

President's Report to the NMU Board of Trustees
Dr. Fritz Erickson
Friday, December 9, 2016

Recent National Recognition for NMU

- We are very proud to announce that Northern was named a 2017 Military Friendly School by Victory Media for the 8th consecutive year.
 - Designation honors the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools nationwide that are doing the most to help veteran students be successful in the classroom and after graduation.
- Northern recently had 3 programs recognized by AccreditedSchoolsOnline.org as among the Top 20 in the nation: Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVAC-R); Electrical Engineering and Construction Management.
- Also, on a list compiled by affordablecollegesonline.org, Northern was 10th among all state public and private institutions in the “Best Online Colleges in Michigan” list.
 - We are proud that outside sources recognize Northern’s high quality and affordable price.

Scholarship Competition Record

- Our Presidential Scholars Competition set a record this year with nearly 400 competitors – 378 to be exact.
 - Admissions counselors notified scholarship recipients late last week, which is always a really fun task for them, and it’s quite the holiday gift for the winners.
 - We offer 10 full-rides (all expenses) and 10 full tuition scholarships, along with hundreds of smaller scholarships as well.

Beaumier Center Anniversary

- Congratulations to the Beaumier Upper Peninsula Heritage Center on its 10th anniversary celebration. The Center celebrated with an event last night.
 - In 10 years, the Center has put on hundreds of outstanding programs, exhibits and events.

Educational Access Network

- We officially launched the Educational Access Network on Nov. 14 after using much of the fall as a pilot study of our new systems.
 - It has been really well received – off to a great start.
 - EAN is Northern’s state-of-the-art high-speed educational broadband network and global campus course offerings, which are both degree courses and programs as well as professional and personal development courses.
 - Just prior to Thanksgiving, Northern received approval from the Escanaba City Council to put equipment on their city towers so the NMU LTE network can expand to the southern U.P.
 - We’re also going to be lighting up Watersmeet and Crystal Falls with NMU LTE. All 3 areas – Escanaba, Watersmeet and Crystal Falls – should be live by the start of January. We’re also looking next at Eben and Grand Marais.
 - As you know, our goal is to cover the entire Upper Peninsula with high-speed educational broadband over the next two years and possibly sooner than that.

Faculty Honored

- Six Northern faculty members were recognized at the annual Celebration of Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship on Nov. 31.

- Recipients and their awards were: Christi Edge of Education and Brian Kakas of Art and Design, Excellence in Teaching; Neil Cumberlidge and Kurt Galbreath, both of Biology, Excellence in Scholarship; Mounia Ziat of Psychology, Technology Innovation; and Dwight Brady of Communication and Performance Studies, Academic Service Learning.
- Dr. Martin Reinhardt of Native American Studies was selected to receive the first Students' Choice Award, and as the recipient will be our commencement speaker.
 - The December graduates were asked to nominate faculty or staff who most inspired and motivated them. From that pool, a committee of ASNMU and Mortar Board representatives selected the honoree.
- Drs. Tawni Ferrarini and Hugo Eyzaguirre of Economics have been selected to serve as Board of Scholars members for the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.

Update on Facilities

- The 16-member University Center design committee has begun to meet.
 - There are lots of specific needs, wants and ideas – very exciting discussions.
 - We have been and will be continuing to meet with many community members, as well as campus representatives, so we get all the information needed to develop a design that works well for everyone.
- New residence hall complex is really taking shape.
 - If you haven't driven down Lincoln Avenue near residence hall construction, you should do so. You'll be amazed at the progress.
 - You can also watch the progress online at <http://it.nmu.edu/content/new-student-housing>

Strategic Planning: Mission and Vision Revisions

- Work that is part of Northern's strategic planning and implementation continues.
 - Writing group for mission and vision statement revisions brought drafts to the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Advisory Committee for input this week.
 - We will be sending out the revised drafts to the campus at the start of the winter semester.
- Also brought to the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee this week was a revised version of the Strategic Implementation Plan.
 - We now have a format that people feel comfortable with and we will be taking final input on that document.
- Finally, we will be moving into the unit strategic planning phase this upcoming semester – some departments and divisions have already begun working on this.
 - On the academic side, developing the parameters for the academic resources allocation prioritization will need to be in place before effective academic departmental and academic program strategic planning can be completed.
 - Our Educational Policy Committee (EPC) is working on that plan and recently had a consultant on campus related to this effort.

Wildcat Sports Notes

- Three NMU-OTS athletes – Sammy Jones, Austin Morrow and Alejandro Sancho – were selected by USA Wrestling to compete at the Greco-Roman World Wrestling Club Cup in Budapest, Hungary this week (Dec. 8-9).

- Both Wildcat swimming and diving teams are in the top 5 in the latest national poll. The men are No. 4 and the women No. 5. They are off to a great start this year.
- Coach Jenny Ryan's Northern cross country team qualified for the NCAA Championship for a second consecutive season and finished in the Top 20 with 14th place. Kameron Burmeister earned All-America status with 30th place.
- The Athletic Department is busy with three open head coaching positions they are working to fill: football, women's soccer and volleyball. I have begun meeting with some of the finalists for the football and soccer positions and I am very impressed with the candidate pool so far.