

# Mesabi Range Foundation Newsletter

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## Creating a Culture of Philanthropy at Minnesota North College

By Dr. Trent Janezich, Executive Director of Advancement  
and Customized Training Solutions

The colleges of the Northeast Higher Education District (NHED); namely, Hibbing Community College, Itasca Community College, Mesabi Range College, Rainy River Community College, and Vermilion Community College officially became Minnesota North College on May 23, 2022, after receiving their final blessing from both the Higher Learning Commission (the regional accrediting body) and the Minnesota State Board of Trustees this past winter.

So, what has changed? Well, our name and brand for one. We will now get to brand ourselves together as one organization. Our tagline “Head North” serves as a beacon...for those who recreate “up north” and all the headlights we see Friday evening coming up I-35. It’s also a slogan for those who are looking to come our way for furthering their education while being able to immerse themselves in natural beauty of our region. Secondly, we are now one regionally accredited comprehensive institution with six campuses serving the vast geography of Northeastern Minnesota. We have one organizational structure that serves all six campuses under the leadership of President Mike Raich (Jodi Pontinen and Jessalyn Sabin will be the Directors of Operations of the Mesabi Range-Virginia and Eveleth campuses respectively while also serving as Financial Aid Director and Dean of Career and Technical Education). Our mission is to be a catalyst for regional prosperity; and, through our merger, it is our hope that students will see increased support and academic opportunity through the pooling of our course catalog, businesses will feel more supported to help meet their workforce shortages through intentional outreach, and our community will deepen its connection with our campuses due to increased capacity and outreach locally from a one-college model. In short, we are stronger together than we are apart.

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## Board Accomplishments and Future Goals

- March: Had a new trophy case built.
- May: Awarded over \$98,000 in scholarships.
- May: Held Annual Meeting and Elected New Officers.
- June: Elected Kim Pittman to the Board of Directors.
- July: Completed the Jackson Lesar Student Success Learning Center makeover project.



### Board Members

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Sue Medure . . . . .         | President      |
| Luke Chopp . . . . .         | Vice President |
| Scott Wirtanen . . . . .     | Secretary      |
| Elizabeth Pluskwik . . . . . | Treasurer      |
| Thomas Aro . . . . .         | Director       |
| Mary Gorman . . . . .        | Director       |
| Tom Inforzato . . . . .      | Director       |
| Shelly Jugovich . . . . .    | Director       |
| Brenda Kochevar . . . . .    | Director       |
| Mark Muhich . . . . .        | Director       |
| Gary Picck . . . . .         | Director       |
| Kim Pittman . . . . .        | Director       |

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### What's inside

- Calendar of Events
- Lesar Student Success Center
- Welcome to Kim Pittman
- Norse Trophy Case
- Tamara Moore
- 2022-23 Scholarship Recipients
- Fall Sports Calendar



## Calendar of Events

|                     |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>July 26</i>      | Foundation Board Meeting             |
| <i>August 23</i>    | Fall Semester Begins                 |
| <i>August 23</i>    | Foundation Board Meeting             |
| <i>August 24</i>    | VB Game: St. Cloud at St. Cloud      |
| <i>August 27</i>    | FB Game: St. Scholastica at Duluth   |
| <i>TBA</i>          | Jackson Lesar Learning Center Social |
| <i>September 6</i>  | Labor Day                            |
| <i>September 27</i> | Foundation Board Meeting             |

*The Board of Directors of the Mesabi Range Foundation meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 12:00 noon.*

## Jackson Lesar Student Success Learning Center

The Learning Center makeover, under the guidance of Mary Gorman, is winding down and will be ready for students to use on the first day of school on August 23. Mesabi Range is extremely grateful to the generous donation from Bill Lesar, who made this project a reality. Thank you Bill!

The room has been recarpeted in blue and green, the walls have a fresh coat of paint, and new lighting and electrical plug-ins for computers and cell-phones have been installed. Comfortable, leather-like chairs and tables are placed throughout the room for student use. Artwork has been added to give the room a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Hours of the learning center are from 8 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday and it is staffed with a tutor to help students with their individual needs.



