Operating Staff Names Outstanding Service Award Recipients

Four members of NIUs Operating Staff have been chosen to receive the Outstanding Service Award for 2009. The recipients are Cliff Alexis, co-director of the NIU Steel Band in the School of Music; Angela Euhus, assistant to the chair in the Department of Management; Bill Finucane, manager of the Department of Transportation; and Barbara Rice, administrative assistant for Human Resource Services.

More than 1,700 employees make up the Civil Service staff. Each year, four are selected by a committee of their peers to receive the award of plaques and $1,500. They were honored at the Annual Service Awards Banquet Thursday, May 14.

Here is a closer look at the recipients.

Cliff Alexis
Co-director, NIU Steel Band, School of Music

Neither time nor temperature can keep Cliff Alexis from his appointed rounds as a master builder and tuner of steelpans especially if the NIU Steel Band can avoid steep shipping costs. Such dedication can be seen when he often spends 10- to 15-hour long days tuning the NIU Steel Bands instruments in an impecable fashion before many of its concerts off and on campus, said Liam Teague, co-director of the band. He has gone so far as to build instruments in the sweltering heat of Trinidad.

Employed at NIU since 1986, Alexis is equally regarded for his performance, teaching, composing and arranging skills on the instrument of his homeland, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. He has appeared with several university ensembles and played and presented at Elgin Community College, the Birch Creek Music Center, the Singapore Festival of the Arts and the National Institute of the Arts in Taiwan.

His composition Pan 2000 helped NIU earn second place at the 2000 World Steelband Festival. Alexis won the Trinidad and Tobago Folk Arts Institute Award for his contribution to the development and education of the steelpan in the United States. Pan Trinbago (the governing body of steelpan) and the government of Trinidad and Tobago bestowed similar recognition for expanding the pans global reach.

He is a member of the Sunshine Hall of Fame and has a lifetime achievement award from the World Steelband Festival. He also was one of the first members of the National Steel Orchestra of Trinidad and Tobago in 1964.

He is nothing short of a wizard, colleague Greg Beyer said, and something of a genius.

Angela Euhus
Assistant to the Chair, Department of Management

Angela Euhus made an extraordinary choice to work at a school when she joined the university 27 years ago. Her response is consistently positive whenever faced with issues not easily resolved: You know I like to learn new things.

Her attitude is always, always, always How can I help you? said Sarah J. Marsh, chair of the Department of Management. In the rare circumstances when she doesn’t know the answer, she
outstanding service award recipients (cont.)

takes the challenge on with energy and enthusiasm. She digs and digs and digs until she gets the answer she needs, and then closes the loop by sharing that information with relevant parties.

Angie will drop what she is doing, added management professor Lynn Neeley, telephone a few people and, remarkably, the problem will be solved.

Praised for her commitment, speed, accuracy and efficiency, Euhus is the go-to person for all matters administrative. She’s also known for her compassion, recently attending grief counseling with colleagues and friends who lost husbands and coming to the aid of a Barsemi Hall custodian with turmoil in her family life.

She’s a Move-In Day fixture and a frequent face at College of Business events, including the annual Hot Dog Day. Away from work, she has served on the board of directors for the Children’s Learning Center, has taught Sunday School, has led several parent-teacher organizations in Dekalb and planned Post Prom for DeKalb High School.

Angie possesses the qualities most organizations would pay any amount of money to find in their employees, professor Stephanie Henagan said, including dependability, conscientiousness and a positive attitude.

Bill Finucane
Manager, Department of Transportation
When NIU needs a ride, it calls Bill Finucane.

Finucane oversees operations for nearly 250 vehicles, including their purchase, scheduling and maintenance, and manages 11 full-time employees.

The 30-year employee who started as extra help in 1975 is a leading force in transforming NIU’s fleet into the largest green fleet in Illinois. He works tirelessly to ensure his operation is fiscally efficient and sound, including negotiations for low fixed rates for gasoline.

But its Finucane’s calm, helpful and patient demeanor, and his commitment to safety, that resound most.

During our annual high school speech camp last summer, the weather was quite bad, said Judy Santacaterina, director of NIU forensics events. On three different occasions, Bill was able to provide us with buses on short notice to make sure that all our high school students and staff made it safely back to the residence halls.

