

President's Report to the NMU Board of Trustees
Dr. Fritz Erickson
Friday, Sept. 21, 2017

The 2018-19 academic year is off to a great start. I'd like to highlight a few things happening at Northern since my last President's report.

- We began fall courses on Monday, August 27. Dozens of faculty and staff joined Jan and I in helping students on move-in day. I'm not sure where some of the students put all that they brought to campus, but we really enjoy meeting the new students and their families, and assisting them to get settled. With close to a double-digit enrollment increase for new students this fall, our residence halls were filled to capacity. One other note about the new first-year students – collectively they brought to campus the highest GPA for a first-year class since 2010 with their 3.26 average.
- Northern held a dedication ceremony for the new Paul L. Lang Jr. Garden last Friday. Paul passed away unexpectedly on January 9, 2015. He came to Northern in 1997 as a tenured professor and head of the criminal justice department. He would serve as an associate dean and dean before becoming provost and vice president of Academic Affairs in 2011. The perennial flower garden is located on the academic mall in front of Jamrich Hall, a building that Paul played a huge role in developing on campus. Paul's wife, Mona, and daughter, MacKenzie, attended, along with a large crowd of Paul's friends, colleagues, and family members.
- The NMU Foundation reported a 34 percent year-over-year increase in outright gifts, pledges, and expectancies for fiscal year 2018 totaling more than \$6.3 million. The amount includes funding for an endowed professorship established by Dr. Mark Lovell ('77 BS) and his wife, Eileen. Departments received direct funds totaling about \$1.6 million. Combined with FY 2017 gains, private giving has nearly doubled over the past two fiscal years. We want to congratulate NMU Foundation CEO Brad Canale and his staff for the great work of the past two years.
- Two NMU students and two alumni successfully completed their quest to circumnavigate Lake Superior by kayak to raise awareness of the importance of clean water and funding for nonprofits that protect the Great Lakes. They departed in May and paddled the final leg of their 1,500-mile journey into Presque Isle beach August 30. They collected water samples that can be tested for microplastics by the Superior Watershed Partnership. They also plan to make a documentary about their journey and hope to screen it at film festivals in the region.
- Northern is bringing Brian Mistler, nationally recognized mental health trainer, to campus for a day-long event on September 28 to train faculty and staff from all departments to be TRAINERS who are empowered **to train others** in the skills needed to respond to students in distress and to become a part of NMU's suicide prevention efforts.
- On the sports front ...
 - Our volleyball team opened the 2018 season with an 8-0 record and a top 20 national ranking, its best start since 2010. Currently, the squad is 10-3 overall.
 - The men's soccer team, in its third year of play, is 4-1 and earned its first-ever Top 25 national ranking on Tuesday at No. 22.

- The Northern-Olympic Training Site weightlifting team has Nate Lewis competing at the World University Championships in Poland this weekend. The NMU-OTS Greco-Roman wrestling team will be represented at three world stage events this fall. Alston Nutter will compete at the Junior World Championships in Slovakia. Senior Dalton Roberts has qualified for the Senior World Championships in Hungary. Six Wildcats will be at the U23 World Championships in Romania, including Randon Miranda, Dalton Duffield, Logan Kass, Jesse Porter, Carter Nielson, and George Sikes.
- The men's swimming and diving team was named the top program in NCAA Division II by swimswam.com. Teams were ranked on their overall team strength, attrition rate and swimmer improvement. The Wildcat women's program came in at No. 19.
- The Northern football team features Mayon brothers Jake, a senior running back, and Troy, a junior safety. Jake is one of Northern's top offensive players, nearing the school record for rushing yards in a career with 3,149 – just 694 away from the mark. Troy is one of Northern's top defensive players, having 13 tackles in 3 games this year. He was third in tackles on the team last season.
- As you know, this is Homecoming Week and there is a plethora of activities throughout the weekend. Two events allow us to honor some special alumni – Friday's Sports Hall of Fame and Saturday's Alumni Awards Brunch.
 - Selected into the Sports Hall of Fame are: Richard (Dick) Allen, football and track & field; Tim Jones, wrestling; John LaPointe, football; Heather Mizer Sarnowski, volleyball; the late Kim Storm Ylitalo, swimming; and the 1997-98 women's basketball team.
 - Our Alumni Award recipients are Keith Nelson and Scott Schloegel receiving the Distinguished Alumni Award; Skye Patrick, Alumni Achievement Award; Beth Millner, Outstanding Young Alumni Award recipient; and Michele Butler, Alumni Community Service Award. A copy of all of their bios that outline their incredible professional and personal accomplishments are on file with the Secretary of the Board.
- Homecoming dedications – The Wildcat Statue will be dedicated this afternoon at 3:00 p.m.
- The dining hall is now fully opened as of this morning. The students we've spoken to are excited about it and that it was worth the wait.
- But we don't slow down any as next week is when Northern holds its annual diversity and inclusion conference known as the UNITED Conference, UNITED standing for Uniting Neighbors In The Experience of Diversity. The conference features speakers, presentations, and performances on a wide range of diversity and inclusion topics. It draws attentions from students, classes, AND community members. The full schedule of presentations can be found at nmu.edu/UNITED.