



ALWAYS NORTHERN

A CAMPAIGN FOR NMU



Join Us in Shaping Northern's Future

Northern Michigan University has a profound impact – not only on the students who learn here, but on the communities they go on to serve and the Upper Peninsula we all call home.

For us, that impact is deeply personal. NMU brought our family together. Rick's father came to Northern from Pennsylvania in the 1950s to play football and never left the U.P. Rick followed from Iron Mountain in the 1980s, earning both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Sue was a Wildcat basketball player, and it was at Northern that we met and built our life together. Years later, our sons Sam and Isaiah became Wildcats themselves – playing soccer and football and earning their degrees. Through the years, Rick has also had the privilege of serving Northern as Alumni Association President, Chair of the Board of Trustees and Trustee Emeritus.

We are, in every sense, a Wildcat family.

But our belief in Northern goes beyond our own story. At NMU, we are guided by a simple but powerful idea: **Always Northern**. It speaks to the enduring connection we share with this university and to our responsibility to help ensure Northern continues to create opportunities for generations to come.

Always Northern – A Campaign for NMU is our call to action – a \$100 million comprehensive fundraising campaign designed to inspire our Wildcat community and others to help shape a transformational future for NMU. Grounded in the university's strategic plan, *Our Compass*, the campaign will strengthen Northern's position as a distinctive, forward-looking regional university while investing in the people, places and opportunities that will define its future.

That is why we said yes to serving as campaign co-chairs.

Now, we're asking you to consider saying yes, too.

A campaign committee is an opportunity to help shape and champion this important work. You don't have to have all the answers or be a fundraising expert. You simply need to believe in NMU and be willing to share why it matters to you. As a campaign volunteer, you can help by:

- Sharing NMU's story and philanthropic momentum within your networks
- Helping identify and engage new friends, partners and supporters of NMU
- Serving as an ambassador through participation in campaign activities and events
- Supporting meaningful donor engagement and stewardship efforts

The enclosed materials provide additional detail about this opportunity and the role you would play in helping advance this important work. We will follow up with you shortly to discuss this opportunity. In the meantime, for more information, **scan the QR code or visit volunteer.nmu.edu**.

We have all been beneficiaries of what Northern has built. Now it is our turn to be stewards of that gift – to help ensure the opportunities we experienced remain possible for the next generation of Wildcats.

We hope you'll join us.

Rick ('88 BS, '90 MPA) and Sue ('90 BS) Popp
Campaign Co-Chairs

For more
information,
scan the QR code.

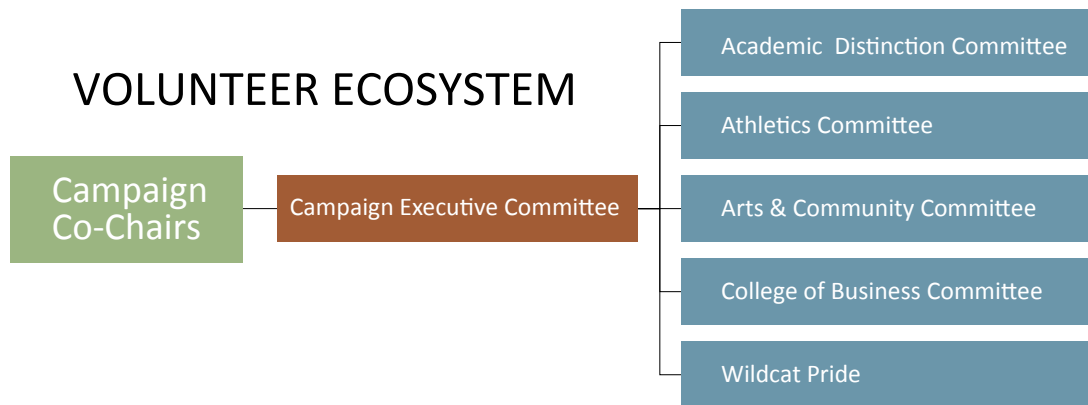


NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE OVERVIEW



Purpose

- > Act as the volunteer structure for NMU's comprehensive campaign.
- > Serve as visible advisors and advocates for the campaign.
- > Represent the campaign nationally, regionally, and across alumni, donor, community, and academic networks.
- > Lead in helping shape the strategies and fundraising activities of the campaign.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

- > Demonstrate leadership through philanthropic support for the area of NMU that matters most to you. Your investment in the campaign will inspire others to make a difference for current and future students.
- > Leverage your personal and professional networks to help identify new philanthropic partners and meaningful opportunities to advance the mission and priorities of NMU.
- > Serve as an ambassador for **Always Northern – A Campaign for NMU** by participating in campaign events, hosting and attending gatherings, extending invitations, providing remarks, and encouraging alumni, donors, parents, and friends to engage with and support NMU.
- > Engage in donor stewardship activities, including thanking supporters and helping foster meaningful connections between donors and NMU.

Term and Time Commitment

- > Participate in your campaign committee meeting(s).
- > All campaign leaders will come together at NMU for the campaign public launch in Spring 2027.

Campaign Volunteer Timeline

- > 2026: Establish campaign volunteer ecosystem.
- > Spring 2027: Campaign public launch.
- > 2029: Expected campaign close.



OBJECTIVES

NMU's vision is to be known like the lake that inspires us, **Superior** – in the ways we support our people, partner with our place, and realize the potential of all our students.

Always Northern – A Campaign for NMU is our call to action to inspire others to help shape a transformational future through our \$100 million comprehensive fundraising campaign that advances four key priorities.



