

2018–2019 Impact Report • Making a Difference



Message from the Foundation Board Chair

Thank you. Your investment in Metropolitan State University through the University Foundation is shaping the communities we live in.

Your support to the Metro Fund, scholarships, and programs creates an exceptional experience for Metro State students. Our students are lifelong learners, working toward their dreams for a brighter future for their families and our state.

You've helped families prosper. Metropolitan State is ranked among the top two percent of colleges and universities nationally for our ability to help low-income students achieve higher incomes through education. Metro State improves the socio-economic mobility of our students better than any other school in Minnesota thanks to your investment and exemplary leadership and scholarship.

You've strengthened our state's economy. Metro State alumni will contribute \$23 billion to the Minnesota economy over the span of their careers. By prioritizing your gift to Metropolitan State University Foundation each year, you help us prepare students for and to advance through the workforce.

Together, we are building a vibrant future. To celebrate our community, I am pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees will issue a challenge to kick off the new school year. If 200 alumni make a gift to Metropolitan State by December 31st, the University Foundation Board of Trustees will contribute \$14,000 to the Metro Fund to support the areas of greatest need.

Sincerely, Michael Langley

President's Thank You

Because of you, Metropolitan State is changing lives and enriching our Twin Cities communities. Your support this past year enabled 2,381 students to complete their degrees and continue their journey toward a better life for themselves and their families. We have heard from so many that a Metropolitan State University education doesn't just provide career skills and knowledge. Graduates tell us they gain personal insights and a new understanding of the world that allows them to be more engaged with their community and live an all around better life.

It is your support that provides us the flexibility to launch new programs responsive to the interests of our students and the needs of our community. These include new undergraduate majors in fields such as cybersecurity, data science, and biochemistry.

At the graduate level we are building on our unique academic strength in helping students develop individualized programs of study to solve the problems they are passionate about through the introduction of a Master of Arts and Master of Science in Individualized Studies. We are bringing creativity, life-long learning, and impactful problem-solving to the graduate level because our world now presents us with graduate-level problems to solve and students eager to work on solutions.

So many of you have recognized the importance of this individualized approach to education, which rewards initiative, creativity and practical knowledge, by joining together to create an endowment for the Wisdom Scholarship, supporting students enrolled in the Bachelor of Individualized Studies program.

Without you we could not have taken on renovation of an abandoned greenhouse and created a thriving partnership with community agencies called the GROW-IT Center (Gateway for Research, Outreach, Workforce Development, Innovation and Teaching). Students, faculty, and community members will come together to creatively address issues of urban agriculture, the impact of climate change, and urban food deserts in this facility.

Your gift supporting a Foundation scholarship enables student-problem-solvers in fields across the academic realm to stay enrolled, stay focused, and finish their program, unleashing more informed curiosity and energy to impact big problems, one degree at a time. Your contribution to our university programs creates exceptional educational experiences. Your gift to the Metro Fund allows us the flexibility to seize opportunities as they arise. Your support sparks innovation, and it has lasting impacts on individuals, families and communities.

Because you recognize and embrace the value of a Metropolitan State education I ask you, as one of our loyal supporters, "What problem do you want to solve and how can Metropolitan State be your partner in realizing your hopes for the future?

Please feel free to reach out to any of our staff that you see highlighted here. We look forward to helping you create the desirable future you envision through Metropolitan State University. On behalf of our students and our university community, I am honored to call you a partner in this important work.



Sincerely,

Virginia arthur

Virginia "Ginny" Arthur, JD '17 (Honorary) President, Metropolitan State University

University Scholar James Densley

by Matthew Spillum '06

Professor James Densley, Metropolitan State's first University Scholar, might not have become an internationally-recognized expert on violence had it not been for a combination of life experience and family background. "My sister, back in England, is a homicide investigator, and my dad was a volunteer police officer for about 25 years, so I guess I kind of grew up around this stuff. But the main turning point for me was teaching special education in the New York City public school system from 2005 to 2007. These were kids that were on the periphery of gangs, worried about their personal safety, had friends and relatives who might be involved in gangs and criminal activity. A lot of the challenges they faced in school weren't to do with school, they were to do with everything that was going on outside."

A flurry of scholarship followed as James pursued these interests beginning with the research for his PhD from Oxford University's St. Antony's College and his award-winning book, *How Gangs Work: An Ethnography of Youth Violence* (2013). In addition to an exceptional number of scholarly journal publications, James has received the UK Prime Minister's Points of Light Award in 2017 in acknowledgement of his co-founding of the charity, Growing Against Violence, and serves as co-principal investigator of a study of public mass shooters in the United States funded by the National Institute of Justice.

James sees his multi-topical study of violence as particularly timely. "The research on gangs never really goes away, since it is a sort of intractable problem. The work on mass shootings; that's never out of the headlines, because we keep having these shootings occur. More recently, I've been working to develop a kind of crisis intervention training for police officers, in terms of how they respond to people with mental health issues, which has been really rewarding work, hand in hand with law enforcement agencies to identify problems in their data and their communities, and then trying to tailor a solution accordingly."

Having been at Metropolitan State for eight years, James has a strong appreciation for the students. "We work with a very diverse population of students, and you can say that about many different measures: race, ethnicity, age, life experience, socio-economic status. It makes for such dynamic conversations in the classroom. These are also students who perhaps don't yet recognize the opportunities afforded them by getting a degree, and it's really rewarding to help students access the opportunities that are out there for them."

One thing that James has come to recognize is the alignment between the university's mission and the work of the university foundation. "We serve a really unique population of students, who often have a number of barriers to entry into higher education.



The foundation's support helps break down those barriers, making higher education more accessible and helping the university live out its vision." One way to help the university live that vision is to donate to the Metro Fund, as James himself does.

Student Philanthropy Program

by Emily Seddon

If you ask current students what makes their experience at Metropolitan State University great, many will say the diverse student body. At Metro State, we expect difference. We are eager to learn about others' unique experiences, and the magic happens when we bring those experiences together.

At the Metropolitan State University Foundation, we work to bring the campus community together. However, not every supporter of the university sees themself as philanthropists. At least, not yet.

We help everyone in the campus community understand and appreciate their place in philanthropy by welcoming all traditions of generosity and experiences in giving and volunteering. The Student Philanthropy Program provides opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership and teach the campus community how philanthropy impacts their experience.

Student Ambassadors

Metropolitan State's Student Ambassadors are the leaders of the Student Philanthropy Program. A paid position, Student Ambassadors bring the student perspective to university stakeholders and help build a culture of philanthropy on campus.

Student Ambassadors hosted a Thank-A-Donor table at Spring Fest. Sitting alongside student organizations, Student Ambassadors shared the different ways that philanthropy impacts the student experience and encouraged their classmates to write

thank you notes to donors. Information about the University Foundation, scholarships, and giving was new for many attendees at this celebration of student life.

Student Ambassadors, like Lucia Rivas a psychology and human resources major who plans to graduate in 2021, are key communicators for the University Foundation. Student Ambassadors may want to pursue a career in philanthropy or another field, and the skills they learn working with the University Foundation will benefit them.



Education

The impact of philanthropy is visible on campus prominently. Commemorative plaques in the Jason R. Carter Science Education Center celebrate

donors and Jason's memory. Names of supporters line the skyway across East Seventh Street. Many scholarships are named for their benefactors.

Many important outcomes, however, are less visible. Support from alumni, faculty, staff, student, and friends allows the university to be nimble and innovative. Student Ambassadors work to share this information among the student body.

Student Giving

Philanthropic engagement deepens our students' commitment to community and civic institutions. By becoming donors, students claim their voice on campus. Last year, 20 students gave almost \$700 to support the university and their fellow students.

Lucia shared her experience in an opinion piece for the student newspaper, "This year, I have come to trust the people in charge of gathering gifts and putting them to work. So, I became a donor myself. I did not give a large sum. In fact, 30 percent of donations last year were small gifts like mine."

Now, when Lucia talks to other students about joining her as a donor, she talks about their power to change the lives of fellow students. "It never occurred to me that being a student donor would give me something in return: an outlet for helping friends and improving my college experience," she told her classmates in her op-ed. That is philanthropy from a student perspective.

Leading the Way

by Emily Seddon

College of Management Professor Dr. Susan Misterek and her late husband Kinney Misterek held firmly to the belief that education, especially higher education, was the key to building a better life for oneself and one's family. In 2016, when Kinney Misterek passed away at the age of 61, Dr. Susan Misterek challenged herself to put their belief in higher education into action. She quickly realized that the answer was right under her nose at the campus she visits every day. She would honor Kinney through a gift to Metropolitan State University.

The Mistereks would not describe themselves as wealthy. She is an academic and he was an officer at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis who taught accounting at local universities in the evenings. In spite of having some knowledge of the basics of personal finance, estate planning was a task they hadn't undertaken.

