

The VMAS return, but not every pick may be the right one

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Northern Star

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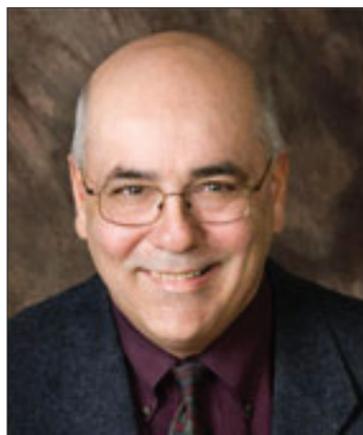
Beyond the Rumors

What you need to know, who you need to know and what is happening with the allegations against current and former NIU employees

Timeline

- Late May: When university officials said they learned of the allegations against Albanese and Gordon.
- July 17: Albanese signed Resignation and Release Agreement.
- July 20: Gordon signed Resignation and Release Agreement.
- July 31: Albanese's and Gordon's retirement and resignation, respectively, go into effect.
- Aug. 2: NIU announced administrative changes in light of Albanese's retirement and Gordon's resignation.
- Aug. 4: *Daily Chronicle* published story about Physical Plant employees allegedly selling scrap metal to DeKalb Iron and Metal Company (DIMCO) as part of coffee fund.
- Aug. 7: *Daily Chronicle* published story about how NIU employees allegedly had a coffee fund for 25 years.
- Aug. 15: *Daily Chronicle* published story with information about Gordon and Albanese receiving payouts.
- Aug. 20: Office of Clay Campbell, DeKalb County state's attorney, said they are "closely monitoring" criminal investigation at NIU.
- Aug. 21: NIU issued a statement welcoming assistance from Campbell's office.
- Sept. 5: *Chicago Tribune* published article with allegations against Gordon, Albanese.

The Breakdown



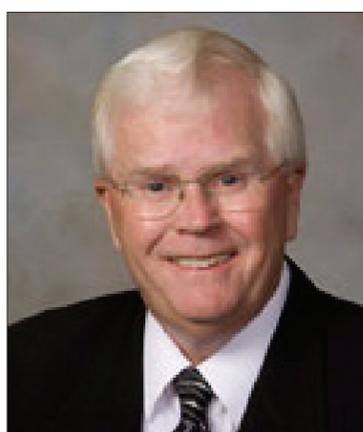
Robert Albanese
 Position: Former associate vice president of Finance and Facilities
 Allegations: The *Chicago Tribune* has reported that Albanese allegedly used university equipment, like ink cartridges, and kept university property at his home for personal use.
 Status: Albanese retired from NIU, effective July 31. He received a \$45,000 payout.



John Gordon
 Position: Former director of the Convocation Center
 Allegations: The *Chicago Tribune* has reported that Gordon and a subordinate instructed an NIU employee to clean Gordon's home several times during the past year.
 Status: Gordon resigned from NIU, effective July 31. He received a payout of \$33,000 and six months of health insurance.

Investigation: The allegations against Albanese and Gordon led to NIU hiring an investigator. However, Paul Palian, director of media and public relations, said if the allegations were true has not been determined.

Investigator



John Countryman
 Position: Attorney with the Foster & Buick firm
 Role: Countryman was hired by NIU officials to investigate the allegations against Albanese and Gordon.
 Status: According to the *Chicago Tribune*, it is expected that NIU will pay the firm about \$15,000 for conducting the investigation and offering legal advice.

Northern Star's Role

Position
 The *Northern Star* Editorial Board has stated that it believes all those involved in the various investigations are innocent until proven guilty. However, the Editorial Board also believes NIU has not been as transparent as it could be in regard to the investigations.

Actions
 The *Northern Star* believes the paper should and can play a key role as a watchdog figure

in the DeKalb and NIU communities. In light of this, *Northern Star* staff members have been looking into the allegations against Albanese, Gordon and those involved in the coffee fund, among other matters. The findings of those investigations are and will be available in past and future editions of the *Northern Star*, as well as on the *Star's* website. For related online information, go to northernstar.info/watchdog/.

Coffee Fund

Northern Star Staff

NIU's ongoing investigation into the coffee fund is separate from its past investigations into the actions of Robert Albanese, former associate vice president of Finance and Facilities, and John Gordon, former

Convocation Center director.

The coffee fund investigation centers around allegations that employees at NIU's Physical Plant sold scrap metal and kept the profits. NIU has confirmed the existence of the coffee fund. According to an

NIU Today article, employees from the Materials Management Department have been placed on leave as a result of the investigation.

When NIU found the coffee fund account, it had about \$2,100 in it, according to the NIU Today article.

Employees allegedly used the money for retirement celebrations, holiday events, etc.

NIU is still determining whether the use of these funds in this manner is a violation of university policy and/or state law.

To read more on the allegations against Albanese and Gordon, go to Page 3.

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The *Northern Star* is the daily campus newspaper serving Northern Illinois University and the surrounding community.

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