

Metro State University
Alumni Association Board Meeting

September 20, 2022, 5:30-7 p.m., Saint Paul Room, New Main

Members attending in-person: Matt Christenson, Thulani Jwacu, Tom Krueger, Matt Moe, Bryan Newman, Scott Pilgram, Ryan Ringwelski, Eric Rios, Shahbaz Shah, Nancy Uden

Members attending via Zoom: Deidra Isaac, Lyna Nyamwaya, Fidelis Odozi, Betsy Salvatore, Shanasha Whitson, Amanda Wong

Members not attending: Brittanie Aune, Munira Maalimisaq, Salman Mian, Darrell Young

Guest: Joseph Ellis

Staff attendees: Ginny Arthur, Kristine Hansen, Rachel Hughes, Noriko Ramberg, Josh Windham

Nancy Uden convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m., welcomed and thanked new board members, returning members, guest and staff for their talent, time and support for Metro State.

President's update:

President Arthur was excited to learn that every Alumni Board membership slot has been filled and stressed that alumni are the driving force to move this university forward.

University's four priorities in FY23

- The university plans to refresh its strategic enrollment plan
 - Identify where the university should focus after the pandemic—specifically on low-income, first-generation, students of color, who are much less likely to be continuing their education due to the pandemic
 - Reach out to adult learners through their employers' education benefit.
 - Metro State is the first partnered university in the upper Midwest with Amazon, where the company pays tuition.
 - Medtronic has a similar program, and a Foundation Board member is making connections on Metro State's behalf within the corporation.
 - The university is looking into having a position within admissions who can devote their time to working with corporations' HR and benefit providers.
- Budget
 - Due to declining enrollment, which affects the university's operating budget, the administrators are carefully examining the allocation of funds and resources.
 - The Alumni Board has been invited to attend the Biennial Budget Listening Session, Thursday, Sept. 22, 10-11:30 a.m., Library 302 (Ecolab room). The Chancellor and some of the trustees of Minnesota State will be present to listen to our priorities.
- Equity, inclusion and anti-racism
 - The plan was developed last fiscal year and has been implemented through training, resources and sessions to students and employees on campus, and the efforts will continue throughout the year and beyond.
- Development of a new vision statement for the university
 - It is a high time to develop a new vision statement since it has not been updated for over 15 years. As the university is approaching the last year in FY24 of the five-year strategic plan, the new vision statement will be the guide and form the basis for the university's next strategic plan.

Regarding the priority of equity, inclusion and anti-racism, Shanasha Whitson suggested that the university:

- 1) host an open house for the faculty of color and students of color.

- 2) highlight the faculty of color in the departmental newsletter and talk about the importance and inclusion of BIPOC students in programs.
- 3) showcase several BIPOC members of the Alumni Board and current BIPOC students in newsletters and recruitment brochures to tell their Metro stories as a way to promote enrollment by prospective students of BIPOC communities.

President Arthur mentioned that Metro State already has an initiative called “Faculty of Color Mentoring Program” for several years, that has 77 faculty members of the BIPOC community, which represents about 35% of resident faculty.

Metro State also implemented the training for employees to be “equity champions” when serving on search committees. This year’s theme at Convocation was “radical inclusivity”, and President Arthur encouraged the Board to view the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf1clmGUo7c>

Approval of committee notes

Board members reviewed the committee notes prior to the board meeting. Motion to approve the committee notes moved by Shahbaz Shah, seconded by Ryan Ringwelski, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Office updates by Kristine Hansen

- Please respond to email and appointments from Alumni Relations in a timely manner.
- Grad Expo this year will be in-person on Saturday, Oct. 29, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Volunteers are needed to staff the alumni and information tables. It is a great opportunity to connect with students who are graduating in December.

Introduction:

Q1: Proudest accomplishment

Q2: What you hope to gain from serving on the Board

- Shanasha Whitson '00, Psychology, CCSPA
 - Proud of graduating from Metro State
 - One of the goals during Whitson’s tenure is to help BIPOC communities overcome the struggles in entering and staying in college. Serving on the board is a great opportunity to achieve that goal.
- Deidra Isaac '16, Individualized Studies, CIS
 - Proud of graduating from and helping Metro State grow by serving on Student Senate.
 - Isaac hopes to be a catalyst for change in her community and other underserved populations and help those who do not have access or resources to meet their needs.
- Shahbaz Shah '15, Professional Communications, CLA
 - Proud of receiving a kidney transplant and serving on the Alumni Board last year.
 - Shah hopes to make relationships work and have the organizations—one being Alumni Board—that he represents be lifted up continuously.
- Eric Rios '15, Marketing, COM
 - Proud of having a son and going to college at the same time and eventually graduating from Metro State.
 - Rios would like to encourage students, especially non-traditional students, to stay in school and graduate by sharing his educational journey and experiences.
- Matt Moe '12, Finance, COM
 - Proud of graduating from Metro State and receiving hands-on, real-world education, and also of being able to fund his nieces’ education at private schools.
 - Moe hopes to help Metro State be known in the community and be connected to Fortune 50 companies for partnerships.

