

# UDARF

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY



APRIL 2015

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Dear UDARF Members,

Spring is finally here, though some of us may have doubted it would ever come. Spring brings new life to our environment, so it is especially apropos that our May 5 luncheon speaker is our new interim University president, Nancy Targett, a marine environmentalist. Nancy will talk about where UD has been, is now, and will attempt to be in the future. She has been at UD for three decades and dean of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment for 10 years. Her Ph.D. is in oceanography from the University of Maine, and her research area has been that of a marine chemical ecologist.

Dr. Targett has served on the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council and the Consortium on Ocean Leadership. We look forward hearing her opinions about this University from the perspective of a top administrator of national significance.

On another note, remember to replace your University ID card with the new ONEcard if you intend to access the University Library or Carpenter Sports Building. The old card will cease to work on Dec. 31, 2015. If your card begins with 603052 and has a picture of Memorial Hall on the front, you must replace it. To procure a new card, you must go to the Student Services Building at 30 Lovett Ave., off of Academy Street, at which time you must surrender your old card. Their hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays, and until 7 p.m., Wednesdays. You do not need an appointment, but you may call them at 831-2273 if you need assistance. See you at the May luncheon!

*Best Wishes,  
Bob Taggart, President*



### ‘Maker of kings’

A new book by *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni titled *Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be* cites UD as a “power school” that has shaped prominent figures on the national political landscape. In his book, subtitled the “Antidote to the College Admissions Mania,” Bruni shows that the Ivy League has no monopoly on prestigious careers, and that students should consider the many other kinds of colleges and universities out there that are ideal springboards. He referred to UD as the “maker of political kings” in a recent interview on *CBS This Morning*, and mentioned Delaware by name in various other interviews, including on National Public Radio.

## Dean Watson discusses future of liberal arts education

When American novelist Mark Twain heard that his obituary had been published in a New York City newspaper he is reported to have quipped, “Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.”

George Watson, dean of UD’s College of Arts and Sciences, believes the same could be said about the perception that a liberal arts education is soon to be a thing of the past in American higher education.

Watson expressed his views on the subject during a talk at the March 3 UDARF luncheon meeting.

There is an increased skepticism over the value of a college degree that pervades the higher education landscape, with parents, students and the public expressing interest in the return on their investment of tuition dollars, Watson said.

“The value of a college degree is often measured in terms of a return on the investment, including the readiness of finding the first job and what the starting salary is,” Watson said. “While the readiness for liberal arts graduates for getting the first job is generally fine, there is a lot of discussion regarding the competitive starting salary of liberal arts graduates against that of graduates with more professionally oriented degrees.”

Concerns about the return on investment of tuition dollars are driven by the rising cost of a college education, increasing levels of student debt, unemployment challenges after graduation and an economy that is still weak while continuing to rebound, Watson said.

### Supporting the liberal arts education

Despite such concerns and press headlines that pose questions on the value of a liberal arts education, the news is not all grim, Watson noted.

“One of the things we are trying to do is to move the discussion from the first job out of college, which, for most students only lasts eight months, and focusing on the long term, sustainable career that you can develop with a liberal arts degree,” Watson said. “Evidence shows that in a lot of enterprises, the liberal arts person is the CEO in charge of the organization, so your boss most likely will come from the liberal arts.”

Proponents of the liberal arts education need to regularly explain the value proposition of the educational experiences and degrees offered, Watson said.

“This is not just in terms of getting a job, but also how graduates are able to think critically, communicate effectively and be productive members of society,” Watson said. “We in



*Dean George Watson discusses the future of liberal arts education.*

the College of Arts and Sciences lay claim to being the intellectual and cultural heart of the University. It’s in our strategic plan.”

Watson noted the importance of providing encouragement and support for innovative interdisciplinary collaboration across campus, and integrating research scholarship, service and engagement with the public into the student curriculum.

“Creative and progressive work is at the core of the liberal arts, and a liberal education is one of the core values of our college,” Watson said. “It really does lay the groundwork for lifelong success.”

As evidenced by its model in general education and majors, the College of Arts and Sciences employs a T-shaped approach, combining areas of in-depth study with specific

areas of interest and exposure to educational experiences across a wide range of academic fields, Watson noted.

“The higher order skills developed through the college experience help students get jobs and have a successful career,” Watson said. “What we are accomplishing with our students in four or five years really does depend less on what their major field is. We believe in that wholeheartedly in our college.”

### Why are the liberal arts important?

Exploring and understanding cultural, social, philosophical and historical issues can provide a framework for thinking about the future and the problems faced by society through creative thinking, Watson said.

“As leaders, graduates will need to identify the important problems that need to be solved,” Watson said. “Identifying these problems is just as important as solving them.”

