Message from Les

Over the last couple of years, Massive Online Courses (MOOCs), increased accountability measures from the Feds, performance-based state funding, and the growing costs of education have received increasing attention. On the flip side, little has been mentioned about the value of the traditional education structure, the importance of face-to-face interaction, and the learning that comes from the on-campus experience.

A keynote speaker at a recent conference I attended commented that, “Higher education will never simply be defined by transcripts; it’s defined by our experience.” This couldn’t be truer than at Michigan Tech, where we have been strategic and intentional about the student experience.

About a year ago we reorganized Student Affairs and Advancement around the Life Cycle of Engagement model. This model embraces the idea that students become aware of Tech through the prominence of our academic program offerings, through the media, from a relative or alum, or perhaps because one of our athletic teams is playing in their area. No matter what the initial connection is, these students may then look at Tech as an option for college. They visit campus, attend a Summer Youth Program, or simply apply for admission.

Once a student is enrolled, our team of staff/faculty and other students works to incorporate these students into the life of the University. Students are quickly immersed into the academic rigors of Tech while also receiving rich opportunities to become involved in campus life.

Over the course of four or five years, students gain not only the knowledge and expertise to be successful in their career or graduate pursuits, but also some of the life skills that will help them become engaged and successful citizens. As these students become alums we hope that they will keep Tech in their hearts but also in their thoughts as they refer others or send their own children to us. We also hope they will consider giving back by providing the same type of resources and support they received.

The illustration above delineates the life cycle. From the Koaches Kids (page 7) to outreach by Financial Aid (page 6), paving Alumni Way (page 4), and the quotes from current students (page 5), you will see examples of the life cycle model in action. While this structure is not common on many campuses, Tech has always been known for innovation, being distinctive, and perhaps a bit quirky. The opportunity to do something different arose; we embraced it and have reorganized to support it.

Enjoy this edition of the Student Affairs and Advancement Connection and best wishes on the conclusion of another successful and productive year!
To remain a top educational institution, Michigan Tech must continue to raise private funds. Most of our alumni have the ability and the motivation to give back to Tech as a result of their first-rate campus experience and subsequent career success. Some trust us to designate their gifts to where the needs are greatest, while others want to be involved in how their gift is used and to see the specific results of their giving. The loyalty shown by our alumni is similar to that typically displayed at a private college rather than at a state university.

Non-alums give because of the great things accomplished on campus, or because they believe gifts to Tech will have a more significant impact than at larger universities. Donors want their money to make a difference. An excellent example is local couple Bob and Ruth Nara who both earned their degrees at the University of Michigan. In recognition of their many contributions, the Naras received Michigan Tech’s Honorary Alumni Award in 2013.

In addition, Michigan Tech is fortunate to have many campus supporters. Historically, the culture of philanthropy at Michigan Tech started with the annual Campus Campaign and the Michigan Tech Student Foundation. (We now also have the Student Philanthropy Council.)

People give of their financial resources in a variety of ways. Most make yearly outright gifts of cash, while others give appreciated stock (occasionally real estate) to help avoid capital gains tax. Many choose to supplement their lifetime giving with an “ultimate gift” through their estate plans. The most common forms of estate (or planned) gifts are will/trust bequests or retirement account beneficiary designations and, to a lesser extent, life income gifts such as charitable gift annuities. Another significant way our alumni and friends give back to the University is through their volunteer service.

Michigan Tech’s donors come from all life stages, ranging from new graduates to those in the Silent or Eisenhower Generation. Many make their first gift through the class tribute program and then move on to annual giving. Our planned gift donors have documented their estate gift with us at an average age of 65. However, this group includes a growing number of younger individuals such as Allen ‘87 and Birgit ‘91 Sorgenfrei, Marie ‘82 and Michael ‘82 Cleveland, and Dave ‘82 and Joy McBride, all of whom have been profiled in University publications.

We are grateful for each and every gift.

To ensure that future generations understand the importance of their role in supporting Michigan Tech with their time, talent, and treasure, we need to continue to foster a culture of philanthropy on campus. It starts with building character and affinity in our students and leads to the belief that investing in the University is a good thing. Awareness of the support they receive from alumni and friends leads to gratitude, which sets the stage for reciprocating with their own contributions.

