

## Your investment in NMU during tough economic times

*A message from the president of the NMU Foundation Board of Trustees*



Tom Ungrodt

As we move into 2009, we find ourselves in turbulent economic times. History tells us that these times will pass. However, it is impossible to say how long it will be until conditions improve.

Amidst this uncertainty we would like to thank all of you who have supported and continue to support NMU and to let you know that we are staying focused, moving forward and continuing to be good stewards of your investment in the future of our students, our communities and the world.

An important part of the NMU Foundation's mission is to make sure that the gifts we receive have the greatest possible impact and that those gifts are well-managed. To that end, the members of the NMU Foundation Board of Trustees continually assess and reassess the financial climate to determine how best to invest the Foundation's endowment.

As early as 2006, members of the Board's finance committee, in ongoing discussions with our professional money management consultant, began recommending the periodic re-allocation of endowment funds in favor of fixed-income, high-yield investments and to reduce exposure to market volatility. After review and discussion, the Foundation trustees determined that adopting these strategies, in accordance with



The NMU Foundation endowment plays an important role in helping to keep NMU's tuition costs down and in freeing up university resources. The endowment represents primarily unrestricted money or other financial assets that have been donated to the NMU Foundation. These assets are invested so that the total value will yield an inflation-adjusted principal amount along with additional income.

As is the case with most endowment funds, the NMU Foundation follows strict policy allocation guidelines with the long-term goal of yielding a target return without taking too much risk.

the Foundation's investment policies, would be in the best interest of our students and the university. These defensive moves have helped to protect the endowment and to minimize the impact of an increasingly unstable economic environment. Consequently, our endowment continues to outperform relevant benchmarks and we feel well-positioned to weather this downturn and well-prepared to take advantage of improving conditions.

Most importantly, in good times and bad, the key to maintaining our momentum and advancing our mission lies in listening closely to what you are telling us about your situations, concerns and passions. What we are hearing is that your dedication to our students and to the importance of higher education remains strong. We cannot thank you enough. With your vision and your support we can continue to create opportunities that will transform the lives of our students and help them lead us toward a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you again,

**Tom Ungrodt '76 BS**  
*President,  
NMU Foundation  
Board of Trustees*

To learn more, visit  
[www.nmu.edu/foundation](http://www.nmu.edu/foundation)