



# President's Report

to the  
Board of Trustees

April 17, 2025



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **ACTION ITEMS I.**

A. Board Action Regarding Committee Recommendation for the 2025 Tenure Awards .....	2
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### **INFORMATION ITEMS II.**

A. Purchases of at Least \$100,000 but Less Than \$250,000 .....	4
B. FY2024 Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Annual Report .....	5

## **ACTION ITEM I. A. 2025 TENURE AWARDS**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>
J. Adrian Castrejon	Justice Studies
Ashley Elrod	History
Wendy Gonzales	Special Education
Amirhossein Maleki	Management & Marketing
Olunbunmi Oyewuwo	Social Work
Jody Siker	Special Education
Christopher Straughn	Library
Andrew Young	Psychology

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**J. Adrian Castrejon** earned a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Leadership from University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Professor Castrejon is a faculty in the Justice Studies program who also teaches in and supports NEIU's interdisciplinary programs including Latino/a and Latin American Studies (LLAS) where he serves as the coordinator and in the University Without Walls (UWW) Program, within which he has taught and mentored students at Statesville Correctional Center. Dr. Castrejon's research and scholarly interests primarily focus on race, labor, and migration, Chicano masculinity, cultural preservation, and day labor work.

**Ashley Elrod** earned a Ph.D. in History from Duke University. Professor Elrod teaches courses in History as well as the interdisciplinary fields of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGS) and Disability Studies. Her teaching covers medieval to modern eras; major historical periods like the European Reformations, Scientific Revolution, and Enlightenment; and spans the history of western Europe, the Mediterranean, the Americas and the Caribbean as well as Africa and Asia. Dr. Elrod's research focuses on guardianship law in German history in the early modern period and her scholarship lies at the intersection of multiple fields of history, disability studies, gender studies, and German studies.

**Wendy Gonzales** earned a Ph.D. in Special Education from University of Illinois, Chicago. Professor Gonzales teaches in Special Education as well as courses in early childhood reading methods and bilingual/bicultural education. She also serves as a University Without Walls (UWW) advisor and as a graduate advisor for her program. Dr. Gonzales' research focus is understanding diverse educational contexts within special education and bilingual education, and aims to advance both theory and practice. The broader impact of her this work is to bridge the gap between research and its practical applications in diverse educational settings connects to the broader field of literacy interventions, demonstrating the role of language in student achievement.

**Amirhossein Maleki** earned a Ph.D. in Business Administration from Washington State University, Pullman. Professor Maleki teaches undergraduate courses in Management, particularly in the areas of strategic management, change management, entrepreneurship and in the MBA program. He has contributed to curriculum development in existing and new areas, including Hospitality Management. Dr. Maleki's research interests are focused broadly on the intersection of institutions and entrepreneurship, including examining conditions that influence entrepreneurs' decisions and the impact of national-level factors such as social trust, social benefit systems, and cultural factors on individual level processes.

**Olunbunmi Oyewuwo** earned a Ph.D. in Social Work from University of Illinois, Chicago. Professor Oyewuwo teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in Social Work research methods and seminars, graduate courses in advocacy, and serves as Curriculum Specialist for the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) research area. Dr. Oyewuwo's research is focused on improving the health and well-being outcomes of women as well as Black, Muslim, and immigrant communities. She is a principal investigator on a national survey research study that examines American Muslims' perceptions and experiences of intimate partner

### **ACTION ITEM I. A. 2025 TENURE AWARDS**

violence and collaborates with an interdisciplinary team of mental health professionals examining American Muslims' utilization of mental health services.

**Jody Siker** earned a Ph.D. in the Joint Program on Special Education at the University of California, Berkeley and San Francisco State University. Professor Siker teaches special education courses including general survey, curriculum, curriculum adaptation, instructional design, and methods courses in licensure programs for undergraduate and graduate students that lead to certificates and endorsements permitting graduates to teach special education. Dr. Siker's main lines of research inquiry focus on questions of how to recruit and retain teacher candidates who identify as racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse (RELD); on using simulations to practice difficult, collaborative conversations; and improving family-school collaboration in special education.

**Christopher Straughn** earned a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Illinois Chicago and a MS in Library and Information Sciences from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Professor Straughn serves as the library liaison to Linguistics, TESOL, Philosophy, SAELL, and the College of Business and Technology, providing library instruction and developing instructional materials for students and faculty in these areas. He also serves as a coordinator for Digital Commons, and as Collections Coordinator. Dr. Straughn's contributions to cataloging and metadata creation over the past five years have focused on original cataloging of the Library's Periodicals and Government Publications collections, as well as work with student publications.

**Andrew Young** earned a Ph.D. in Psychology from University of Wisconsin, Madison. Professor Young teaches undergraduate and graduate level courses in developmental psychology, child psychology, statistics and research methods. He supervises undergraduate research capstones, has mentored students in various college-wide and university-wide programs, and serves as a major advisor for Psychology. Dr. Young's research focus is in the area of Cognition Science, and in particular, the study of cognitive reflection in children; STEM thinking and learning; and children's social cognition.