## Kim Pittman

Kim Pittman, a Cherry native, is the newest member of the Mesabi Range Foundation Board of Directors. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin—Stout. She also has a Master's Degree in Management from the University of Phoenix.

Kim spent the last three years as the Foundation's Office Coordinator. In April, she accepted a position with Cleveland Cliffs as a Senior Buyer. She is excited and eager to continue to be involved with the Foundation. Kim is the President of Elementary Sports for the Cherry School, Treasurer for Cherry Baseball, and the Financial Secretary for Faith United Lutheran Church.

She enjoys volunteering in her community and meeting new people. In her spare time, Kim likes to spend her time with her husband, Dustin, and their three children. They enjoy the outdoors, the lake, camping, fishing, and any type of sports. Kim is looking forward to serving on the Mesabi Range Foundation Board and continuing to work with the wonderful board members and fabulous donors.



*Welcome New Board Member Kim!*

## NEW NORSE TROPHY CASE

Last summer, during the makeover of the Athletic Department, over 100 trophies were discovered in a storage room, hidden away in the dark, collecting dust. Athletic trophies dating back to the 1920's..... Athletic trophies from Division Championships, State Championships, National Championships, and Bowl Games..... Athletic trophies representing football, basketball, volleyball, softball, track, baseball, golf, hockey and tennis. There was even a National Oratory Championship trophy from 1937!

It was decided that these trophies needed to be displayed. After all, they are a part of Mesabi's legacy. So thanks to the expertise and craftsmanship of Ryan Lehto, former Mesabi Range College carpentry graduate, a 18' x 8' trophy case was built in the West entryway of the Virginia campus and was completed in just four days. The trophies were then organized by each sport, dusted, polished and carefully arranged in their new home by Scott Wirtanen, Tom Inforzato and Tay Thomas. Please stop by to see the beautiful, new addition to the campus. Go Norse!



# Tamara Moore, a Title IX Trailblazer



Tamara Moore, men's basketball coach at Mesabi Range, recently flew to New York City to appear on ABC's "Good Morning America." She was told that she was selected to be on a panel to discuss Title IX issues; when actually, Robin Roberts and Michael Strahan were honoring her for all that she has accomplished in her basketball career. They also surprised Coach Moore with a check for \$10,000.

Tamara's high school career resulted in being selected Miss Minnesota Basketball in 1998. From there, she played college basketball at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and had a

successful career with the WNBA. At the present time, Tamara is the FIRST black woman to coach a men's college basketball team; and, in her spare time she works with the Boys and Girls Club of the Twin Cities. "Good Morning America" called her a Title IX Trailblazer. Currently, she has been added to the Summer League coaching staff for the Boston Celtics.

*Congratulations!*

*Way to go Tamara!!*



# 2022-23 Mesabi Range Foundation Scholarships

The Mesabi Range Foundation is proud to announce the scholarship recipients for the 2022-23 academic year. Additional Foundation scholarships will be awarded in September. The following students were selected in May 2022:

## American Association of University

### Women

Rowlanda Comes Flying

## Andrew Lang Memorial

Nick Peters

## ArcelorMittal Minorca Mine

Abigail Lauer

## Archie Hill Memorial

Destiny Zaren

## Artisan

Joseph Lessin

## Barb Garni Memorial

Jennifer Osufsen

## Bill & Joan Wirtanen Memorial

Jacob Majerle

Kevin Rahe

## Carl G. Carlson Memorial

Landan Adams

Chandler Davidson

## Dan & Yvonne Webb Engineering

Ashley Aho

Avery Enochson

Alyssa Fena

Ayla Isaacson

Trevor Mattson

Katherine Scherf

Dane Sepin

Wyatt Thorson

## Dave Stillman Memorial

Aundreas Griffin

## Dr. George Erickson & Emil Erickson

### Memorial Scholarship

Avery Enochson

Alyssa Fena

Abigail Lauer

## Eino Kopponen Memorial

Brandon Lind

## Emily & Joseph Kraker Memorial

Kylee Huusko

## Eveleth Elks/Cruise Eveleth

Alex Yrjanson

## Gene F. Kishel M.D. and Brynhild Kishel

### Engineering

Ashley Aho

Alyssa Fena

## Herschel "Pepper" Lysaker Memorial

Wyatt Thorson

## Jeremy Carpenter Memorial

Iain Agee

## Jeremy Jindra Memorial Scholarship

Jaxon Germain

Kaelynn Kudis

Jennifer Osufsen

## Joanne Lindgren Memorial

Alexis Dobson

## Joe Kraker Jr. Memorial Engineering

Kristchan Lenarz

## Joseph J. Rebovich Memorial

Brandon Lind

## Louanne Picek Memorial

Cameron Tibbetts

## Marian E. Haij Memorial

Alexis Dobson

## Marjorie Bangs-Schmitt

Abigail Lauer

## Matt Rozinka Memorial

Alexis Dobson

## Megan Ashley Anderson Memorial

Caleb Hill

## Mesabi Range College Foundation

Jacob Majerle

## MRC Faculty/Staff

Kevin Rahe

## Rainy River Recovery

Jacklyn Plesha

## Ray Garni Memorial

Abigail Lauer

## Rod & Jackie Ogrzovich

Sarah Voss

## Roy Carlson Honor

Elijah Johnson

De'Corey Eason

## Ruth Kanianen & Bob Clark

### Journalism/Education

Hannah Anderson

## The Johnson Family

Lauren Lautigar

## The LaMarche Creek Foundation

Anna Fink

Carter Flannigan

## The Lassila Family Memorial

Alexander Atkinson

## Tom Rukavina Engineering

Trevor Mattson

## Tony & Joyce Nigro Education

Diego Christianson

Marilynn Pagel

## Trenti Law Firm

Mark Blount

## Twin Cities Iron Ranger

Rowlanda Comes Flying

Kylee Huusko

Destiny Zaren

## Virginia Lions Club

Jacob McCarthy

## Virginia Rotary Club

Alex Yrjanson

## Virginia Women of Today

Jacklyn Plesha

## Walfred A. Bodas Memorial

Durand Douglas

## Walker, Giroux, and Hahne

Cameron Tibbetts

# Sports Schedules

## 2022 NORSE FOOTBALL

| DATE          | OPPONENT        | SITE            | TIME     |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Aug 27 (Sat)  | St. Scholastica | Duluth (A)      | 10:00 am |
| Sept 3 (Sat)  | Vermilion       | Ely (A)         | 1: 30 pm |
| Sept 10 (Sat) | MN West         | Mt. Iron (H)    | 11:00 am |
| Sept 17 (Sat) | Rochester       | Rochester (A)   | 2:00 pm  |
| Sept 24 (Sat) | Central Lakes   | Brainerd (A)    | 1:30 pm  |
| Oct 2 (Sun)   | Augsburg JV     | Minneapolis (A) | 12:00 pm |
| Oct 8 (Sat)   | MN State FF     | Mt. Iron (H)    | 2:30 pm  |
| Oct 15 (Sat)  | NDSCS           | Mt. Iron (H)    | 2:30 pm  |

*Support Mesabi's Fall Sports!*

## 2022 NORSE VOLLEYBALL

### August

|          |                      |              |          |
|----------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| 5 (Fri)  | 1st Practice         | HOME         |          |
| 19 (Fri) | ^Illinois Valley CC  | Rockford, IL | 10:00 AM |
| 19 (Fri) | ^DuPage (IL)         | Rockford, IL | 12:00 PM |
| 20 (Sat) | ^NIACC               | Rockford, IL | 9:00 AM  |
| 20 (Sat) | ^Morton College (IL) | Rockford, IL | 1:00 PM  |
| 24 (Wed) | St. Cloud            | St. Cloud    | 6:30 PM  |
| 31 (Wed) | *Hibbing             | Hibbing      | 6:30 PM  |

### September

|          |                    |                |          |
|----------|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| 3 (Sat)  | Alumni             | HOME           | 12:00 PM |
| 7 (Wed)  | *Central Lakes     | Brainerd       | 6:30 PM  |
| 9 (Fri)  | *Alex Tech         | HOME           | 6:30 PM  |
| 10 (Sat) | *Northland         | HOME           | 12:00 PM |
| 14 (Wed) | *Rainy River       | HOME           | 6:30 PM  |
| 16 (Fri) | *Itasca            | Grand Rapids   | 6:30 PM  |
| 17 (Sat) | Dakota County      | Inver Hills CC | 3:00 PM  |
| 17 (Sat) | Anoka-Ramsey       | Inver Hills CC | 5:00 PM  |
| 20 (Tue) | UWS JV (Scrimmage) | Superior, WI   | 4:00 PM  |
| 21 (Wed) | *Fond du Lac       | Cloquet        | 6:30 PM  |
| 24 (Sat) | *Vermilion         | HOME           | 12:00 PM |
| 28 (Wed) | *Hibbing           | HOME           | 6:30 PM  |
| 30 (Fri) | *Alex Tech         | Alexandria     | 6:30 PM  |

# Creating a Culture of Philanthropy at Minnesota North College

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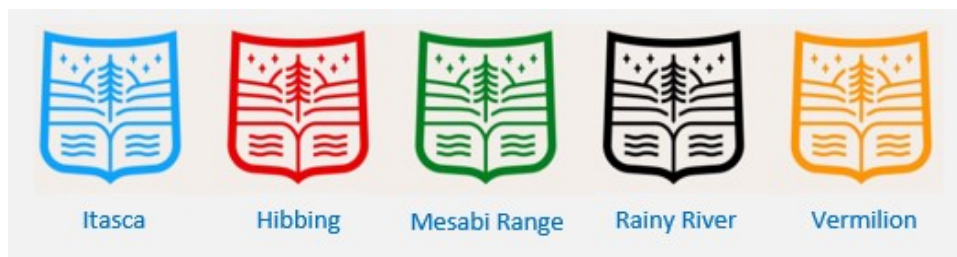
What will continue to be the same? First, and most importantly, all of our campuses will remain open. We will continue to have five athletic programs at our legacy campuses that provide so much opportunity for students from all over the country and internationally as well. We will also continue to have six campus foundations (including one alumni association that also gives out scholarships). Lastly, but certainly not least, what won't change is everyone's commitment to student success.

Now that we are one college with six campuses, our collective work is really just beginning. One of the biggest ways we all can affect student enrollment and student success is by being intentional about eliminating barriers for our students. **The biggest barrier for students is a financial barrier, not being able to afford (whether that is transportation costs, childcare costs, food costs, or tuition costs) to make the jump into college.** In addition, we hear all too often from businesses and other organizations in our region that there is a critical workforce shortage all throughout our region. Something has to give! So, the question is really, how are we going to make the students' decision to attend college, easier? What are the levers we can pull to make it more attractive? Creating a sustained and aligned culture of philanthropy across Minnesota North College via our campus-based foundations, and being laser-focused on substantially increasing our scholarship awards, while not a silver bullet, is as close to a silver bullet as we will get.

As I mentioned, as we move forward, our college will continue to have and promote our six campus foundations (including two at the Mesabi Range campus in the form of the Alumni Association, and Campus Foundation). Our campus foundations are a vital connection to our local community and will continue to be moving forward. My role, while continually evolving, will be that of a convener, facilitator, and liaison between our college leadership team and our six campus foundations and their staff and boards.

In addition, my role will be to support our foundations directly, when and where it makes sense, and as determined by the campus foundation boards. For instance, in the absence of executive leadership, the Vermilion Campus Foundation Board asked that I serve as their Executive Director to help them re-constitute their board and modernize their activities. To that end, at Vermilion we have hired a new Foundation Coordinator, in Sarah Murn, and together we are starting to move in a positive direction.

There is a lot of potential across all of our campus foundations; and, for the good of the region, I am really hopeful about where we all can go, together! Thank you for your continued commitment to the Mesabi Range campuses and to the future of Minnesota North College. It has never been a better time to "Head North."



Keep your compass pointed north to find the education you need. Minnesota North College offers programs in a variety of areas of expertise all designed to give you an on-campus college experience unlike anything else you will find. Our six campus locations across Northern Minnesota will ensure you find plenty of off campus activities as well. Let us help you reach your goal of finding an educational experience leading to the career of your dreams. All while you...

## Head North



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