



NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CIRCLE

Courier

May 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear Circle Members,

Happy Spring! Abundant April showers are bringing all things spring and we certainly can look forward to spectacular May flowers.

We hope many members plan to attend our Scholarship Reception on **Tuesday, May 12, from 4:30 to 6:00 pm**, in the Northwestern Room at Norris University Center.

This year we purposely chose a weekday other than the traditional Friday afternoon and a later starting time for the event. Campus parking lots open for free parking at 4 pm so the later start allows plenty of time to get to Norris after parking in the south lot.

The reception is an opportunity to meet and congratulate our four scholarship recipients, hear about their career goals and show our support for their accomplishments. Their stories of balancing work, family and classes are always interesting, if not amazing.



It's also a special time and place to connect with Circle friends and enjoy some delicious treats, too. Many thanks to Debbie Crimmins for chairing the Scholarship Committee and Committee members Lonnie Dunlap, Sally Dobroski, Jane Dampfs and Mary Paula Baumann. This year the School of Professional Studies forwarded seventeen scholarship applications for the committee's review.

We would also like to thank Pat Ulmer for chairing the Program Committee this past year. Our unique programs are the result of brainstorming, planning, organizing and sometimes serendipity. The latter was the case when Pat met NU's women's tennis coach while both were dog walking in their neighborhood. Pat's initiative led to the exceptional Q & A Lunch with the Coaches program. Thanks, Pat!

Best wishes and see you soon,

Margaret Schatz mesharbor@gmail.com 847-287-0669
Sally Sprowl sds_sprowl@hotmail.com 847-420-7036

ANNUAL MEETING & SCHOLARSHIP RECEPTION

TUESDAY, MAY 12
4:30 TO 6:00 PM

Norris University Center, 1999 Campus Drive, Evanston
Northwestern Room, #160

PROGRAM: ELECTION of officers
PRESENTATION of the 2026 Circle Scholarships
CONVERSATION with the recipients of the Circle Scholarship

Enjoy delicious delicacies while reconnecting with friends. Guests are welcome.
Parking is free after 4:00 p.m. in the outside parking structure just south of Norris.

Questions? Contact Pat Ulmer, 847-682-5741 or pat.ulmer@gmail.com.

www.northwestern.edu/university-circle



MISSION

The mission of University Circle is to provide opportunities for Northwestern University women to participate in service, scholarship, and social activities that enhance the University community.

MEMBERSHIP

If you know of a woman who is interested in becoming part of University Circle, please bring her along to a special interest group or general membership program. You may also contact Jane Dowding at 847-736-9064 and she will happily send membership information out by mail. You can find membership information on the University Circle web site:

www.northwestern.edu/university-circle

BOARD MEETINGS

University Circle Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of most months on the Evanston Campus. All members are welcome. Meetings typically last one hour and are always lively and fun. Please contact the president for dates, time and location, and/or if you have an item for the agenda.

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SCHOLARSHIP	Debbie Crimmins
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NORTHWESTERN SETTLEMENT	Pat Ulmer Jeanne Fitzpatrick Sally Sprowl Margaret Schatz
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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN	Joan Fragen
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For information about other interest groups, please contact the co-presidents.

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR 2026

The University Circle Scholarship Committee is pleased to present the recipients of the 2026 University Circle Scholarship. This tuition scholarship is awarded to Northwestern University employees who are pursuing degrees in NU's School of Professional Studies. We congratulate them and look forward to honoring them at the annual meeting and scholarship reception on May 12 at Norris University Center.