Watson added that a liberal arts education affords students the opportunity to develop skills necessary to synthesize, contextualize and communicate information and to work with increasingly diverse groups of people.

“I believe that the liberal arts have a way of bridging boundaries, bringing us together, illuminating the human condition and reminding us, in a world where we’re frequently faced with issues that divide us, that we are all connected through our humanity,” Watson said. “The arts are also a critically important avenue to helping us engage students and audiences alike.”

*Article by Jerry Rhodes*

*Photo by Ambre Alexander Payne*

## Change in leadership

# Nancy Targett to serve as interim president, effective July 1

The University of Delaware Board of Trustees has selected Nancy Targett, dean of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment, to serve as interim president, effective July 1.

Current President Patrick T. Harker announced March 2 that he will step down June 30 to become president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.

“I am grateful to Dean Targett for agreeing to take on this important leadership role,” Board Chairman Gil Sparks said in making the announcement. “She has the experience, vision and commitment to lead UD as the search committee completes its important work. Over the next three and a half months, she will be working closely with President Harker to ensure a smooth transition in the administration.”

“Having dedicated more than 30 years of my professional life to the University of Delaware, I am honored to serve as interim president,” Targett said. “I look forward to working closely with the students, faculty and staff to build on the accomplishments of President Harker’s tenure and to prepare the way for the next president.”

Sparks also has announced the appointment of a search committee to identify the institution’s next president

“Our diverse 15-member search committee, cochaired by trustees Terri Kelly and Don Puglisi, includes representatives from key University constituencies, including the board, faculty, staff, students, parents and alumni,” Sparks said. “Together they bring to this critical task a deep knowledge of the University, an understanding of the world of higher education and a keen insight into the essentials of presidential leadership.”

### Presidential Search Committee

Members of the Presidential Search Committee are

- trustee cochairs **Terri Kelly**, president and CEO of W.L. Gore & Associates, and **Don Puglisi**, MBNA America Professor of Business Emeritus at UD and managing director of Puglisi & Associates;
- trustees **Tony Allen**, who leads corporate communications for Bank of America’s Consumer Banking and Business Banking divisions; **Carol Ammon**, founder and retired chief executive officer and chairman of Endo Pharmaceuticals Inc.; **Mariah Calagione**, vice president of the Dogfish Head companies; **Stuart Grant**, co-founder and managing director of Grant & Eisenhofer P.A.; **Mike Geltzeiler**, chief financial officer and senior vice president at the ADT Corp.; and **Mary Jane Willis**, vice chair of the Board of Trustees;
- student **Georgina Class-Peters**, a junior from Smyrna, Delaware, with a double major in criminal justice and political science;
- UD parent and alumnus **Fred Cottrell**, vice chair of the Litigation Department at Richards, Layton & Finger;
- faculty members **Debra Hess Norris**, chair of the Department of Art Conservation and Unidel-Henry Francis du Pont Chair of Fine Arts; **Babatunde Ogunnaike**, dean of the College of Engineering and William L. Friend Chaired Professor of Chemical Engineering; **Robert**

**Opila**, professor of materials science and engineering and president-elect of the Faculty Senate; and **Lynn Snyder-Mackler**, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Physical Therapy and Faculty Athletic Representative; and

- staff member **José-Luis Riera**, dean of students.

“I thank them all for their dedication to UD and willingness to serve in this important capacity,” Sparks said. “The trustees have asked the committee to proceed diligently and deliberately. The Search Committee’s goal is to bring to the Board of Trustees the best candidates to lead this University, not to meet an arbitrary timeline.”



Nancy Targett

### Nancy Targett

A member of the UD faculty since 1984, Targett has served as dean of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment (CEOE) and director of the Delaware Sea Grant College Program since 2005. CEOE has a global reach with research and teaching programs extending around the world and studies ranging from the upper atmosphere to the floor of the deep ocean. A nationally recognized expert on ocean issues, she is immediate past chair of the Board of Trustees of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership and is an officer of the Sea Grant Association, a national network of 32 Sea Grant College Programs.

### Patrick Harker

Harker announced his decision to step down as president effective July 1, in a message to the UD community, saying, “It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as president of this University. Working with our motivated students, illustrious faculty and dedicated staff has been inspiring, invigorating and unforgettable.

“Together we have accomplished much over the past eight years, facing challenges, crafting solutions, maximizing opportunities and ensuring the future of this noble institution,” he wrote.

Sparks said, “Pat Harker’s strong and thoughtful leadership has served the University of Delaware well through a period of considerable change in American higher education. We thank him for all he has done for the University and for the State, and I know my fellow trustees join me in wishing him well on his new endeavor.”