#### **Recommended Action:**

Pursuant to Board Regulations Section II. A. 3.(b), I request that the Board approve the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee's recommendation regarding the 2025 tenure awards as presented by the Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and in accordance with the University's standards and practices regarding such.

**INFORMATION ITEM II. A. PURCHASES OF AT LEAST \$100,000 BUT LESS THAN \$250,000**

Board of Trustees' Regulations require that the President report to the Board purchases of at least \$100,000 but less than \$250,000 other than those exempt from Board approval (e.g. utilities). The following lists those purchases since the last Board meeting.

<b>VENDOR</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CONTRACT AMOUNT</b>
Davis & Campbell, LLC Non-BEP, Non-IPHEC	Legal services and litigation support for employment and collective bargaining matters	\$90,000.00 (Original contract amount)  \$140,000.00 (Amended contract amount)

Contract # 4126744  
PO# 0066220

**INFORMATION ITEM II. B. FY2024 BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM (BEP) ANNUAL REPORT**



[www.neiu.edu](http://www.neiu.edu)

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February 27, 2025

To: Dr. Katrina E. Bell-Jordan, President  
From: Opal L. Walls, Director of Procurement Services  
Cc: Beni Ortiz, Interim Vice President Finance and Administration

RE: FY24 Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Expenditure Report

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) remains dedicated to increasing the participation of minority, women, and disability-owned businesses in its contracting processes. Our purchasing procedures adhere to all applicable state statutes, the Illinois Procurement Code, University Board of Trustees regulations, and the university's fiscal policies.

For FY24, our compliance plan set a 30% aspirational goal, equating to \$2,446,347. We exceeded this target, with actual expenditures totaling \$2,873,425—representing 35% of the dollars subject to goal (DSG = \$8,154,490).

Our success in surpassing BEP goals is the result of consistent efforts to engage BEP-certified firms in contracting opportunities. We proactively notify BEP vendors well in advance of upcoming solicitations and set a minimum 30% BEP goal on contracts whenever feasible. NEIU remains committed to identifying additional opportunities to ensure BEP firms are actively represented and participating as required. We recognize that achieving these goals not only benefits small businesses but also strengthens our communities, families, and the broader economy.

We extend our gratitude to the NEIU Board of Trustees, President, Senior Management, and Administration for their unwavering support of the BEP program. Every contract and award presented for Board approval undergoes thorough review to assess BEP participation, underscoring our collective commitment to this initiative.

We look forward to another year of exceeding our goals and fostering meaningful participation in our procurement processes. Please let me know if you need additional information or have any questions.

**INFORMATION ITEM II. B. FY2024 BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM (BEP) ANNUAL REPORT**

STATE OF ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION COPY OF REPORT SUBMITTED ON MARCH 5, 2025						
BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM FOR BUSINESSES						
OWNED BY MINORITIES, WOMEN, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES						
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE REPORT SUMMARY FY2024						
PURCHASING ENTITY NAME & ID #	Northeastern Illinois University		620			
	ALL BEP VENDOR EXPENDITURES	ALL BEP VENDOR TOTAL PO/CONTRACTS	PRIME BEP VENDOR EXPENDITURES	PRIME TOTAL PO/CONTRACTS	SUB CONTRACTOR BEP VENDOR EXPENDITURES	SUBCONTRACTOR TOTAL PO/CONTRACTS
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES	\$376,277.52	38	\$376,277.52	38	\$	0
AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALES	\$167,849.24	31	\$167,849.24	31	\$	0
HISPANIC AMERICAN MALES	\$334,928.37	26	\$283,128.37	25	\$51,800.00	1
HISPANIC AMERICAN FEMALES	\$203,416.57	75	\$178,816.57	74	\$24,600.00	1
ASIAN AMERICAN MALES	\$1,240,438.87	36	\$1,240,438.87	36	\$	0
ASIAN AMERICAN FEMALES	\$44,847.88	4	\$44,847.88	4	\$	0
NATIVE AMER/IAK NATIVE MALES	\$	0	\$	0	\$	0
NATIVE AMER/IAK NATIVE FEMALES	\$	0	\$	0	\$	0
CAUCASIAN FEMALES	\$183,194.77	46	\$183,194.77	46	\$	0
<b>PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:</b>						
(ETHNICITY & GENDER)	\$322,472.05	10	\$322,472.05	10	\$	0
<b>BEP TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$2,873,425.27</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>\$2,873,425.27</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2</b>
SHELTERED WORKSHOPS	\$	0	\$	0	\$	0
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$2,873,425.27</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>\$2,797,025.27</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>\$76,400.00</b>	<b>2</b>
Dollar Amount Subject to Goal =	<b>\$8,154,490.00</b>	BEP Participation= 35%				