

PRESIDENT'S REPORT for BOT

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SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS:

A few additional comments from what was presented and decided upon earlier this meeting.

BUSY FALL:

Most semesters are active, but this fall has been especially busy.

- **Dedicated 3 campus facilities:**
 - Jacobetti Complex
 - new WellBeing Center
 - and the new BEAR Center location
- Held my **presidential investiture** – what an event for the campus, community and my family
- Created the **new University Assembly** (campus and community leaders, including student leaders) and met for our first time – will meet once a semester
- Also **reinstated once-a-semester University Forum** and held first forum a few weeks ago
- Also, **reinstated the Chat with the President events** for me to meet with students informally. This semester held three chats:
 - one chat in residence hall area
 - one co-sponsored by new Commuter Student group and held in a location and at a time more beneficial for commuter students
 - and held one co-sponsored by the Graduate Student Association with NMU graduate students.
- We have also created the new **Lunch with the President** for faculty and staff.
 - Held two this semester and another two scheduled for next semester
 - At Convocation, I asked attendees to leave names of NMU employees who that considered to be “unsung heroes” on campus – they go above and beyond but don’t always get recognized
 - These unsung heroes have been my lunch guests

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

I thought I’d highlight a couple of national recognitions for Northern and our students and faculty.

- Northern was recognized on the American Indian Science and Engineering Society list of the **Top 200 Colleges for Indigenous Students** again this year. NMU’s selection was based on the strong programming of our Center for Native American Studies. Northern is the only college in Michigan that offers a bachelor’s degree in Native American Studies. We also have a certification in American Indian education and a master’s degree in American Indian education administration, as well as a Native American community services associate degree and minor. The Center also provides indigenous resources and activities for the campus and community.
- Two students who recently received national recognition:
 - **Freshman Riley Diehlman** was invited to participate in the White House Tribal Youth Forum in Washington D. C. Riley is an enrolled member of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and is pursuing an associate degree in Native American community services.

- **Senior Zoe Fess** was one of 185 Indigenous youths selected from nearly 500 applicants to participate in the Biennial United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Forum in Rome, Italy. She joined peers representing all seven socio-cultural regions of the world to share concerns and work on proposals for the United Nations and its member states on improving the live of Indigenous youth. Zoe is graduating this semester with a degree in environmental studies and sustainability.
- Two faculty be recognized:
 - **NMU librarian Emera Bridger Wilson** was accepted into the highly competitive American Library Association's Emerging Leaders Program. The program accepts no more than 50 participants from across the country year. This is a leadership program that enables early career librarians from around the nation to participate in problem-solving work groups, network with peers and learn to serve the profession a leadership capacity.
 - **Bill Digneit, director of SISU: The Innovation Institute of NMU**, received the Culture of Innovation Award from Trend Hunter at the Future Festival World Summit in Toronto. At the Festival, Bill spoke on stage about the SISU Institute and its innovation process. He was presented with his 3D-printed rocket ship trophy by a NASA representative.

MORE RECOGNITIONS ...

While not national recognition, I also wanted to highlight a couple other students, faculty and staff:

- Northern selected **Katherine Born** of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., as our **2023 Student Veteran of the Year**. Katherine was deployed to Camp Redleg in Dubai, United Arab Emirates with the 182nd Field Artillery out of Detroit from 2015 and 2016. She served as a power generating equipment mechanic, as well as a light and heavy wheeled vehicle mechanic in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Katherine received the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service medals, and an Army Achievement Medal. After her service, Katherine enrolled at Northern and earned an associate degree in clinical lab sciences and is now working to complete her bachelor's degree in the same major. She is an officer in the NMU chapter of the Student Veterans of America and does a wide range of volunteer work, including for Habit for Humanity.
- 18 students from the Earth, Environmental and Geographical Sciences Department recently attended the 2023 West Lakes Division of the American Association of Geographers meeting in Chicago. **Mary Kelly and Julia Leitz placed first and second in the undergraduate paper award competition**. Mary's paper was about her research involving mitigation wetlands at Presque Isle Park and Julia's research involved farmland in the Upper Peninsula.
- **Dr. Weronika Kusek** of the EEGS Department will start in January as the **new Provost Fellow**. She will work on a mentoring program for faculty new to Northern, with a particular focus on international faculty. In January, **Dr. Dwight Brady** of the Communication and Media Studies Department will begin work as NMU's **international programs faculty liaison**. Dwight will work with the International Programs Office and faculty members to increase on-campus and abroad international learning opportunities.
- **Derek Estes**, who assumed the role of NMU **executive chef** in mid-October, was recently **named the U.P.'s Culinarian of the Year** by the Upper Peninsula Chapter of the American Culinary Federation. Derek was previously the operations manager for Northern Center catering events. He has worked for NMU Dining since 2013, starting as a production cook. He has two NMU degrees: food service management in 2018 and hospitality and tourism management in 2019.

UPDATE ON PROVOST/DEI SEARCHES

We are nearing completion of our searches for provost/vice president for Academic Affairs and assistant vice president for diversity and inclusion.

Provost – The provost selection committee brought 3 finalists to campus. I, along with many of campus, had a chance to meet all 3 of them. A big thank you goes to chair of the selection committee Carol Johnson and all of the committee members.

AVP/D&I – The AVP for Diversity and Inclusion selection committee brought 2 finalists to campus to meet me, along with Northern students, faculty and staff and Marquette community members. Thank you to committee co-chairs Jill Compton and Amy Hamilton, along with the committee members.

In both cases we are moving forward with the offer process and hope to be able to be able to make announcements early in the new year.

THREE FINAL NOTES:

GRANT AWARDED – Northern has once again been **awarded a competitive Student Select Support Services (4-S) grant, worth about \$100,000 annually over a six-year cycle, as part of the state's larger King-Chavez-Parks initiative.** The 4-S program is designed to develop retention programs to benefit academically- or economically-disadvantaged students enrolled at four-year public and independent educational institutions throughout the state. Joseph Baynesan of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity-Workforce Development, who oversees the KCP Initiative, visited campus a few weeks ago and I had a chance to discuss our program going forward with him. We appreciate the State of Michigan's support in this area.

SUPPORTING WELLBEING – **I want to give a shout out to Northern's Biology Department on its "Be Well in Weston" initiative to support student and employee wellbeing.** The Department has designed a program to make it easy to participate in fun physical and mental health activities on campus, such as the October Step Counting Challenge that resulted in trees planted for every 10,000 steps taken in the competition, along with craft and painting events, mindfulness and art therapy sessions, yoga and lunchtime walks. Thank you to Biology for supporting the Okanagan Charter and for extending wellbeing beyond the classroom.

ATHLETIC NOTES – I know we're going to be discussing the success of the NMU women's soccer and cross-country Wildcats shortly so I won't add to that other than to say what an outstanding effort by these women and how lucky we are to have the coaches we have for these programs.

But I did want to share with the board our **winter teams are off to good starts** all around.

Additionally, our **women's swimming and diving team is currently ranked No. 5 in the nation and our men's team is ninth** while our **women's wrestling team is 11th in the nation.**

Also, the **Greco-Roman wrestlers recently won Norway's prestigious Kolbotn Cup, taking home the Under-20 team title** with seven medalists.

LOOKING AHEAD – In February, I will update you or we will do presentations on the progress of the pillar priority projects I told you about in September, but in the interest of time, we'll save that for the next time the board is on campus.

Thank you.