

It is my honor to recognize the life of former Northern Michigan University President John X. Jamrich, who passed away at the age of 101 on February 20.

Dr. Jamrich was Northern's eighth president, serving from 1968 until his retirement in 1983. His 15-year tenure – the third-longest of any NMU president – was marked by tremendous growth in enrollment, academic programs and community outreach.

During his time as president of NMU, he conferred degrees to 24,000 graduates. In fact, Dr. Jamrich was the president who handed me my degree when I graduated from Northern in 1973. His accomplishments were great, and his legacy endures in the form of rigorous academic programs, autonomous student life, and substantial investments in infrastructure.

During his tenure, President Jamrich supported the development of programs in nursing, criminal justice, and computer science, as well as ROTC programs. He led the construction for the Learning Resources Center, now (known as Harden Hall), and of the Jacobetti Complex, the PEIF, Cohodas Hall and Kaye House.

Dr. Jamrich was at Northern's helm when the University established new university and business partnerships, underwent union organization of both staff and faculty, saw the start of women's athletics, worked with students protesting issues around diversity, and – near the end of his term – worked through financial hardships because of severe state budget cuts.

According to Dr. Jamrich, one of his most treasured memories as NMU president was celebrating the 1975 football team's NCAA Division II national championship.

Northern remained an integral part of Dr. Jamrich's life following his retirement.

- An outstanding pianist, he wrote a 10-minute composition for the NMU centennial celebration in 1999.
- He and his wife June, who passed away in April 2020, were longtime philanthropic supporters of NMU.
 - They established the John X. and June A. Jamrich Endowed Music Scholarship and the John X. and June A. Jamrich Family Art Endowment.
 - They also supported many other scholarships and funds over the years, including the Center for Upper Peninsula Studies, the DeVos Art Museum, NMU Athletics to mention a few.

A native of Muskegon Heights, Michigan, Dr. Jamrich was the child of Slovakian immigrants and he spent a portion of his childhood in his parents' native country. He was fluent in five languages, was a World War II Army veteran, a trained meteorologist, a highly sought-after expert in higher education, a dedicated lifelong learner, and an NMU Wildcat to the very end.

Please join me at this time in a moment of silence to honor Dr. John X. Jamrich.