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Bowling Green State University

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Retirement is important part of employees' total compensation

Editor's Note: Following is the first of a series of articles on employee compensation packages. While much is written about these packages, but least understood, benefits of state employees is retirement under the State Retirement System. The two systems are: the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), for administration and classified staff, the Public Employees Retirement System Law Enforcement (PERSLE), for law enforcement staff, and the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), for faculty.

Many, as known as "defined benefit plans," each provides a benefit at retirement determined by a mathematical formula that uses employees' age, years of service credit and final average salary. An employee's final average salary was calculated by using his or her three highest years of earnings while contributing to the system. Health care, disability and survivor benefits may also be provided when years of service requirements of the system are met.

Both the employees and the University contribute to the retirement system. Employee contributions based on earning are required through payroll deduction. These pre-tax employee contributions are 8.5 percent for PERS, 9.0 percent for PERSLE and 9.3 percent for STRS. BGSU's contributions to the systems (13.31 percent for PERS, 16.7 percent for PERSLE and 14 percent for STRS) are deposited into an Employer Trust Fund, which is used to pay retiree pensions, disability, survivor benefits and health care.

Raymont honored by international educators

Sally Raymont, director of education abroad, has received the George E. Herrnich Advocacy Award from the National Association of Foreign Student Affairs: Association of International Educators for her commitment to international education and foreign-exchange programs. The professional association has more than 7,000 members, representing all 50 states and 60 countries.

Selection is based upon service to NAFSA, a demonstrated willingness to assist colleagues within the field of international education and advocating the causes of international education within the nominee's own institution.

An active leader at the regional, national and international levels of NAFSA, Raymont is also a member of the National Association of Student Personnel and Development and serves on the board of Academic Advisors for the American Institute for Foreign Study professional organization.

"The field of education abroad allows me to help students achieve their dreams," Raymont said.

Coverage for past and future retirees. For example, a faculty or staff member earning $31,000 annually would contribute $2,635 into PERS or $2,790 into STRS. BGSU would pay $3,993 into PERS or $4,200 into STRS.

A pension through PERS or STRS is payable at least five years of Ohio service credit at age 60 or 25 years of age 55. With 30 years, there is no age requirement. Those covered under the retirement system may retire at age 32 with at least 25 years of service, or at a reduced rate as early as age 40.

Last spring, legislation was passed to provide a higher benefit formula for calculation of the final average salary (FAS) for the first 30 years of service. The prior 2.1 percent of FAS used to calculate pension for the first 30 years of service was increased to 2.2 percent. The 2.5 percent used to calculate pension after 30 years remained the same.

Brochures are available in the Human Resources Office or on the state System Web sites (www.opers.org or www.strsio.org).

Each state system sends an annual statement. STRS mails in the fall of each year and shows credit through June 30 of that year. PERS statements are mailed in the spring and reflect service credit with that system through Dec. 31 of the prior year. The statements also provide what the member has contributed to the system, the estimated retirement date (those in current years of service and age), and the estimated pension benefit under Plan B, as well as information (Continued on back)

BGSU aviation program gets new set of wings

BGSU has made a major commitment to its aviation studies program with the recent purchase of two new airplanes, according to Ret. Lt. Col. Jon McDermott, interim director of aviation studies.

The two new Cessna 172 Skyhawks were picked up in December by McDermott and aviation students, who flew to the factory in Independence, Kan., where the airplanes are made by hand.

The white planes, with gold and forest-green trim, will carry the BGSU logo on their sides.

Each can seat three to four people.

With the addition of the state-of-the-art aircraft, "We're one of the elite aviation education programs in the nation," McDermott said.

The University invested an additional $30,000 per plane to the $150,000 purchase price to install sophisticated communication and navigation equipment, such as a Global Position Satellite instrument. The result is a duo of airplanes prepared to meet the program's future needs.

The new planes offer students the latest in technology, which will be a boon to recruit­ment efforts and the level of instruction for the program.

"They represent the qualitative standard we want to set for our students as they pursue aviation careers," McDermott said.

After a brief hiatus, the aviation program was revitalized four years ago and has been growing steadily at a rate of about 10 percent a year. There are now 60 flyers enrolled.

McDermott said the goal is to purchase one new airplane every other year beginning in two years.

"We want to slowly increase the size of the fleet so that eventually there will be one plane for every 10 students," he said.

Other scheduled improvements include paying of the aircraft parking lot this summer, which will help preserve the planes' exteriors, and resurfacing of the runways and taxways next fall.

In addition to McDermott, the aviation studies program has one full-time flying instructor and six part-time instructors. Royce Ann Martin and Stephen Quenemo teach the program's management courses and assist with aviation classes.

Production of general aviation airplanes suitable for flight education and training was stopped for 13 years until about five years ago due to lack of demand, McDermott said. The University's aging planes were rebuilt every year but were becoming expensive to maintain. When Cessna resumed production, an entire new production staff had to be trained.

"All those skills had been lost over the 15 years they were out of production," McDermott said. He decided to wait until things were running smoothly again before buying new planes for the University.

Now that the new airplanes are here, the program's faculty and staff say they are very optimistic about the future of aviation at Bowling Green.
Economics Colloquium Series, "Gender Inequality and Economic Growth Revisited: The Impact of Gender When Culture is Considered," 3:30-5 p.m., 4000 Business Administration Building.

Music at the Forefront Series, with mezzo-soprano Anne Marie Donovan, 8 p.m., Bryan Recital Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Saturday, Feb. 24
Young People's Concert, "Overture," 11 a.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center. Ticket prices are $2 for adults and $1 for children.

Call 2-0171.

Sunday, Feb. 25
Faculty Artist Series, Penny Tompkinson, violin, 3 p.m., Bryan Recital Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Monday, Feb. 26
Education Dean Candidate Open Forum, Richard Lynch, education faculty member at the University of Georgia, 3:15-4 p.m., McFall Assembly Room. 

Continuing Events
Feb. 25-March 25 Annual Undergraduate Art and Design Exhibitions. Dorothy Uber Bryan and Wilard Walschman galleries. Fine Arts Center. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.

An opening reception will be held from 2-4 p.m. Sunday (Feb. 25).

*A BGSU Firelands Diversity Month Event
**To register for CTLT workshops, contact Jane Thompson at jthompson@bgsu.edu or 4-6890.

Retirement
(Continued)

about survivor benefit pensions in the event of the member's death and the estimated monthly benefit if they were to become disabled.

Employees who have questions regarding the retirement systems or who wish assistance in completing retirement forms, preparing correspondence to obtain estimates of pension benefits, cost estimates to purchase additional service credit or reemployment previously refunded funds, should contact Diana Shamp in the Office of Human Resources at 2-2115.

Swegan, Nagel win 'Spirit of BG' award

Congratulations to Gary Swegan, interim director of admissions, and Erik Nagel, maintenance repair worker at the Ice Arena. They are the January winners of the Spirit of BG Award.

Swegan, the winner of the administrative staff award, was noted for recently organizing “Northwest Ohio Guidance Counselor Day,” which brought many professionals to campus. He will receive a blown glass vase created by Ona Magaro, School of Art.

Nagel was chosen for regularly going “above and beyond the call of duty,” including his recent, cheerful aid to the Syn-chronized Swimming Team with an unpleasant clean-up job. He will receive a $75 cash award.