Operating Staff Announces Outstanding Service Award Recipients

Four members of NIU’s Operating Staff have been chosen to receive the Outstanding Service Award for 2009. The recipients are Marcia Dick, a Senior Library Specialist in the Reference Department of the University Libraries; Jennifer Gregory, Office Support Specialist in the School of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders; Lee Ann Henry, Administrative Assistant I in University Advancement; and Lenita Hepker, Administrative Assistant I in the Office of the Dean of the College of Business.

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 a Thursday, May 6, banquet.

Here is a closer look at the recipients.

Marcia Dick
Senior Library Specialist, University Libraries

Students with disabilities have a true friend in Marcia Dick. Dick is the coordinator of services for students with disabilities at Founders Memorial Library; it was her innovation to hire undergraduates with hearing, visual and other impairments to staff the Information Desk.

She manages Room 102, home to many kinds of assistive technology, where she helps students with disabilities to conduct online searches. Her work on a Center for Access-Ability Resources grant resulted in nearly $10,000 worth of computers and software for the library’s new assistive technology room.

Jennifer Gregory
Office Support Specialist, School of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders

In a school where students train for careers in health care, Jennifer Gregory prescribes the course schedule, runs triage for students and faculty in need and performs wizard-like first aid on office machines. Her service with a smile – always current, always accurate – makes her...
the first person anyone contacts for help. The phrase “I don’t know” is not in her vocabulary.

Gregory makes time to support every student who visits the school’s main office, showing genuine compassion and concern when they are anxious and upset about admissions, scheduling conflicts and grades.

“She takes time that she doesn’t really have to offer comfort, support and the type of assistance these students need to calm down and resolve the issues,” says Sherrill Morris, an associate professor in the school. “She never tells anyone she doesn’t have time, even when she should.”

When faculty bring complaints, such as classrooms lacking computers or environments conducive to effective teaching and learning, the nine-year NIU employee goes beyond her job description to fix those problems.

Her commitment to the school extends to the Communicative Disorders Student Association, for which she helps students reserve rooms.

She also handles a multitude of logistics for the school’s annual certificate training programs on deafness and deaf-blindness. During those events, her extra-mile attitude has taken eyeglasses for repair, picked up medication for a guide dog with a skin allergy and obtained kosher food.

In her hometown of Rochelle, she is involved with Special Olympics and a supporter of the Girl Scouts.

Lee Ann Henry
Administrative Assistant I, University Advancement

Lee Ann Henry’s colleagues have a nickname for her: Oz. As in “The Wizard of …”

Also known as the division’s glue and the first and best source of information, Henry handles numerous responsibilities as administrative assistant to Vice President Michael P. Malone with ease and professionalism.

Her key role in the complex preparations for transporting hundreds of top donors to recent bowl games made her victorious with those constituents.

She also is happy to make the needs, problems and questions of others her priority, no matter if the task is stuffing holiday cards or wrapping presents.

“Lee Ann is the type of person who doesn’t just tell people who they need to call for the answer; she tracks down the answer for them,” advancement colleague Diane Johnson says. “If asked for directions somewhere, Lee Ann won’t simply tell you how to get there. She will be walking beside you, making sure you reach your destination.”

As the university’s liaison to the NIU Annuitants Association, Henry maintains membership records for 1,250 retirees, 405 current employees and 152 spouses/partners. She recruits new members, processes their applications and interacts on the group’s behalf with NIU’s payroll department and the State Universities Annuitants Association.

The 14-year employee also served on the Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities and was a member of the Feb. 14 memorial committee.

In her hometown of Rochelle, she’s active with the Ogle County Hospice Society and the local MS society, organizing a team of walkers called “Henry’s Heroes.”

Lenita Hepker
Administrative Assistant I, College of Business

Among 139 employees and nearly 4,000 students in NIU’s College of Business, Lenita Hepker wears many crowns.

The go-to person. The most-trusted person. The person who is caring, organized, creative and tireless. The mentor. The true leader. The center of the college’s community and culture.

“As dean of a large college, I must be very careful who I confide in, yet I often need someone to share with and get advice from,” Dean Denise Schoenbachler says. “Lenita has become one of very few people I can trust 100 percent. I trust her above most anyone else. I also have learned that she has amazing insight into people and problems.”

