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Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association
Annual Meeting
Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Welcome
Dr. Randy Smith, Chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed guests to the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association. Dr. Smith noted FY 2025 proved to be a strong year in fundraising. He also shared the goal of 52 percent of students graduating debt-free, included in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, was exceeded with 59 percent of students graduating in the May 2025 commencement.

Dr. Smith thanked the committee members for their time and commitment to supporting the university and the students of Northwestern.

Approval of the 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
Dr. Smith asked for approval of the 2024 Annual Meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Mark Schwerdtfeger and seconded by L.D. Rapp. The motion was approved.

Chief Executive Officer's Report – Skeeter Bird
Skeeter Bird began his report by recognizing the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association staff and acknowledging their strong performance in the past year.

Plans from Last Year

- ***Continue to Build Mentorship Programs, Alumni Memberships and Social Media Followers to New Levels*** and ***Increase Total Number of Donors*** will remain as goals. Bird referenced the agenda packet invitation, with QR code, to invite others to sign up for the monthly eNewsletter. This eNewsletter provides valuable information and updates on Northwestern's and the Foundation/Alumni organizations successes, initiatives and events. It serves as an excellent tool to stay connected.
- ***Increase Total Number of Donors*** will provide more opportunities for funding and prepare Northwestern for the next century.
- ***Focus Fundraising Efforts on Scholarship Dollars*** is underway.
- ***Enhance and Add to our On-Campus Events.*** One event – the Northwestern Leadership Forum – was added in the fall of 2024. Another event will be added this year.
- ***Build on Improvements to our Internal Accounting Procedures*** continues.
- ***Complete Transition from Blackbaud Software to Virtuous (Fundraising) and Quicken (Financial).*** The transition with Virtuous began in March 2025 and the staff is beginning to settle in to understanding the software. The transition to Quicken began in July.
- ***Create New Strategic Plan.*** The draft of the plan, based on information from the August 7, 2025, Strategic Planning Session, is being developed and will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, along with the university's Development Committee. The new Strategic Plan should be published in December/January.

Accomplishments in FY 25

- ***Increased Total Funds Raised to Over $4.1 Million – $1.3 Million More than FY 24.***
- ***Herod Hall Renovation Nearly Complete.*** Bird encouraged the guests to attend any upcoming venues to experience the renovation, including new lighting and sound.
- ***Set New Records in Alumni Membership – 586 Members.***

- ***Increased Number of Donors by 235 People from FY 24.***
- ***Set New Records in Participation and Total Dollars for Both End-of-Year Solicitations.*** Bird shared two solicitation campaigns are initiated at the end of the year, including 1) GivingTuesday, an online format; and 2) Annual Appeal, which is a mailed solicitation. This year's donor participation was 277 participants compared to the highest number of 154 in 2023. The strongest fundraising in dollars was also achieved with $1.2 million raised, compared to the previous highest of $246,000 in 2021.
- ***Exceeded Investment Annual Goal by 240 Percent – Over $4.8 Million.***
- ***Set a New High Level of Performance on Audit Preparation.***
- ***Leveraged eNewsletter to Achieve a New Record of 77.5 Percent of Alumni with Accurate Biodata.*** Bird shared accurate biodata is the presence of one confirmed way to reach individuals in the database, whether it be email, cell phone or physical address. The percentage of 0.5 represents 1,500 individuals. Five years ago, the accurate biodata for the organization was 62 percent; progress has been made and efforts will continue to raise the percentage.
- ***Northwestern Leadership Forum was a Huge Success – 2nd Scheduled for November 6, 2025.*** In November 2024, three alumni participated in a Q&A forum before students, faculty, staff and community members. It was well-received, and the second forum is scheduled for November 6.
- ***Received the Largest Endowed Scholarship Endowment from a Single Individual – Don Cunningham.*** This $1.5 million scholarship supports the Nursing Division.

Plans for FY 25

- ***Continue to Build Mentorship Program, Alumni Membership Participation and Social Media Followers to New Levels*** and ***Increase the Total Number of Donors*** will remain.
- ***Focus Fundraising Efforts on Endowed Scholarship Dollars.*** Bird shared $2 million has been raised to date, and added a $1 million estate gift is expected by the end of the year.
- ***Launch First Face-to-Face Ranger2Ranger Event – October 8, 2025.*** Bird shared after three years of an online program, it was time to launch the face-to-face event to provide real-time advice to Northwestern students. Twenty alumni will be available on October 8 to visit with students in 30-minute sessions.
- ***Complete Transition from Blackbaud Software to Virtuous (Fundraising) and Quicken (Financial).***
- ***Create and Publish New Strategic Plan.***
- ***Emphasize the Long-Term Value of a Donor's Lifetime Contribution.*** Given the information provided at the August Strategic Planning Session, Bird shared, strategies and goals will be developed to increase this focus area.

Student Remarks – Carson Wright

Carson Wright is a senior biology major from Nebraska. He began his remarks with "I am proud to be a Ranger." Wright compared the annual cost of going to Northwestern - $11,000 – to the national average of $29,000. Additionally, he noted 70 percent of students at Northwestern receive some form of financial assistance. "The fact that almost 60 percent of students graduated debt-free is unbelievable and so appreciated."

