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Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner

Summary: Ten employees with nearly 300 years of combined service at the University of Minnesota, Morris will be honored during the annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner to be held Thursday, April 30.

(April 20, 2009)-Ten employees with nearly 300 years of combined service at the University of Minnesota, Morris will be honored during the annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner to be held Thursday, April 30. A UMM Retirees Association reception will be held at 4:30 p.m. at LaFave House. A dinner will begin at 6 p.m. in Oyate Hall of the campus Student Center.

In addition to the retirees, those who have received the following awards will also be recognized: UMM Alumni Association Teaching Award - Bradley Deane, associate professor of English, Mary Martelle Memorial Awards – Nathan Giles, student recipient, Carol McCannon, staff recipient, Outstanding Staff Awardees - Linda Pederson, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Carol McCannon, Civil Service, and Mark Staebler, Teamsters, and the Morris Academic Staff Award - Henry Fulda, assistant vice chancellor, Office of Student Affairs, and counselor, Student Counseling.

Pre-dinner piano music will be provided by senior Kati Hamlin, Springfield. Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson will welcome the dinner guests. Thomas McRoberts, director, Continuing Education, Regional Programs, Summer Session, Center for International Programs, and Center for Small Towns, will give closing remarks.

Here’s a brief profile of each faculty and staff who will be retiring from the Morris campus this year:

James “Doc” Carlson ’65, professor of music, began his campus career in 1978. An obvious change today in comparison to his earliest days: the campus didn’t have a jazz program when he arrived. Over the past 31 years, he taught a variety of classes, including American Jazz Styles, Jazz Combo, Jazz Ensemble, Music Methods, Trumpet, and Brass and Percussion Techniques. He introduced a Multicultural Music course into the academic curriculum in 1995. In 1979, Carlson orchestrated an annual event that has become a defining campus characteristic and tradition: Jazz Fest. Carlson received the Horace T. Morse-Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education in 1993. In 2000, he received the UMM Faculty Distinguished Research Award and was named Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA) Educator of the Year. In 2006, Carlson was inducted into the MMEA Hall of Fame. He knows what he will miss the most when he leaves Morris: “The caliber of students we have…they’re extremely bright, hardworking, conscientious, and delightful to work with!” Carlson earned a doctorate in music education at Indiana University in 1972 and received a master of arts in music from Moorhead State College in trumpet performance in 1968.

Kay Carlson ’65, teaching specialist, taught part-time Piano and Organ at Morris from 1965 until 1967 and also served as the full-time Bookstore manager. She taught piano at Manchester College in Indiana from 1970 until 1973, returning to the Morris campus in 1978. At Morris, she served as head of piano studies and taught Piano, Organ, Harpsichord, Class Piano, Music Theory Keyboard Lab, and Piano Pedagogy. She also taught private piano lessons everywhere they
have lived. “I’ll miss our terrific UMM students,” says Carlson, although, she adds, “I will not miss Minnesota winters!”

The Carlsons, Jim and Kay, both retire from Morris this year. They will move to Florida, where she will continue to teach piano.

Janie Klein, executive office and administrative specialist, began her campus career in Health Services in January 1992—“in the middle of the school year.” A licensed practical nurse, her duties were many—making appointments, answering telephones, transcribing dictation, helping doctors with student patients, and receptionist duties, just “like a clinic.” She identifies technology as a major change from her first days on campus: “No more typing on the typewriter and then having to retype as changes were made. The fax machine also made our work easier rather than sending documents to the doctors by regular mail.” Klein received nurses training at the then North Dakota State School of Science in Wahpeton, North Dakota, and at Dakota Hospital in Fargo, North Dakota. Klein will miss Morris students and the doctors who serve Health Services. “I enjoyed working with them,” she says. Klein’s retirement plans include spending more time at the lake, as well as more time with three grandchildren, other family members and friends.

Tom Mahoney ’74, director of grants development, began his Morris career as co-founder of the Morris campus Drug Information Center and as a junior scientist on Professor of Psychology Eric Klinger’s Project on Fantasy, a federally funded research project. Mahoney’s contributions to campus during his career include: founding the grants development office helping guide the campus from minimal external grant activity in 1980 to significant external funding success today service on numerous campus and University-wide committees, task forces, and the University Senate and helping establish the Morris Academic Staff Association. Mahoney received many awards including the Outstanding Civil Service Award and the inaugural Morris Academic Staff Award. He holds a bachelor of arts in psychology.

Where a tree grows in Morris,

Carol McCannon ’80, an associate administrator, was probably standing beside the student who planted it. McCannon began her Morris career as a student herself, then as a recruiter of students in the Office of Admissions, and finally as one who nurtures and supports community service and volunteerism in the Office of Student Activities. It is no surprise what she will miss the most after 33 years of employment. “Students, of course,” she says. “Faculty have the honor of teaching our students. I have had the honor and privilege of learning from them.” McCannon energetically worked with students and others to coordinate projects such as community meals tree plantings Performing Arts performances Convocations lectures Grandview Apartment window washings Tots for Tots, Salvation Army, and Adopt-a-Family. McCannon “made it happen” over the years students with whom she’s worked say she’s “made it look effortless.” She received the Student Activities Leadership Award, the University of Minnesota Outstanding Community Service Award, and the 2009 Mary Martelle Memorial and Outstanding Staff Awards. She holds a bachelor of arts in English from the University of Minnesota, Morris.

Mike Miller, coordinator of cultural programs, began his campus career in 1987 as a counselor in the Multi-Ethnic Student Program (MSP), then the Minority Student Program. He recently served as MSP interim assistant director. He played a key role in long standing campus traditions such as the annual World Touch Cultural Heritage Week and the annual Powwow. Miller describes his years at Morris as “challenging and enjoyable.” Although missing students, MSP staff, and UMM staff since retiring in December 2008, Miller’s days are filled with his children and grandchildren, “The Price is Right,” and developing a “new, different kind of goal” for the rest of his life. Miller earned a master of social work in community development from the Duluth campus, and a bachelor of science in business from Appalachian State University. He completed extensive graduate work in pre-doctoral research and educational administration on the Twin Cities campus.

Tim Ray ’91, electronics technician, began his Media Services career in 1978. A Minneapolis Vocational and Technical Institute’s electronics program graduate, he also holds a University of Minnesota bachelor of science in political science and secondary education licensure. His responsibilities include repair and maintenance of most of the campus’s audio visual and sound systems. When he arrived at Morris, computers were virtually nonexistent. Today, technology plays a major role in his work. Being responsible for sound systems allowed him to meet famous people like Ralph Nader, but his fondest memories focus on campus people, especially theatre and dance faculty. In 1991, he earned a bachelor of arts in theatre—a perfect complement to his technical background. Ray will direct “The Buddy Holly Story” this summer for the Prairie Wind Players, a theatre company he and wife Kathy established in 1978. This fall, they will live and work in
the U.S. Virgin Islands through an exchange program, and next winter they will “house sit” in the Twin Cities and “pick up some theatre work.” Future plans also include: a year on the road in an RV as much theatre as possible gardening playing guitar and staying healthy.

Judy Riley, principal informational representative, shares that since 1988, technology has significantly shaped University Relations’ communication tools, but the mission of her role as the campus communications coordinator remains unchanged: to share the news about students, faculty, staff, events, programs and initiatives, and to forge media and community relationships. She remembers: “When I first started, we typed news releases, printed them at Duplicating Services, then hand stuffed them in envelopes, pasted on address labels and mailed them. Today, most communication is electronic and technology is ever evolving, however, the importance of one-on-one conversations and developing relationships with colleagues, in media and in the community, should never be ‘old school.’” Riley will miss “our smart, outstanding students. They keep me young and those who worked in University Relations still keep in touch. They live outstanding, successful lives, some in media. It’s awesome.” Riley looks forward to life without “meetings and the regimen of a daily schedule.” She will fill her days with friends and family and freelance writing. An alumna of the School of Journalism on the University’s Twin Cities campus, she received the Mary Martelle Memorial Award in 1997.

The campus history of Lynn Schulz ’68, informational technology professional, begins as a student worker under Pearl Johnson’s supervision in the Louie’s Lower Level in Behmler Hall. A math major, his first exposure to computers and computer programming occurred as a commissioned Navy ensign responsible for tracking satellites. After moving back to Minnesota in 1974, he visited Pearl, who asked if he knew about the campus opening for a programmer. She called Andy Lopez, then director of computing services, who interviewed the résumé-less Schulz the same day. “When I began,” Schulz remembers, “we entered programs on punch cards through card readers. We read the card decks locally into Twin Cities’ machines, and the output printed on a local printer. The first campus computer was a data entry system, the size of a washing machine, with a total disk capacity of 5 mg for programs and 5 mg for data. Today, I carry a flash drive that holds 20 gig of data and my computer stands on my desk!” Schulz’s cherished memories all relate to people: his dear friend Pearl former chancellor Jack Imholte “dropping in” in his office former chancellor David Johnson’s people skills and the “people in the trenches.” As he retires from his current position in the lower level of Behmler Hall, he says: “It has been a privilege to work with the people keeping UMM operating on an even keel.” Schulz looks forward to playing accordion at area senior facilities, working on projects around the house, and fishing with his grandchildren and wife.

James Van Alstine, professor of geology, began his Morris career in 1974. When he arrived, students earned a geology degree as an “option two” or a designed major. He and the late Clemens “Johnny” Brauer, professor of geology, developed the curriculum that led to the official major. Van Alstine developed the geology field camp program in the 1980s. Today, geology students study in a facility specifically designed for the discipline. Van Alstine is proud of the current facilities, although stories from earlier years always bring a smile: “Geology never had real facilities until the science building renovation. We used facilities ‘borrowed’ from other disciplines and received lots of complaints when we dropped rocks on the third floor. The rock cutting room was in the old P.E. Annex dressing room.” Van Alstine plans to spend more time hunting and fishing with wife Sharon and four grandsons, and at West Central Environmental Consultants, Inc. He says: “Morris has been a great place to both work and to live. This college and this town have given me and my family everything we need.” Van Alstine holds a doctorate in paleontology and a master of science in paleontology and stratigraphy from the University of North Dakota and an undergraduate degree in geology from Winona State University. In 1983, he received the Horace T. Morse-Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.