

An aerial photograph of a university campus featuring brick buildings, green lawns, and numerous trees. A prominent red banner with white text is centered over the image.

# IMPACT REPORT

MSUM FOUNDATION FY2021



MSUM Foundation  
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD



SCHEELS FIELD



30 40 50 40 30

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**WE ARE DRAGONS. FIERCE. FORMIDABLE. WITH FIRE IN OUR BELLIES AND COURAGE IN OUR HEARTS. WE WILL NOT BE SLAYED BY THE CHALLENGES BEFORE US. RATHER, WE WILL EMBRACE THE CHALLENGE. BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT OUR PROMISE, AND OUR PURPOSE, IS WORTH IT.** – ANNE BLACKHURST







>>> Brad Wimmer

## GREETINGS FROM THE MSUM FOUNDATION BOARD

**A**lthough it's been a rather peculiar year all around, life for the MSUM Foundation has brought surprising positive results. We cannot thank our donors and staff enough for keeping us in the game and making great things happen for students and the campus of MSUM. Our new Alumni Center is taking shape and our hope to break ground soon is coming to fruition. Although our enrollment, like many universities, is down, students are thriving in the many diverse majors that are offered. Our Foundation board remains very active and engaged, staff is working hard to produce great results and President Blackhurst is actively engaged to keep MSUM at the top of its game. Stay tuned, there is more to come, Thank you for your active generosity as a true Dragon!

**Brad Wimmer '76**  
*MSUM Foundation Board President*



>>> Gary Haugo

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

**W**ow! What a year. On so many levels this year was one for the history books. From the radical shifts for our students and staff, to the massive amounts of change in our professional and personal lives. The loss that we have endured as loved ones and friends have been affected by the pandemic through illness, loss of employment and other extremely challenging circumstances is great. This year has been one that has left an impact.

Though, through all the challenges, we have seen an incredible response. The MSUM Foundation posted its largest fundraising year ever. We raised over \$19 million to support the students and programs that you love. You gave from the heart. You responded when our community needed you most. You have made MSUM stronger and provided momentum to help us achieve our goals. Because of this we will nearly double our annual allocation from the endowment to MSUM. We will construct a new Alumni Center that will serve as a place to bring our students, faculty, alumni and community together, to learn from each other and linger in conversation and relationship.

Thank you, Dragons. You continue to live our core values of Grit, Humility and Heart. They are the values that have been at the core of every Dragon and with your support will continue to live on for generations to come.

**Gary Haugo**  
*VP for University Advancement  
MSUM Foundation*

# FOUNDATION PROGRESS

## FUNDRAISING

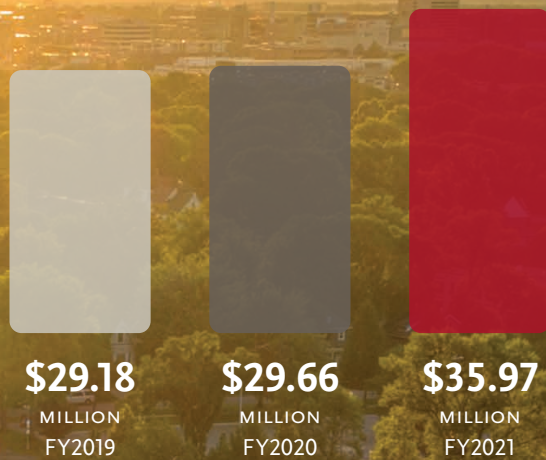


## SUPPORT TO MSUM

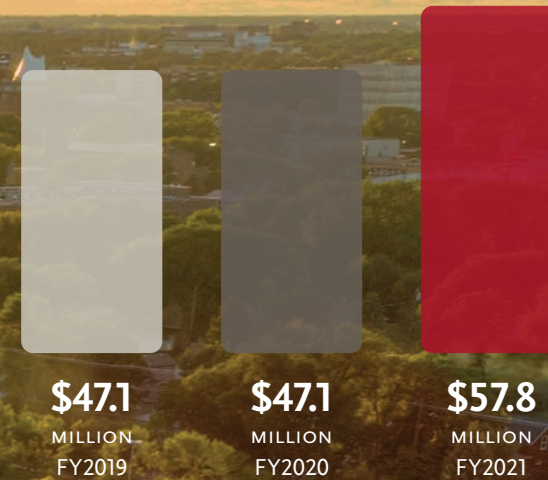




## ENDOWMENT PROGRESS



## TOTAL NET ASSEST & LIABILITIES









**VISION 2020 HAS TRANSFORMED MSUM. WE NOW HAVE THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT AND ARE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY THAT WILL SERVE THE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF OF MSUM FOR GENERATIONS.**