Wright also noted the advantages of a low student to faculty ratio, as well as on-campus alumni and community invested in the success of students. He acknowledged he will graduate without debt. Wright said he looks forward to being a giving alumnus in the future and providing the same opportunities to generations following him.

Wright concluded by thanking the alumni and donors for giving back and paying forward.

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2024-2025 Annual Audit Report – Kirk Vanderslice, CPA
Kirk Vanderslice, Hinkle & Company, referenced the Independent Auditor's Report and noted – in the opinion of Hinkle & Company – the financial statement presented fairly in all material respects. The Auditor's Letter to the Board noted no findings to report.

Investment Committee Report – Trevor Phillippi
Trevor Phillippi, partner and chief operating officer, 6 Meridian, shared the wealth advisory firm – based out of Wichita, Kan. – manages $3 billion for its client base.

Phillippi expressed his appreciation to the guests for their investments in Northwestern and its students. Phillippi noted the mission of 6 Meridian is to help clients achieve their goals for present and future generations.

Phillippi then referenced the bound report and noted it included information for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. He added 6 Meridian, in partnership with the Investment Committee, manages more than $40 million with assets diversified globally across equities, fixed income and alternative investments. The portfolio gained $4.9 million in value during the previous 12 months, with $4.4 million coming through market performance and $0.5 million coming from net cash influx.

The Foundation has a target allocation of 60 percent in equities, 18 percent in fixed income, 21 percent in alternative investments and one percent in cash.

Phillippi shared the return on investment over the last ten years is 7.7 percent, which compares to an average return of 6.5 percent for Foundations nationally. For FY 2025, the rate of return on investment is 13.6 percent, the third best in the last 11 years.

Governance Committee Report – David Manning
David Manning, Chair of the Governance Committee, recognized the members of the Governance Committee, including Josh Bellamy, Clint Claypole, Thad Dilbeck and Austin Keeney.

Manning announced the recommended trustees for the Class Year 2028, including:

- Gail Box, Mary Hamilton, Sandra Koehn, Michael Richards and Suzy Richards.

Rita Porter made the motion to accept the five individuals as trustees. Thad Dilbeck seconded and the motion was approved.

Trustee Plaque Presentations
Dr. Randy Smith presented plaques of appreciation to L.D. Rapp and Dr. Kyle Reynolds, both rotating off the Executive Committee, and to Loren Reiger, who is rotating off the Investment Committee.

Plaques will be given at a later date to two trustees unable to attend: Josh Bellamy, rotating off the Governance Committee, and Jim Dunning, rotating off the Investment Committee.

2025-2026 Committee Appointments
Dr. Randy Smith shared the roster of names for next year's membership on the four standing committees:

- **Executive Committee** – Gail Box, Patty DeWitt, Mike Fouts, Dr. Bo Hannaford, Sandra Koehn, Regina Kraus, David Manning, Mark Schwerdtfeger, Dr. Randy Smith and Linda Tutwiler. Dr. Smith will serve as Chair with Mark Schwerdtfeger serving as Vice Chair.

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- **Investment Committee** – Cassandra Berry, Larry DeWitt, Mike Fouts, Michael Richards, Suzy Richards and Sue Schwerdtfeger. Mike Fouts will serve as Chair.
- **Governance Committee** – Clint Claypole, Thad Dilbeck, Mary Hamilton, Austin Keeney and David Manning. David Manning will serve as Chair.
- **Stewardship Committee** – Julie Benningfield, Rita Porter, Linda Tutwiler and ReJeana Wiebener. Linda Tutwiler will serve as Chair.

Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award
Dr. Bo Hannaford presented Dr. James Bell, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. Roxie James, Chair, English, Foreign Language and Humanities Department, with the Donovan Reichenberger Fundraising Award.

Drs. Bell and James presented a proposal to Chad Moore, CPA and Northwestern alumnus, regarding the need for professional development in Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Northwestern faculty, staff and students. Chad and Kim Moore then established the Moore Family Advancement of Technology Lectureship. This $100,000 investment will support training, travel and conference opportunities for Northwestern's AI committee to remain engaged in the changes in AI and, therefore, provide training to Northwestern's stakeholders.

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

University Report – President Bo Hannaford
Dr. Bo Hannaford acknowledged Carson Wright and thanked him for his remarks regarding his experience at Northwestern. Dr. Hannaford noted the excellence of the Northwestern students and encouraged the guests to take any opportunity to meet them.

Dr. Hannaford shared the excitement of the fourth consecutive year in enrollment growth, with a 3.5 percent increase this year. Transfer enrollment has increased.

On behalf of the administration, faculty, staff and students, Dr. Hannaford thanked the guests for their role in 59 percent of the recent graduated leaving Northwestern debt-free. He challenged those in attendance to reach out to fellow alumni to support Northwestern's goals for the future.

Dr. Hannaford encouraged the guests to take a tour and see the changes on campus. He shared the university will again receive deferred maintenance funding – nearly $4 million. This will fund window replacement in Herod Hall, new security cameras on all campuses, HVAC and roof replacements, and dorm improvements for Ament and Coronado.

Adjournment
With no further business, Dr. Kyle Reynolds made a motion to adjourn. Steve Stands seconded and the motion was approved.