October 2026 Report of the UCDEA

This fall we welcomed a new UCD Retiree Center Director, Darolyn Striley, and look forward to working with her in the future. The primary roles of the UCDEA are advisory, advocacy, and assistance. Assistance is not limited to UCDEA members nor is it necessarily restricted to emeriti/ae. We are viewed as engaged elders of the campus community, a source of collective wisdom, and custodians of campus cultural heritage through our Oral Histories. The Video Records Project (VRP) begun in 1993 and now has over 560-hour long interviews. The VRP also engages in Special History Projects, typically of a college or other academic unit. The VRP additionally includes a set of videos from our centennial celebration on campus. We host 3-4 Brain Food talks over the academic year designed to be educational, timely, and honor our various research award winners.

All emeriti/ae are automatically members of the Alumni Association and that association sponsors several fundraising social events on campus that are popular, often sold-out, and well-attended by emeriti/ae. Other units offer similar fundraising events. Since these other events benefit students or some other worthy cause, events that benefit the UCDEA would likely not be as popular. The Retiree Center holds coffee hours and multiple social activities for retirees and emeriti/ae as well. We therefore play a limited role in sponsoring social events for our membership. Our Brain Food talks (3-4 per year) include either lunch or reception afterwards for interaction with the speaker. However, attendance at those events is not limited to emeriti/ae and retirees.

The Executive Committee of the UCDEA meets monthly during the academic year, every second Thursday. At each meeting we invite an academic or administrative leader to attend for a "chat". We hold a retreat in October to set our agenda for the year and an annual membership meeting in May. We have 372 lifetime, 16 annual, and 70 associate members, 458 current total.

Goals for the 2026-2027 Academic Year

Cultural Heritage: Last year a Dickson Professorship award was presented to Professor Emeritus James Carey to create an AI ecosystem for mining our oral histories archive. To quote the Professor Carey's report: "While traditional archives rely on selective top-down models for elite figures, this initiative built a globally unique corpus capturing the everyday department builders who constructed the university." We have over 560 oral histories to date, each an hour, so watching them all is a daunting task. The AI ecosystem that Professor Carey created enables topical searches, career summaries, comments across decades on the same issues, to name only a few. He presented our first Brain Food talk of the year October 21, which was also part introduction to AI and how to get it to work for

you. One main issue was choosing an AI system that would stick to the actual content of the videos and not manufacture conversations or hallucinate in response to a prompt. Thus, the controlled ecosystem to rein in the "creativity" of the AI. The outputs were impressive. Most popular with the audience was the text over sketch of humorous interactions at faculty meetings, comments in teaching evaluations or classrooms. We think this will be a valuable tool not just for the UCDEA but for campus in general. Professor Carey made several recommendations for changing how we do oral histories so this will be a primary discussion this year. One of our chats will be with campus Strategic Communications as we think this technology will have broad application beyond emeriti/ae.

Advocacy: We will continue to work closely with CUCEA and RASC on the UCRS Power of Attorney form for greater clarity and publicize more broadly the benefits of designating an attorney-in-fact for a UCRAYS account. The legalese of the form, which is an obstacle for many, is unfortunately essential for the validity of the document. One Executive Committee member contacted local attorneys to determine the fee to assist with filling out the form, and it ranged from $600-$1,000, clearly also barrier. Second, last year, as reported in May, we developed a comprehensive list of Emeriti/ae Rights, Benefits and Privileges to be located on one site on our UCDEA website instead of scattered across various documents and other campus sites. This will state current university and campus policies and document those that are discretionary by department. It is the discretionary implementation of policy that leads to most of our requests for assistance from emeriti/ae. Third, to enable these efforts, we are working on a new design for our website that will include sections on useful information for and general resources available to emeriti/ae and migrate away from items that quickly become dated.

Advisory: We have chats scheduled with several administrators for 2026-2027 and have gotten other requests for consultation. This year we will need to schedule two chats for a single executive committee meeting to accommodate all, and some may need to be held at a different time with a smaller group of committee members.

Assistance: We hope one feature of our website will be an assistance hotline email service so that emeriti/ae in need of our advice or help can more readily contact us. We are currently identifying chronic issues impacting emeriti/ae and assessing campus messaging on these topics.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda F. Bisson

UCDEA President