**Metropolitan State University’s Annual “Breakfast at the Capitol” Connects Record Number of Alumni with Sen. Sandy Pappas and Sen. Roger Chamberlain**

*Discussion focuses on education issues, including proposed bonding bill to fund Metropolitan State University’s Science Education Center*

**ST. PAUL, Minn. (April 10, 2013) –** More than 60 Metropolitan State University faculty and alumni came together this week for the annual “Breakfast at the Capitol” event, featuring Minnesota State Senate President Sandy Pappas and Senator Roger Chamberlain – both Metropolitan State University graduates. Among the education issues discussed was the recently proposed bonding bill to fund Metropolitan State University’s cutting-edge Science Education Center, which received support from legislators, alumni and faculty alike.

“Metropolitan State’s science majors have been growing rapidly in the last two years, and we currently have only a few science labs on campus, which are underequipped,” said Sue Hammersmith, president of Metropolitan State University. “The new Science Education Center will provide students with a world-class laboratory experience, and will help us increase STEM-related degree completions that meet the shortage of qualified science experts entering the workforce, thereby keeping STEM-related jobs in Minnesota.”

Metropolitan State University’s Science Education Center is the top Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) campus construction project before the 2013 Legislature. If funded this year, the facility will open in early 2015 on the Saint Paul campus, giving the University’s 600 science students a cutting-edge, laboratory-based education, and will become a destination for urban students interested in pursuing science degrees. It will also create more classes that focus on STEM subjects, and allow the school to add more science degree programs, including master’s degrees in environment and health fields.

“The new Science Education Center will be an asset to the entire campus community, allowing students to use high-tech labs for coursework and conduct senior research, and enabling faculty to do independent research,” said John F. Schneider, Ph.D., associate professor at Metropolitan State University’s Natural Sciences Department. “However, until the bill is passed, this new facility is not guaranteed. It’s up to us – the alumni, faculty, students and supporters – to contact our legislative representatives, and ask them to support this higher education bonding package.”

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To contact your local representative about the proposed bonding bill to fund higher education in Minnesota, including the new Science Education Center, visit www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/districtfinder.aspx.

For more information about Metropolitan State University’s Science Education Center, visit www.metrostate.edu/msweb/resources/depts_services/bldg_services/capital_projects.html.

About Metropolitan State University
Metropolitan State University, a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, is America’s premier university for lifelong learning, providing unsurpassed, competitive academic and professional degree programs at the bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral levels while maintaining affordability.

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