—Debbie Crimmins, Chair; Lonnie Dunlap, Sally Dobroski, Jane Dampfs, and Mary Paula Baumann



KARL BURNS is pursuing the Advanced Accounting program with the long-term professional goal of becoming a CPA and ultimately working for a regulatory agency. He works as a financial analyst at Northwestern's Facilities Management. His interest in working for a government oversight body is rooted in a strong belief that honesty and transparency in

financial reporting are essential to protecting the public. The next major step in his career is sitting for the CPA exams. He is committed to community involvement through the Fishers of Men ministry in the Joliet Diocese, where he serves meals at the Daybreak Shelter, as well as through volunteer shifts at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora.



and economics, while supporting herself throughout her studies. Her academic and professional goal is to leverage data science to improve access to effective, scalable mental health care for underrepresented populations. Prior to joining the Lab for Scalable Mental Health, she worked with a range of underrepresented communities, including families

of children with developmental differences, adults under guardianship, unhoused youth, and survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence. Following completion of the MSDS program, she plans to apply to clinical psychology PhD programs to further develop her clinical and research training in support of equitable mental health care access.



KELSEY CREAMER is pursuing her Master of Public Policy and Administration degree and works as a program administrator at the Golub Capital Board Fellows Program at the Kellogg School of Management. Her long-term goal is to strengthen nonprofit organizations that serve under-resourced communities. Through the MPPA program, she hopes

to develop the analytical and leadership skills necessary to design and evaluate programs that improve educational access and community-based services throughout Illinois. Her volunteer work has included many roles with Amigos de las Americas, an international youth development organization, and vice president of the Association for Northwestern University Women.

ALYSSA GORKIN is a research study coordinator at the Lab for Scalable Mental Health at the Feinberg School of Medicine. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in data science. She completed her undergraduate degree in psychology at Reed College in 2024, with minors in music



MIGUEL MONTERO is a research study coordinator in neurology at the Feinberg School of Medicine. He is working on the Master of Science in Data Science degree. He has worked in clinical research for more than five years, including close to three of those with Northwestern's Stroke and Neurocritical Care Research Collaborative (SNC2RC). Working

on investigator-initiated studies to clinical trials he learned that large gaps exist in long-term stroke recovery. His goal is to gain advanced skills in data science and AI so he can help close those gaps. To accomplish this, he is developing skills in Natural Language Processing, Large Language Models, and predictive analytics. He has also been a contributing author to many abstracts at major conferences and has completed a medical mission trip to Honduras.

University Circle thanks Margaret McCarthy, associate dean of student and alumni services, and Ariella Mak-Neiman, assistant director of academic advising, in the School of Professional Studies for administering Circle's scholarship program.

CIRCLE SCHOLARSHIP FUND DONORS 2025-2026

University Circle gratefully acknowledges those individuals who have contributed to its Tuition Scholarship Fund. Since the scholarship's inception in 2004, these scholarships have provided tuition funds for 57 recipients who are full-time employees of Northwestern University and who are enrolled in degree or certificate programs in the School of Professional Studies. We thank the following donors who contributed between April 2025 and March 2026.

Albert Louis Allred	Sally Dobroski	Junia Hedberg	Paulinda Lynk	Margaret Schatz
Mary Paula Baumann	Jane Dowding	Laurie Howick	Bertha Mount	Lynn Snarr
Leigh & Henry Bienen	Lonnie Dunlap	Joy & Christopher Joyce	Charlotte Newman	Sarah Sprowl
Carol Booth	Eliza Earle	Claudia & Raymond Krizek	Carol Nielsen	Sylvia Taflove
Helen Bratsolias	Mary Givler-Savage	Carolyn Krulee	Maria Poeppelmeier	Pat Ulmer
Jean Corvine	Kay & Kenneth Hamel	Esterle LaBahn	Eleanor Prince	Diane Unger
Debbie Crimmins				Anita Yamada

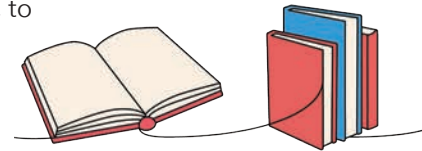
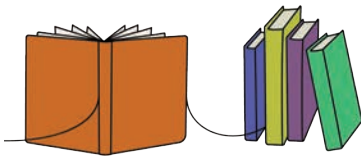
DONATIONS TO THE CIRCLE SCHOLARSHIP FUND continue to make these scholarships possible.

Donations are always welcome and will ensure that this important Circle program continues.

Please consider a donation in any amount, and note "Circle Scholarship at SPS" when making your donation.

GIVE ONLINE at www.northwestern.edu/giving

GIVE BY MAILING A CHECK, payable to Northwestern University, to
Northwestern University, Alumni Relations and Development
1201 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60208
Questions? Call the Office of Annual Giving, 800-222-5603.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The Membership Committee announces with pleasure the addition of four new members to Circle's family: **Helen Bratsolias, Patricia Mann, Janie Savage** and **Nancy Wasielewski**. We welcome you and look forward to meeting you at the annual meeting and scholarship reception on May 12.



Dowding. Jane's work to update names and contact information, and arranging to have the directories printed and mailed is much appreciated. Several updates that came too late to make it into the directory will be sent to all members via email.

Updated membership directories were mailed to all members in January, thanks to the efforts of Jane

If you did not receive a 2025-26 membership directory, please contact Jane at dowdingjane@gmail.com to request that one be sent to you.

ANNUAL MEETING TO ELECT OFFICERS

University Circle's annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, at 4:30 pm in the Northwestern Room at Norris University Center. The business of the meeting is to elect officers.

Immediately following the meeting there will be a reception to honor the Circle Scholarship recipients.

The following candidates are slated for election to the Circle executive board for two-year terms:

Vice President, Membership: Jane Dowding

Recording Secretary: Elisabeth Malthouse

Treasurer: Jeanne Fitzpatrick

— Jane Dowding and Margaret Schatz, Nominating Committee



LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY



– by Margaret Schatz

Which should be used for baking: glass or aluminum pans? Are there any reasons not to substitute cooking spray for butter and flour on baking pans? Can sugar in a recipe be reduced? These questions and others were answered by Janice Lawandi,

this year's speaker, selected by

chemistry students, for the Mark A. Ratner Series of Scholars, held April 1 in the Tech Institute.

Janice is a PhD chemist turned baker who lives in Montreal. She works as a professional recipe developer, tester, and consultant with a focus on the science of baking. She

shares many resources, including recipes, on her website (bakeschool.com).

Several Circle members enjoyed nearly front-row seating at the lecture, delivered to a full house of engaged students. This was clearly not your ordinary chemistry talk. The students had many questions for Janice, revealing their interest in baking and kitchen chemistry.

At the reception which followed, Circle members had a special opportunity to talk with Janice and ask questions based on many years of baking experience. It was a treat to meet her.

This series holds an annual lecture which honors the contributions of Emeritus Professor of Chemistry Mark Ratner.



Circle members in Tech:

Top row, left to right: Elisabeth Malthouse, Maria Poeppelmeier, Kay Hamel, and Mary Savage.

Bottom row, left to right: Nancy Wasielewski, Margaret Schatz, and Jane Dowding.

DINNER AT LUNA'S PUB AND GRILL

– by Diane Unger

Acting on an invitation to “try out” the new Norris Center dining spot, Luna's Pub and Grill, 14 Circle members and spouses met there for dinner on December 18. In issuing the invitation, Jeremy Schenk, associate VP for operations and services, wrote, “This is also a great chance to see the broader transformation underway within Norris and along the lakefront, including the Cohen Lawn, the Kahn Pavilion, and the progress on Luna's itself. The Cohen Lawn project has created spaces that foster connection, well-being, and community for our students.”

If you missed the soft opening, you might want to check it out now, just as spring has sprung on the lakefront. The pub features locally sourced food with offerings of starters, burgers and sandwiches, salads and desserts (see the menu at tinyurl.com/mt95fwt6). The real attraction is the space it occupies in Norris: an indoor ground-level cafe and pub and a rooftop patio that look

out onto the new Cohen Lawn beside Lake Michigan. Luna's is open daily for lunch and dinner, and offers weekly trivia and karaoke nights. Campus parking is free after 4 p.m.

