

TRITON COLLEGE ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION

**C/O Carol Bibly
1808 Jeanette Ave.
St. Charles, IL 60174**

**SPRING LUNCHEON
APRIL 18, 2017
INFORMATION INSIDE**

TCAA Spring Newsletter – 2017

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TRITON COLLEGE ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION

TCAA

April 2017

Web Site: www.triton.edu/tcaa

SPRING LUNCHEON – TUESDAY – APRIL 18, 2017

TIME: 11 AM - 2:00 PM

PLACE: Triton College

Second Floor – College Center Building – Hospitality Center
Room B 203 (Just left or north of Café)

COST: \$14.00 – Includes buffet, beverage, and dessert (TIP included)
Payable at the door (Lunch and Program)

PROGRAM

Registration B 203: 11:00 – 11:30 AM

Meet and Greet/Luncheon: 11:30 – 12:45 PM

Program and TCAA Business Information: 12:45 – 2:00 PM

PROGRAM TOPIC

“Obama, Trump, and the Economy”

Tom Porebski

Reservations

Carol Bibly, 708-466-1093 or
cbibly2002@yahoo.com

2. President's Message

Another year has gone by and very little has changed since the state's pension bill was declared unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court. The state is still in financial crisis. The Governor and Democrats in Springfield are still at odds as to how to fund and provide basic services to the people of Illinois. All the while, the state still owes the SURS pension fund about 100 billion dollars, a situation of the state's own making, as pointed out by the legal defense team we were able to recruit from the dues contributed by our SUAA chapter members. Obviously, this impasse cannot continue forever.

Under consideration is a general increase in state income taxes and the taxing of pensions. Recipients of the state's health care system will probably have higher co-pays and higher deductibles. All levels of education will receive less funding from the state which will result in fewer jobs for teachers and a reduction in other vital programs and services. And there is still no talk of a graduated income tax which would significantly increase the state's revenues. It's not a popular subject. Once again, the pensions we lawfully earned in good faith will be blamed for bankrupting the state's treasury. And the one thing we can be certain of is that our elected lawmakers will attempt to draw up yet another pension bill, this time with better hidden take-aways, which they hope will slip by our notice.

All of which makes it more crucial than ever that we remain well-informed and vigilant. We have our surrogate in place in Springfield who watches every move the General Assembly makes. Equally crucial is the need to increase our membership to add weight to whatever positions we may take vis a vis proposed legislation. Toward that end, the Triton College chapter of the SUAA will be setting up an information table in the campus cafeteria during faculty in-service days. On such occasions we invite members in good standing to preside at this table to encourage currently employed staff to unite with us by joining our ranks. It is their future, after all, that we are safeguarding. By remaining united, informed and vigilant we will prevail.

Michael Gong
President, TCAA

3. Minutes – October 18, 2016 – Fall Luncheon

The TCAA Fall Luncheon was held at Pescatore Palace. Members arrived around 11 AM to visit with friends and past associates.

At 11:45 AM Michael Gong, President, opened with a brief business meeting and asked the various executive committee members if they had any comments to share with members.

Ann Sullivan, Treasurer, stated that since we had a dues increase we were able to rebuild our finances from the past two years or more. The current balance for TCAA is about \$2,000.

Connie Allekian spoke about the latest letter from SUAAction committee asking individuals to consider helping SUAA in funding which will be used to work with legislators who are working to support our cause-pension rights and health benefits. She stressed how important it is for our members to contribute any amount to SUAAction and support their local legislators who are supporting us. This may be accomplished online by visiting SUAA.org or sent to SUAAction, 217 East Monroe Street, Suite 100, Springfield, IL. 62701, or by calling 217-523-4040 and speaking with someone in the office.

Ken Piwowar spoke about our website, Triton.edu/tcaa, and stated individuals should visit the site for current information about items which are happening within our pensions, health insurance, legislation, meetings, member news He mentioned the most current things we have placed on the website is information on the TRAIL process for open enrollment in the College Insurance Program, CIP; rates for HMO and PPO for 2017; Medicare open enrollment dates and current seminars for TRAIL being held in the Chicago area.

Michael thanked John Cadero for working with us at Triton in arranging the equipment needed for the presentation. He also thanked the staff from Triton A/V department coming to the restaurant for setting up the equipment for the presentation. Michael also mentioned SUAA is holding the fall board meeting in Bloomington and requested executive committee members to consider attending as he will not be able to attend. He stated how important it was to have at least two representatives in attendance from Triton College.