In his new role, Harker will serve as the 11th president and chief executive officer of the Philadelphia Fed. He has served as a non-banking Class B director of the Philadelphia Fed for the past three years.

As president, he will participate on the Federal Open Market Committee in the formulation of U.S. monetary policy, and will oversee 900 employees at the Philadelphia Fed.

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### In Memoriam

**Polly Bray**, a lecturer in the theatre department from 1975-82, died Dec. 23, 2014, at the age of 90. She was the widow of the late Dale F. Bray, who chaired UD's Department of Entomology and Applied Ecology from 1958-80.

**Robert G. Dean**, former Unidel Professor, died Feb. 28 in Gainesville, Florida, where he lived. He was 84. Dr. Dean served as Unidel Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering and the then College of Marine Studies from 1975-82. He was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1980.

**Steven K. Dentel**, a member of the civil and environmental engineering faculty since 1983, died Feb. 18, after a long struggle with prostate cancer. He was 63. Prof. Dentel was instrumental in the creation of an undergraduate major in environmental engineering at UD and was the founding adviser of the University's popular Engineers Without Borders chapter.

**Otilia Hoidal**, an instructor in foreign languages and literatures who taught Spanish, business and medical Spanish from 1978-96, died Jan. 24. She earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees at UD and led scores of students on cultural exchange trips to Costa Rica and Spain. She was 80.

**Rivers Singleton Jr.**, a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences from 1974 until his retirement in 2013, died Feb. 23, after a brief illness due to complications from multiple sclerosis. While at UD, his teaching and research interests spanned the sciences and humanities. He was 75.

**Richard P. Wool**, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering and director of the Affordable Composites from Renewable Sources (ACRES) laboratory, died unexpectedly March 24. A member of the UD faculty since 1994, he was a fellow of both the Royal Society of Chemistry and the American Physical Society, Division of High Polymer Physics. Dr. Wool was 67.

# UDARF

### In Brief

In celebration of UD Women's 100 Years, the annual Women of Promise dinner on March 12 honored three distinguished women: **Mae Carter**, former assistant provost for women's affairs and executive director of the Commission on the Status of Women; **Maxine Colm**, former vice president for administration; and **Judith Gibson**, former assistant vice president for affirmative action and multicultural programs.

The Board of Directors of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) has appointed **Louis ("Lou") Hirsh**, retired director of Admissions, to a two-year term as chair of NACAC's Admissions Practices Committee. His term begins Oct. 1, 2015. The Admissions Practices Committee monitors compliance with NACAC's Statement of Principles of Good Practice and proposes amendments to that document. NACAC's 14,000 membership includes secondary school counselors and college admissions officers throughout the United States and many countries overseas.

**Richard Davison**, professor emeritus of English, presented "A Visit With F. Scott Fitzgerald" on March 16 at the Newark Senior Center.

**Charles E. Robinson**, professor emeritus of English, delivered the 10th Leslie A. Marchand Memorial Lecture at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York City on March 13. His lecture, "Byron and Hazlitt: Inclining Their Ears Towards Each Other," was organized by The Byron Society of America, and it will be printed in a collection of these Marchand lectures edited by Kathy Kernberger to be published by the University of Delaware Press in 2016.

The late **A. Julian Valbuena**, Elias Ahuja Professor of Spanish at UD from 1960 until his retirement in 1999, was honored by the University of Murcia, Spain, where he received his "Licenciatura" (bachelor's.) degree. Two articles were published in his honor, written by Francisco Javier Diez de Revenga. The first, "Ángel Valbuena Briones, Tras La Estela de Calderón de la Barca," is available online at <http://www.udel.edu/002517> and shows his career and list of publications with accompanying photos. The second "Hispanistas murcianos en norteamérica, Angel Valbuena Briones. Discurso de apertura del Curso Académico de 2015," was published by the Real Academia Alfonso X El Sabio, 2015, pgs. 25-31. Dr. Valbuena died Feb. 5, 2014.

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C/O DANA BRITTINGHAM  
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
NEWARK, DE 19716

## LUNCHEON MEETING RESERVATION FORM

**Luncheon Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 5, 2015**  
**11:30 A.M., Clayton Hall**

**Reservations are due one week in advance  
of the luncheon.**

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ \$17.00

GUEST: \_\_\_\_\_ \$17.00

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Reservations can be made in either of two ways: by mail or electronically.

By mail: **Send check payable to the University of Delaware with this form**

Electronically: Go to [www.udel.edu/UDARF](http://www.udel.edu/UDARF), click on *Reservation for Next Luncheon meeting*

All reservations due by April 28, 2015

E-MAIL ADDRESS (*only if new*): \_\_\_\_\_

*Please use remaining space for news and address change.*