Metropolitan State University's values mirror the values the Mistereks held as a family of educators. Both knew that the university's greatest asset is its students. Both valued action that produces results. And both believed that learning is a lifelong endeavor. Susan Misterek also knew that she wanted to immediately see the impact of the gift she and her husband gave.

Consequently, Susan Misterek committed to funding fifty \$1,000 scholarships during each of the next five years. She set generous criteria for applicants: scholarship recipients must be enrolled in the College of Management and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75.

Susan explains that her contribution has had an impact on many students. "The scholarship isn't going to make anyone rich, but it is helping Metro State students reach their goals."

The thank you letters from scholarship recipients each year are confirmation that Susan's generosity is having an impact. The letters are filled with descriptions of challenges that students have had to overcome and how this scholarship will help them reach their dreams. One student shared, "As a first-generation college student, immigrant, and orphan, it was difficult to financially support my own education. However, with the support of scholarships such as this, I am now able to reach heights I was never able to before."

Thank you letters from scholarship recipients also demonstrate the importance of this support at all stages of someone's career and educational journey. A candidate for bachelor's degree shared that this scholarship will help him become a postal inspector,

eventually managing "other agents to make sure we are serving and protecting the community as best as possible."

A candidate for a degree in the Master in Business Administration shared, "When I had my daughter at the age of 21 with nothing but a GED, I never could have imagined myself in a position to someday be this close to completing an advanced degree." Another candidate noted that she sometimes felt like pursuing a doctoral degree was a "selfish" use of her time amid work and parenting responsibilities. This scholarship was a reminder to her "that pursing higher education for the purpose of knowledge is a meaningful and important journey." •







Creating Change for the LGBTQ Community—Alumna Grace Doyle '19

by Emily Seddon

For Grace Doyle '19, looming student loan payments added stress to her last semester in the Master of Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL) degree program.

For two years, Grace had jumped at every opportunity to volunteer. She wanted to make the most of her experience. Her professors and classmates noticed her willingness to help others, and she was awarded the LGBTQ and Allies Scholarship in her final semester.

The scholarship provided some financial relief and allowed Grace to finish the MAPL program with the same enthusiasm as she started the program—saying yes to every opportunity.

Eager to help her community, Grace completed her capstone internship with OutFront Minnesota early on in the MAPL program. Her experience helping

build a coalition to ensure equal opportunities, protections, and rights for LGBTQ individuals taught her the power of lobbying. She trained students on how to tell and share their stories in a way that could spark change. Her internship convinced her to shift from a nonprofit to a public policy focus through MAPL.

As a student, Grace's civic engagement extended to the campus community. She worked with the Alumni Relations office and as a student writing tutor. She also helped lead the Advocacy, Political Leadership, and Service club. Volunteering also gave Grace behind the scenes access to big events happening on Metropolitan State's St. Paul Campus, such as the October 2018 debates between candidates running for statewide office.

Grace describes receiving the scholarship as the time that she realized she was "worthy of winning". Her own philanthropy is centered around providing that validation to others. She contributes to the LGBTQ and Allies Scholarship with the hope that it will help others reflect, connect, and build on their personal and academic experiences.

At the time of writing, Grace was working as the Legislative Assistant to the Minnesota House of Representatives Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Division. She's enjoying this step in her career and hopes to continue to advance to support staff and writing roles in which she can choose the projects she works on, including her commitment to the LGBTQ community.



Empowering Dreams for Graduation and Employment

by Maureen Acosta

Insurance providers have been the experts at managing risk since the late 1600s. Today, in addition to helping our community plan for uncertainty, they plan for their own future by developing a pipeline of skilled employees.

One way Travelers is doing this is through Travelers EDGE (Empowering Dreams for Graduation and Employment), a program established in 2007 to help underrepresented students advance through college and obtain a career in the insurance and financial services industry.

Originally called the Travelers Pathways Program at Metropolitan State University, Travelers EDGE started a partnership with the university because of its diverse student body.

Maureen Acosta
Corporate
and Foundation
Relations Director

Since 2007, Travelers has invested more than \$2.3 million for programming and scholarships for Travelers EDGE at Metropolitan State. Sixty-one Travelers EDGE scholars have received \$518,000 in scholarships — scholars like Bonnie Hansen ('15), a first-generation college student who chose to finish her bachelor's degree at Metro State because it fit her schedule as a working mother.

The program aims to enhance the educational and career development options for students through a risk management and insurance curriculum, industry-based experiential learning opportunities, and scholarships to help diverse and low-income students understand career options and prepare to enter the insurance and financial services workforce.

