DIRECTOR'S REPORT
September 2025

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL CHARGE - Members worked over the summer to clarify SAC's charge and how it relates to SHINE. Dr. Jelili Adebiyi led reflective discussions that advanced understanding and increased the precision of the document. Members voted unanimously to implement the new Charge.

MI HEALTHY CLIMATE CORPS - In April, the White House issued a "stop work order" for all AmeriCorps programs across the country, putting more than 30,000 people out of work. The State of Michigan figured out a way to keep the MI Healthy Climate Corps program running, and all of the "members" - now called "fellows." The program was reinstated in early June. Anna's fellowship will conclude on Friday, October 17. We'll have a goodbye celebration for her on Thursday, October 16, 12-2 p.m. Everyone is invited. There will be a third cohort of the MHC program, 12 fellows instead of 32. We've applied for a fellowship position focused on managing the sustainability demonstration area behind Woodland Park apartments. We'll know in early October if we are a host site.

SUSTAINABILITY DEMONSTRATION AREA - The area behind Woodland Park Apartments has transformed over the summer. Several collaborators and opportunities have facilitated the evolution of that project. The solar panels were moved in early June. Then, the Dean's Office "Swipe Out Hunger Grant" funded the purchase of two new hoop houses. By July, the University & City agreed to close Niedhart & Norwood, and Facilities and Grounds worked with contractors to remove the road and revegetate the area, expanding the wildlife corridor. There is a designated parking area with a split rail fence. Construction management students are currently working on raised beds for the area. We hosted an open house and Design Jam to gather stakeholder input on Tuesday. More to come!

SUSTAINABLE CITIZEN BADGE - 71 people have enrolled in the course. This summer, Anna & I led in-person versions of the course (2 sessions at the Staff Professional Development days in May and one session for the New Faculty Orientation / Faculty Professional Development Day in August). We plan to offer the in-person course as a skillbuilder at least once per semester; it's available online anytime.

GREEN FUND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE - The 2025 projects are at various stages of implementation. Bikes were purchased for the ASNMU bike share program. Still working on composting at Woodland Park Apartments, will likely support compost at the area behind the apartments. The bat houses and bird houses are here, and pollinator over-winter houses are being built - all will be installed once we finalize locations in collaboration with proposers & NMU Grounds.

DIVESTMENT UPDATE - In May, and then again in August, the University moved another portion of its endowment out of portfolios that included fossil fuel-related industries. Currently, we estimate that less than 2% of NMU's endowment is still in portfolios with ties to the industry. The last two moves are scheduled for May & August 2026, which means we may reach our divestment target two years ahead of schedule. Likewise, the University has increased investments in sustainable funds including the Climate Paris Aligned ETF, S&P 500 Fossil Fuel Reserves Free ETF, and Impax Global Environmental Markets; the three funds collectively will account for 60% of NMU's investments.

SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS INDEX - For the first time ever, NMU is featured in AASHE'S Sustainable Campus Index. The Sustainable Campus Index highlights the most sustainable colleges and universities in 17 impact areas and overall by institution type, as measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). We are one of three "Gold" public colleges in

Michigan (with MTU & Univ. of Michigan) and one of nine public, masters-granting institutions with an enrollment under 10,000.

STRATEGY 1.4 PROGRESS - Moving into 2025-2026, we're going to focus on 5 priority action items; we've moved two from our action plan (sustainability summit & green fund promotion) to general operations and the remaining 8 items are in the "ongoing" category. We're working on updating the link on our website to indicate these changes.

SISU PROJECT FUNDED - SHINE's proposal to conduct a comprehensive waste audit and design waste reduction campaigns was funded by SISU. Dr. Jelili Adebiyi and Dr. Lucy Johnson and their students are conducting preliminary research. Our contract with Waste Management was also updated to include weekly weights and photos of every pick-up. We'll compare the students' audit with the data from WM and have a robust data set to create recommendations for waste reduction in the coming year. More to come!

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS - NMU is an institutional member of AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education), anyone with an NMU.EDU email address can create a login and access thousands of resources on the AASHE website. NMU is also a member of UMACS (Upper Midwest Association for Campus Sustainability), anyone can attend their coffee chats or other free, virtual programs. Several students will be presenting research and projects at the UMACS conference September 25-27, in Decorah, Iowa. NMU is also a member of the Michigan Sustainable Business Forum (https://misbf.org/), which promotes business practices that advance climate leadership, social justice, and the creation of a circular economy. They have an online monthly Michigan Campus Sustainability Collective Meeting - the next one is Wednesday, October 8 at 1:00.

SHINE OPERATIONS

- **SHINE OFFICE** - We're temporarily located in 2603 & 2605 Hedgcock. We'll move to the third floor of Harden Hall in December. Interns have keys to 2603 to access the building after 5 p.m. for meetings and workshops.
- **WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER** - Email newsletter goes out on Fridays. Last year we experimented with the University's newsletter platform, but the subscription process was complicated. This year, we're continuing to explore format and delivery mechanisms.
- **HOMECOMING** - We'll be with WellBeing & OEP in the Homecoming parade. It's also "National Talk Like A Pirate Day" so look for pirates and mermaids; "ARRGGGHHH! Is for reduce, reuse, recycle!"
- **TABLING** - We'll be set up at the ASNMU Farmer's Market with the EcoReps. We'll also have the TerraCycle recycle bins there - bring toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, & old socks to recycle. Otherwise, the bins are located in the SHINE conference room; feel free to drop by anytime.

INTERNS' INITIATIVES

- **CARBON NEUTRALITY** - Avery Case is working on some campus updates about our divestment progress and carbon-negative carpet in the renovated areas of Harden Hall. She's also beginning to learn SIMAP software and learn about the data required for Scope 3 reporting.
- **CLIMATE EDUCATION** - Chloe Ravenscraft is this year's NCN intern and is organizing the Climate@Noon series. Hosted her first one last Friday. Two more this semester - Oct 3 will be MassTimber@MSU presentation, and UPPCO will present on the Republic Solar Project on Nov. 7.
- **COMM & OUTREACH** - Janelle Harris is leading all of SHINE's communications - the newsletter, social media, website updates, and the creation & posting of other promotional materials as necessary.

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** - Lucy Planica (SLFP) is our first SLFP intern and is primarily focused on external engagement. She's brainstorming all of the community outreach and programming ideas for the Woodland Park area as it continues to evolve.
- **GREEN ATHLETICS** - Joanne Arbic is team lead this year. She's exploring options for Zero Waste volleyball game in the Vandament for October. She's also meeting with teams and coaches and considering expanding the group to include club and intramural sports teams.
- **NATIVE PLANTS** - Ashlyn Albert has joined Grace Freed in helping tend to the plants in the Nursery. They are also working on the Bee Campus USA designation and a proposal for small native plant signs across campus.
- **SUSTAINABILITY AUDIT** - Delany Frank is learning STARS 3.0 and making a master list of the data needs for our next submission. She's also updating the campus-wide sustainability survey so that we can improve our data collection and precision.