Dear Friends,

As we celebrate our once-in-a-lifetime 50th anniversary, I am delighted to report on the impact of your generosity. Looking back on the turmoil of the past year, when it would have been entirely understandable for our friends, alumni, and philanthropic partners to be more cautious, you came together to provide support for Metro State students. Your generosity in the midst of uncertainty and sometimes fear is an expression of faith in our campus community and hope for the future. It reflects the spirit of Metro State, which has always seen opportunity in the midst of struggle.

In these pages, you will read about Antavia Paredes, a chemistry student and single parent who received a scholarship from the Jason R. Carter Endowment in Science. Like many of our students, Antavia has demonstrated perseverance and academic achievement throughout her academic career. Receiving a scholarship empowered her to pursue her degree and give back to the community by working as the program coordinator for Metro State’s First Saturday Science program, bringing science education to children and families in the Dayton’s Bluff neighborhood.

Coming together to create a more equitable society has been woven into the fabric of the university. When North Central University President Scott Hagan challenged the nation’s universities to establish scholarships in the name of George Floyd, it became a top priority for our university to answer this call. This report shares a behind-the-scenes look at a call to action becoming a reality through the commitment of our alumni, staff, and friends.

As I look forward to the next fifty years, I am grateful for your partnership in continuing to meet our mission of serving the unmet higher education needs of the Twin Cities area. Metro State has spent the last fifty years honing the educational innovations that will be needed to thrive in the next fifty. I am confident that our future will be bold and innovative, preparing students and alumni to create a just and equitable community and solve problems we may not even have imagined yet. Thank you for joining us on this journey and for embracing our vision of providing an excellent and inclusive education for all who seek it.

Virginia “Ginny” Arthur J.D. ’17
(Honorary)

President, Metropolitan State University
Your Impact
2020-2021

10,801 STUDENTS

3% International
50% Of color
56% Female

$272,595 awarded in Foundation Scholarships

Metro State graduates earn higher income. Metro State is ranked #1 in Minnesota in Social Mobility rankings

*CollegeNet's Social Mobility Index
The murder of George Floyd, a Minneapolis man, during an encounter with police officers on May 25, 2020, sent shockwaves through the Twin Cities community, the nation, and indeed the world. And while the aftermath reflected the level of systemic trauma and entrenched resistance to change that engendered the tragedy in the first place, a desire to create and resource initiatives promoting lasting equity blossomed from organizations and individuals alike. Retired Dean of Student Services Joyce LeClaire ’75, watching funeral services for George Floyd, listened to a challenge by North Central University President Scott Hagan to set up a scholarship at North Central in Mr. Floyd’s name, she realized, “Metropolitan State is probably an even better place for a scholarship like that, and it needs to be doing something like this.” From there, the idea, and the initial gift to start the fund, was born.

The response from the University Foundation was immediate. Vice President for University Advancement Rita Dibble remembers, “This was obviously a very important effort to get behind, and quickly. We worked to leverage our major donors, and tapped Dean of Students Maya Sullivan and former School of Urban Education Dean Timothy Berry to craft the scholarship description and award criteria.”

MAKING A LASTING IMPACT

Among those who heeded the call was Ernest Grumbles, of Grumbles Law, LLC. “Like a lot of people living in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, we felt the anger, anxiety, and worry brought about not only by George Floyd’s death, but by people being forced to confront the injustice, and worse still, the indifference to the plight of Blacks in the United States… we arrived at a moment, which while terrible, was an opportunity to have our collective eyes opened and actually take action.”

As he and those at his boutique law firm based in downtown Saint Paul
considered their individual responses, Ernest looked back at some of his formative adult experiences. “People try to make an impact in different ways: putting out messaging, donating money, lending support… I worked as an inner-city school teacher at a Catholic elementary school in the Bronx working with a nearly all non-white student body after growing up in considerably less diverse circumstances in Dallas, and was forced to confront that difference and work in a social justice-oriented program. So my mind set is always on how to make lasting change, and education is one of the most powerful I know. Right away, I thought about what the firm could do: make a contribution to a scholarship.”

As Ernest thought about what school to contact, he reached out to a friend, Wilson Garland, former executive director for Advance IT Minnesota, co-located with Metropolitan State, who connected Ernest to the staff at the foundation. While that personal connection was important, he could see, like Joyce before him, that Metropolitan State was a fitting choice for a number of reasons. “We’re really just down the Seventh Street hill from the campus, so we see it every day looking East. But I also particularly wanted to contribute to a school that was serving a diverse population, one that was open and financially accessible, a place that was serving students in different economic situations, including working students.”

RECIPIENTS AS IMPACT MULTIPLIERS

While every scholarship makes an impact, on the
person receiving it, the organization working with that student, and the community benefiting from the education of its member, a scholarship like the George Floyd Memorial Endowed Scholarship for Racial and Social Justice has continuing impact at its very heart. The scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student who demonstrates commitment to racial equity and social justice. As something designed to perpetuate that commitment, it stands to reason that equity and social justice should continue to be championed by those awarded this scholarship. Essence Williams, the initial recipient of this scholarship, provides a wonderful picture of how that initial impact can continue on.

At the time the scholarship was first announced, Essence was struggling with a lack of financial aid. “I lost a lot of hope and kind of just like thinking I need to take loans out, I didn't have any funding and I had to pay a little bit of money out of pocket, so I just started looking online seeing what scholarships were available and I saw that the George Floyd scholarship had opened for applications.”

Essence worked at the time as a legal advocate at Domestic Abuse Project, a domestic violence center in Minneapolis, helping families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence. “I knew I had to be a voice for the BIPOC community and contribute to breaking the faulty criminal justice system,” says Essence. That work aligned seamlessly with the focus of the George Floyd scholarship, and her application was a unanimous choice for the selection committee.

And while the undeniable impact of direct financial support was itself powerful, Essence can see other ways that this scholarship has impacted her life. “I can honestly say that Metro State showed up for me. Being a woman of color, not having funding for school, seeing all that was happening in my community… getting that email saying 'you are the first recipient' really boosted my confidence. As the university was asking if they could talk to me about my story and use that story to reach other people, I was like, wow, I can inspire other people that might be in my situation.”

Essence, who plans on pursuing a Master’s degree in social work in the near future, also notes the way her story can be an inspiration on the donor side. “It is important to recognize that donating to a scholarship is more than just helping somebody pay for school; it is helping people be the reason that other people stay in school.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENDOWMENT FOR INDEPENDENCE

While it was important to bestow the first George Floyd Memorial Scholarship in 2020, Rita Dibble was driven to get the scholarship endowed. “It is one thing to be the first school in the (Minnesota State) system with a George Floyd Memorial scholarship, to recognize a student who works towards social justice and support their educational achievements, but to remove that assistance from the vagaries of appropriations and the changing focus of donors, we needed to get it endowed.”

While endowment is a longer process, requiring enough funding to make the pool self-sustaining, the expedience of getting the scholarship awarded that same year was facilitated by the President’s Office generously granting their discretionary scholarship to the 2020 and 2021 recipients of the George Floyd Memorial Scholarship. After that, the fund is endowed, and can sustain itself. “It was the fastest endowment process I’ve ever seen; just extraordinary!” says Rita. “We want this program, and many other programs, to be in a position to grow, not merely stay afloat. We can only do this through
private gifts, because foundations don’t give to endowments. We need to tap into the generosity of people who actually believe in our anti-racist mission.” Reaching those people was accomplished not only through contacting major donors, but making the George Floyd scholarship the focus of the foundation’s 2020 Give to the Max campaign.

CONTINUING TO RIPPLE THE POND

It might seem a bit calculated to have to rely on individual consciences to directly impact issues of social justice. However, as Ernest Grumbles mentioned, we have to confront the indifference to the plight of others that is endemic in our society. Until such a time as this indifference is an odd aberration, the way forward is through the vision of the forward-thinkers.

Given the fact that the enormous burden of student debt lands primarily on those with the most socioeconomic barriers to paying it off, endowed scholarships, with their sustainable base and independent potential for growth, might just be one of the most transformative tools for economic justice available to society. “By empowering people to finish school, without debt,” says Essence Williams, “it really allows you to do the work you’re really meaning to do, instead of having to take whatever job you can find just to pay that debt back. Because that’s trauma of another kind.” In fact, she says that, “I actually had applied for a second job to help pay for the semester to avoid loans, but when I got the scholarship, I didn’t have to take it. I could actually focus on school instead of being overstressed by having two jobs while going to school full time.”
Taking a Leap of Faith: Antavia Paredes

By Lucia Rivas ’22

“I want to acknowledge the privilege it takes to make school your whole life, and I feel so lucky to have been able to do that,” says Antavia Paredes, an undergraduate chemistry student and Jason Carter Endowment in Science Scholarship awardee.

Antavia completed her Liberal Arts associate’s degree at Minneapolis College, one class at a time, while working full time and caring for her son as a single mom. She knew continuing her education that way would take her a very long time but decided to wait for her son to start kindergarten before committing to a more demanding academic workload.

When a childhood friend shared her rewarding experience at Metro State, Antavia was convinced to give it a try by taking one course—precalculus. Antavia recalls, “I decided that if I did well in this class, I would allow myself to pursue a chemistry degree.” As a first-generation college student, she lacked confidence and mentorship and felt unsure about pursuing a career in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). However, with the support of faculty, staff, and peers, Antavia persisted and was able to succeed in the class. “Something that is obviously unique to Metro State is that it’s an Asian Pacific Islander and Native-serving institution. And so, there are a lot more Native students like me here,” says Antavia.

“I took a leap of faith and enrolled full-time and ended up doing really well,” Antavia continues. “I didn’t know how I was going to do that financially, so I applied for scholarships.” Her leap of faith was rewarded, and she earned a number of scholarships, as well as a student worker position at the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) that allowed her to stay in school. In addition, Antavia gives credit to services at Metro State, such as the Student Parent Center for providing support and groceries through the Food for Thought Food Pantry.

Antavia also participated in the Conservation Corps’ Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) fellowship, a “college-to-careers pathway” for ‘underrepresented’ STEM students—women, racial and ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities—who are interested in pursuing environmental careers. She did not know what to expect when she applied, but after her interview, she was welcomed into the cohort of 16 selected from more than 100 applicants across the state. Antavia was provided with a scholarship and mentorship and later an internship at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. She says, “It was a full-time job, and they paid me really well. Fair pay is definitely a major piece in building educational equity.” She decided to stay and is now working as a hydro-geochemist, in charge of conducting literature reviews for research as well as collecting and analyzing groundwater samples in the lab. Antavia says, “My passion is at the intersection of environmental equity and making sure our water is safe for the next generation. And I love science, so I really love what I am doing.”

Antavia will graduate in December 2021 with a BS in chemistry and is applying to PhD programs in Water Resources Sciences. She is determined and says that if she does not get in this year, she will continue working and apply again next year. “My goal is to be a research scientist and use my own labor and love of science to create a more equitable relationship with our environments and with our people,” Antavia says. She plans to work to correct the disconnect between the science done in the lab and how the things researchers study affect real people outside the lab. To her, it is also important to see the representation of minorities in science to benefit all communities, enrich scientific knowledge, and create a better world for future generations.

My passion is at the intersection of environmental equity and making sure our water is safe for the next generation. And I love science, so I really love what I am doing.
Lois learned about Metro State with a phone call to the foundation when she was the vice president of the Ecolab Foundation. She was following up on a request the Metro State Foundation had submitted for the library, and she had many questions. She learned through that conversation that Metro State supported non-traditional students. She recognized herself in these students—she also took a non-traditional path to get her degree as a working adult and mother. This phone call launched her longtime relationship with Metropolitan State University.

Now retired, Lois remains connected to Metro State as a donor and volunteer. She explained why she continues to support the university, “It feels good to be able to participate in something important. Since I was young, I’ve been trying to move the world forward.” She knows her support of Metro State makes a difference.

And Lois knows that education can be a gateway to a wider world—this is why education is so significant to her. She described, “If you are truly willing to be educated, you learn so much about making a life versus making a living. You learn so much about the world around you. It builds self-confidence, and it’s a credential that opens doors for you as a desirable employee.” She hopes her support can help Metro State students achieve this.

Lois went back to school as a young mother and a graduate of Waldorf College and Mankato State University. She went on to earn her Master’s Degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School at Harvard University.

It makes sense for Lois to want to help others on their educational journey because education has opened so many doors for her. First in her career as a journalist who worked for a small daily newspaper and The Associated Press and later working as the press secretary to a U.S. Senator, communications director for the nonprofit Prison Fellowship, and as the community relations director and vice president of the Ecolab Foundation, from which she retired in 2003.

Once she realized the possibilities that Metro State created for students pursuing a four-year degree, she knew she wanted to support this. When Lois retired from Ecolab, they provided her with an opportunity to contribute to the organization of her choice—she chose to establish an endowed scholarship with Metro State—the Lois West Duffy and Joe Duffy Endowed Scholarship. Since then, she has added to it with contributions of her own. She has been able to make a bigger contribution than she expected when she learned she could make a gift directly from her IRA. “The IRA gift is larger than what I’d make if giving from my monthly income—we both get more, me and Metro State!” Lois shared.

It is no surprise when Lois says, “Helping people always mattered a lot to me.” Her passion for helping people has been evident throughout her life: caring for 30 foster children, raising her own three boys, and her dedication to Metro State and its students. When you talk with Lois, you can hear the compassion and enthusiasm in her voice as she explains her commitment to moving the world forward. We know that through her support of her scholarship fund, she will move students’ lives forward one scholarship at a time.
The small site nestled between Metropolitan State’s Studio Arts building and the First Lutheran Church has become East Saint Paul’s newest treasure. The GROW-IT Center, the Gateway for Research, Outreach, Workforce Development, Innovation, and Teaching, is a year-round greenhouse and educational space designed to generate and share knowledge about urban food production, healthy food access, and environmental sustainability.

Phase I of the GROW-IT Center project was completed in the fall of 2019. This first phase expanded greenhouse space by more than a third, rehabilitated a secure research area, and equipped the facility with a remote-controlled HVAC system that enables year-round applied research and learning in pest management, soil health, urban tree propagation, and urban food production.

Phase II of the project is underway and will create a versatile space for demonstrations, workshops to maximize teaching, learning, and material exchanges envisioned by the university and its community partners.

The benefits of learning, teaching, and research at the center will have a long-lasting effect. The collaborative nature of this project also ensures the impact will be felt throughout the community. The GROW-IT Center will help prepare the next generation of scholars and practitioners concerned about achieving food security and a healthy environment.

The university will use the space to bridge theory and practice for its students, enhancing existing courses and aligning them with the work of community partners. The center will be home to a stream of students from K-12 schools, community colleges, and Metropolitan State as they advance their education and careers.

Rebuilding the GROW-IT Center would not have been possible without the philanthropic support of our funders. We would like to express our gratitude to our community partners for helping the vision come to life.

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EXCERPTED FROM AUDACIOUS GOALS: Building the Grow It Center; buzz magazine, Spring 2020
By Jennifer Houston, Emily Kelson ’21, and Jodi Bantley
Thank you!
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**METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION 2020-2021 IMPACT REPORT**

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ARC Day of Honoring, Learning, and Action
Anonymous
In honor of Birtukan Abebe
Anonymous
In honor of Virginia Arthur
Anonymous
In honor of Leylo Boru
Anonymous
In honor of Faisal Kaleem and Joe Klein
Anonymous
In honor of Mai Nyua Lee
Anonymous
In honor of Chris Mikessell
Anonymous
In honor of Susan Misterski, Denise Williams and Queen Booker
Anonymous
In honor of Deborah Mosby
Anonymous
In honor of Debra Vos
Abbie, Annie and Alex
In honor of President Arthur
Robert A. Anderson ’16
ARC Day of Honoring, Learning, and Action
Virginia Arthur ’17 (Honorary) and
Thomas Haluska
In honor of Charles Shepard
Joe Bailey
In honor of Deborah Mosby
Barbara Beltran
In honor of Debra Vos
Linda and Andy* Boss
In honor of Debra Vos
Chris Brae1on ’98
In honor of Jaja Johnson
Carl W. Brooks
In honor of Debra Vos
Leondias Butcher
In honor of Debra Vos
Sandy Clark
In honor of Deborah Mosby
Kelly L. Delfs
In honor of Deborah Mosby
Rita M. Dibble
In honor of Ramin Daghigh, James Densley, Diane DeRosier, Wilson Garland, Sarah Dimick Gray, Shelly Heller, Pa Her, Steve Reed and Charles Tedder
Timothy S. Dunsworth
In honor of Debra Vos
Adrienne Falcon
In honor of Debra Vos
Michelle J. Flikins
In honor of Deborah Mosby
Suzanne C. Fitzgerald
Emerita recognition; donation in lieu of plaque
Mary H. Gates  
In honor of Debra Vos

Michael D. Green  
In honor of Debra Vos

Robyn Hansen and John Clarey  
In honor of Debra Vos

Stanley J. Hatcher ’93  
In honor of Deborah Mosby

Anne and Peter Heegaard  
In honor of Debra Vos

David K. Horn  
In honor of Debra Vos

Ruby M. Hunt  
In honor of Debra Vos

Karin S. Jax  
ARC Day of Honoring, Learning and Action

Lennie and Jill Kaufman  
In honor of Debra Vos

Susan A. Lang  
In honor of Debra Vos

Baorong Li  
In honor of Debra Vos

Edward Mack  
In honor of Debra Vos

Edward S. Malecki  
In honor of Debra Vos

Zachary Mensinger  
In honor of Debra Vos

Nancy Miller  
In honor of Debra Vos

Mallory Mitchell  
In honor of Debra Vos

Brian J. Nerney  
Emeritus recognition; donation in lieu of plaque

New Wave Design and Verification  
In honor of Ryan Hankins

Eve Nichols  
In honor of Debra Vos

Richard and Nancy Nicholson  
In honor of Maureen Acosta

Sandra Oehlke  
In honor of Debra Vos

John Owens ’94 and Patricia Strong  
In honor of Debra Vos

Christine M. Pulkrabek ’97  
In honor of Debra Vos

Noriko and Chris Ramberg  
In honor of Debra Vos

Yvonne RB-Banks  
In honor of Deborah Mosby

Elizabeth Schaefer  
In honor of Debra Vos

Lorelei Schroeder  
In honor of Debra Vos

Emily W. Seddon  
In honor of Debra Vos

Carol Bormann Young  
Emerita recognition; donation in lieu of plaque

Richard Zehring  
In honor of Debra Vos

Baorong Li  
In honor of Debra Vos

Edward Mack  
In honor of Debra Vos

Edward S. Malecki  
In honor of Debra Vos

Zachary Mensinger  
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Richard Zehring  
In honor of Debra Vos

Jeanette Augustson  
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Metropolitan State University Alumni Board President

Rita Dibble  
Metropolitan State University Foundation Executive Director
Thank you from the Chair

On behalf of the Metropolitan State University Foundation Board of trustees, I thank you for supporting the university and its students. As Metro State celebrates 50 years of breaking down barriers to education, you can be proud to partner with a university that champions innovation in higher education.

Last year members of the Metro family; alumni, friends, and corporate and foundation partners gave over $1.2 million to advance our mission. Your support of scholarships, programs, and student emergency grants provided the vote of confidence that is a gift beyond dollars to Metro State students.

We begin each Foundation meeting with a mission moment. Students and alumni with impressive accomplishments tell us how their degree has transformed their lives. I am touched by the genuine gratitude they express for Metro State. We count ourselves fortunate to have the chance to hear firsthand about the impact of our work on behalf of the university. This impact report is your opportunity to experience a mission moment by reading our alumni and student stories.

The stories in the 2020-21 impact report illustrate a few of the ways Metro State, her students and alumni will continue to achieve great things for the next 50 years fueled by your philanthropy.

Warm Regards,

Christine Boese
Metropolitan State University Foundation Board Chair
WHERE TO GIVE
You can choose what you’d like your contribution to support.

**Metro Fund:** Support for the areas of greatest need for our students and the university.

**Scholarship Funds:** Support students who have exhausted state and federal funding options and need your help to complete their education.

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For the full list of options for designating your gift, visit www.metrostate.edu/give/give-now.

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There are many ways to make a gift to the Metropolitan State University Foundation. Choose what works best for you.

**Online:** Make a gift online with your credit card at www.metrostate.edu/give/give-now. You can make a one-time contribution or set up a monthly gift.

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**Stock:** Your gift of appreciated stock could be a tax-wise way to support Metropolitan State University. Visit www.metrostate.edu/give/ways-to-give for more information.

**Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA:** If you are 70 ½ or older, you can make a rollover gift up to $100,000 directly from your IRA to Metropolitan State University Foundation—known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). The check must come directly from your financial institution to Metro State Foundation.

LEGACY GIVING
You can make sure your family is taken care of while also making the best gift of your lifetime to Metropolitan State University Foundation. To learn more about leaving a legacy, visit metrostate.giftlegacy.com.

YOUR INVESTMENT WILL BENEFIT METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY AND OUR STUDENTS FOR YEARS TO COME.

No matter what you give to or how you give, your annual support of Metro State benefits not only the university but our entire community. Thank you!