

Metro State University
Alumni Association Board Meeting

March 28, 2023, 5:30-7 p.m., St. John's Hall 150

Members attending in-person: Bryan Newman, Eric Rios, Betsy Salvatore, Shahbaz Shah, Darrell Young

Members attending by Zoom: Matt Christenson, Deidra Isaac, Matt Moe, Fidelis Odozi, Scott Pilgram

Members not attending: Munira Maalimisaq, Lyna Nyamwaya, Ryan Ringwelski, Shanasha Whitson, Amanda Wong

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

Guest: President Ginny Arthur

Fidelis Odozi convened the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

President's update:

- Update on the House and Senate higher education bills:
 - The House added a \$331 million request for Minnesota State in their bill, including a \$122 million additional request for the biennium to the campuses for the Minnesota State stabilization.
 - The House implemented the tuition freeze in the bill, so the state would cover the raised tuition cost.
 - Additionally, the House is appropriating Minnesota State with \$50 million, one-time funding for campus support. Metro State will receive approximately \$3 million from the pool.
 - The Senate added \$74 million in their higher education bill.
 - Another provision is \$26 million over the biennium that would be divided up among state colleges and universities for additional student support services.
 - The Governor, the House and the Senate are in agreement to assist higher education shore up the budget restraints due to enrollment decline and increasing cost. They will negotiate these proposals near the end of the legislative session, May 22.
- Update on bonding bill, that included the building of the Cyber Security Lab on Saint Paul Campus and refurbishment of the Management Education Center in Minneapolis:
 - The House passed the bonding bill, but the Senate did not. Instead, they agreed on the "all-cash" bill, which means the state will pay for the projects, but we will not have the debt obligation. This is a nice budget relief for us.
 - With the promising news of possible relief from the Legislature, we are currently building contingency budget plans for the fiscal year 2024.
- Preparing a vision for the university of the future
 - We are currently in year 4 of the 5-year strategic plan.
 - Areas of focus by the work groups
 - Contemporary/adult learners – What does Metro State need to change or offer to help adult learners be successful in the future?
 - Transfer students – 91% of Metro State students are transfers; what makes the transition easier for students? How can we attract transfer students?
 - Trends in how people view higher education—How can we negate the public perception of worthlessness of investment in higher education?
 - The changing job market, emerging areas of study – How does Metro State reshape curriculum to adapt to changes?
 - The work groups will present the findings at the university-wide town hall on Friday, March 31. They will administer the survey afterwards to the Alumni Board members to get their feedback.
 - The university recently hired an internship and apprenticeship developer to dive into the business community and be a liaison with Metro State's students.

Betsy Salvatore shared her thoughts on the necessity of more in-depth connection with community colleges to support transfer students. Also, the more aggressive approach to connect with employers for offering professional development opportunities, similar to our relationship with Amazon and Affinity Credit Union, may be another way to support adult learners.

Deidra Isaac expressed disappointment with Metro State's current disconnect with the business community and lack of career connections and assistance for African American students and alumni. She is willing to be a part of the efforts to connect Metro State with BIPOC small business because she works with them.

The president clarified that Affinity CU and Amazon are the first two businesses, through interactive connection, that showed interest in Metro State for partnership in professional development in recent years, and we are closely monitoring how the program fans out for both parties since it is still in the early stages of the newly developed partnership.

Emily Johnson, the newly-hired internship and apprenticeship developer, and the Career Center will explore other relationships and pathway opportunities that could be beneficial to Metro State through partnerships with businesses. It is worth noting that Career Center offers annual Diversity Networking Job Fair and Nonprofit and Government Job Fair, in addition to career counseling, services and events. Kristine Hansen encouraged the board members to volunteer at the next Alumni Career Experience and Networking event in May to be a part of the Career Center's effort in assisting students and alumni.

Office updates:

- Josh Windham is finalizing the process to get all the board-related documents on the Teams platform so that board members and committee members can access them as needed. He hopes to get it running by the next board meeting.
- Group and individual photos of the Alumni Board will be taken at the May board meeting.
- Student worker, Tayai, will contact the Board to get their bio for the web page.
- Nancy Uden decided to resign from the Board to focus on her health and family. Due to her departure, Amanda Wong will step into the role of the Board President. The Vice President position will be filled by Ryan Ringwelski for the rest of this fiscal year. Office election for fiscal year 2024 will be conducted at the May board meeting.
- Bylaw review
 - Ad-hoc bylaw review committee: Salvatore, Shahbaz Shah, Wong, Darrell Young
 - Goal: Revise the current bylaws and present a new set of bylaws at the May board meeting
- Alum of the Year application is open. Deadline is March 30.

Approval of committee notes:

Board members reviewed the committee notes prior to the Board meeting. Motion to approve the committee notes moved by Shah, seconded by Bryan Newman, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Committee reports:

Membership Committee

- The committee created a timeline of the action items and shared with the Board at the last board meeting.
- If there is an open role in our committee and would like more members, contact the Membership Committee for recruitment.
- The committee would like to request the Engagement Committee to recruit new committee members with marketing skills.
- The committee would like to move the recruitment cycle up; thus, they are hosting a listening session for prospective committee members in April instead of June.

Advocacy Committee

- Breakfast at the Capitol event was moved to the Zoom platform due to weather. It was still valuable to hear what is happening at the legislature and meeting legislators.
- Keep reaching out to your legislators to advocate for Metro State. Find your legislator at <https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/>. Metro State's focus areas are workforce development, student support, tuition relief, and operations.
- The committee is working on creating opportunities for the BIPOC community to meet with the president to voice their advocacy needs.
- One of the ideas of recruitment for the Advocacy Committee is to reach out to graduates at the Commencement.

Career Resources Committee

- The committee is working with the Career Center to host another alumni career networking event on May 10.

Engagement Committee

- Odozi shared the overview of the university activities that the Board can be engaged in and participate in. The Board can also refer to this spreadsheet to explore the right timing of its own events throughout the year.
- Odozi and Hansen can further explain each university activity in detail if you are interested in participation.
- In addition to event participation, sharing ideas for newsletters or referring featured alumni is also appreciated.

Other business:

- Matt Christenson briefed the Minnesota State Legislative Breakfast on March 2 to advocate the needs of the workforce groups to some of the legislators. He felt the voices of the workers were well-received and heard by the participating legislators.
- If you know of any friends, family or colleagues who are interested in Metro State programs, Admissions Open House is March 30, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Great Hall.
- The Board is invited to the President's Outstanding Student Award Reception on April 29. Refer to the invitation email for details.
- Commencement is May 6.
- Hansen encouraged the Board to thank their legislators for supporting higher education this legislative session.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Shah, seconded by Salvatore at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator