

President's Report to the NMU Board of Trustees
Dr. Fritz Erickson
Friday, September 23, 2016

New Programs in Development

Academic Affairs and the Northern faculty continue work on developing some new and exciting programs.

- Congratulations to the Political Science Department for completing an agreement with Michigan State University Law School for a **3+3 Legal Education Admission Program**.
 - This allows NMU students going to MSU Law to simultaneously complete the final year of their bachelor's degree and the first year of law school.
 - The result is that students will complete their Juris Doctor (JD) degree in six years instead of the traditional seven.

- We continue to work on the development of a **forensic anthropology program**.
 - If implemented, the program would include a secured outdoor research station.
 - It would be only the eighth outdoor research station worldwide and the first cold-weather facility.
 - We are doing extensive research on possible sites, including a possible site on state land that would require a partnership with the State of Michigan.
 - We recently had several forensic anthropology specialists on campus for discussions and are exploring a possible cooperative program with Western Michigan University.

- The Psychology Department is working on creating an **applied behavior analysis center** that will address our regional shortage of assessment and therapeutic services for young children with autism spectrum disorder, developmental disabilities, and other behavioral concerns.
 - Students in our behavioral psychology programs would get high-level, hands-on training by working and researching at this center.

- Northern just received a nearly \$300,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to launch a **two-year pilot project designed to increase the number of American Indian and Alaska Native female college graduates, particularly in STEM fields** of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
 - Two aspects of the program that will bring in new students:
 - Training Native American teachers to teach STEM subjects.
 - Educating Native American high school students about STEM fields.
 - Big congratulations to Dr. Jessica Cruz, chief diversity and inclusion office, and the faculty of the Center for Native American Studies on the work done to achieve this impressive grant.

Celebrating Anniversaries

- 25 years ago, on September 14, 1991, the Superior Dome opened its doors as the world's largest wooden dome – a title it still holds.
 - Hosted everything from football games to trade shows and fundraising dinners.
 - Serves as the community's regional convention center.

- Is important on a daily basis to the many walkers and joggers who take advantage of the Dome's walk and jog program sponsored by Northern, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and UP Health Systems-Marquette.
- Dome was built of 781 Douglas fir beams and 108.5 miles of fir decking.
- It stands 14.1 stories high and spans 5.1 acres.
- 50 years ago, in 1967, Northern broke ground for the Learning Resources Center – a milestone that is being remembered with Saturday's LRC Open House.
 - I won't go into the historical details as I know some of you are planning to attend the open house and that is part of the program.
 - Northern is working on developing plans for a major LRC renovation in the future.
- Last week the Aviation Maintenance faculty and students held a celebratory and recruiting event to recognize the 25th anniversary of the program's first graduates

Speaking of Recruiting Activities

- Fall is one of the busiest and most important student recruitment periods for traditional-aged college students.
 - During September and October, our admissions counselors are scheduled to attend approximately 160 college fairs and make nearly 500 high school visits.
- There are also several on-campus recruiting events in September and October:
 - An **open house event today for the displaced Empire Mine employees** impacted by the mine's closure.
 - Allow them to explore our program options, get financial aid and admissions information and assistance.
 - **Family Weekend** – September 30 – October 1
 - Many of our current students are the siblings of our past students.
 - **NMU Hockey at the Resch Center in Green Bay** – October 7 – 8
 - We'll be inviting prospective students in the Green Bay/Appleton area to join us for the Wildcats vs. the Wisconsin Badgers hockey series.
 - Have had good success in the past interacting with interested students during these NMU-UW hockey series.
 - **College of Business' "Celebrating Entrepreneurship" Conference** – October 7
 - The annual conference focuses on women in business this year
 - We expect 200 – 300 area high school students to participate
 - **Wildcat Weekend** – October 15
 - We hold one in the fall and one in the spring (March 15).
 - We expect between 150 – 200 prospective students to attend.
 - **Jacobetti Open House** – October 27
 - Will invite area high school students and their families to come and explore NMU's career and technical programs.
 - **Presidential Scholars Competition** – October 30 – 31 and November 13 – 14.
 - Some of the brightest students from around the region and beyond come to compete for our largest, most prestigious scholarships.

