

**Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association
Annual Meeting
Tuesday, September 19, 2023**

Welcome

L.D. Rapp, chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed guests to the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association.

Approval of the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

Rapp asked for approval of the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Steve Stands and seconded by Mike Benway. The motion was approved.

Chief Executive Officer's Report – Skeeter Bird

Skeeter Bird updated the guests on the following areas.

Plans from Last Year. Bird reviewed the plans presented in the Annual Meeting in 2022 and reported the progress made over the year.

- **Continue work on website to enhance donor and alumni experience.** The initial goal of the website was to be a communication tool. Over time it has become the venue to conduct business. Jana Lindley, communication and marketing manager, has redesigned the monthly eNewsletter to effectively become the Foundation's premier communication tool.

The website has been enhanced to be an effective place for business transactions.
- **Build mentorship program and alumni membership participation to new levels.** A total of 127 individuals joined either the mentorship program or became a lifetime alumni member over the last year, creating an increase of 25 percent.
- **Continue to work on mall renovation.** Bird shared he and President Hannaford have met with two sets of donors who have declined to participate in funding the outdoor classroom project. Bird and Dr. Hannaford will meet with potential donors in the future.
- **Continue to build Northwestern Leadership Trust endowment.** In 2020, the President's Association was renamed the Northwestern Leadership Trust and transformed from a pass-thru fund to an endowment, with a goal of \$1 million. The current fund balance is \$899,400.
- **Increase total number of donors.** The number of donors increased 30 percent over the last year. The current number is 1,180; the goal is 1,340.
- **Begin preparations for Northwestern's next capital campaign.** Bird shared many of the initiatives being executed will prepare the Foundation for the next Capital Campaign.
- **Advance and improve our internal accounting procedures.** Bird acknowledged 2022 bore the worst audit process in the last 18 years of the Foundation's history. There has been a huge improvement in the last year with Jim Dunning, chair of the Investment Committee, stepping in to support Tonny Loustaunau, financial manager.

Additional Accomplishments in FY 23.

- New records were set in social media engagement.
- The Foundation exceeded its investment income by \$1 Million.

Plans for FY 24.

- **Leverage the success of our eNewsletter to build relationships** and increase the current number of 3,300 individuals.
- **Continue to build the mentorship program and alumni membership participation to new levels.**
- **Increase total number of donors.**
- **Continue preparations for Northwestern's next capital campaign.**
- **Continue to work on mall renovations.** The primary project on this is the outdoor classroom.
- **Continue to improve internal accounting procedures.**
- **Leverage the use of artificial intelligence in fundraising.** This includes identifying behavior patterns already available in the database to recognize potential trends, donors and giving opportunities.
- **Begin the process to change fundraising and software packages.** Eight companies have been identified that may offer software with improvement in benefits. Research and assessment will continue.

Student Remarks – Chris Kincaid

Chris Kincaid, a graduate student, is from Mooreland, Oklahoma. He came to Northwestern as a cross country student-athlete in 2017. He graduated with a major in health and sports science and a minor in psychology. Kincaid is finishing his master's degree in psychology.

Kincaid shared some of the experiences he gained at Northwestern and how those experiences impacted his life. Faculty and coaches were positive influences on many decisions he made throughout his academic journey. He expressed his gratitude to the donors who support students.

2022-2023 Annual Audit Report – Kirk Vanderslice

Kirk Vanderslice, CPA and partner-in-charge of the Oklahoma Practice of Hinkle & Company, PC, presented the findings of the June 30, 2023, audited financial statements.

Vanderslice referenced both the letter and the *Financial Statement with Independent Auditors' Reports*, included in the agenda packet. Vanderslice reported a clean, unmodified opinion on the financial statements.

The FY 23 audit went smoothly, with significant improvement from the previous audit year.

Two significant deficiencies are noted, including cash reconciliations and accounts payable. After discussion with management, Vanderslice believes both deficiencies will be resolved in the 2024 fiscal year.

Vanderslice noted the investments are up from previous years, with June 30, 2023, financial statements showing an increase in investment return of \$2.5 million. Net assets show an increase of \$1.2 million.

Liquidity also went from a negative to a positive number of \$162,000 in FY 23.

Investment Committee Report – Trevor Phillippi

Trevor Phillippi, partner and chief operating officer, 6 Meridian, provided a brief overview of the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association portfolio, including historical data on performance.

The Foundation’s current target allocation includes 64 percent in equities, 18 percent in fixed income, 17 percent in alternative investments and one percent in cash.

An eight-year average return on the Foundation’s investment is 8.0 percent compared to a national endowment average of 5.8 percent.

Governance Committee Report – Grace Wessels

Grace Wessels, Chair of the Governance Committee, acknowledged her six years spent on the Governance Committee were worthwhile and encouraged others to volunteer their time and talents in service as a trustee.

Bird introduced the three new trustees, including Thad Dilbeck, Dempsey Roten and Regina Kraus.

2023-2024 Committee Appointments and Trustee Plaque Presentations

L.D. Rapp acknowledged three trustees who are rotating off committees, including:

- Mike Benway, Executive Committee
- Grace Wessels, Executive Committee and Governance Committee
- Blaine Easter, Governance Committee, was absent from the Annual Meeting

Rapp shared the roster of names for next year’s membership on the four standing committees:

- **Executive Committee** –Patty DeWitt, Jim Dunning, Dr. Bo Hannaford, L.D. Rapp, Regina Kraus, Dr. Kyle Reynolds, Dempsey Roten, Dr. Randy Smith, Steve Stands and Linda Tutwiler. Rapp will serve as Chair, with Dr. Smith as Vice Chair.
- **Investment Committee** – Cassandra Berry, Larry DeWitt, Jim Dunning, Mike Fouts, Dr. Gary Lott and Loren Rieger. Dunning will serve as Chair.
- **Governance Committee** – Josh Bellamy, Shawna Berryman, Thad Dilbeck, Austin Keeney and Dempsey Roten. Roten will serve as Chair.
- **Stewardship Committee** – Cherrie Greco, Rita Porter, Linda Tutwiler and ReJeana Wiebener. Tutwiler will serve as Chair.

Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award

Dr. Bo Hannaford presented Dr. Jen Oswald, Chair, Division of Education and Associate Professor of Education, with the Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award.

Over the years, Dr. Oswald has carried on Northwestern’s legacy of mentoring and preparing students who will one day step into their own classrooms. She is recognized as a leader at Northwestern, a leader in her community, and a leader in her field of education.

Dr. Oswald was instrumental in securing the Kirk and Drue Washburn Excellence in the Classroom Scholarship, which provides support for paraprofessionals in earning their education degrees. This program serves to place qualified teachers in the classroom in the future and at a time when schools are challenged with teacher shortages.

Donor Recognition

President Bo Hannaford presented recognition gifts to donors reaching new levels of giving.

University Report – President Bo Hannaford

Dr. Bo Hannaford thanked the guests for their investment in Northwestern’s students and the university.

Dr. Hannaford reported the start of the school year has been positive. The recent Family Day events were successful and enjoyed by many families.

Dr. Hannaford thanked the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association staff and its board members for their continued efforts in making Northwestern the best place to receive an education.

Enrollment numbers are up for the second consecutive year, with current fall numbers up four percent. Dr. Hannaford acknowledged the Recruitment Office, faculty and staff for their work on both retention and graduation numbers.

The Oklahoma Legislature provided additional funding in the past year that resulted in the third consecutive year of no increase in tuition or mandatory fees for Northwestern students.

Dr. Hannaford shared a Northwestern mission is meeting critical occupational needs across the state. The university is up 70 percent in teacher education enrollment from last year to this year. Northwestern also is up 22 percent in enrollment numbers in its undergraduate nursing program.

Northwestern is approved for curriculum and a certificate in cyber security, which will better equip the computer science students eventually moving into the workforce.

The Visual Arts major degree is back with two new faculty members leading this curriculum.

Northwestern led all RUSO universities in improving the number of graduates in FY 23 as compared to FY 22, with an increase of 15 percent. Also, with regard to first-time, full-time cohort, numbers improved by six percent.

The mall area improvements, while delayed by recent rains, will continue with new concrete and sod work.

Dr. Hannaford said strategic review and decisions will continue to be made to allow for future campus improvements.

Adjournment

With no further business, Grace Wessels made a motion to adjourn. Jim Dunning seconded and the motion was approved.