Bill was first on the scene as the sky began to darken and the tornado sirens started to blare on Opening Day 2007, added Kelly Wesener, assistant vice president for Student Services.

After Feb. 14, Finucane drove President John Peters to the funerals for the five fallen students. He coordinated transportation for the families of the killed and injured as they attended memorial events and for the legion of counselors brought to campus.

Finucane, a double NIU alum with a masters degree in public administration and a passion for Huskie sports, is active in Kiwanis and chairs the DeKalb Citizens Environmental Commission. He also serves on the board for the Volunteer Action Center, the board of advisers for NIU’s public administration program and manages the annual girls soccer tournament for DeKalb High School.

Barbara Rice
Administrative Assistant, Human Resource Services
Everyone in Human Resource Services is committed to NIU’s employees.

Barbara Rice, a member of the NIU family since 1998, elevates her commitment above and beyond.

Among Rices many duties, which include being the voice of supervisor and colleague Steve Cunningham and managing his busy schedule, is service to the university’s shared governance.

She coordinates annual faculty and staff recognition ceremonies that sometimes honor a collective 1,000 employees.

Each spring, Barb becomes the field marshal of functions. She organizes all the details, from invitations and guest lists, scripts, menus, decorations and job responsibilities for many of us who also work at these events, said Deborah Haliczer, director of employee relations. It is a massive undertaking, like organizing a wedding for several hundred people each and every year.

Barb’s work on these events greatly exceeds the level of anticipated responsibility, Cunningham said, and is a true representation of her dedication to our employees and staff councils.

Lauded for her friendly strength, calm, fortitude and integrity, Rice is always prepared to staff meetings, committees and advisory panels. She coordinates several HRS events and helps to produce the annual supplier diversity fair.

Since 2000, she has coordinated the university’s annual campaign through the State Employees Charitable Appeal.

Away from work, Rice has been a Sunday School teacher, church choir member and on stage or backstage at community theater plays. She supports Hope Haven and Safe Passage and prepares homemade chicken soup for friends and family who are ill.

employment changes

February 2009
Welcome New Employees
Michael Freske, Housekeeper—Conference Services
Pamela Kombrink, Office Support Specialist—Political Science
Samanta Pastorik, Building Service Worker—Building Services
Laurel Slack, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer and Nutrition

Changes
Kathy Gibbs to Office Manager—Alumni Services
Courtney Harms to Admissions/Records Supervisor—Registration and Records
Stacy Jackson to Office Support Specialist—College of Health and Human Sciences
Patricia Lee to Office Support Associate—Recreation Services
Heather Mashare to Office Support Specialist—Mathematical Sciences
Linda Novotny Roth to Office Support Specialist—Health Enhancement
Jennifer Ridge to Administrative Aide—College of Health and Human Sciences
Marianne Spring to Administrative Assistant I—Student Affairs
Ebony Winfield to Staff Clerk—Recreation Services

Changes in Title
Shaun Allshouse to Graphic Design Assistant—University Press
Barbara Ball to Graphic Design Associate—Biological Sciences
Neil Cowell to Graphic Designer—Media Services
Julia Fauci to Graphic Design Manager—University Press
Barbara Kolb to Graphic Designer—Publications
Marjorie Lee to Graphic Design Associate—Publications
Michael Mackey to Graphic Designer—Media Services
Holly Nicholson to Graphic Design Assistant—Media Services
Mariano Spizzirri to Graphic Design Manager—Media Services
Jeffrey Strom to Graphic Design Manager—Publications
Sophia Varcados to Graphic Designer—Media Services

Retirement
Susan Brown, Account Technician II—Bursar

Separations
Gary Butterfield, Jr., Chief Clerk—Customer Support Services
Christian Garcia, Stationary Fireman Helper—Physical Plant

March 2009
Welcome New Employees
Charles Bagot, Financial Aid Adviser I—Student Financial Aid
Sonia Fagan, Clerical Assistant—President’s Office
Alexandra Galindo, Office Support Specialist—Educational Technology and Research Assessment
John Kearns, IT Technical Associate—Information Services
Kim Toesam, Electronics Engineer Assistant—Chemistry and Biochemistry
Sherril Klimpke, Kitchen Helper—Housing & Dining
Annemarie Oelschlager, Anthropology Curator I—University Libraries

