

**Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association  
Annual Meeting  
Tuesday, September 15, 2020**

**Welcome**

Sheila Ferrell, chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed guests to the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association.

**Approval of the 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes**

Ferrell asked for approval of the 2019 Annual Meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Paul Corr and seconded by Steve Stands. The motion passed.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report – Skeeter Bird**

Skeeter Bird encouraged the guests to walk to the west side of the Student Center after the meeting to see the physical changes taking place.

Bird spoke to the changes, challenges and required flexibility brought on by COVID-19 and by staff changes in the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association. In spite of the challenges, Bird said he felt there were several accomplishment he wanted to share.

***Return on Investment.*** While the end-of-the-year return on investment was a negative 0.24 percent, Bird stated he was extremely pleased with that outcome. Additionally, while the stock market reached a negative 24 percent during the worst period of the year, the lowest our return on investment reached was a negative 12 percent. Bird thanked the members of the Investment Committee and the members of the 6 Meridian investment firm for their continued stewardship of the organization's investments.

Bird shared that by the end of August 2020, the return on investment had recovered to a positive 5.42 percent.

***Northwestern Leadership Trust.*** Bird shared that a new initiative has been launched to fund the advancement of leadership at Northwestern with endowed funding that will last in perpetuity. The Northwestern Leadership Trust is designed to replace the President's Association annual fundraising program with a perpetual stream of funding for leadership education programs.

***Hybrid Spending Model.*** The Investment Committee, along with assistance from 6 Meridian, created and approved a new spending model in January 2020. The spending policy is a hybrid model which is a similar style used at Yale and Stanford. Bird added that this new model is uniquely designed with the Foundation & Alumni Association's operational needs in mind.

***New Website.*** Bird reported that work continues on the organization's new website, which is expected to launch in November. This website will offer a personalized experience to the user. Donors will be able to review their giving history, and philanthropic recommendations will be available based on their past giving interests.

**Student Presentation – Angie Aguilera**

Angie Aguilera, a junior majoring in vocal performance, is from Woodward, Oklahoma.

Aguilera shared the struggles she has endured as a student with learning disabilities and mental illness. She acknowledged that there were many unknowns and concerns about being allowed to prove herself, let alone getting a degree. Aguilera transferred to Northwestern from Oklahoma State University hoping for a more personalized experience. She is convinced she received this from Northwestern.

“Where I was once told to give up because a person like me would never be able to succeed in music, I stand here today to tell you that I never dreamed I would be doing what I’m doing.”

She thanked the Fine Arts professors for their genuine care and encouragement in pursuing her degree. She also acknowledged the community of Northwestern for their support.

**Investment Committee Report**

Trevor Phillippi, Vice President and Director of Operations, 6 Meridian, provided a brief overview of the Foundation portfolio. 6 Meridian manages nearly \$26 million on behalf of the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association, with assets diversified globally across equities, fixed income and alternative investments.

Phillippi referenced the current portfolio allocation in the handout, along with target allocation which were reviewed and updated in the last Investment Committee meeting in July 2020.

The target allocation is 69 percent equities, 15 percent fixed income, 15 percent alternative investments and one percent cash. Phillippi added that the portfolio allocation and performance are reviewed quarterly and the portfolio is rebalanced, accordingly, to maintain target allocations.

Phillippi noted that the generosity of donors and the stewardship of the assets by the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association and trustees have resulted in an average increase in value of 8.4 percent per year over the last five years. This compares to 5.1 percent for firms on a national basis.

**2019-2020 Annual Audit Report – Kirk Vanderslice**

Kirk Vanderslice, CPA and Partner-in-Charge of the Oklahoma practice, Hinkle and Company, noted that the audit process went well and resulted in no findings, significant deficiencies or material weaknesses.

Vanderslice mentioned a new disclosure regarding liquidity noted on page 22 in the audit handout under *Note 8: Liquidity and Availability of Financial Assets*. Another disclosure in the footnotes mentioned the economic conditions given the pandemic.

**Governance Committee Report – Grace Wessels**

In the absence of Grace Wessels, Chair of the Governance Committee, Rachel Kraus, Relationship Manager, presented the Governance Committee Report.

Members of the past year Governance Committee include Josh Bellamy, Shawna Berryman, Blaine Easter, David Shafer and Grace Wessels.

Committee recommendations for the Class Year 2023 include the following:

- Mike Benway, Blaine Easter and Grace Wessels agree to a second three-year term.
- Cassandra Berry and Linda Tutwiler stepped in to complete the terms of others. Cassandra serves on the Investment Committee and Linda serves on the Stewardship Committee. Both are beginning first terms of their own this year.
- Five new members have been added. Jim Booth will serve on the Governance Committee. Patty DeWitt and Randy Smith will serve on the Executive Committee. Larry DeWitt will serve on the Investment Committee. RaJeana Wiebener will serve on the Stewardship Committee.

Rachel asked for a motion that the ten individuals be elected to serve as the incoming class of 2023. Jim Dunning moved to accept the ten individuals as trustees for the Class of 2023. Steve Stands seconded and the motion was passed.

### **Trustee Plaque Presentations**

Four trustees are stepping down after fulfilling their commitments. Skeeter Bird presented Sheila Ferrell with her plaque, and thanked her for her years of service on the Executive Committee.

Plaques will be sent to the remaining outgoing trustees who were not present. They include David Johnson, Jim Seeger-Newby and David Shafer.

Ferrell shared the roster of names for next year's membership on the four standing committees:

- **Executive Committee** – Mike Benway, Paul Corr, Dr. Janet Cunningham, Patty DeWitt, Jim Dunning, L.D. Rapp, Kyle Reynolds, Randy Smith, Steve Stands and Grace Wessels. Rapp will serve as Chair.

Bird shared that trustee Donna Anderson had notified John Allen, Director of Alumni Relations, that she would be stepping down due to health issues. Jeremiah Campbell, current vice president of the Alumni Board, will replace Anderson in her role as president and will serve as a trustee on the Executive Committee.

- **Investment Committee** – Cassandra Berry, Larry DeWitt, Jim Dunning, Dr. Gary Lott, Dwight Pfeiffer and Loren Rieger. Dunning will serve as Chair.
- **Governance Committee** – Josh Bellamy, Shawna Berryman, Jim Booth, Blaine Easter and Grace Wessels. Wessels will serve as Chair.
- **Stewardship Committee** – Paul Corr, Cherrie Greco, Linda Tutwiler and ReJeana Wiebener. Corr will serve as Chair.

**Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award**

Dr. Janet Cunningham presented Ryan Bowen, head baseball coach, with the Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award.

Bowen was recognized for raising an average of more than \$30,000 for his program in the three years he has been the head baseball coach at Northwestern. He has taken the lead in securing baseball hitting software, which is used to improve our student athletes' batting performances. He has led letter writing campaigns, three online crowd-funding campaigns and multiple baseball camps. He also has managed the Dugout Club Golf tournament each fall.

In every capacity, Bowen has admirably represented his program and Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

**Donor Recognition**

President Janet Cunningham presented recognition gifts to donors reaching a new level of giving.

**University Report – President Janet Cunningham**

Dr. Janet Cunningham thanked the guests for their attendance and for their investment in Northwestern.

Dr. Cunningham shared that the campus – including students, faculty and staff – is adjusting well to the pandemic's new normal and stated that “we are all stronger, together.”

New projects continue to be identified and started to make the campus a more inviting environment. The remodeling project on the west side of the Student Center is one example of the dedication and hard work by the project team, led by Kevin Fields with support from the maintenance team. This project, coupled with the new look of Ryerson Hall, will provide a great first impression to prospective students and parents visiting Alva's campus.

The Ryerson Hall dedication was held in November 2019, where Richard Ryerson and family were acknowledged and thanked for their dedication to revamping the oldest building on campus. The remodel included replacement of over 300 windows and several doors, as well as tuckpointing the brick facade. Inside the building, two of the four restrooms are nearing completion. Work will soon begin on the remaining two restrooms.

Another project was the updating of the Wi-Fi infrastructure in student residential halls. During the summer, each residence hall received new cabling and Wi-Fi access points. This project provides students with the best Wi-Fi experience while in their rooms and makes a tremendous impact on student life.

Academic program improvements also have been made. The first seven graduates of the new Doctor of Nursing Practice program – the Wisdom Family Foundation Doctoral Program for Rural Nursing Practice in the Charles Morton Share Division of Nursing – graduated in May 2020. While the spring commencement was a virtual event, Dr. Cunningham said that it did not dampen the spirit or enthusiasm of these doctoral level students.

Another related milestone occurred in the fall of 2019 with the initial accreditation of the new doctoral level program.

Northwestern's teacher education program successfully completed accreditation by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation with no areas for concern or areas for improvement.

Dr. Cunningham expressed appreciation for Dr. Bo Hannaford, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. James Bell, Associate Vice President for Academics/Dean of the Faculty, for their leadership of the academic programs. She also recognized the faculty for their continuing excellence in and out of the classroom.

Another upgrade for the entire University is the continued implementation of the college ERP system. The University is in the final stages of a monumental task that affected everyone on campus. Dr. Cunningham thanked Dr. David Pecha, Vice President for Administration, for overseeing the project; Craig Ricke, Director for Information Technology, and his staff for managing the information technology issues; and Chris Lauderdale, former Comptroller, for serving as project director.

Dr. Cunningham said enrollment is down about seven percent. A decline was expected due to COVID-19. It also was expected that the Enid and Woodward campuses would have a significant downturn in enrollment. Dr. Cunningham shared that the uncertainties of the public schools situation caused some students to step out for a semester to see what the future would hold.

Northwestern received approximately \$1.5 million in relief from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Half of the funds were distributed to students who were enrolled in the spring 2020 semester to offset the costs of the interruptions to studies created by COVID-19. The other half could be spent by the University. Those funds were used to reimburse the University for the room and board refunds caused by COVID-19 and for technology infrastructure to enhance classroom and online learning opportunities.

Northwestern's TRIO-Student Support Services grant was recently renewed for \$1.3 million for the next five years. This grant supports first generation and low income students in their academic journeys.

Regarding the pandemic, Dr. Cunningham shared that a COVID-19 Task Force was appointed in the summer and consisted of faculty, staff and students. The Task Force worked throughout the summer and developed plans for the students to return in the fall and to remain on campus as long as possible. The return of students meant the implementation of a required face covering policy in all campus buildings. A number of residence hall rooms were set aside for quarantine purposes.

Faculty members are required to teach behind a Plexiglas barrier or wear face coverings during lectures. Faculty members also are working diligently with students who have faced isolation

or quarantine scenarios to complete his/her coursework on time. Ten classes requested and are receiving instruction through a hybrid model, which includes partial classroom time and partial online time.

Dr. Cunningham acknowledged the excellent work of Kelsey Martin, Director of Marketing and University Relations, in communicating COVID-19 related information to the Northwestern community.

Dr. Cunningham said the positive COVID-19 cases have been low in numbers compared to other universities. In order to be as transparent as possible, the number of active cases are posted on the University website each Friday afternoon.

Dr. Cunningham shared that Calleb Mosburg, Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and his staff are leading the efforts for coordinating communication with students regarding isolation and quarantine procedures, as well as contact tracing.

Two of the biggest changes can be seen in the dining experience and in the Athletic Department. Coronado Café received numerous Plexiglas partitions and food items are no longer available on a buffet line. Each item is served by an employee wearing personal protective equipment. A “to go” dining option also is available.

The Athletic Department has seen a major shift in schedules. All fall sports have been moved to the spring. All sports will likely have a shortened, revised schedule. Dr. Cunningham said Brad Franz, Athletic Director, and staff have developed the most rigorous protocols on campus to keep student athletes safe and engaged.

One major change has been the postponement of the annual Homecoming event. Dr. Cunningham said the University is hopeful to have the Homecoming activities available in the spring. Revised schedules for sports will be released when finalized.

In closing, Dr. Cunningham shared a new ranking for the University. In December 2019, 24/7 Wall Street named Northwestern as *Oklahoma’s Most Affordable College with the Best Outcomes* for the state of Oklahoma. This ranking recognizes the affordability and the quality of an education at Northwestern.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, Paul Corr made a motion to adjourn. Steve Stands seconded and the motion was approved.