– GARY HAUGO



## CAMPAIGN RESULTS

**M**innesota State University Moorhead has announced the successful completion of its six-year comprehensive campaign. The Vision 2020 Campaign raised \$59.1 million, the largest fundraising initiative in the university’s history. Vision 2020’s campaign legacy will improve student experiences by increasing scholarships, investing in academic programs, and creating community connections through an alumni center.

More than 23,000 gifts were made to the record-breaking campaign, including alumni, parents, community members, and businesses. MSU Moorhead’s original goal in 2014 was to raise \$25 million; the goal was revised to \$50 million in 2019 because of early success. The Vision 2020 campaign exceeded its revised goal by 18 percent — raising a total of \$59.1 million. In addition, more than one-third of the campaign total, \$19 million, was raised during the pandemic.

“Vision 2020 has transformed MSUM. We now have the ability to provide significant support and are building a culture of philanthropy that will serve the students, faculty and staff of MSUM for generations,” said Gary Haugo, vice president of university advancement.

The Campaign Cabinet, including current MSUM Foundation Board President Brad Wimmer, past Foundation Board President Scott Nelson, and former board members

Rodney Paseka and Bob Bowlsby, spearheaded the Vision 2020 campaign.

“The gifts we received from generous donors will help transform the landscape of our campus,” Nelson said. “Scholarships are more important than ever before and investing in the quality of our academic programs will help set MSUM apart to attract the brightest and most deserving students.”

In addition to being the largest and most successful campaign in MSUM’s history, Vision 2020 achieved several other milestones:

- ▶ More than 23,000 gifts were contributed to the campaign, nearly 19,000 of those gifts are from alumni.
- ▶ The campaign received 15 gifts of \$1 million or more and 10 gifts of \$500,000 or more.
- ▶ Donations came from 49 states.

“Throughout this campaign, our Foundation team has demonstrated their grit in achieving a goal beyond our expectations. And our alumni, friends and donors showed up by supporting our students – past, present and future – with the heart of a Dragon,” said MSUM President Anne Blackhurst. “Private support creates a margin of excellence that is key to the university’s success. Most importantly, it creates momentum and lays the foundation for future campaigns.” ■

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**I THINK SCHOLARSHIPS ARE A WONDERFUL THING FOR STUDENTS AND THEY CAN IMPACT THEIR LIVES SO MUCH. THIS SCHOLARSHIP WILL HELP ME OBTAIN MY BSN AND CONTINUE ON TO THE DREAM CAREER I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED.**

– Summer Brown, Nursing and Healthcare Leadership Scholarship recipient

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**YOUR SCHOLARSHIP HAS CREATED SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ME THAT I WOULD NOT HAVE HAD OTHERWISE. YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES A GREAT DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE.**

– Nadia Nik, Charles Magel Philosophy Scholarship recipient





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**I AM IMMENSELY GRATEFUL TO HAVE RECEIVED THIS SCHOLARSHIP. IT HAS RELIEVED ME OF THE FINANCIAL ISSUES THAT MOST INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FACE WHEN STUDYING IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY AND HAS ALLOWED ME TO PURSUE A DEGREE THAT I LOVE. I WILL FOREVER CHERISH THIS OPPORTUNITY.**

– Temiloluwa Ajayi, Marjorie Sanders Memorial Scholarship recipient

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**I AM THE FIRST PERSON IN MY FAMILY TO PURSUE A COLLEGE DEGREE. THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME MEET THIS CHALLENGE.**

– McKenzie Schmidt, Margaret E. Fugle Social Work Scholarship recipient

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## ESSENTIA CENTER FOR NURSING

**M**innesota State University Moorhead's new investment in university programs expands our academic excellence by offering more intentional opportunities for students to apply their knowledge. These essential and meaningful experiences build bridges between classroom activities and future employment, ensuring new graduates step into their first job with confidence and preparedness.

One of our significant academic investments is MSUM's partnership with Essentia Health-Fargo to prepare the next generation of nurses with a new B.S. in nursing. The Essentia Health Center for Nursing collaboration is an excellent addition to MSUM's academic offerings and the Fargo-Moorhead community by addressing the national shortage of nurses across all health care settings. Essentia Health has provided clinical placement opportunities, and students have completed more than 3,000 clinical hours at Essentia Health in the past year.

"Essentia is proud to partner with MSUM in creating the Essentia Health Center for Nursing because it aligns with our mission to make a healthy difference in people's lives," said Nicole Christensen, Essentia Health chief nursing officer. "Ultimately, this partnership will lead to high-quality nurses being available to care for our community when they need it." ■



**ESSENTIA IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH MSUM IN CREATING THE ESSENTIA HEALTH CENTER FOR NURSING BECAUSE IT ALIGNS WITH OUR MISSION TO MAKE A HEALTHY DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.**

– NICOLE CHRISTENSEN





Essential Health







## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**T**he campaign met its \$6 million goal for an Alumni Center with nearly all major gifts from current or former Foundation board members because they believe in the goals of this project.

“I am extremely excited to be moving ahead with the new MSUM Alumni Center. We thank all our Foundation board members, staff and donors for their generosity and support to fulfill this Dragon dream,” said Brad Wimmer, MSUM Foundation board president. “The facility will provide a new home for current and future Dragons to gather for years to come. We couldn’t be prouder of the direction President Blackhurst and the Dragon team has led students, staff and alumni to new heights. It truly is a great day to be a Dragon!”

This Alumni Center will provide space for student and community interactions and serve as the anchor for alumni returning to campus to visit, engage, inspire, and be inspired. The community will be invited to campus to meet students, faculty and staff in meaningful and transformative ways. Supporters want to engage with students

during their MSUM journey, and this space will help create those connections.

“Ultimately, the Alumni Center will become a catalyst for philanthropy at MSUM as our current students witness the generosity of our alumni – and our donors witness firsthand the transformative power of their giving,” President Blackhurst said.

MSUM set the stage for this campaign with a great story to tell – stories of students’ grit to overcome obstacles in achieving their goals; stories of alumni and donor heart by believing in our purpose; and stories of community support by embracing the challenges of the world before us. These investments make a real impact, creating a revenue source the university can rely on year after year.

“This work has built a solid foundation for the university and our students,” Haugo said. “We are humbled by the support of our alumni and friends and the community. We value and appreciate their generosity and their commitment to the Dragon family.” ■

# MSUM HONORS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI, OUTSTANDING SERVICE

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even individuals were honored this year by the MSUM Foundation for their professional successes and community contributions:

- ▶ Helen Wussow – '82 English & Individualized Studies Distinguished Alumni
- ▶ Lonni Schultz – '82 Computer Science & Mathematics Distinguished Alumni
- ▶ Teresa Rasmussen – '81 Accounting Distinguished Alumni
- ▶ Michelle Olson – '93 Mass Communications Distinguished Alumni
- ▶ Peter Geib Service Award
- ▶ Mary Jo Richard – '86 Accounting Service Award
- ▶ Tyler Michaels King – '11 Theatre Arts Young Alumni



**HELEN WUSSOW '82**



**LONNI SCHULTZ '82**



**TERESA RASMUSSEN '81**



**MICHELLE OLSON '93**



**PETER GEIB**



**MARY JO RICHARD '86**



**TYLER MICHAELS KING '11**









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**I WANT TO GIVE STUDENTS OPPORTUNITIES LIKE I HAD,” SOULE SAYS. “TO GET AN EDUCATION, THAT’S A FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING ELSE THEY DO IN LIFE.**

– GEORGE SOULE



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## **AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER AND STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS**

**G**eorge Soule always knew he wanted to be a lawyer.

As a young teen in the late 1960s, he became interested in politics. At the time, nearly every politician had a law background. To build a successful political career, he expected to simultaneously build a legal one.

Over a storied career, he has done both.

Soule earned his undergraduate degree from MSUM in 1976 and continued his studies at Harvard Law School. He is a founding partner of his Minneapolis practice and is active in Minnesota politics.

His career also gave him opportunities to explore and celebrate his American Indian heritage.

Soule and his wife, Lisa McDonald, have been generous in financially supporting American Indian students on campus.

Their gifts have funded American Indian student scholarships and needs, in addition to programming through the American Indian Center on campus. The center recently was named in honor of Soule in gratitude for his support.

“I want to give students opportunities like I had,” Soule says. “To get an education, that’s a foundation for everything else they do in life.”

The George Soule American Indian Center is designed to promote a sense of community among American Indian students. It also serves as a center of knowledge and understanding of traditional and contemporary American Indian culture.

“(Soule’s) gift ensures that financial barriers for our American Indian students will be removed so they can focus on their education,” says Jered Pigeon, campus diversity officer. “It also ensures that the American Indian Center remains viable and collaborative.”

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Soule grew up on Big Cormorant Lake in Becker County, Minnesota. He attended MSUM to study political science. Once enrolled, he took an economics class and added that discipline to his studies, as well.

Throughout his college years, he worked part-time for a nearby law firm. He also worked on various political campaigns. His senior year of college, he served as chair of the Clay County Republican Party.

Those experiences cemented his interests in law and politics.

“My mother grew up on the White Earth Reservation, but we didn’t talk about it much.” Soule’s mother passed away when he was a sophomore at MSUM. “After I began practice, I started to get more in touch with my Native roots.”

Friends in the legal community encouraged Soule to join the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association. He served as president of the group for two years.

“I’ve met some of my best friends through MAIBA and had some of my most meaningful experiences through it,” Soule says. “It also connected me to Minnesota’s tribes.”

Today, in addition to practicing law through the firm he co-founded, Soule is a tribal appellate judge for the White Earth Nation and three other Minnesota tribes.

Along his professional journey, Soule has given back in more ways than financial gifts. He has served on MSUM’s foundation board and is currently on the board of trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. He has been appointed to numerous public boards, including the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board and the Minnesota Commission on Judicial Selection.

While Soule was a student at MSUM, his father began working at the university as a janitor. He cleaned the floors of the Comstock Memorial Union, the building where the center named for Soule now resides. Soule’s father died when he was in law school.

Even though Soule lost both parents at young ages, he lifts up their legacy.

“I’m thankful for the support they gave me,” he says. “I’m fortunate that I can contribute in a way that helps others and honors the ways my parents encouraged me.” ■

**“ I’M THANKFUL FOR THE SUPPORT THEY GAVE ME. I’M FORTUNATE THAT I CAN CONTRIBUTE IN A WAY THAT HELPS OTHERS AND HONORS THE WAYS MY PARENTS ENCOURAGED ME.**

– GEORGE SOULE



# GEORGE SOULE AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER



**GEORGE SOULE**  
IN RECOGNITION FOR HIS SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION  
TO MISSISSAUGA AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER







**MY ALMA MATER  
GAVE ME SO MUCH,  
SO I WANT TO GIVE  
BACK AND ENSURE  
THE FOUNDATION IS  
STRONG, AND HELP  
AS MANY PEOPLE AS  
POSSIBLE. – GREGG LOF**



>>> Gregg Lof

## **LOF LEAVES LEGACY FOR STUDENTS**

**G**regg Lof has been in higher education his entire adult life. From starting off as a student at MSUM, to his current role at the largest university in the country, he knows the value of education and the impact it can make. Because of this, he knew he wanted to help students during their educational journey. For a lot of people, leaving a legacy means passing things down to their children. But he and his husband have no children, so Gregg decided to assist students who may otherwise not be able to afford to attend college. “We need to help those who may be struggling,” he said. “Because of my higher education experiences, I understand how important such help is.”

Gregg recently started an endowed scholarship in his name with the MSUM Foundation and also left an estate gift, ensuring that even after he passes away, students will be helped out financially for years to come. “It will help people who live beyond me. That means a lot to me,” he said.

Gregg attended MSUM during a period of growth and change in his life. Reflecting back on his time on campus, he said the community and people there played a role in who he is today. “MSUM gave me the ability to figure out who I was and how to be successful both personally and professionally,” he said. “I’ll always be appreciative of that.”

Professors and mentors like Lois Selberg, Marie Swanson, Dale Grondhøvd, Lou DeMaio, and Arnie

Tiegland took Gregg under their wings and helped him learn and grow. He said they taught him how to think, taught excellent courses and were just overall kind people. Gregg found his passion in the Speech-Language Pathology department, which turned into a very successful career for him. In time, he earned his PhD and excelled in roles as a professor and department chair at the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston. Temporarily leaving retirement, he is now the interim director at the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. He has published 26 articles and presented at over 100 seminars and workshops in 32 states and six countries.

Gregg says he credits much of his success to the education he received at MSUM. “Those early years are so important in our lives,” he said. “My alma mater gave me so much, so I want to give back and ensure the Foundation is strong, and help as many people as possible.”

Many think only large gifts are impactful, but Gregg encourages people to start small, and give to places that matter to you. “One of the things I learned early on is that when you’re a young person, start by giving \$20 a year. Even a small amount is important and hopefully you will eventually develop a philanthropic mindset to give more when you can.” ■









## EQUIPPING DRAGON STUDENT-ATHLETES

**T**he weight room renovation project at MSUM began back in 2017 under the direction of former strength and conditioning coach Travis Anderson and with a \$250,000 gift from Sanford Health. Fundraising to renovate the room with state-of-the-art equipment – the “Lift Up Dragons” campaign – has now reached an astounding \$58,790 from 179 private donors, smashing the original \$20,000 goal. In fact, \$26,715 of that was raised in just one week with matching funds from two donors.

“We cannot thank everyone enough for all the support provided in helping us reach our goals,” says head strength and conditioning coach Phil Herkenhoff. “Our alumni know first-hand what this will mean to our

current student-athletes and to our future Dragons. This just shows what type of people we have in our corner.”

After years of research by visiting other weight rooms across the country and adding a new strength and conditioning staff, the new weight room is finally ready for use.

The project took the existing footprint of the space and gutted it. Floors were replaced, walls painted, LED lights updated and new equipment installed with four additional rack spaces to accommodate multiple teams at once. Rock Gulluckson, alum and NFL strength coach, demonstrates the scope of change as he remembers how the new strength and conditioning coaches’ offices were once the entire weight room.



**THIS IS ONE ROOM THAT EVERY STUDENT-ATHLETE USES THROUGHOUT THEIR TIME AS A DRAGON ATHLETE. THEY'RE GOING TO GET FASTER, STRONGER, BIGGER – THIS IS THE ROOM THAT'S GOING TO HELP THEM DO THAT. – CHAD MARKUSON**

The new red turf that resembles the end zones of Scheels Field is a special feature, helping Dragons train on the surfaces that they compete on. Sorinex Exercise Equipment provided state-of-the-art systems, including the customizable rack units. And, of course, the Dragon logo is present everywhere, on the racks, dumbbells and plates.

The last step of the project will be installation of the adjacent cardio room equipment and delivery of the Dragon logo custom plates. There will be an official open house when the project is complete, but the Dragons are already improving their skills and fitness in the facility.

“This is one room that every student-athlete uses throughout their time as a Dragon athlete,” MSUM interim athletic director Chad Markuson said. “They’re going to get faster, stronger, bigger – this is the room that’s going to help them do that.” ■



*Scan the code to tour the old and new weight room virtually.*





6:43



MSUM Foundation  
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD®

**CONNECT. ENGAGE. GIVE.**

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The MSUM Foundation is an independent 501 (c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to Minnesota State University Moorhead and its alumni and friends.