This meeting is taking place on November 21. It is about a 2 – 3-hour drive. The meeting place is just off the expressway so it is not difficult to find. If you can attend, please contact Michael. If two individuals attend he suggested you drive together.

After the Business meeting ended Michael introduced our guest speaker the President of Triton College – Mary-Rita Moore.

Mary-Rita Moore did some reflection on when she initially started at Triton as an Academic Advisor and how she remembered names and signatures of department chairs and coordinators from this time.

She was also the phone voice for Triton College for many years. She spoke with members in the audience and asked questions about the early times she spent at Triton, and how we all worked together. She reflected on many positive memories she had at Triton in the early part of her career and how much she enjoyed those times.

She began her talk on “Triton College: Campus Renewal and New Programs”.

This is the 3rd year of a 7-year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was developed by faculty, hourly staff, mid-managers, local community members, and administrators.

The three major areas of concern are:

1. Increase College Readiness
2. Improve College Completion and
3. Close Skill Gaps

She handed out a brochure which elaborated on each of the three items above and then spent some time covering each of them. She then spoke about the current demographics of Triton College.

1. Head count for the fall was 12, 389
2. In-District was 9,139
3. The majority of students at the school today are minorities.
4. African American- 14 %
5. Latino -38%
6. Caucasian – 38%

Fifty-two percent (52%) of credit students are on financial aid. The financial aid could be from the state, federal government, or private donations. Forty-two percent (42%) receive Pell Grants. As state funding has been lacking, a lot of the financing is coming from loans from Triton College.

There are currently 108 degree and certificate programs at Triton. Over the last eighteen months, eighteen new programs have been created. Some which were mentioned were Cyber Security, CISCO, Bio technician lab technician, Environmental Science, and Medical Assisting. The school staff is continuing to look for needs of the workforce to create new degree programs and certificate programs.

Fifty percent (50%) of the students profess they are planning to transfer to a four-year university or college. Currently twenty percent (20%) transfer on.

Mary-Rita spent time in discussing and showing pictures of new facility changes taking place on Triton's campus: East Campus Athletic campus; Demonstration Kitchen; Bakery and many more. Mary-Rita also spent some time speaking of Triton College Foundation and scholarships.

At this point Mary-Rita asked for questions from the floor:

One was on funding from the state and she stated they had received 27% of the funding from the state for school year 2016 and 30% for 2017 to date.

The last question dealt with the current number of employees at Triton – 1400 Employees.

Mary-Rita invited all members to come to campus to see the updates and take a tour of the new and updated facilities on campus.

Michal Gong, President, thanked Mary – Rita for being our guest speaker and for providing us an update about Triton. At 12:30 PM lunch was served. There were four entrees to select from, a mixed green vegetable, salad, coffee, soda, tea and a delicious piece of cake. Members enjoyed their meal and conversation with each other and the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

4. TCAA Membership & Member Information

Membership Chair Report

TCAA Board of Directors are actively informing Triton employee groups of SUAA and Triton's chapter (TCAA) and the importance of SUAA in all 49 chapters. Just for review for you, here is why it is important to continue your membership and important for current employees to join us:

"SUAA is the only advocacy organization that focuses solely on preserving retirement and healthcare benefits for employees, their spouses and their survivors for today and for tomorrow."*

SUAA (SUAA@suaa.org) is actively lobbying the legislature to prevent legislation from becoming law that would harm active and retired SURS members, such as attempts to change the "pension clause" in the Illinois Constitution. We need to continue to support these efforts by increasing membership so our voices are loud in support of keeping the benefits we all worked so hard for.

Spread the word to your colleagues, active and retired, as we work together for the common goal. Contact me (Carol Bibly – cbibly2002@yahoo.com) and I will be happy to send information to anyone interested.

Membership Activities

TCAA Board members attended the Faculty/Staff Meeting prior to the beginning of the spring semester at Triton. Approximately 30-40 attendees filled out forms and will receive information about TCAA's activities. Constantine Netisingha won the raffle for a new gift membership. Additional recent members are Debra Rodriguez and Tom Olson. Recent member renewals include John Augustine, Herman Dittrich, and John Torpy.

Member News

Carol Bibly received the following note from Becky Banner (Hospitality).

"One of these luncheons I will find my way from the mountains to Illinois. Give my best to the group there and let them know if anyone is planning to travel to Asheville, North Carolina to let me know (Rebecca Banner, beccabanner@gmail.com). I have a few vacation rentals that may have some availability if they are looking for a place to stay. Here is a line to one – www.vrbo.com/169068."