Changes
Patricia Fisher to Administrative Assistant I—Student Affairs
Martha Jacobson to Cook’s Helper—Housing & Dining
Linda Washington to Image Processing Technician II—Registration and Records

Department Changes
Diana Caldwell, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Enrollment Services
Manette Cook, Financial Aid Adviser II to Enrollment Services
Rebecca Erhart, Financial Adviser II to Enrollment Services
Paula Root, Chief Clerk to Enrollment Services
William Sarafin, Business Manager II to Information Security and Operations
Elizabeth Sloan, Clerk to Enrollment Services
Charlene Smith, Account Technician II to Bursar

Retirements
Karen Feltz, Accountant I—Bursar
Andrea Larson, Office Manager—Housing & Dining
Robert White, Storekeeper III—Materials Management

Separations
Sonya Hetzel to Sonya Frederick, Program Administrative Assistant—College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
Dora Irons-Welch to Dora Welch, Collections Specialist I—Bursar

Retirements
Karen Feltz, Accountant I—Bursar
Andrea Larson, Office Manager—Housing & Dining
Robert White, Storekeeper III—Materials Management

Separations
Sonya Frederick, Program Administrative Assistant—College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
Hyder Mohammed, Police Officer—Public Safety
Deborah O’Dell, LAN Support Specialist II—Career Services
Kara Romanski, Police Telecommunicator—Public Safety
Shun Stone, Police Officer—Public Safety

Service Awards
February 2009
10 Years
Kathleen Morisette—Student Financial Aid
Bonnie Seebach—Campus Parking
Peggy Simonds—Alumni Services
Jennifer Withers—Electrical Engineering

15 Years
Robert Bankie—Media Services

20 Years
Nellie Davis—University Libraries
Charles Gautcher—Physical Plant
Clifford Golden—University Libraries
Emmylou Studier—Registration and Records
David Vespa—Physical Plant

25 Years
Steven Clark—Heating Plant
Jill Draves—Teaching and Learning
Karyn Lovell—Document Services
Jeffery Sherman—Bursar
April 2009

5 Years
Debra Brust—Chance Program

10 Years
Ronald Bisplinghoff—Media Services
Diane Faber—Campus Parking
Marsha Hogeveen—Student Financial Aid
Danell Nixon—Document Services
Judy Waterfield—Registration and Records

15 Years
Jeffery Montgomery—Physical Plant
Stuart Roach—Materials Management

20 Years
Robert Besonen—Information Services
Susan Carter—College of Visual and Performing Arts
Karen Clifton—Public Safety
Frederick Kelly—Information Services
Guy Lacombe—Physical Plant
Andrew Small—Chemistry and Biochemistry
Stanley Turner—Holmes Center Game Rooms

25 Years
Mitchell Saari—Building Services
Janice Vander Meer—English

30 Years
Kathleen Krolo—Art
Tonia Morris—Housing & Dining
Linda Tucker—Teaching and Learning

May 2009

5 Years
Scott Haas—Motorcycle Safety
April Kaiser—Campus Child Care
Debra Woolbright—University Libraries

10 Years
James Barry—Holmes Center Custodial
Terence O’Connor—Physical Plant
John Schlieben—Physical Plant

15 Years
Julie Bowen—Insurance and Employee Benefits
Neil Colwell—Media Services
Timothy Heitter—Psychology
Nathan Johnson—Network Support
James Latimer—Grounds
Paul McMenamin—Physical Plant

20 Years
David Bunger—Building Services
Dean Cornell—Physical Plant
Rebecca Ehrhart—Enrollment Services
Dianne Gautcher—College of Visual and Performing Arts
Kenneth Kamm—University Libraries
Michael Pottinger—Building Services
Elizabeth Zarek—Parking Services

25 Years
Rebecca May—Procurement Services

30 Years
Patty Bittner—Housing & Dining
Janet Irving—Registration and Records

50/50 Raffle Winner

The 50/50 winner from the Benefits Choice Fair was Jeanne Meyer, Police Sergeant in Public Safety.

Jeanne won $25 and normally that would put $25 into our Staff Dependent Award Scholarship fund. However, Jeanne put her share of the money into the scholarship fund too. Thank you for your generosity Jeanne!