Hepker has created a culture of professionalism in the dean’s office, building and maintaining good relationships across campus.

An NIU employee since 1997, she’s always happy to take on extra administrative duties. She cheerfully joined the college’s Strategic Action Group to “break down silos” between departments, organizing research breakfasts for faculty and creating (and continuing to produce) a “face of the week” e-mail newsletter.

Hepker manages meetings of the College of Business Board of Executive Advisors and the dean’s Student Advisory Board and supports students in the Business Careers House.

She also is proud to provide a voice for staff through membership on NIU’s Administrative Professionals Advisory Council.

In her hometown of Sycamore, Hepker is active with Sycamore United Methodist Church and Kiwanis. She also served many years with DeKalb County 4-H, the Sycamore Pumpkin Festival and as a “Big Sister.”

EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

February 2010

Welcome New Employees
Danielle Mikos, Office Support Associate—Health Services

Changes
James Bollenbach to Media Technical Services Manager—Media Services
Herbert Kaelin to Stationary Fireman—Physical Plant
Richard Lovell to Assistant Chief Plant Operating Engineer—Physical Plant
Jeffery Montgomery to Pipewitter—Physical Plant
Rebecca Notes to Ambulatory Care Assistant—Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
Rolf Oxnevad to Painter Foreman—Physical Plant

Name Change
Kimberly Rains to Kimberly Mammen, Building Service Worker—Building Services

Retirements
Ted Bachman, Accountant III—Controller
James Boyes, Carpenter—Physical Plant
Gary Grendahl, Storekeeper II—Physical Plant
Sally Kerbel, Cook’s Helper—Housing & Dining
Nancy Ludwig, Accountant II—Controller
Wallace Powers, Stationary Engineer—Physical Plant

Separations
Matthew Barker, Kitchen Helper—Housing & Dining
March 2010

Welcome New Employees
Crystal Edsall, Office Support Associate—Theatre and Dance
John Fudacz, IT Support Associate—College of Business
Samantha Myers, Collections Specialist II—Bursar
Michelle Nguyen, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer and Nutrition
Melissa Roseberg, Chief Clerk—Housing & Dining
Rachel Wilson, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer and Nutrition

Changes
Sherri Klimpke to Cook’s Helper—Housing & Dining
Peggy Simonds to Business Manager II—Alumni Services
Kathleen Wildenradt to Office Support Associate—Liberal Arts and Sciences External Programming

Death
Patricia Boehning, Office Manager—Student Involvement and Leadership Development

Department Changes
Lorelli Carlson, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Patricia Collin, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Carol Engel, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Cynthia Fahler, Admissions/Records Representative to Admissions
Lela Green, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Brenda Haines, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Carol Holdridge, Office Support Specialist to Admissions
Sheila Hoogkirk, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Lori Kocher, Admissions/Records Specialist II to Admissions
Sheetal Kumar, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Hope Montavon, Admissions/Records Specialist II to Admissions
Patti Schweitzer, Chief Clerk to Admissions
Kelly Turner, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Paula Vasko, Admissions/Records Specialist I to Admissions
Linda Washington, Image Processing Technician II to Admissions

Retirements
Eddie DeSpain, Building Service Worker—Building Services
Latasha Bennett, Building Service Worker—Building Services
Sarah Kakkuri, Child Development Associate—Campus Child Care

Separations
Linda Washington, Image Processing
Paula Vasko, Admissions/Records Specialist
Kelly Turner, Admissions/Records Specialist
Patti Schweitzer, Chief Clerk to Admissions

April 2010

Welcome New Employees
Anthony Chase, Storekeeper I—Materials Management
Andrzej Stolarski, Parking Services Agent I—Campus Parking
John Work, Admissions/Records Representative—Admissions

Changes
Nicholas Lowery to Office Support Specialist—Psychology

Change in Department
Sharon Banks-Wilkins, Administrative Assistant I to Vice President University Relations
Neil Colwell, Graphic Designer to Vice President University Relations
Patricia Erickson, Administrative Assistant I to Vice President University Relations
Mary Mickey, Office Administrator to Administration and University Outreach

Name Change
Amy Flavin to Amy Aeling, Housekeeping Supervisor—Holmes Student Center

Retirements
Ruth Taylor, Admissions/Records Specialist I—Registration and Records

