, the RFA approved a series of amendments to its constitution. All changes clarified areas of our charter and are now posted on our website.
- Over Summer 2010, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Mayrl worked with the UWM Foundation to set up RFA accounts for RFA membership dues, student scholarships and special projects. Members will be solicited accordingly.
- RFA membership now is 383 and our RFA scholarship contribution has increased to \$2000 per year.
- May 2011. RFA had a gala 50th Anniversary Luncheon.

2011-date

- During the Fall 2011-Spring 2012 timeline, the RFA Executive Committee took under advisement the expansion of the current RFA to include all UWM retirees.
- In December of 2011, UWM approved a policy entitled, “Annuitant Privileges” (SAAP S-61, located at: https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_61_Annuitant_Privileges.pdf). This ensures that all retirees continue to have internet/email access and retain their UWM ID Card (enabling use of several UWM facilities requiring an UWM ID card). For details: <http://uwm.edu/iam/services/epantheraccount-services/annuitant-epantheraccount-terms-of-service/>.

- In Spring of 2012, a study was done to review other higher education institutions that have retiree groups/associations. The majority were inclusive of all institutional retirees.
- In May 2012 at the annual RFA meeting/luncheon, the members approved opening up the RFA to all UWM retirees, effective immediately. Our name was also changed to the UWM Retirees Association (UWMRA).
- The executive committee is further considering modifications with respect to its composition and committee structure. The “Newsletter Editor” position is being redefined as our “News” moves to primarily on-line/WEB media.
- As of 2015, we have had broad-based representation from all employment ranks among members of our Executive Committee.
- While public support (general purpose revenue, or GPR) for higher education has decreased, UWM continues to complete and also start capital projects (eg the KIRC – Kenwood Institutional Research Center, the NW Quadrant – the original Columbia Hospital, and Innovation Park at the Milwaukee County Grounds-Wauwatosa).
- The UWMRA has witnessed increases in membership with retirements from our ranks on campus. Programming and informational venues catered to UWM Retirees continues to evolve as interests dictate.
- In Spring of 2017, UWMRA will launch a new website as well as a presence on Facebook.

Bardell, Eunice Bonow (1986). *The Retired Faculty Association of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1961-1986*. Milwaukee (WI), Unpublished monograph, UWM Golda Meir Libraries Archives, AC 126, Folder #3 (“History 1986”).

Information from 1986 to date was taken from various sources including RFA Minutes, Annual “Newsletters/Directories,” financial reports, and related material. These materials are located within the UWM Golda Meir Libraries Archives. Material from the last year is on our website as well (eg Minutes).