

SPRING 2020

AURORA BOREALIS



A YEAR TO REMEMBER

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CONNECT WITH US



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Hello from MSUN!

Dear Alumni and Friends,

We hope this message finds you safe and healthy. Our Spring 2020 semester was definitely like none other. In fact, it feels like the semester was split in two distinct parts.



The first few months, we were busy planning and hosting our 90th Celebration Gala (pg 5) a scholarship fundraiser. I traveled the state with Chancellor Kegel, seeing alumni, and sharing what was happening on campus. March 9th construction began for the Sports Complex to the west of Cowan Hall with the goal of having the field game day ready for the Fall 2020 season. (pg 7) (We are still fundraising and would appreciate any donations! (pg 10))

But things changed rapidly. With new guidelines around the Covid-19 virus (pg 3), the campus went to an online curriculum. The Foundation worked remotely and postponed or cancelled all of the events we were working on for spring and now summer. To make the most of it, in April, we did a Care-A-Thon (pg 11), reaching out via phone to over 500 alumni just to check in and say hello. In doing this, we were able to hear such wonderful stories about Northern. As soon we are allowed, we will plan some get-togethers with you all. Experiences like we have witnessed this spring help us to appreciate the importance of the human connection.

We do want to say congrats to our Golden Grads – class of 1970! And to our current graduating class of 2020... congratulations and welcome to alumni status!

I look forward to connecting with so many of you and just know that we, at the Foundation, are thinking about you, always.

Sincerely,

Shantel Cronk

Executive Director

shantel.cronk@msun.edu

COVID-19: MSU-NORTHERN'S EXPERIENCE



Chancellor Kegel and Northern were quick to respond to the pandemic, and it paid off. On March 5th, MSU-Northern first issued a travel advisory to students preparing for spring break, warning them to take precautions if they were traveling outside of Montana. By March 18th everything about spring semester was changed as COVID-19 rapidly escalated to a worldwide emergency.

Shortly after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, Northern began preparing teachers and students to switch to online classes. What was expected to be a temporary precaution turned into the status quo and all classes went online until the end of the semester. Students were asked to leave the dorms, the gym was closed, and to-go orders were all that was allowed in the dining hall.

***"We are all in
this together."***

-Chancellor Kegel

Along with the cancellation of all sports for the season, Spring Commencement was canceled and graduates invited to participate in the Fall Commencement Ceremony this December.

The MSU-Northern Foundation also transitioned and started working from home, coming into the office only if necessary to accomplish a certain task. We reassessed our spring events, including Golden Graduation for the class of 1970 and the Induction Ceremony for the Founders' Excellence Award and Hall of Fame, all to be rescheduled on a safer date. Paws to Destress, a pet playtime event for students, was cancelled.

But Northern and the Foundation endeavored despite the circumstances. Professors and students adapted to online classes and pivoted into their “new normal” for the rest of the semester. Staff at Northern worked hard to keep students engaged by leading activities via social media. Becky Toth, Director of Food Service and Catering, led online cooking lessons for students. The Foundation started the ‘Care-A-Thon’ to reach out to our alumni and see how they were doing (more about this on page 11).

We kept in touch using web-based tools, emails, texts and video chats and were able to maintain all necessary meetings via these avenues. And the Hi-Line communities came together to support their local restaurants, bars, breweries, and businesses. We are all in this together.

These challenges have shown us the generosity and resilience of our Northern family, and it’s taught us to think creatively about how we reach out to our alumni during times like these. Though the future remains uncertain, we will continue to support MSU-Northern’s students through the generosity of our alumni and friends and look forward to the day when we can all gather together again.



A student cuddles with a puppy at our first Paws to De-stress event, held last December during finals week.

The MSUN Nursing Department donated their PPE supplies to local medical providers as part of their response to COVID-19.