We have a number of programs in place to help students understand the role that others have played in their success, and we are always looking for new ways to share this message. The goal is to build awareness and provide opportunities for students to
demonstrate their gratitude for this support, which has helped create a rich learning environment at Michigan Tech. Building a culture of philanthropy is a gradual process and will be demonstrated by increasing altruistic and generous actions by our students.

Much progress has been made, and we all have a role to play in taking the culture of philanthropy at Michigan Tech to an even higher and more extensive level!

—Eric Halonen

Michigan Tech Is ‘Million-Dollar Ready!’

Less than a third of American colleges managed to attract individual donations of $1 million or more from 2000 to 2012, according to a Chronicle of Higher Education article. But Michigan Tech received thirty-seven such gifts during the seven-year, $215-million campaign completed in 2013, clearly establishing itself as “million-dollar ready.”

In a December 11, 2013, article, the Chronicle of Higher Education discusses factors that influence an institution’s chances of landing million-dollar gifts, based on a study by Indiana University’s Lilly Family School of Philanthropy and Johnson Grossnickle and Associates. Here are some characteristics shared by colleges that receive multiple major gifts:

- Great student experience—Our consultant’s 2006 campaign feasibility study found that “Michigan Tech can build on the deep affection many feel for the school.”
- Long-serving president—Glenn Mroz, Michigan Tech’s ninth president, is beginning his eleventh year as president.
- Generous trustees—Board of Control members, Michigan Tech Fund trustees, and Campaign Committee members contributed a combined $42.5 million to the recent campaign.
- Institutional maturity—Michigan Tech’s founding date of 1885 surpasses the benchmark year of 1900 cited for colleges receiving more million-dollar donations.
- Strong national ranking—Michigan Tech’s undergraduate programs ranked 57th among public national universities in the 2014 Best Colleges rankings.
- High percentage of tenured professors—Ratio of tenured/tenure-track faculty is 70.5 percent (342 of 485).
- Location—Rural colleges were found to receive 11 percent fewer million-dollar gifts than colleges elsewhere. Houghton’s inclusion in Norman Crampton’s guidebook, The 100 Best Small Towns in America, may be a positive factor in our case.

Although placement rates were not addressed in the article, Michigan Tech’s undergraduate placement rate of 94 percent is a significant factor in the University’s success.

—Eric Halonen
As members of the campus community, we appreciate the value of our unique Michigan Tech traditions such as Winter Carnival, K-Day, Homecoming, Broomball, Spring Fling, and MTSF’s Oozeball for our students.

The Alumni Association and the University are planning construction of Alumni Way, celebrating our traditions and enhancing campus for years to come. Rovano Plaza, the gathering spot outside the library, was dedicated last fall and is the first part of Alumni Way.

We have received a generous donation from a longtime Michigan Tech volunteer and advocate to install a larger-than-life Husky statue near the center of campus. The Husky will be surrounded by a brick plaza constructed of pavers, which the Alumni Association is making available to alumni and the campus community to commemorate their affiliation with Michigan Tech.

Two sizes are available:
- 4x8-inch paver with three lines of engraving (thirteen characters each) for $200;
- 12x12-inch square paver with six lines of engraving (fifteen characters each) for $500. This larger paver is ideal for families and groups

Already we have seen a considerable amount of interest from campus organizations such as the UAW, SWE, Greeks, and from members of the Alumni Association Board of Directors and the Presidential Council of Alumnae.

You can see samples of the pavers and purchase a paver online by visiting www.mtu.edu/alumniwaypavers. A gift receipt will be issued for all contributions.

In addition to the Husky Statue and pavers, the Alumni Way project includes benches, legacy markers, landscaping packages, and more. For more information on these other opportunities, visit www.mtu.edu/alumniway or contact Connie Scott at the Office of Advancement at 906-487-3325.

—Dennis Walikainen
SAA Meets Goals for Student Learning

We all know that learning is happening throughout Michigan Tech’s campus. How do we know this? We just do, right? Maybe, but in today’s higher education climate, our stakeholders—including legislators, parents, and students—are asking to see results. We have to provide evidence that learning is taking place.

One way the University is addressing this issue is through the set of eight learning goals. These goals were established to guide the institution in determining and demonstrating what our students will achieve by the time they graduate.

