

**President's Report to the NMU Board of Trustees**  
**Dr. Fritz Erickson**  
**Friday, Dec. 14, 2018**

How quickly the fall 2018 semester went by. I would like to highlight a few things happening at Northern since my last President's report.

- We are hopeful that next fall will bring our third year of enrollment growth – despite demographics. Several factors contribute to our early optimism. We enjoyed our largest-ever turnout for a fall Wildcat Weekend in October. Also, in October, we had 15 high school bands participate in the annual NMU Band Day, double our usual number. Additionally, we had more than 400 participants in this year's Presidential Scholars Competition in November, increase of about 35 competitors. We are already seeing impressive registration for the March Wildcat Weekend, and early registration for new student orientation in June and July is well above our usual numbers for this time of year. These are all strong indicators of interest in Northern by prospective students.
- Congratulations to the faculty honorees recognized at the Celebration of Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship. The recipients were: Gary Brunswick, Business, and Jon Sherman, Languages/Literatures and International Studies, for Excellence in Teaching; James Strain, Music, and Marek Haltof, English, for Excellence in Scholarship; Shirley Brozzo, Native American Studies, for Excellence in Part-time Teaching; Dave Donovan, Physics, and Jessica Thompson, Communications and Performance Studies, for Excellence in Leadership; Stacy Boyer-Davis, Business, Excellence in Online Teaching; and Mounia Ziat, Psychological Science, recipient of the Technology Innovation Award.
- Northern's Bachelor of Science degree in applied workplace leadership received the 2018 Innovation in Transfer Award from the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. This two-year old online program enables individuals holding an Associate of Applied Science degree from any community college to ladder to a bachelor's degree that will qualify them for management positions. We developed the five-course core curriculum in collaboration with several community partners, including the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Works!, the Upper Peninsula Construction Council, Bay College and UP Health System.
- We want to congratulate Dan Truckey, director of the Beaumier U.P. Heritage Center, for being awarded the Peninsulas Prize by the Michigan Museums Association. This statewide award honors an individual or organization that demonstrates the significance and impact of community engagement over the past year. In announcing the award winner, Nathan Kemler of the MMA Board said, "Under Dan's leadership, the Beaumier U.P. Heritage Center has compiled an astonishing record of community engagement and educational outreach in the Upper Peninsula." We could not agree more. Thank you, Dan, for what you do to connect Northern to the U.P. community.
- Northern was very pleased to be named one of two new cybersecurity training hubs for the Michigan Cyber Range Network, in an announcement by Gov. Rick Snyder at the 2018 North American Cyber Summit in Detroit. Through the hub, Northern will accelerate talent development for the high-demand cybersecurity industry, creating jobs in the Upper Peninsula and making U.P. residents and businesses less vulnerable to attacks by hackers. Northern will partner with U.P. universities, community colleges and school districts to develop innovative competency, apprenticeship and

experience-based learning pathways at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The cybersecurity hub designation further advances the cyber risk consortium formed to develop Northern's proposal for the Marshall Plan for Talent program. NMU has advanced to the third round of that grant-approval process.