Always nice to hear from members who live out of our area.

5. TCAA Website Information - Please check our website (www.triton.edu/tcaa) for more information concerning the following; Communications (Organizational Minutes, Previous Newsletters), Health & Insurance, In Memoriam, Legislative News, Membership Application, Photo Gallery, SUAA, and Updates from Members.

6. Quality of Life Segment – The following information comes from three health letters (Consumer Reports on Health, Focus on Healthy Aging, Mayo Clinic Health Letter). The information may not be new, but reminders and suggestions are always helpful.

NUTRITION

The new dietary guidelines suggest we focus on nutrient dense foods rather than highly processed foods by making small shifts in our current habits. For example, substituting whole grains (edible parts of grain such as bran, germ, and endosperm remain) for refined white bread, cereals, pasta, or rice. Increasing fruits and vegetables by adding fruits to our cereals or including vegetables in our scrambled eggs. Also as we age our sense of thirst declines, so including times to drink water would help to avoid potential dehydration. An article on food myths suggests that the natural sugars in whole fruit are processed differently than added sugars because the fiber in fruit minimizes the sugar's impact on blood sugar. Another myth is that white vegetables (cauliflower, mushrooms, turnips) have little nutritional value. These have anti-cancer and immune-boosting benefits. Another myth – “Peanut butter is too fattening to be healthy.” – appears to only be true if you use too much. Other butters (almond butter and cashew butter) were also recommended.

SLEEP

Aging tends to reset our internal clock to an earlier time. Consider napping earlier in the day or spending the last few hours of daylight outside to prolong wakefulness. Perhaps talk to your doctor about taking melatonin to facilitate sleep.

FITNESS

Try to incorporate elements of endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance in your regimen. Movement is a key. Since sitting for long periods has a negative effect on health, getting up during commercials would improve circulation. Consider using small weights as you sit in a chair to maintain muscle strength. Aim to walk 30 minutes each day but perhaps divide it up into three 10 minute segments. To avoid injury, start slow or increase activities gradually. There were several articles on the importance of reducing belly fat (especially fat that accumulates around the internal organs) which is strongly linked to elevated blood sugar, high blood pressure, and undesirable cholesterol levels. Emphasis on food portion control, using minimally processed plant foods, minimizing high calorie drinks, and of course increasing physical activity were stressed.

BRAIN FITNESS

One study suggested that physical activity could improve brain volume and reduce the risk for Alzheimer's disease by 50 percent. Recreational pursuits which got people moving such as dancing, gardening, walking, riding a stationary bike were stressed. Higher intensity exercises were more effective. The last comment by Dr. Gandy was, “If I could only give my patients and their families one prescription, it would be for 30 minutes of physical activity at least three times per week.”

5. TCAA Executive Committee for 2016 – 2018

President

Michael Gong
3709 Haas Avenue
Riverside, IL 60546
708-442-0265
mcgong@att.net

TCAA Director (TCAAction) Member at Large

Connie Allekian
7623 Sussex Creek Drive #407
Darien, IL 60561
630-986-9238

Vice-President

Mary Jeans
609 S. Humphrey Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60304
708-609-1899
friendlyscholar@sbcglobal.net

TCAA Director – Member at Large

Tom Bondi
5336 S. Sayre Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638
773-229-0226
Joan_Tom@comcast.net

Past President

Jens Nielsen
234 Forest Avenue
Itasca, IL 60143
630-773-2552
jensnielsen@comcast.net

TCAA Director (Legislative) Member at Large

“De” DeGrado
13153 Sage Court
Homer Glen, IL 60491
708-828-7260
degradoio@aol.com

Recording Secretary

Robert F. Witherspoon
564 Whitehall Way
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
630-985-6490
rfspoon@aol.com

TCAA Director (Webmaster) Member at Large

Ken Piwowar
6718 W. Thorndale
Chicago, IL 60631
773-827-8227
kenpiwowar@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer

Ann Sullivan
1700 N. Riverwoods Drive #614
Melrose Park, IL 60160
708-345-3374
anntsull@sbcglobal.net

Publication Editor

Bob Anthony
34W103 Wagner Road
Batavia, IL 60510
630-879-1475
banthony103@comcast.net

Membership Chair

Carol Bibly
1808 Jeanette Ave.
St. Charles, IL 60174
708-466-1093
cbibly2002@yahoo.com

Program Planner (Social Chair)

John Cadero (Triton College News/Information)
P. O. Box 35203
Elmwood Park, IL 60707
johncadero@yahoo.com