90th CELEBRATION GALA

On February 15th, we hosted the 90th Celebration Gala, formerly known as the We Love Northern Ball, a fundraiser for student scholarships. To make the event special, we moved it into the newest building on campus, the Diesel Technology Center (DTC). We hosted over 100 people in the DTC and raised \$52,000! The food provided by MSU-Northern's Catering Department was outstanding, and the entertainment had our guests on the dance floor long into the night.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) matched up to \$10,000 that night for donations to the Montana Access Scholarship. That money was then matched by the state of Montana for a total of \$40,000 raised for the scholarships. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a night to remember! You can still donate, check out page 10 for more details.





NEW ON THE HORIZON

On March 9th construction began on Phase 1 of the on-campus MSU-Northern Sports Complex which is located on the old practice fields to the west of Cowan Hall. The crew worked dutifully to carve out a bowl shape into the earth for the future stadium.

This is a dream finally made into reality thanks to the generosity of our donors, supporters, and alumni.

Throughout the year, Executive Director Shantel Cronk has been going on campaign outreach trips with Chancellor Greg Kegel, Head Football Coach Andrew Rolin, Athletic Director Christian Oberquell, and a few others. Along with various gatherings in Havre, they visited Lewistown, Chinook, Fort Benton, Conrad, and Malta, meeting a host of alumni, Northern supporters, and community members interested in learning about the projects at MSUN.

As it related to the Sports Complex, the message was, and still is, that this project is about the future of Northern, about heightening the students' college experience, and providing a new gathering space for the Hi-Line community.



As Head Football Coach Andrew Rolin said in one interview with Montana Sports, "Having our own brand-new, on-campus stadium, that's a big deal to kids...it's the first thing you see. And so from curb appeal, it's a big deal for non-football athletes, as well."

And it will have ripple effects in the Havre community. Phase 1 of the Sports Complex will be more than a football field. It will be an economic engine. It will be a venue ideal for hosting concerts, events, club sports, fundraisers, reunions, camps, car shows, and more. The opportunities are endless. And each of these activities brings in more shoppers, diners, and overnight visitors who will stimulate the local economy.

The first phase of the project is set to finish this Fall and will produce a game-ready turf field, the only turf field in 100+ mile radius. You can watch the project develop by following our Facebook page or checking our website for regular updates.

We are still raising money for this project and are 80% to goal. If you are interested in participating and even getting your name or your families name on the wall at campus – please let us know! We could use your support! See page 10 for details on our greatest needs.

The modeled photo below shows the complete stadium project. Phase II will include a large events center (pictured behind the stands).



NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

Diesel Technology is one of the most popular programs at Northern. In 2020, there were 185 students enrolled in a Diesel Technology major. These students receive a hands-on education in the newly built Diesel Technology Center which opened its doors for classes in Fall 2018. The DTC was funded by supporters of Northern and the industry partners who hire Northern's graduates.

MSU-Northern was named the number one school in Montana, and fifteenth in the nation, for upward mobility by Opportunity Insights (a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization located at Harvard University). Upward mobility means that the students at Northern overwhelmingly move from the bottom 20% of income distribution to the top 20%. Our education, nursing, diesel technology, and engineering programs are some of the many programs propelling these students into high-earning careers.

This year, both the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation and the Harnish Group worked with the Foundation to create new scholarships for Diesel Technology majors. Approximately 80% of students



at Northern receive financial aid, and in 2019 the MSU-Northern Foundation awarded over \$400,000 in scholarships.

Many of our scholarships were created by our alumni who chose to leave a legacy gift. There are many ways to give to MSUN. **If you want to learn more about how to support students at Northern for years to come, please visit our website** (link at the bottom of this page).

GIVE TO OUR GREATEST NEEDS



Northern helps students rise to the top! But we can't do it without your help. Many of Northern's scholarships, campus improvements, and other needs are supported by private donors like you. Support what matters to you.

The CARES Act expands charitable giving incentives. For those claiming the standard deduction, you may now deduct up to \$300 in cash donations to charitable organizations like the MSU-Northern Foundation. It may not seem like a lot, but imagine if all our donors gave \$300! Learn how to maximize your donation by reading more information about the CARES Act on our website.

FINISH THE FIELD BY AUGUST

We are 80% to our \$3M goal for Phase 1! Help us reach this goal by August 1st and give the students something they deserve that can be used by the entire community. (See page 7 for details)

MONTANA ACCESS SCHOLARSHIP

The Montana Access Scholarship is 92% to goal thanks to the contributions from our 90th Celebration Gala! We are so close to raising all \$67,000 we need to maximise the state match for these new scholarships. A gift would be greatly appreciated.

EXCELLENCE FUND

This gift is an opportunity for us to continue reaching out to you, sharing what is happening at Northern, and sharing your memories. Please consider supporting your Northern Alumni Foundation today!

Make a tax-deductible donation online, by mail, or by calling our office.

Online: www.northernalumnifoundation.org/donatenow.html

Mail: PO Box 1691 Havre, MT 59501

SHOWING WE CARE

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 we were searching for some way to connect with our alumni without seeing them in person. In April we launched a new outreach event called the Care-A-Thon. Similar to a Phone-A-Thon, we asked our volunteers and staff to call alumni simply to check in on them and see how they were doing. We were not fundraising, we just want to reach out and ask, "How are you?"

In one month, we made 551 calls. We loved chatting with each of you and hearing about your memories of Northern and Montana. Many live all across the United States and spoke fondly of Havre.



We encourage you to write us with your personal stories of Northern. If you find any pictures that you want to share, you can send them to us by emailing alumni@msun.edu. You are also always welcome to call our office at 406-265-3711.

JOIN THE F.A.N. CLUB

We are nothing without our FANS! And we don't just mean our awesome donors, board members, and businesses that support our mission. The volunteers who help us execute our fundraising and outreach events are essential to the work that we do. Give back and have fun by joining us!



The Friends and Alumni of Northern (FAN) group support us in many ways. It's a fun way to meet people in the community and participate in great activities. Everything from planting flowers, walking in parades, decorating for events, or cheering on the Lights and Skylights, we could use your help to support Northern!

Anyone can be a FAN. If you want to volunteer a little of your time to a fun-loving, community minded organization, we might just be right for you! You don't even have to live in Havre. We would love to have FANS help us organize alumni meetups in cities all around Montana. Let us know if you want to get involved by emailing us at alumni@msun.edu or calling 406.265.3711. Join us!



AN ORIGINAL: LYNN OPHUS

In the 1970s, a group of women wanted to play basketball at Northern. It wasn't easy to start a new women's sport with no resources or support. As it was not yet an official college sport, they had no uniforms and no scholarships, just a love for the game. Luckily, the original Skylights were led by Health and PE instructor Lynn Ophus. She was keen to organize competition for the early Skylights and helped the team flourish at NMC.



Lynn Ophus in 1976. She is an Instructor Emerita in Health and PE.

Carol Cooke, class of '76, was part of the first women's basketball team, and she credits their success to Lynn. "She's the one who supported and protected the team in the beginning," she said. Lynn asked Carol to come up with a name and design for the team to distinguish them from the men, which is how we've come to know them as the Skylights.

Just a few years after they started, women's basketball became an official team sport at NMC. Judy Bricker was their first coach. Before that, other athletes helped coach their practices. But once they started playing in 1974, things changed for the Skylights. They were outfitted in their own gear and players from around the state were recruited to the team. Carol remembers, laughingly, that

a few of the original players were sidelined due to the quality of the new recruits.

Judy Bricker asserts that Lynn is the main reason the team got on its feet in the 70s. Her advocacy for the players made a huge impression on them. She was a role model to her students in the Health and Physical Education department and received the Golden "N" award in May of 1989. Northern has always been lucky to have people like Lynn who share their light with the school. If you would like to contact us with your stories about someone who made an impact on you while you were at Northern, please email us!

CLASS NOTES

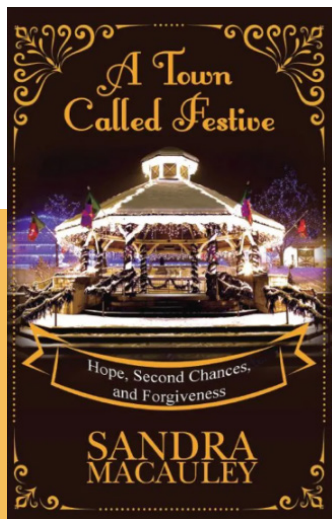


Elizabeth Werk, class of '05, was honored by the Montana Association of Community Development Extension Professionals with the inaugural Community Impact Award. Werk is an Agriculture Agent at the Fort Belknap Extension. She and her team organized a 4-H Fair where "none previously existed." Werk credited the dedicated work of her colleagues and the leader of the 4-H Club in Dodson who helped make this happen. Congratulations Elizabeth!

Sandra Macauley, class of '07, published her novel, "A Town Called Festive" in February. Congratulations Sandra!

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

Whether it's a marriage, birth announcement, new business, an award, or anything special we want to know! Submit your class notes on our website so we can include them in the next Aurora!



Do you want to hear more from us? We may not have your current email or phone number. Update your alumni information by submitting it online at our website.

www.northernalumnifoundation.org

RETIRING FACULTY AND STAFF

This Spring, five professors and two staff members retired from Northern. Due to COVID-19, they were not able to be honored at a public ceremony. We thank these individuals for their work and dedication to MSUN.

Lorraine Johnson, Accounting Associate: 25 years at Northern

Steven Wise, Dean of Students: 3 years at Northern

Stephen Lockwood, Professor of English: 32 years at Northern

John Snider, Professor of English: 31 years at Northern

Tom Welch, Professor of Agriculture: 39 years at Northern

Charles Pollington, Professor of Mathematics: 16 years at Northern

John Foley, Professor of Counselor Education: 25 years at Northern



"I have worked at Northern for the past 31 years. It has been my privilege to work with the hard working students here in Montana.. Northern plays an essential role in higher education in our state and has the distinction of enrolling a significant number of Native American students. Through out these years I have seen the faculty go out of their way to help our students and encourage them to succeed."

John Snider, Professor of English

After thirty-nine years with Northern, Welch states, "I was meant to teach at Northern and what a gift it has been to spend four decades in an agricultural learning environment with some of the best students ever! I have an extreme curiosity and passion for the land, the magic of agriculture and the many amazing agricultural technologies. Being able to share the science of agriculture with Northern students and watching them grow, graduate and become agriculturalists has been so rewarding."



Tom Welch, Professor of Agricultural Technology

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

The MSU-Northern Foundation Board of Trustees onboarded new members last October. This past year, we welcomed Shari Baltrusch, Marilyn McLain, and Michelle Burchard.



Shari Baltrusch was born and raised in Havre and she graduated from MSU-Northern in 1982. She has over 30 years experience in financial services and is currently a Registered Associate with High Plains Wealth Management Group. Shari spends her free time with her friends and family, golfing, enjoying outdoor activities, and traveling.

Marilyn McLain grew up in Chinook, Montana and attended MSU Billings. She worked for the Chinook Public School System until 2005 and then moved to Havre to work at Hill County Electric and Triangle Telephone. She retired in 2017. Marilyn is a talented quilter and enjoys reading, camping, and spending time with her children and 18 grandchildren.



Michelle Burchard was also born and raised in Havre and graduated from MSU-Northern in 2000. She then went on to earn her MBA at the University of Montana. She is currently the CEO of the Havre Day Activity Center. Michelle enjoys spending time with her husband and three teenage children.

Previous board members, including Gunnar VanderMars, Jamie Young, and Jodi Korb, ended their terms this past year and we sincerely thank them for their service and continued support of MSU-Northern.

NoMoCo

Official Student Publication of Northern Montana College, Havre, Montana, January



RECEIVE THEIR CAPS —Class of 12 was honored at are Mrs. Hazel Brandgard, R.N., Mrs. Gudrun instructors. (Photo by Stewart)

Nurses Are Honored Ending First Period

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Billings;
Havre;
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Falls;
Bismarck;
Charles;
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and Lou-
Counts." Mrs. Hazel Brandgard, R.N., director of nurses at Kennedy Deaconess hospital, which participates with NMC in the training of the practical nurses, presented the caps to the candidates in impressive ceremonies, after which they took their pledges. A reception was held in the library of the college conducted by the Practical Nurses' association.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. 21, "M" club meeting, 8:00 P.
Jan. 22, 8:00 P.M. club dance

THE NOMOCO

The NoMoCo was the college newspaper for many years, named at a time when the campus was called Northern Montana College. The contributors wrote news articles, sports recaps, poems, cartoons, book reviews, and speculative columns, providing a perfect window to look back in time.

The NoMoCo printed its first issue March 8, 1933. Editor in Chief E. Mead Williams wrote in a special front-page editorial that the school had outgrown its general assembly and needed a newspaper to spread information to the more than three hundred and thirty students enrolled at NMC. At that time, Northern Montana College was gaining traction as a prominent school in Montana. Enrollment was growing year after year. It was obvious to the students at NMC that the college in Havre would only continue to grow.

And grow it did. At the beginning of each semester, the NoMoCo would dutifully report on enrollment numbers. They pressed for students and the local community to rally their legislature and approve the funding for the first administrative building on campus, Cowan Hall.

*Read copies of the NoMoCo online at
libguides.msun.edu/archival-collections*

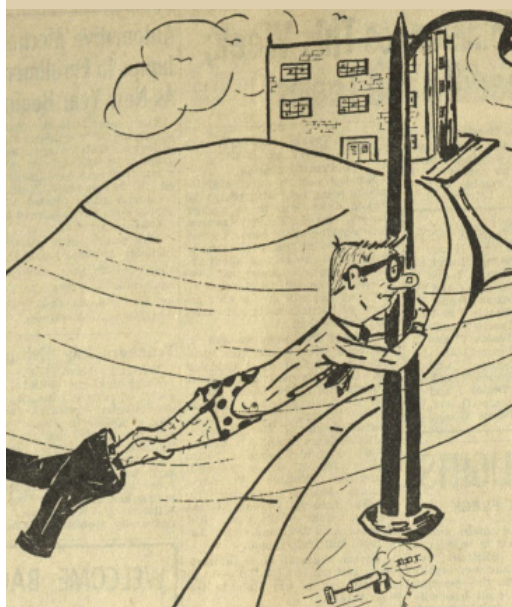
NMC On-the-farm-training Program

Only One of Its Kind In Montana

In addition to covering sports, club activities, and student elections, the NoMoCo was a funny, creative outlet. It featured political cartoons, poems, and short vignettes about life at NMC. They used the paper as a way to build a college community, something that was difficult for Northern. Many students were commuters who went home after class. Nevertheless, school pride shines through the NoMoCo. The student writers highlighted Northern's strong nursing, education, and agriculture programs, stressing the importance of these industries much like we do today.

As NMC evolved, so too did the governance of the paper. The Havre Daily News printed the paper and copies were distributed on campus periodically. The Central Board (student government) partially funded the paper and some of the editors. Unfortunately, like so many publications, the internet led to the end of the NoMoCo come the

early 2000s. On the bright side, you can still find a wealth of information about Northern on our website and on our social media pages.



THE GUSTY CLIMB TO COW-AN — NoMoCo Cartoonist Don DonTigny arrived at this version of the fight for knowledge waged by the student who battles against head winds to climb back to Cowan hall after the necessary cup of Student Union coffee.

TENTATIVELY COMING UP...

OCT

HOMECOMING

GREAT NORTHERN GET-TOGETHER:

ALL CLASS REUNION

FIRST HOME FOOTBALL GAME IN

NEW SPORTS COMPLEX

9-10

NOV

01

EXCELLENCE FUND

ANNUAL GIVING DRIVE

FEB

2021

THE AUCTION

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER



NORTHERN

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