

## November 2024

### What is the AFA?

It's your union, protecting and fighting for the rights of all adjunct faculty members. We are affiliated with the Illinois Education Association, a state affiliate of the National Education Association.

### Fall 2024 Payroll Dates

11/22, 12/6, 12/20

Dues taken from 4th and 5th paychecks (non-instructional pay is typically delayed)

### Oakton Board of Trustees Mtgs

12/10 at 6 p.m. in the DP Board Room

### AFA Board Meetings

On [Zoom](#) on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month; 9 – 10:30

### AFA Open Office Hours

DP: Wed. 11-1 2166

SK: Mon. 12:15 - 1:30 A213

[Online](#) :3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs of month  
4-5 p.m.



## Were you hired by Oakton after Jan. 1, 2011?

*Then you are in Tier 2 of SURS* (The State University Pension System). Does it make a difference if you are in Tier 2 and not in Tier 1? **Yes, it does.**

SURS has two tiers: Tier 1 for those of us who were hired before January 1, 2011, and [Tier 2](#) for those hired afterward. How are they different?

**Tier 1** can retire at age 60, or age 55 if they have spent 35 years in the education field.

**Tier 2?** They can retire at 67; if you retire earlier, your pension benefits go down - even though you have been required to pay the same amount into the system. There are even more disadvantages beyond the above for Tier 2 educators.

However, there is [a bill meant to fix this. According to IEA, "Senate Bill 2024](#) addresses Tier 2. It makes changes to the retirement age, the service credit requirement and the formula used to calculate your pension payment." This past Wednesday IEA held a rally in Springfield to urge lawmakers to fix this flaw in our retirement system



What can YOU do? Scan the QR code below and urge your state legislator NOW and urge them to undo Tier 2.

# IT'S TIME TO UNDO TIER 2

[UndoTier2.org](#)

Scan the QR code and join the fight for equitable retirement for all educators.



## **Contact Your Senator to Get Rid of the Windfall Provision**

The House has passed the bipartisan Social Security Fairness Act. NEA sees this as an historic passage, a ‘major milestone’ and ‘huge victory’ for public service workers. Now the legislation faces [its next hurdle: passage in the Senate](#). The Senate’s companion to the Social Security Fairness Act currently has 62 cosponsors.

Under the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), when you retire, you’ll get your SURS pension. But if you have worked outside the SURS system and are due Social Security benefits for that work, those benefits will have a cut taken out so there is no ‘double dipping.’

The Social Security Fairness Act (S. 597) repeals both the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) so that you will receive the full benefits that you are due – from SURS and for social security for the years in which you worked outside the SURS system and paid into Social Security.

The NEA has worked long and hard on this. The years-long bipartisan push to repeal the GPO/WEP is a direct result of your advocacy and the momentum we have built. It also shows that reaching across the aisle can get results, even in these fractious times!

Please [send an email](#) to your representative to vote yes on this bill that will affect so many of us.



*Chris Lacina*, Law Enforcement,  
recipient of the Ray Hartstein  
Award for Teaching Excellence for  
Adjunct Faculty

*Elizabeth Sanderson*, recipient of  
the Adjunct Faculty High Impact  
Practices Library Award

### ***Elections to the IEA Regional Assembly***

[The Regional Assembly of the IEA \(Illinois Education Association, of which the AFA is a part of\) is meeting next year from March 13 to 15](#) in Rosemont. In this assembly of delegates from throughout the state, debates are held and decisions that set the direction of IEA for the coming year are made. **On Dec. 6**, you, the membership, elect several AFA members to attend. You could be one of them! You can nominate yourself or someone else. Attending the RA helps you to understand how the Illinois Education Association works, helps you to network, and have a voice in IEA policies and legislation. Adjuncts who have attended in the past report that learning how the organization works and what initiatives are discussed is fascinating. Your voice matters!

## Share Your Accomplishments!

There was a recent news item in the Oakton Weekly inviting full-time faculty to share their accomplishments. Let's do the same! Have you received a new degree? Published an article or a poem? Gave a presentation? Had artwork shown in a gallery? Sang or played a musical instrument in a concert? Achieved a goal in athletics? Other continuing eligibility type achievements? Let your news be shared in the AFA newsletter and let your colleagues celebrate with you.

[Share this](#) with [Laberendsen@gmail.com](mailto:Laberendsen@gmail.com), listing your

- Name
- Division and what you teach
- Your accomplishment

## Got some free time over the Thanksgiving holiday?

It's time for our annual Title IX training module. It's a state requirement, so we have to do it, and because it is a state mandate, no, we don't get paid for it. Additionally, to protect student privacy, there is another required module explaining the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Action (FERPA). These three modules are:

- **Sexual Harassment: Staff-to-Staff - Updated training** (approximately 53 minutes)
- **FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act training** (approximately 20 minutes)
- **Title IX and Sexual Harassment - Updated training** (approximately 28 minutes)

Additionally, to protect the privacy of our students, a module explaining the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Action (FERPA) is required this year. You are doubtless getting emails from Vector Solution reminding you to do these. They won't stop until you do it. The deadline is Dec. 6.

Vector Solutions keeps your training record to show you completed it; you can also download a certificate for your records. [Please click this link for detailed instructions on how to access the training module.](#) Contact CPD at [cpd@oakton.edu](mailto:cpd@oakton.edu) with your questions.



## *A Lovely Winter Day in the Morton Arboretum*

You are all invited to attend this year's 2025 Faculty Retreat! Seats are limited so register now with this link:

<https://forms.gle/35a1KVxQmsZiNhZP6>

Hope to see you there!