- Matt Christenson '12, Public and Nonprofit Administration, CCSPA
 - Proud of having two adult daughters grow and be good, responsible citizens.
 - Christenson hopes to connect with current and future students, not only to help them into Metro State but also bring them into the workforce and continue to move forward.
- Scott Pilgram '10, Business Administration, COM
 - Proud of completing a bachelor's degree while working fulltime, and also proud of the opportunity Metro State's degree led him to be in management at his current job.
 - Pilgram would like to meet a lot of people in-person through volunteer opportunities and share his Metro State experiences.
- Ryan Ringwelski '21, Individualized Studies, CIS
 - Proud to be the first one to graduate from college in his family.
 - Ringwelski hopes to advocate for veterans and be able to bridge the gap between the university system and veterans.
- Fidelis Odozi '18, Marketing, COM
 - Proud of his children, 5- and 8-year-olds, and watching them grow.
 - Odozi hopes to deliver the great stories he hears from the Board to other alumni and students and get them engaged with Metro State through the Engagement Committee work.
- Lyna Nyamwaya '09, Nursing, CNHS
 - Proud of graduating from Metro State as the Outstanding Student Award recipient.
 - Nyamwaya is passionate about advocating for racial equity, diversity, and inclusion; share her struggles and achievements with students, alumni, and the community; and being an ambassador representing the Alumni Board.
- Amanda (Clark) Wong '17, Professional Communication, CLA
 - Proud of being the first-generation graduate in her family, finished a 4-year degree in 4 years while working full time, and landed a dream job in marketing and PR in the construction industry.
 - Wong hopes to discover new ways to collaborate, problem-solve with the board, and give back to Metro State to benefit students and alumni.
- Nancy Uden '88, Individualized Studies, CIS
 - Proud to be the mother of 3 beautiful daughters, proud to graduate from Metro State to further her career advancement, and proud to be able to leave a legacy upon her retirement from Great Clips, Inc.
 - Uden is eager to give back to Metro State as much and long as she can.
- Joseph Ellis '19 (Honorary), Foundation Board chair
 - Proud to be supporting Metro State as the Trustee for 14 years and, as the chair of the Investment Committee at that time, navigated and continued giving scholarships away with better fund management and stewardship through the 2008 financial crisis and beyond.
- Tom Krueger '17, Urban Elementary Education, CCSPA
 - Proud of completing a college education and having his own classrooms as a teacher.
 - Hope to give back to Metro State by being an advocate for the underrepresented population and for the racial diversity of the teacher workforce in the K-12 educational system.
- Bryan Newman '15, Business Administration, COM
 - Proud of being the first in his family to graduate from college, of the birth of his daughter, of writing three books, of being able to teach people public speaking skills as the area director of toastmasters.
 - As the hiring manager, Newman hopes to help students build resumes, interview well and offer valuable tips to better prepare them for professional ventures after college.
- Thulani Jwacu '05, Social Science, CLA
 - Proud of his nephew graduating from Metro State this summer.
 - Jwacu hopes to guide students from BIPOC and low-income communities through the spectrum of education and to take care of them throughout their educational journey and beyond.
- Josh Windham, associate director of alumni relations

- Proud of his children, 6- and 9-year-olds.
- Windham hopes to keep working with Membership Committee and Fundraising Committee to set strategies and vision.
- Rachel Hughes, executive director of the Foundation
 - Proud of completing her college degree when the opportunities were given—at times, she was close to dropping out.
 - Hughes admires all the board members who attained their college degrees as non-traditional students while juggling careers and family and enjoys listening to their Metro State stories.
- Kristine Hansen '07, History, CLA, director of alumni relations
 - Proud of her son, urban education grad, who recently started teaching first grade.
 - Hansen hopes to get to know all board members better and leverage the power of alumni to make a difference and create opportunities for current students and alumni.
- Noriko Ramberg, office coordinator for alumni relations
 - Proud of finishing college in the U.S. despite the language barrier while caring for children.
 - Ramberg is excited to welcome the largest board membership this fiscal year and looks forward to supporting them.

Give to the Max Day (GTMD), November 17, 2022:

Krueger conducted an exercise to promote and educate the Board about the GTMD campaign. Krueger had the Board guess what the numbers below mean in relation to Give the Max Day. The answers are:

- 58 = The days until GTMD
- 56 = The amount of alumni donations Metro had just on that day last year
- 10,360 = The amount raised by the Foundation Board and the Alumni Board for GTMD, that was matched by a Foundation Board member
- 180 = Total number of donors we had on that day
- 13,225 = The amount Metro State raised on GTMD, not including challenge grants
- 33,585 = The total last year Metro State raised through the GTMD campaign
- 34.3 million = Overall amount raised after GTMD across the state last year

Action for the Board

- Krueger encouraged the Board to give in advance to be a part of the Board match that we offer to the rest of the community when the GTMD promotion starts.
- Fundraising Committee will provide more contents to share, such as competition details, as it gets closer to GTMD.

Krueger shared the developing idea of creating the professional development fund for recent (up to 5 years) alumni, which is intended to be used for certification fees, test fees, professional organization dues, etc. Fundraising Committee would like to highlight and promote the fund during the GTMD campaign.

Other business and updates:

- Uden encouraged all to express thanks to other board members by email, call, or text when they hear something worthy or pleasing to their ears.
- Board Retreat is Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. In-person attendance is strongly encouraged.
- Uden encouraged all to join Metro State Connect to be a mentor to students.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Christenson, seconded by Newman, and the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator