



# Newsletter of the Towson University Retired Faculty Association

Spring - Summer 2023-2024

Pr

Dear TURFAns,

As I write, it appears we have lost the battle for our prescription rights. I am so grateful to president-elect Jim Roberts and his task force (Mike Bachman, Jane Clark, John Dedie, Bill Kahn, Kathy Miller, Tracy Miller, Peta Richkus, and Jane Wolfson) for all their hard work in lobbying the legislature and in keeping us all informed. I am also grateful to all of you who wrote or emailed or called your state legislators on behalf of the prescription legislation.

I once gave a paper in which I suggested that the dean's role is really to be chief cheerleader, chief mourner, and chief storyteller. This is one of those occasions when I feel myself to be chief mourner, leading a lament for what we have lost.

However, at the same time I want to assure you that TURFA will continue to stand by our members in the months ahead as we all try to navigate the new reality of seeking prescription benefits during Medicare open season beginning in September. As procedures are articulated by the state, we will spread information as quickly and as widely as possible. And we will work with the university and with the retired faculty groups in other USM institutions to try to ease the transition.

We can't promise success, but we can promise a good faith effort.

#### **TURFA Executive Committee**

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# TURFA Events and Activities

## Non-Fiction Book Group

*Jo-*



The Mother Superior then tells her she has a living relative, an aunt. Visiting her aunt, she learns her parents were Jewish, killed during World War II, and her name is Ida, not Anna. This starts Ida and her aunt on a road trip to the parents' village, a voyage of discovery and self-discovery. *Ida* is an

incredibly beautiful film, shot in black and white and a 4/3 aspect ratio to evoke Eastern European films circa 1960. It's about religious transcendence and the sorrows of life, individual choices and the sad collective history of P\* n.

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## On Lena Ampadu

*By Florence Newman*

You might call the trajectory of Dr. Lena Ampadu's life "a tale of two cities." Born and raised in New Orleans, Ampadu still thinks of her visits there as "going home," although she has made

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Dr. Ampadu thinks of her career at Towson University in two phases: the teaching phase, comprising the first eighteen years, and the teaching, research, and administration phase, consisting of the final 25 years. Teaching is obviously the common element here. She began in the Study Skills Center, and she encountered one of her most memorable students there. He had, she recalls, both dyslexia and ADHD, but worked so hard and improved so much that eventually he could teach others. “Students like that you never forget.” They remained in touch over the years and when he relocated to Chicago to work, he kept in touch. Later when her daughter was studying at the University of Chicago, he insisted that she and her husband stay with him and his family when they visited her during her first year of enrollment. They shipped her books to the post office near his house, which he picked up and carted to her dorm. When he comes home to Baltimore, in turn, he took her and her husband out to lunch: “He’s like a member of the family.”

This attention to her students’ holistic educational experience characterized Ampadu’s literature courses as well. When she taught African American literature, for instance, she would arrange field trips to local museums like the Baltimore Museum of Art “to contextualize what we were studying.” When she taught a Harlem Renaissance course, she organized a day trip to Harlem, where she and her students visited the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, which holds the largest repository of African American cultural materials in the country, as well as the Studio Museum in Harlem, which featured an exhibit of the photography of James Van der Zee. On this day trip, Ampadu discovered that some of her students,

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the key points to remember and consider:

Medicare-eligible retirees, hired before July 1, 2011, will lose their Maryland State prescription benefits as of January 1, 2025.

- Ø You must choose a Medicare Part D plan during the open enrollment period from October 15<sup>th</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup>
- Ø If you were hired before July 1, 2011 and retired by January 1, 2020, the State will provide you with the following benefits:
  - A Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) will be established in your name with up to \$750 to help you pay for your drugs during the transition.
  - The cost of your deductibles plus your coinsurance/copays for drugs will be capped at \$2,000 per year.
  - Unfortunately, this cap does not apply to drugs not covered by your Part D plan.
  - If you retired after January 1, 2020, you are not eligible for these benefits.
- Ø If your current State prescription plan is a family plan that includes your spouse or dependent children, you will have to get separate prescription plans for each person on your current plan.

As you compare Medicare Part D plans, please remember that the plans with the lowest monthly premiums may be much more expensive in the long-run because they cover fewer drugs.

The State says it will offer information sessions and one-on-one counseling to help you with your transition to Part D. We do not yet know how this will work. TURFA will distribute more information on the transition as it becomes available. We will also hold sessions during the open enrollment period on how to use the online tools for comparing Medicare Part D plans.

I would like to thank the members of the TURFA Task Force on Prescription Benefits who worked hard over the last nine months to restore our prescription benefits. Your voices were heard in Annapolis, even if we did not succeed.

## Members of the TURFA Prescription Benefits

Task Force: JET@000002 0 1 2 reJET@000003 (T)2UR

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