

President's Report to the NMU Board of Trustees
Dr. Kerri Schuiling
Friday, September 23, 2022

SISU INSTITUTE UPDATE: I have been asked about the activities of SISU and am pleased to provide this update.

In the past six months, SISU has:

- facilitated 18 workshops/sessions/retreats
- provided 557 consultation and ideation hours to NMU programs, services, departments, and colleges
- Led five events outside the University, including for Urban Manufacturing Alliance, Detroit Design Jam, Live Design International in Las Vegas, and two workshops at Westfield State University.
- Collectively, the Institute has awarded 111 “Intro to Design Thinking” badges and presented “Intro to Design Thinking” to 298 session participants.

SISU is in the process of launching the Illuminating Ideas Campaign, which was formerly known as the program incentive fund or PIF. A redesign of the program is focused to engage all aspects of the design thinking process: discovery funding, re-innovation funding, and implementation funding.

Many thanks to Bill and his staff for their great work in support of innovation on our campus.

WELLBEING: On Tuesday, September 27, WNMU-TV will host a “Facing Suicide: Town Hall” event on campus. A panel of Upper Peninsula mental health professionals will advance Northern’s conversation surrounding mental health with a discussion about suicide awareness and prevention. The town hall is inspired by the PBS documentary, Facing Suicide, which premiered on Public Television this month. WNMU-TV was one of 10 public media stations across the country awarded a grant to expand education efforts in the communities we serve regarding this issue. The town hall will be moderated by WNMU-TV producer Mike Settles.

CYBER SUCCESS: Northern’s Upper Peninsula Cybersecurity Institute held its inaugural cybersecurity symposium earlier this month, which brought together multiple state, federal, and civilian cybersecurity resources to connect with regional cybersecurity practitioners and decision makers. Topics included: cyber resilience, incident response planning, cybersecurity connections, and resources. A highlight of the event was a “fireside chat” session with Chris Inglis, national cyber director and adviser to President Joe Biden on cybersecurity. Congratulations to Doug Miller, Steve VandenAvond, Dave Nyberg, and all the others involved in putting on this very successful event.

ACCREDITATION: Northern’s Master of Social Work program, which began in 2019, received full accreditation over the summer from the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on Accreditation. NMU’s bachelor degree in social work, which has been continuously accredited since 1974, was reaffirmed for another eight years.

Nursing’s MSN program underwent an accreditation site visit this past month. While the final outcome will not be known until May, the visit went very well with the visitors indicating their report will state that all standards were met and there were no areas of concern.

Congratulations to both the Social Work and Nursing faculty and staff for the work for these positive outcomes.

PARTNERSHIP: Northern has established a new partnership with Eastpointe Community Schools, located just north of Detroit, that will provide an online pathway for their staff to obtain teacher certification in exchange for a three-year commitment to teach in the district upon completion of the program. The ECS Board of Education is providing funding to cover the NMU tuition so their employees who already hold a bachelor's degree can obtain a secondary certificate in a core subject area, or paraprofessionals with a certification in learning disabilities.

This is an example of NMU's School of Education, Leadership, and Public Service and our Global Campus staff rising to the occasion with an innovative solution to help K-12 schools. It's with great pride that I point out that it was the Michigan Department of Education who recommended NMU to Eastpointe. As Interim Dean Joe Lubig says, NMU is becoming the "go-to institution in the state to solve unique problems for schools, and the Michigan Department of Education is a champion for our work."

STUDENT RECOGNITION: Northern graduate assistant Benjamin Fidler won first place in the most recent international 3-Day Novel Contest. Elijah Sparkman, a recent NMU MFA graduate, also participated and advanced to the final selection. The event requires authors to create a novel or novella in 72 hours, competing against other writers worldwide. Congratulations to Ben and Elijah, and the MFA program.

ATHLETICS UPDATE: I have three athletic notes:

- I want to publicly welcome Rick Comley back for a second tenure as Northern's athletic director. As many already know, Rick agreed to step into this important role when Forest Karr departed for another institution in late August. To say that Rick has hit the ground running is an understatement. Additionally, thank you to Julie Rochester for taking on the role of Senior Athletics Advisory. What could have been a tough transition for the Athletic Department has proven to be almost seamless thanks to Rick and Julie and so many others helping to keep the programs and all the related processes moving in the right direction.
- Heading into tonight's road match vs. Grand Valley, Northern's women's soccer team was at the top of the GLIAC with a 4-0 league mark and is undefeated at 7-0-1. Grand Valley is second in the league, so it's a big match tonight. And, speaking of top of the league, the Wildcat hockey team has been selected to finish second in the Central College Hockey Association preseason poll, which was announced Monday. The 'Cats drop the puck on their new season on October 1-2 with a home series against Bowling Green.
- Finally, three members of our National Training Site Greco-Roman wrestling program will be in Spain in a few weeks having qualified to compete for Team USA at the Under-23 World Championships. Good luck to Alston Nutter, Benji Peak, and Payton Jacobson.

ALUMNI SHOUTOUT: A part of Homecoming is bestowing the Alumni Association Awards on deserving former students. I want to publicly congratulate our four recipients: Chris Mosier, Alumni Service – Community Award; Stephanie Lay, 'Outstanding Young Alumni Award; James Paquette, Alumni Achievement Award; and Steve Nystrom, Distinguished Alumni Award – well deserved honors for all. Tonight's Homecoming Awards Show is taking place at the Forest Roberts Theatre and also being streamed live so that alumni and friends here and around the world can participate in honoring our award recipients and Sports Hall of Fame inductees. The link for the stream is on the nmu.edu/homecoming web page.