Committee Work

- We have created a new **Sustainability Committee** on campus that has been meeting since the start of the academic year.
 - It has wide university representation, including students.
 - It has begun its work with a comprehensive audit of all of the university's current sustainability efforts.
- **President's Diversity Committee and the Gender Work Group**
 - Jessica Cruz is working with both groups to develop a plan on their separate and collective projects.
 - The two committees are merging some of their funding to create a mini-grant program that will sponsor some diversity and inclusion events on campus.
 - Each group is working on identifying needs of targeted Northern campus populations, which will result in a series of recommendations that the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will be bringing forward later in the year.
- **Transparency Project**
 - Has worked through the summer on a series of new tools that will help the university community and university leadership regarding better communication and transparency in decision-making processes.
 - The group is also working on a series of recommendations to bring forward to the university leadership as part of its final report in December.
 - Both the preliminary versions of the tools and the recommendations will be vetted with the campus at a university forum sometime in November.
- **Strategic Planning and Budgeting Advisory Committee**
 - Also has been meeting through the summer and into the early fall, primarily helping leadership review the budget reduction proposals and the 5-year Strategic Enrollment Implementation Plan.
 - Have had very insightful feedback on both from committee members.
 - This group is also getting ready to tackle the work needed to revise the mission and vision statements.

New Residence Hall Complex

- Payne Hall demolition is completed except for some final cleanup tasks.
- The footings for two of the new buildings have been poured and we expect framing to begin any day now as the wall structures and trusses have arrived on campus.
- Crews are running three shifts and making great progress.
- Recently completed an agreement with EdR for student collaboration.
 - Our construction management students, as well as students from some of our other career-technical programs, will be intimately involved in the building processes of the new residence hall complex.
 - Outstanding hands-on experience for them.

Wildcat Athletics Update

- Last Sunday (September 18), our men's soccer team earned its first victory in program history with a 5 – 2 win versus Walsh.

- Coach David Poggi has been doing an outstanding job getting that program up and running.
- In the first poll of the season, the Wildcat women's cross country was ranked third in the Midwest and No. 8 nationally.
 - Northern finished ninth at last year's NCAA Championships.
 - Coach Jenny Ryan only lost one key runner from last year's squad.
- You may recall that Marquette's Lakeview Arena was the Kraft Hockeyville winner and, as such, is the host of a NHL pre-season game between the Buffalo Sabres and Carolina Hurricanes on Tuesday, October 4.
 - NMU has been helping the city's Hockeyville Game organizing committee and is supplying facilities and people for the game, which will be televised by NBC Sports.
 - We're also pleased to have several Hockeyville Celebration events that highlight some of our most prominent Wildcat Hockey alumni, including:
 - Dallas Drake, a former Detroit Red Wing, who is bringing the Stanley Cup to Marquette for the event.
 - And Don Waddell, the president and general manager of the Carolina Hurricanes.
- The last time you were here, I think I highlighted some of the former NMU-Olympic Training Site athletes and NMU coaches who would be participating in the Summer Olympic Games. Now pleased to say that our eight OTS alumni did well in Rio, especially:
 - Helen Maroulis, who won the first-ever U.S. wrestling gold medal and over one of the legends of the sport, and
 - Sarah Robles, who earned the first U.S. weightlifting medal in 16 years with a bronze.
- We also have a very exciting class of Sports Hall of Fame inductees that will be honored this weekend – I know many of you are attending that ceremony.

HLC Reaccreditation

Northern is in the process of reaccreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. As part of that, we are required to seek public comments that address the quality of the university and our academic programs in advance of our regional accreditation evaluation.

- An HLC team will visit Northern March 20 – 23.
- Comments can be submitted online or sent to the HLC Office, but must be received by February 20, 2017. Details are available at www.hlcommission.org/comment.
- Accreditation impacts many things at a university, one of the biggest being eligibility for federal financial aid.
- Northern has been accredited since 1916.

UNITED Conference

The 11th Annual UNITED Conference begins Sunday and runs through Wednesday.

- I know several of you have been past UNITED Conference presenters.
- This year's schedule includes presentations, art exhibits, movies, research posters, and more on a wide variety of topics.