

## 2018 FALL IRTA BOARD MEETINGS – CONDENSED INFORMATION

### IRTA Member Benefits Committee Meeting September 25, 2018

- Larry Newman and Omar Guerrero of AMBA introduced two new **short stay long-term care plans**:
  - Recovery Care Hospital Indemnity provides care in the home, nursing home or assisted living facility and will help with the costs of hospitalization.
  - Home Care Plus gives the freedom to choose when and where you recover. Both plans are with Aetna Insurance Company and administered by AMBA. More information may be found on the IRTA website;

Informed the group that currently over 17,000 people are participating in the IRTA dental plan; Discussion of the My AMBA Discounts (Passport) program: offers discounts on benefits including travel, dining, electronics, sports, entertainment, and so much more; a Passport pdf document will be created by IRTA to give out at local meetings.

- Tricia Klim, Member Services Coordinator, reminded the group that **US Bank recently discontinued their relationship with IRTA. Purchases made with an IRTA credit card will no longer help support IRTA financially.** All current IRTA credit cards will be phased out upon the expiration date on the card. All credit card holders will be issued a regular US Bank credit card at that time. Klim asked Guerrero **to investigate the option of another credit card benefit.**

### IRTA Legislative Committee Meeting September 26, 2018

- Andrew Bodewes gave an update on legislation. **It was a good legislative session with both IRTA supported bills passing the legislature that were signed by the Governor.**
  - **SB3046** allows re-entry into the Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP) during the open enrollment period. It was mentioned that Central Management Services (CMS) will not notify individuals who have previously opted out of TRIP.
  - **SB3045** increases the amount of time a retiree can teach to 120 days or 600 hours. This legislation **does have a sunset date of 2 years.** Appropriations for State payments to TRS and TRIP were passed in the 2018 Budget.
- There is still an issue with State payments to the Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP). **Even though the money is appropriated, the Comptroller is not making the payments. The State currently owes the fund \$200 million.** IRTA is trying to establish a plan with the Comptroller to start making the payments. If payments to vendors get too far behind, providers will start asking for payment for services up front. **If no plan to make payments to the fund can be made, IRTA might consider filing a lawsuit against the State. If Committee members hear of retirees being asked to make full payment to providers up front, they should inform the IRTA Office.**
- Legal Defense Fund: There is currently \$145,500 in the Legal Defense Fund.

### IRTA Membership Committee Meeting September 27, 2018

- Nathan Mihelich, IRTA Director of Membership & Marketing, reported that 10 people are currently signed up for IRTA's October 2018 Portugal Trip, and that IRTA's January 2019 Caribbean Cruise is sold out; outlined the possibility of some future IRTA group opportunities including a New Year's Eve fundraising event and a 2019 trip to Ireland;
- Chair Mike Schmidt discussed offering a special IRTA Cub/Cards baseball game event for next summer (2019).
- Nathan Mihelich provided the committee with an update on current IRTA membership statistics. **Currently, IRTA has 38,431 members.** IRTA's 2018-2019 membership goal is to have 39,325 members by December 31, 2019.

- Mihelich explained how he was able to obtain a partial list of deceased TRS annuitants after his second appeal to the Illinois Attorney General's Office.
- Charlie Chrisman is delivering all 76 "Excellence in Education" teacher grant checks and thanking new members for joining via phone calls. Over the summer, he also contacted the 350 non-renewals asking them to rejoin IRTA.

## IRTA FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 16, 2018

- Label Fundraising Campaign: Mo Shaner reported that the **donations are down** to date this year. **(If you have not contributed, please make an effort to do so!)**  
The following are beneficiaries!

**Foundation Assistance:** The Foundation is currently assisting 10 people on a monthly basis with amounts ranging from \$200 to \$650 a month for a total annual payment of \$47,100. Real estate taxes are paid for two people as well as one-time requests for assistance with medical expenses or other one-time needs. **Forms for assistance may be obtained from the office or from the web-site.**

**Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers:** A total of 368 grants were received state wide with 76 awarded. The amounts of the grants ranged from \$69 to \$750. **The following are the Area II recipients.** Please go to [www.irtaon-line.org](http://www.irtaon-line.org) for more information on these fantastic teachers!

Stefanie Beane, Dryden Elementary School, **Arlington Heights**, Diane Bilcer, Avoca West Elementary, **Glenview**, Maggie Jensen, Olson Elementary School, **Woodstock**, Alison Leja, Buzz Aldrin Elementary, **Schaumburg**, Carol Link, Lincoln Early Learning Center, **Mundelein**, Ailey Logan, Fairhaven School (SEDOL Sector), **Mundelein**, Rhonda Malina, Elementary North, **Vernon Hills**, Kate Ruiz, Winston Campus Junior High, **Palatine**, Jennifer Simon, Hawthorn Elementary North, **Vernon Hills**, Laura Sutton, Special Education District of Lake County, **Gages Lake**, Elizabeth Wheeler, Newark Community High School, **Newark**, Andrea Woods, Big Hollow Elementary School, **Ingleside**

**Scholarship Program:** Each area awarded a scholarship in the amount of \$1500 to a student who is a **junior or senior in college and majoring in education**. Information regarding the program was sent to all Community Colleges/Junior Colleges in Illinois and public four year schools. **Applications for the scholarships are due by March 7**. This year 36 applications were received.

## IRTA FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 17, 2018

- Andrew Bodewes, Contract Lobbyist, reported on financial and voting trends throughout the state. At this time the Republican Party is spending the most money due to the Governor's race between J.B. Pritzker and Bruce Rauner. Downstate rural areas are trending Republican while the urban areas are trending Democrat.
- Teachers' Retirement System Report: Larry Pfeiffer, TRS Annuitant Trustee, reported on the TRS investments and their performance in 2018 fiscal year. **The investments total \$51 billion and had a return of 8.45% for the year. The fund ranks #82 in size among world pension systems.** There are presently 170 fund managers of which 33 are women and minorities.
- Membership Committee: Mike Schmidt reported that the Membership Committee would like to change the motto of IRTA from "Investing in the Future of Retired Educators" to "Protecting the Future of Retired Educators" after January 1, 2020. Motion passed.
- TRS Trustee Candidate Endorsement: TRS Annuitant Trustee candidate, Doug Strand was selected as the candidate for our endorsement. Motion by Bob Lyons that Doug Strand be endorsed by the Board of Directors as our candidate for the TRS Board of Trustees passed.
- Steve Cardinal – AMBA CEO: introduced the **new IRTA website** that was developed by Velocity in conjunction with IRTA and AMBA.
  - **This user friendly website is located at [www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org).**
  - **We also have a new website – [www.lcrta.org](http://www.lcrta.org)**
- Other Business: Because of the leadership of Sen. Andy Manar to obtain the passage of the two bills in the legislature that were sponsored by IRTA, a motion was made to name Andy Manar as the IRTA Legislator of the Year.
- **The next convention, is going to be held on October 14 and 15, 2019 in Springfield.**