- Northern received a \$15,400 award through the Michigan Campus Sexual Assault Grant Program to support an awareness campaign titled "Consent: Back to Basics." The topic is pivotal in sexual assault cases, yet in feedback obtained through a survey we learned that many students do not feel they have a clear understanding of what constitutes consent. This campaign will attempt to alleviate that with workshops, posters, stickers, t-shirts, and a guest speaker addressing the topic. The grant program, launched in 2015 by First Lady Sue Snyder, is administered by the Michigan State Police and aims to change the overall culture of sexual assault among the college-age population.
- Regarding food insecurities, Northern is home to the first official U.P. chapter of the Food Recover Network, a nationwide student organization that recovers perishable food from campus dining facilities and donates it to people in need. The NMU Food Recovery Network delivers leftover food from NMU Dining locations to the Room at the Inn Warming Center in downtown Marquette. On average, the group saves about 30 pounds of food each week. Last year, the group rescued well over 1,000 pounds of perishable food items on campus. This is part of ongoing efforts by this student organization to reduce the ecological footprint of the university and supports Northern's core value of environment sustainability. On a related note, I did an interview with WJR Radio in Detroit about Northern's collective work to address food insecurity issues on campus and in the community.
- Two weeks ago, about 90 participants spent a full Friday in training with Brian Mistler, a nationally recognized mental health trainer, who was on campus with his I CAN HELP program. This program trains faculty and staff to be trainers of others on campus in the skills needed to respond to students in distress. This is part of Northern's ongoing suicide prevention and mental health wellness efforts. Recently, the University Marketing and Communication Office, in conjunction with other campus departments, created a spectacular educational video on breaking the stigma about asking for help for mental health wellness issues. The video link was sent to you. I hope that you are as moved by this piece as I was. It was a great job done by all involved.
- We were extremely pleased to have had alumnus Bob Stefanski, Class of '84, on campus recently to speak on artificial intelligence and the impact it will have on future jobs. He was also the Marquette Economics Club's November speaker. Bob is the co-founder and managing director of eLab Ventures, a venture capital firm based in Silicon Valley and Ann Arbor. I had a fascinating talk with him about AI and I hope we will be able to continue that conversation and involve even more campus stakeholders. Some of what he was sharing about where AI is and where it will be was mind-boggling. Northern needs to be considering this change element now.
- On the sports front ... We want to congratulate four Wildcats who garnered All-Region recognition, including a trio on the men's soccer team. Seniors Kevin Hoof and Sam Popp, were selected to the first team, and junior Callum Olpin, named to the third team. For the women's soccer team, Caroline Halonen was an All-Region second team pick. We also want to recognize senior running back Jake Mayon on being named to the All-Region football first team and selected as the GLIAC's Offensive Back of the Year. Jake became Northern's career rushing leader with 4,220 yards this year.

- Northern held its second NMU Day of Giving on November 27, in conjunction with the global charitable event, Giving Tuesday. NMU alumni, family, friends, employees and students were encouraged to give back to the university in a way that was meaningful to them. A few of the promoted focus areas of need included the Northern Fund, the Flexible Aid Fund, student scholarships and the NMU Food Pantry. I'm pleased to report that we received significant contributions that will increase opportunities and expand access and aid for our students. The University surpassed its goal of collecting 2,000 non-perishable food items and personal hygiene products for the NMU Food Pantry, doubling last year's total. In addition, the pantry received over \$2,500 in cash gifts. Combined, the two represent over 200 bags of groceries for Wildcats in need.
- On Nov. 11, Veteran's Day, the NMU Music Department held a Veterans Day choral concert where I had the honor of presenting this year's presidential coin to Traci Dietz. This is the second year we have presented the coin to a distinguished student veteran; it is a new tradition that I strongly support. Through her student employment at Veteran Services Office, Traci works hard to make the lives of her fellow veterans a little easier. She serves as president of the Student Veterans of America-NMU chapter, is an active member of the Art Student League, and is an award-winning photographer. Traci was a master-at-arms with the Navy Ceremonial Guard in Washington D.C., and spent much of her service working in the Pentagon. She will graduate in May. I also want to note that the concert was the idea of senior communication studies major Megan O'Connor who worked with University Choir director Erin Colwitz and director of Veteran Services Mike Rutledge to make the event happen. It was an outstanding collaboration.
- Expanding partnerships is one of the four priority outcomes of Northern's strategic plan. I have two great examples of this. The first is Invent@NMU launching a remote kiosk in Calumet; the other is in Gogebic County. The kiosk allows inventors and entrepreneurs to learn about services offered, submit an idea for a product or business, and receive a response from the Invent@NMU team within three business days. Another example of U.P. outreach is the BEAR Center entering into a partnership with the Western Marquette County Health Foundation to provide behavior analysis services to children in the schools of the western portion of the county (Westwood, Negaunee, Ishpeming). This partnership also gives Northern psychological science majors invaluable hands-on analysis experience. The collaboration was made possible through WMCHF funding and a \$25,000 grant from the Superior Health Foundation.
- Four students are attending NMU this fall through the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (UGRAD), one East Africa, another from Egypt, one from Pakistan and a fourth from the Philippines. The program is designed to help foster cultural exchanges between students from other countries and American institutions of higher learning. It is an example of Northern expanding global partnerships.