

Dear colleagues, students, alumni and friends,

It is our pleasure to announce the appointment of Dr. Mike Lukkarinen as the interim chair for the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration. Dr. Lukkarinen will assume the duties of interim chair on August 1, 2018. Until that time, Dr. Katrina Daytner will serve in this role.

Dr. Lukkarinen joined the faculty at Western Illinois University in 2005 as a visiting instructor. He became an assistant professor in the department in 2006 and currently holds the rank of associate professor. Dr. Lukkarinen has conducted research in the areas of recreation programming and interscholastic sports teams and has served on numerous committees at WIU as well as in his profession and the local community.

Dr. Lukkarinen earned his doctorate from the University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign with a concentration in sport management. He also earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration from Western Illinois University.

A note from Dr. Dan Yoder

Dear colleagues, students, alumni and friends:

Thank you for the last 24 wonderful years. Such memories we have about all of you.

The RPTA Department was, is, and will be in the future a place where people find themselves, make a difference and/or lay the foundation for making a positive impact on individuals and communities. I know we will all continue to do that.

Sheryl and I are excited about the next phase of our lives. And while we are starting over in some ways, many things will never change. **You will always be dear to us** so please stay in touch. I will retain the good ol' WIU email address and my wife Sheryl will keep me informed about Facebook news. And, over the next few months I will be getting back for some RPTA events. I will definitely see you there.

Always,

dan

A note from Dr. Lukkarinen

It is always a bit awkward to introduce myself when I already know many of you, but some of you I hope to meet in the future. As the announcement stated, my name is Mike Lukkarinen and I have been a faculty member here since August 2005. Prior to earning my PhD at UIUC, I was a two-time graduate of the RPTA Department. During my time here as a student, I picked up early on the family vibe the department sends out and can tell you it is real and earnest.

My time as a faculty member has confirmed that for me. That, above all else, is why I have remained here. We are one of the premiere professional preparation programs in the country. Our faculty have real world experience in their chosen areas and prepare our students to be successful when they enter the field. They also have a passion for what they do.

I take pride in being a part of this wonderful department. We have a bright future and we are all Leathernecks for life. There is a bond there that cannot be broken and that has served me well in my career. For me, RPTA is my home and my family. I look forward to moving the department ahead with the wonderful people we have onboard and adding to our family as well.

One final comment: We have until June 30th to get Dr. Yoder to spend his \$100,000 match and I intend to have him have to match it all!!

Sincerely,

Mike

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Michael D. Lukkarinen, Ph.D., CYSA, ASEP Instructor
Interim Chair and Undergraduate Internship Coordinator
WIU Volunteer Women's Golf Coach & 10U CATS Coach
Department of Recreation, Park & Tourism Administration

Tradition of Tough!!!

Match Challenge Update

As of June 20, 2018, the Department has raised \$54,848 toward Dan and Sheryl Yoder's generous match challenge. They have agreed to match up to \$100,000 dollar for dollar. It is not too late for you to contribute. To learn more about the Match Challenge, please visit our homepage at <http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/rpta/>