The partnership between Travelers and Metropolitan State is multifaceted. In addition to funding, Travelers provides support by hosting a number of events, such as job fairs and conferences, for our students and staff in the Twin Cities, Hartford, Conn., and Baltimore, Md. Travelers employees also volunteer to speak on career panels and in our classrooms, offer job shadows, serve as mentors for students, and attend our job fairs. Metropolitan State also works closely with the Travelers Talent



Travelers EDGE scholars at Wells Fargo

Acquisition staff to explore opportunities for our students such as internships, leadership development programs, and full-time employment.

Bonnie "was intrigued by different levels of support the program offered, including financial assistance, mentorships, and possible internships." She shared, "I knew these opportunities would help me build my soft skills and make me a more competitive candidate after I graduated." She was right. After interning in an actuarial role, she was hired full time at Travelers upon graduation, and was promoted to Senior Actuarial Consultant in September 2018. Bonnie is one of seven Metro State Travelers EDGE alumni who are now employed by Travelers and support current students by answering questions, providing coaching, and attending networking and professional development events.

Today's Travelers EDGE scholars are eligible for up to \$12,500 in financial support to help them stay enrolled and make progress toward their academic and career goals. But the program provides much more than financial aid, it builds confidence. Bonnie shared that when she was asked to speak at the Travelers EDGE symposium, "I hadn't really thought of myself as having anything special to contribute.

After being asked, I realized that other people saw something in me that I needed to work on seeing in myself. I was away from my home, my kids, and took time away from school to attend. Everything about that trip was outside of my comfort zone, and going to that symposium was a pivotal moment for me."



Travelers EDGE scholars at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

Metropolitan State works closely with our Travelers EDGE partners at Inver Hills Community College, Saint Paul College, and Augsburg University to create these transformational experiences. Together, we strengthen the pipeline of contemporary students who are working to complete their degrees and prepare for careers at Travelers or within the insurance and financial services industry. We collaborate on career development events, transfer information sessions, student conferences, and networking events. We provide seamless, holistic support as students make the transition from two-year colleges to four-year schools to complete their bachelor's degrees.

The partnership between Travelers and Metropolitan State has had a life-changing impact on the students, as Bonnie recently shared:

"I will always be grateful for what Travelers EDGE offered me. As a first-generation college student who attended as a non-traditional student, I was venturing on the path for a higher education on my own. Travelers EDGE made sure I was not alone. I had the support of my mentors, peers, and the program staff all along the way. Through that support, I learned to believe in myself and it really set me on the course to a successful career path." •



Looking to the Sky

by Emily Seddon



Virginia "Gini" McCain has included Metro State in her estate plan in order to help students balance their many commitments.

Gini McCain ('74) is a pilot. Literally, she earned her pilot's license mid-life; although, she stopped flying when she turned 80. Piloting also has a different meaning when you hear her story: she is, and has always been, in charge of her journey.

In her 30s, Gini tried to work full time and go to school at a traditional college. It wasn't sustainable.

She dropped out. The company she worked for closed. Then, Metropolitan State hired her as one of its first admissions officers.

She fondly remembers the brightly colored walls in the office on 7th Street and Wabasha Avenue in Saint Paul. More importantly, she truly believed in David Sweet's vision for Metro State. She was drawn to Metropolitan State's innovation and commitment to growth.

When the company Gini had worked for reopened and she was rehired, she decided to finish her degree at Metro State. Gini was one of Metro State's first students. She said, "Competency-based education at the very new Metro U led to the **validation** of the skills and knowledge I had gained in county government, a nonprofit agency, and a start-up company in biomedical communication systems."

As a student, she saw parts of town and met people she would not have otherwise. She learned from professors who were experts in their field and who had real-world experience.

Her experience as a student at Metro State "inspired [her] to seek bigger challenges." This included a 23-year career at 3M and extensive volunteerism, including to help build the Metro State Alumni Association.

Gini served on the Alumni Board from 1976-1978 and has continued to volunteer since. She says that as an alumni community, "We share a history. And we pay attention." She encourages all alumni to proudly include their Metro State degree in how they describe themselves, even if they must explain Metro State.