ELEVATE Academic Distinction

A Northern education is about more than what students learn. It's about how they learn and where that learning can take them. From the Honors Program and Student Experience Grants to faculty research and distinctive academic programs, we can open more doors to discovery, exploration, and hands-on experiences that turn knowledge into opportunity. Together, we can build on Northern's academic strengths and give every student the chance to discover just how far they can go. We believe that every student, from anywhere and any background, deserves the chance to have life- and career-changing opportunities as a student.



ENHANCE the Campus Experience

The way students learn, live, and connect with each other is changing – and Northern is changing with them. A new home for the College of Business, the development of an integrated Arts District and enhancements to athletics facilities will elevate spaces designed around today's students, evolving academic programs, and future careers. Together, we're building a campus that inspires learning, sparks connection, and makes the Northern experience even stronger.



STRENGTHEN Community Connections

Northern and the Upper Peninsula have always been connected – each helping shape the other. Through the development of the Arts District, NMU can strengthen its role as a regional hub for the arts, creating new opportunities for students and communities across the U.P. to experience, create, and connect. Rural health, SHINE, and other community partnerships deepen that relationship, bringing Northern's people and expertise together with the communities we serve.



INVEST in the People who make NMU Extraordinary

Northern is extraordinary because of the people who make it so. The faculty who inspire discovery. The staff who support our students and keep Northern moving forward. The students who arrive ready to find their path. The student-athletes who compete with pride. Through scholarships, faculty and program support, athletics, employee well-being initiatives, and other opportunities, we can invest in our people and give more of them the chance to learn, lead, achieve, and make their own mark on Northern – and beyond.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: What is a campaign?

A comprehensive campaign is an organized fundraising effort built around a shared vision, defined priorities, and long-term goals. Through strategic outreach and relationship-building, the campaign seeks philanthropic support for the university's highest-impact priorities. A campaign also brings together alumni, donors, friends, faculty, staff, and community advocates through storytelling, engagement, volunteer leadership, and philanthropy to build lasting momentum and deepen connections to the university for years to come.

Q2: What are the benefits of Always Northern – A Campaign for NMU?

The campaign will strengthen support for the priorities that define the future of NMU – creating transformative opportunities for students, advancing academic distinction, and deepening NMU's impact across the Upper Peninsula and beyond.

The campaign will also build long-term momentum for NMU by strengthening philanthropic support and expanding engagement among alumni, donors, parents, faculty, staff, and friends of the university. By celebrating the power of the NMU community, the campaign will inspire pride, elevate the university's visibility, and unite supporters around a shared vision for the future.

Q3: Why is it called a “comprehensive” campaign?

The campaign will advance nearly every aspect of NMU through four key priorities: elevating academic distinction, enhancing the campus experience, strengthening community connections, and investing in the people who make NMU extraordinary. In measuring success, we will recognize the collective generosity of the NMU community through all gifts, pledges, planned gifts, and in-kind support made throughout the life of the campaign.

Q4: What is the timeline?

The campaign will span ten years from FY19 through FY29. This is an average length for a regional university campaign and incorporates two phases:

- > Quiet Phase: Organize campaign plan; secure significant gifts early.
- > Public Phase: Broad and public appeal, with anticipated launch in Spring 2027.

Q5: What is the quiet phase?

The quiet phase is the period before the campaign's public kick-off, when significant funding is secured from the university's top donors, and substantial progress is made towards the overall campaign goal. NMU is currently in the quiet phase of our campaign, which will last through Spring 2027.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTINUED...

Q6: What is the campaign goal?

\$100 million.

Q7: How was this goal set?

To help establish a bold yet achievable campaign goal for NMU, the Foundation partnered with Graham Pelton as its campaign counsel to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study. This process evaluated NMU's fundraising history, donor engagement trends, philanthropic potential, and the passion and capacity of alumni, friends, corporations, foundations, faculty, staff, and community supporters.

Through interviews, research, and strategic planning discussions, the study helped identify the university's greatest opportunities for philanthropic investment and the priorities that resonated most strongly with supporters. The findings were reviewed collaboratively with university and Foundation leadership, including the Foundation Board of Trustees and the NMU Board of Trustees, as well as the campus community, to determine a campaign goal that is both aspirational and attainable.

The result was a recommended goal of \$100 million – a transformational investment in the future of the university, and the students, programs, people, and experiences that define the NMU community.

Q8: Who will give to NMU's Campaign?

We will ask for support from alumni, parents, individuals, friends, corporations, foundations, faculty, and staff, with a strong focus on alumni and current donors.

Q9: How much has been raised?

Approximately \$64 million as of September 1, 2026.

Q10: May I talk about the campaign now?

Absolutely! We encourage you to share NMU's philanthropic momentum as you connect with fellow Wildcats.

NMU is in the "quiet phase" of a \$100 million comprehensive fundraising campaign designed to elevate academic distinction, enhance the campus experience, strengthen community connections, and invest in the people who make NMU extraordinary. As you talk with peers and alumni, feel free to highlight this exciting moment and the growing energy around NMU's philanthropic impact across campus and beyond.

Q11: How does the campaign align with NMU's strategic plan?

The campaign is aligned with NMU's strategic plan, **Our Compass**, and will provide critical resources to advance its vision, meet the evolving needs of students, and strengthen NMU's position as a distinctive and forward-looking regional university. It will invest in NMU's strong and highly regarded academic programs while also celebrating what sets Northern apart – rigorous, career-focused learning opportunities delivered in a place where an exceptional academic experience is matched by the beauty of its surroundings.