POTLUCK AND MUSICAL

– by Elisabeth Malthouse

On the last Saturday evening in February, a group of about 20 members and spouses gathered for the Circle's annual potluck-and-show. Circle members once again proved to be great cooks and contributed a variety of delicious appetizers, main dishes, salads and desserts. Even though there was no featured speaker to give a pre-performance talk, everyone enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with each other over a shared meal.

After the potluck the members attended the musical “How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying” at the Ethel M. Barber Theater.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION BENEFITS SETTLEMENT FAMILIES

– by Pat Ulmer

Circle welcomed the 2025 holiday season by celebrating our annual Adopt-a-Family Project with cheerful fellowship at Curt’s Café on December 3. The extraordinary generosity of our members provided holiday support for five families, chosen by the Northwestern Settlement staff, who were deemed especially needy.



The holiday party brought together (L-R) Kay Hamel, Maria Poeppelmeier, Jane Dowding and Claudia Krizek

At our annual holiday party, members also generously contributed many children’s gifts for the Settlement toy room, where parents who were not sponsored by the Adopt-a-Family program could choose a present for their children for the holidays.

Thanks to the Adopt-a-Family Project Committee for their work in making this project a success: Margaret Schatz, Jeanne Fitzpatrick, Sally Sprowl, and Pat Ulmer.

The staff of Settlement encouraged contributions to be given in the form of gift cards, rather than presents, so the recipients could choose the things they need and prefer. Donations totaling \$4045 were received from 38 Circle members. With the proceeds, Target gift cards totaling \$1800 were purchased and given to 12 members of the five families. Each family received Jewel gift cards with the cost totaling \$2150. In addition, each family received a beautiful quilt created by our Piecemakers group. The remaining \$100 was donated to Settlement in January for their emergency fund.

Lakesha Nelson, assistant director of development for Northwestern Settlement, wrote in a letter to Circle, “Because of generous partners like University Circle, we were able to reach 235 families—over 900 individuals—to help make the holidays warmer, brighter, and more hopeful. Thank you for your shared compassion and collaboration.”

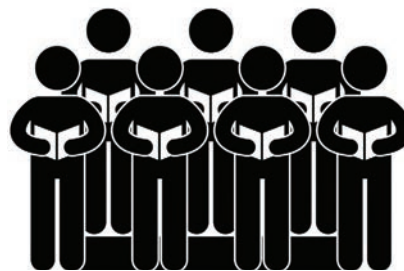
Circle thanks the following people whose generous contributions made these gifts possible:

- | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Melanie Anderson | Sally Dobroski | Janet Hoffman | Linda LaBuda | Mary Savage |
| Mary Paula Baumann | Jane Dowding | Judy Holman | Mary Ellen Lydon | Margaret Schatz |
| Carol Booth | Eliza Earle | Lonna Horwitz | Elisabeth Malthouse | Lynn Snarr |
| Helen Bratsolias | Jeanne Fitzpatrick | Joy Joyce | Bertha Mount | Sally Sprowl |
| Margareta Brown | Wynn Graham | Jane Kenamore | Charlotte Newman | Pat Ulmer |
| Debbie Crimmins | Kay Hamel | Claudia Krizek | Carol Nielsen | Judith Ungashick |
| Jane Dampfs | Maureen Hanrahan | Bunni LaBahn | Maria Poeppelmeier | Diane Unger |

A LOOK AT THE NORTHWESTERN COMMUNITY ENSEMBLE

– by Diane Unger

As this issue of the *Courier* goes to press, Circle members are anticipating a visit to Deering Library on May 6 to see a recently opened exhibit, “Stay with God: The Northwestern Community Ensemble and Black Sacred Music on Campus.” Charla Wilson, archivist for the Black Experience at Northwestern, will be on hand to give highlights and answer questions. Circle members will remember hearing Charla speak about her work in a University Guild program last year.



Known for its worshipful concerts, NCE has long been a beloved presence on campus as invited guests at university events and in the broader community. More than a choir, it has served generations of students as a space for fellowship, spiritual formation, and cultural expression.

“‘Stay with God’ explores NCE’s rich history, from its founding to its lasting legacy, highlighting the traditions, milestones, and evolving impact of Black sacred music at Northwestern University.”

From an exhibit news release: “For over five decades, the Northwestern Community Ensemble has shaped campus life through music rooted in the Black church tradition.

If you miss this event, there is more time to check out the exhibit. For more information, contact Charla Wilson at charla.wilson@northwestern.edu.

LUNCH WITH THE COACHES

– by Diane Unger

On February 3, Circle members had a special opportunity to meet and hear from the coaches of half a dozen Northwestern women's sports teams. The event was sited in the big and beautiful Walter Athletics Center, where we first picked up lunch at Nona Joe's dining hall, trying not to stare at NU's student athletes pile plates high with the nutritious offerings. After peeking into the student athletes dining room to admire the beautiful view of Lake Michigan, we were escorted into a large conference room, where we sat at tables in a square formation and ate lunch.

Claire Pollard, the women's tennis coach, welcomed us and quickly got to the point: we were there to learn about women's sports at Northwestern through the eyes of the women coaches. We heard from Rachel Stratton-Mills, swimming and diving; Kate Drohan, softball; Jill Miller, cross country and track; Tracy Fuchs, field hockey; and Kelly Amonte Hiller and Alexis Venechanos, lacrosse. Each of them gave overviews of their sport and talked about the challenges and rewards of coaching Northwestern's female student athletes.

Most of the hour-long event was spent with Circle members and guests asking thoughtful and sometimes probing



The NU coaches' Q&A included (left to right) Claire Pollard, Rachel Stratton-Mills, Kate Drohan, and Jill Miller.

students receive at Northwestern. Kelly emphasized that Northwestern excels at academic support: "Number 1 is success in the classroom, number 2 is success on the field."

The coaches agreed that "there are so many questions we can't answer," a reflection of what's happening in the fast-changing environment of college sports. They weren't shy about expressing their frustration with some of the changes, but were clear that their primary focus is making their student athletes have the best possible experience at Northwestern.

We're grateful to all the coaches for sharing their insight and giving us a behind-the-scenes look at women's sports at Northwestern. Thank you to Pat Ulmer and Claire Pollard for making this special event happen.

UNIVERSITY GUILD PROGRAM WITH MELISSA ISAACSON

– by Kay Hamel

The University Guild has a tradition of extending an invitation to the University Circle members to attend one program each year as our guests. This year, Guild welcomed Circle members and Circle guests to a program on March 2nd by Melissa Isaacson, award-winning sportswriter, author and public speaker, and assistant professor at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism. This program tied in nicely with the Circle's meeting with the NU female coaches on February 3.

Missy's program was "A Sportswriter Looks Back: Now a professor at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, Melissa Isaacson reflects on her 34 years as a reporter and how Title IX changed her life and what she tells her students today." Missy comes to the Guild after her successful NU Alumnae Continuing Education program. She is the author of three books; her most recent, *State: A Team, a Triumph, a Transformation*, recounts her experience on her state championship-winning high school basketball team and

the transformational journey that occurred shortly after the passage of Title IX.

Missy was charismatic when sharing personal anecdotes, from her young experience playing basketball to a career that included interviewing Michael Jordan, and now a whole different experience of teaching NU students in the multimedia technology environment. Not to mention the changes in sports such as name-image-likeness (NIL) revenues including college athletes.

The program was followed by a coffee/tea reception with a table full of goodies including the Guild Board's homemade cookies. Books about women, including Missy's book, were on display.

The Guild thanks the Circle for their support and contribution to our engaged audience. Our "sister" organizations promote each other. The Guild is proud to report we have members from the NU Alumnae Board and the University Circle.



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Courier May 2026



PIECEMAKERS ARE AT IT AGAIN

Observe and be amazed at what members of Circle's quilt group have created already this year. They'll keep at it over the summer and into the fall, until it's time to pass them on to those who will benefit.