Today, Gini is proud to give annually to Metro State. She is also planning for the future. Gini made a bequest of stock to Metropolitan State because she wants to help students who are working, going to school, and meeting other responsibilities—such as parenting or caring for an aging family member. She is making a legacy gift because Metropolitan State "continues to develop innovative learning strategies, which will meet the needs of students, employers, our state, and the nation." •



Making a Difference in the Community and State

Annually, an estimated \$3.3 million in charitable donations and volunteer services are generated by Metropolitan State faculty, staff, and students. donated to local charitable organizations by Metropolitan State faculty, staff, and students. \$2.5 million of volunteer time by Metropolitan State faculty, staff, and students.

Metropolitan State was founded in the 1970s to bring higher education to people, including working adults, who were not being reached by traditional institutions. It has held true to its calling and is making an impact in the Minnesota economy through its outside-the-box approach to programming and partnering in support of the future workforce.

Students just out of high school, veterans and activeduty military, new Americans, and mid-career students wishing to elevate their current careers or pursue and create unique niches for which conventional university programs do not exist, all find a place at Metropolitan State. This flexible, whole-person approach to learning ensures flourishing communities and helps underresourced students succeed beyond college, supporting Minnesota's current and future economy.

We make it easy for you to give.

Where to give...

You can designate where your dollars will go.

Metro Fund. Gifts to the Metro Fund allow the university to take advantage of opportunities and support students when unexpected needs arise. From funding departmenals requests to supporting student scholarships and emergency funding, a gift to the Metro Fund makes a difference for all students.

Scholarship Funds. Contributions made to scholarships support students in their academic journey. This is especially critical for students who have exhausted their state and federal funding options and need your help to complete their education.

Program Funds. We have many innovative programs that welcome your contributions, including art education, nursing and health sciences, law enforcement and criminal justice, business, management, theater and more. You can give to any of our seven colleges—give to honor your program or support training for today's students.

How to give...

There are many easy ways to make a gift to Metropolitan State University Foundation. Choose the one that best fits your individual situation.

Online Giving - www.metrostate.edu/give

Mail – You can mail your gift to Metropolitan State University Foundation, 700 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106.

Stock – Giving appreciated stock helps our students and gives you a tax deduction.

Memorials and Wills – Honor a loved one by leaving a memorial or adding Metropolitan State University Foundation to your will or estate plan.

Corporate Matching Gift Programs – Many companies offer matching gift programs that can double your contribution. Check with your employer to see if it has a matching gift program.

Consider an endowment or a planned gift.

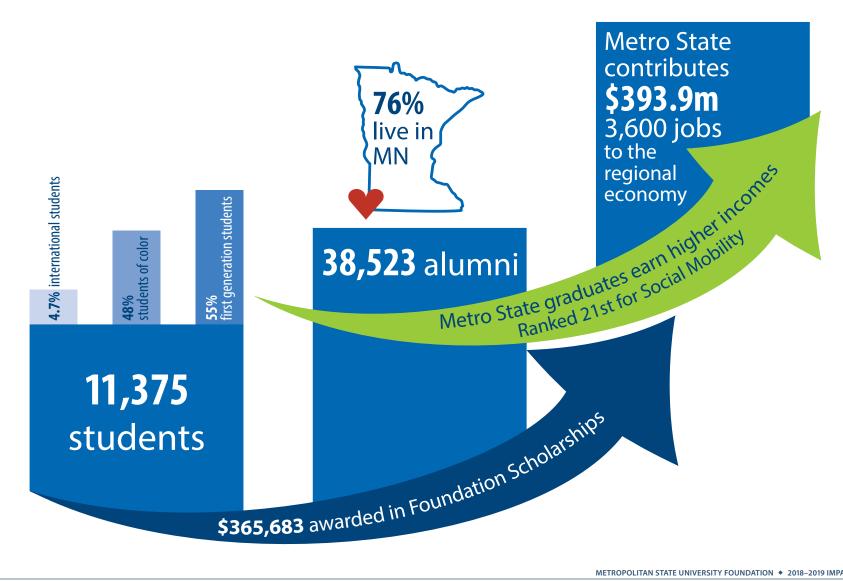
Endowments provide students scholarship support and professional development assistance, both of which lead to success for our students. An endowed fund can also ensure the continued growth and success of an academic program.

Your investment will benefit our students for years to come.

Your gift to the Foundation will create a long-term benefit to the community. Through your annual gifts and contributions to endowments we look forward to sharing the many ways in which your investments are making a difference in the lives of our students.



Numbers to note 2018-2019



Thank you!

The Foundation takes pride in recognizing those who help to preserve the quality education that Metropolitan State University provides. These donors have expressed their belief in our mission and have made an investment in the university's long-term impact on our community. This list recognizes donors from July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019.

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