Separations
Lorraine Greffe, Office Support Specialist—College of Law
Mary Lawrence, Office Support Specialist—Anthropology
Samantha Snyder, Clerical Assistant—Information Services

Service Awards
February 2010

5 Years
Janet Brown—Holmes Center Food Service
Daniel Mojica—Public Safety
Mercedita Sawyer—Building Services

10 Years
Michael Crase—Building Services
Linda Gahlbeck—Building Services
James Kunkel—Customer Support Services
Joseph Pastoris—Housing & Dining
Tammie Pulak—Building Services
Rhonda Richards—Building Services

15 Years
Patricia Adams—Customer Support Services
Terry Albright—University Legal Services
Nancy Ondera—Housing & Dining

20 Years
Elizabeth Sloan—Admissions
Tammy Stevens—College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Laura Wagner—Holmes Center Food Service

25 Years
Ronald Fuller—Heating Plant

30 Years
Betty Baugh—Center for Governmental Studies

March 2010

5 Years
Angelina Dybas—English
Adam Kuhn—Information Services
Robert Olle—Registration and Records

10 Years
Jeffrey Anderson—Heating Plant
Christine Berg—Housing & Dining
Deirdre Davis—Building Maintenance
Gregg Fieffer—Finance and Facilities
Terri Humes—University Libraries
Jeffrey Lang—Building Services
Tara Mitchell—Affirmative Action and Diversity Center
Patrick Sanchez—University Libraries
David Strozewski—Building Services
Dawn Taylor—Holmes Center Custodial
Lori Viereckl—Building Services

15 Years
Victoria Ortega—Holmes Center Custodial
Fredzie Pugh—Vice President Research and Dean of Grad School
Tammy Wilkerson—Biological Sciences

20 Years
Joseph Safranek—Building Services
Debra Thompson—Counseling, Adult, and Higher Ed

25 Years
C. Sue Brammerlo—College of Education
Susan Manlove—History
G. Scott Morris—Holmes Center Admin

30 Years
Freyja Rasmussen-Johns—Biological Sciences
April 2010

5 Years
Traci Cheeseman—Payroll and Compensation
Jayne Crosby-Lindner—University Libraries
Christy Gray—Public Safety
Richard Neubauer—Information Services
Rachelle Phillips—Holmes Center Bookstore

10 year Award
Patricia Arndt—College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Jeffrey Askins—Building Services

15 year Award
Carolyn Grzywa—Health Services
Rebecca Martin—Student Financial Aid
Jeffrey McCarthy—Network Support
Kevin Nodurft—Building Services
Heidi Rudolph—Theatre and Dance
Ernest Williams—Building Services

20 year Award
Judith Fisher—Literacy Education
Linda Odom—Finance and Facilities
Charles Walker—Building Services

25 year Award
Joseph Hodder—Public Safety
Paula McDowell—College of Education
Vance Moore—Information Security and Operations
Patti Schweitzer—Admissions

Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Recipients

One of the benefits for Operating Staff who have children attending NIU is the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship. It is given to two dependents each year who are or will be full-time students here at NIU working on an undergraduate or graduate degree with an overall GPA of 2.5 or higher. They will receive $250 for Fall and Spring semesters for that academic year for a total of $500.

This year’s first recipient is Evan Wittke. Evan is a senior at Indian Creek High School. He is ranked first in his class with a GPA of 3.92. He will major in Biology and minor in Chemistry at NIU to prepare him for a career in medicine. He would like to specialize in neurology. He is the senior class president, Academic Bowl captain and an Illinois State Scholar. He is a member of the National Honor Society and the school Chess Team. Evan is the son of Erwin and Marcia Wittke. Erwin is Food Service Chef at the Holmes Student Center.

Our second recipient is Jaclyn Zimmerman. Jaclyn is a senior at DeKalb High School with a GPA of 3.429. She will major in Theater Design at NIU. She is an Illinois State Scholar. She was inducted into theater’s Thespian Society last year with seven stars, which is awarded to those with the equivalence of 800 plus hours of time spent on theatrical productions. She is active in her church and its youth group. She is interested in Anime and Martial Arts. Jaclyn is the daughter of Ron and Stefanie Zimmerman. Stefanie is an employee of Materials Management and works in Campus Mail Services.