

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. My name is David Wiegand and I am the new president of our UAW local 2178. Our new vice president, Lindsay Haukkala, is also here today. I have been asked to represent the Staff Labor Council today. It is an honor to be asked to deliver these remarks and to be honest, I'm not sure which is more uncomfortable. Talking in front of this many people or the shirt and tie I'm wearing.

The people I represent in the TOPs, AFSCME and AP unions are the base and the critical infrastructure of the pillars that NMU currently stands on. Our members are involved in every aspect of our campus. From admissions and financial aid to student success and wellbeing. From academics and athletics to student experience and housing, we are there. Our rigor, sense of community and inclusion and the environment we've help create has brought over 7400 students to our campus this year. We strive to help our students make connections, find innovation and achieve their higher education goals and success.

While attending convocation, I was excited to hear of all the great things NMU is trying to achieve with our grand challenges. We look forward to being a part of this exciting and incredible undertaking. Our staff will indeed keep our compass pointing north to help in any way we can. I also enjoyed reading the list of NMU's unsung heroes, as I know a great many of them. However, as I continued through my work in the following days, I realized that list should be much, much longer. So many of the people I see all around campus and am proud to work with should be on that list. The things they achieve are truly amazing and too often go unnoticed. They show me their dedication and commitment to our core values each and every day. The people I'm speaking on behalf of are the reason that every day is a great day to be a wildcat.

The Staff Labor Council would like to thank you Dr. Tessman, Dr. Young and the members of our board of trustees for your efforts to have open and frank discussions about the concerns of our members. Listening to the struggles that we face and taking the time to have those conversations, even the tough ones, have shown your willingness to open those lines of communication that seem closed in years past. We look forward to continuing these discussions and find practical and innovative solutions to help our human infrastructure achieve their wellbeing.

Thank you again for this opportunity.