Student Affairs and Advancement is an active participant in the University’s learning goal process. We are working to demonstrate that students who interact with and participate in our programs, training sessions, services, and sponsored lectures are learning and developing important skills.

For example, in keeping with the University learning goal of communication—Students will be able to communicate effectively, orally, in writing and in new media, to a wide variety of audiences—Student Affairs and Advancement is working to advance student learning in several areas:

- Admissions—Student tour guides and telecounselors are learning oral communications skills that will accurately and positively convey the information to prospective students and campus visitors.
- Athletics—Student-athletes are learning how to communicate effectively in interviews with the media.
- Center for Diversity and Inclusion—The Young Women’s Leader Program mentors are learning presentation skills that are designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, and promote positive change with the young women they are mentoring.

While in the past we may have known that learning was taking place, being more intentional and structuring student learning outcomes has yielded positive results in many of our projects and initiatives. For further information about the University Learning Goals, visit Assessment: www.mtu.edu/assessment.

—Beth Lunde

Students Love Being a Husky

I LOVE BEING A HUSKY BECAUSE...

“It feels like home”

“We are a family”

“I LOVE BEING A HUSKY BECAUSE...

“Cheering for our top notch varsity sport teams, having a chance to play for a club team, making the craziest friends, or taking part in the unique traditions here. I have never had a reason to wish I went somewhere else.”
Recent headlines are full of news reports regarding college costs, student borrowing, and the shrinking support of higher education. The reality is that there are steps a student and his or her family can take to make college more affordable. The Financial Aid staff at Michigan Tech is reaching out to both the local and campus communities to help them navigate the waters of financial aid and financial literacy.

The Financial Aid Office co-sponsors FAFSA Night workshops at Copper Country Intermediate School District (CCISD) high schools. Seniors and their parents are invited to learn about federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs. Financial aid staff members provide a brief overview of the financial aid process and assist students and parents with completing and submitting their FAFSA.

Also, the Financial Aid Office hosts CCISD counselors on campus for the annual Michigan financial aid webcast. This event updates counselors on changes with the State of Michigan financial aid programs, as well as requirements on campus.

Finally, the eight GEAR UP cohort schools keep the Financial Aid office busy meeting with families. Middle school is a great time to educate students and families on what it means to be “college ready.” Students learn about college payment options such as 529 college savings plan, and how to search and qualify for grants and scholarships.

Liz Fujita, assistant coordinator for GEAR UP, says, “There are so many scholarships, savings plans, forms, and options that it can be overwhelming for the students. By introducing it in small pieces and starting early, the financial aid team is doing a great job making it less intimidating.”

At Michigan Tech, the Financial Aid Office has teamed up with Dr. Emanuel Oliveira and the Finance Club to offer financial literacy training. FinanceU recently held its second annual event in the Van Pelt Library where nearly 200 students stopped by to ask personal questions regarding their own financial life.

Students also completed a short informal survey assessing their financial literacy. Results from the survey illustrate the need for continued financial literacy education on campus. More than 80 percent of the students surveyed indicated that they owned a savings or checking account; however, over 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they do not budget their resources. To help fill this need, the Financial Aid Office has conducted financial literacy workshops and met over 500 students. The workshops are designed to educate students in the areas of budgeting, saving, credit, loan repayment, and financial aid.

If you would like to schedule a workshop presentation for your group, call the Financial Aid Office at 487-2622 or email us at financialaid@mtu.edu.

—Cindy Cowell
Student-Athletes Team Up with Area Youth

As if Michigan Tech student-athletes didn’t have enough on their plates with practice, travel, competition, and being full-time students, they are involved in the community as well.

Many of the community outreach initiatives involve spending time with area youth. Hockey’s Koaches Kids program, Little Huskies basketball and volleyball programs, and Make-A-Wish Foundation fundraisers are some of the ways in which Tech athletes connect with children.

The relationships are mutually beneficial.

“It’s important that our student-athletes give back to the community—especially the youth,” said athletic director Suzanne Sanregret. “Members of this community support our teams by attending events and making our student-athletes feel at home away from home.

“For the youth, they really look up to the athletes as role models. And they are good role models. Our student-athletes are all smart, hard-working, and well-rounded individuals.”

Koaches Kids
The hockey team’s Koaches Kids program pairs members of the hockey team with local elementary school classes. Players visit classrooms to read to the students and answer questions. The team then hosts the children and teacher at a game, giving them free tickets.

Sheri Normand’s fourth graders at South Range Elementary were excited. “We had a great time in the classroom and at the game,” said Normand. “My students asked a lot of really good questions of the players.”

Team captain Blake Pietila was one of the three Huskies who went to Normand’s class.

“It’s important that we’re out showing our faces in the community,” he said. “We had fun with the kids. We answered a lot of questions. Some were more serious than others. I think one of them asked how I taped my stick.”

Little Huskies
The basketball and volleyball teams all hold Little Huskies clubs. Youth attend instructional clinics taught on court by Tech student-athletes once a week (typically on a Saturday), then receive free admission to games by wearing their Little Huskies shirt. At basketball, Little Huskies teams play a mini-game during halftime.

Last year, 200 youth participated in one of the three Little Huskies programs.

Assistant women’s basketball coach Maria Kasza has been involved with the program as both a student-athlete and now as a coach.

“Little Huskies is a great way to give back to a community that’s so supportive of us,” she said. “It’s awesome to see the kids at our games wearing their Little Huskies shirts.”

“Our players serve as coaches for the kids, and they bond together. The kids get to see our athletes as people, not just players on the court.”

Make-A-Wish Fundraiser
Michigan Tech’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee has raised money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation for a number of years.

This year, the group decided to take on the wish of a local child, Madison Moilanen, from Hancock, who wants to go to Disney World.

“We contacted the Michigan Chapter of Make-A-Wish to see if we could be paired up with a local child,” said Jordanna Kero, a volleyball student-athlete and president of Tech’s SAAC. “It’s made a huge difference for our student-athletes to know they’re helping somebody in our community.”

Madison suffers from nemaline rod myopathy, a congenital neuromuscular disease that makes muscles weak.

Kero and several other student-athletes took time recently to visit Madison at her school. They also hosted her at the February 21 Michigan Tech-Northern Michigan hockey game.

Madison was featured on the video board at the game. See the video at: MichiganTechHuskies.com/video/Madison-s_Wish.

—Wes Frahm

The women’s basketball team led this Little Husky girls basketball clinic last fall.
Michigan Technological University “prepares students to create the future.” In doing so, the University inspires the values of community, scholarship, possibilities, accountability, and tenacity. According to the University’s values statement, “We inspire individuals to hold themselves accountable and to act with integrity, honesty, and diligence.” These values guide decisions and foster learning. To help the University community advance the mission, standards of conduct are set forth in the Student Code of Community Conduct and the Academic Integrity Policy. The goal of the Office of Academic and Community Conduct is to resolve academic integrity and/or student conduct issues in an atmosphere of honesty and trust. All participants in the conduct process are treated fairly and respectfully.

The purpose of the conduct process includes:

- Determining responsibility for conduct violations;
- Helping students develop ethical standards of conduct and personal accountability;
- Achieving an educational outcome in conduct cases; and
- Protecting the interest of the Michigan Tech community in an environment that promotes education, personal growth, and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Integrity is essential in a community of scholars and is the responsibility of students, faculty, and staff. Anything less than total commitment to integrity undermines the efforts of everyone. When a student makes a mistake and accepts responsibility, actions will be taken to ensure that mistake is not made again. Every opportunity should be made to help the student learn, who in turn should share with their peers.

Creating a culture of integrity starts with accepting that everyone makes mistakes. As an engaged community, we need to actively seek improvement through accepting and understanding these mistakes and to learn from them through academics, research, and continued learning. We must explore and create possibilities to prevent these mistakes through innovative use of our skills and knowledge. We will hold each other accountable to act with integrity, honesty, and diligence. This will help those who have made a mistake to develop the tenacity required to make ethical choices and to persevere through all obstacles. This is accountability.

—Rob Bishop

Let’s Get Social

Wondering what’s new with the University’s Facebook and Twitter pages? Want to check out the cool imagery and videos shared on our Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube accounts? Overwhelmed by the idea of “fanning” and “following” so many different accounts? Head to Michigan Tech’s new social networks page: www.mtu.edu/social. It features a running stream of our latest social media activity in a single easy-to-access location. Plus, you’ll find a directory of all University social media accounts— for academic and administrative departments, athletics, auxiliary services, and more. It’s the best way to get (and stay) connected with @MichiganTech!