

staying CONNECTED

Minnesota West
FOUNDATION

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF MINNESOTA WEST COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

SUMMER 2020
IN THIS ISSUE

-  From the President
-  Scholarships
-  Food Pantries,
Blue Jay Emergency
Funds
-  Awards/Honors
-  Memorial,
Retirements
-  Alumni Updates
-  Philanthropy Corner

The Minnesota West Foundation is a private non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

The Minnesota West Foundation believes in affordable and accessible educational opportunities for students. Because of this belief and commitment to education, the Minnesota West Foundation provides funding for scholarships and development opportunities for students attending Minnesota West Community and Technical College.



2020 Virtual Graduation

Commencement in the Age of COVID-19

Minnesota West held its first ever virtual commencement ceremony on May 15, 2020 to honor the Class of 2020. The ceremony, which was streamed on social media, included congratulatory video messages from Minnesota West President, Terry Gaalswyk, Minnesota State Chancellor Devinder Malhotra, and Medical Lab Technician faculty, Minnesota Outstanding Educator Nominee, Dr. Rita Miller. The ceremony also included a virtual musical interlude by members of the Minnesota West choir. In all, Minnesota West celebrated over 592 graduates during the ceremony. Graduation gifts including cap, diploma cover, tassel, cord, program, and alumni memorabilia were mailed to each graduate to commemorate this unique year. The video is viewable at <https://www.youtube.com/user/MinnesotaWestCollege/videos>.



Our Mission:
Preparing learners for a lifetime of success.

From the **PRESIDENT**

This past academic year was a tale of two halves, with neither half looking much like the other. The effects of the pandemic upended our traditional methods of providing educational services to our communities, and it threatened the social and economic pillars of our region. We began the academic year with the typical excitement of new and returning students walking through our campuses and into our classrooms. And we ended our spring semester with our first ever virtual graduation ceremony. 10 days later, Minnesota became the epicenter of protests over racial injustice. The tragedy of George Floyd has been painful for our entire state and country, especially for our communities of color, who are also disproportionately being affected by the pandemic. I, along with our entire college family, stand united and committed to creating communities where we are safe, respected, and celebrated for our differences. The faith, determination, and collective resolve of our faculty, staff, and students provides great hope for tomorrow.

Minnesota West's Educational Priorities

As we continue to manage through the current pandemic, our college is focused on three priorities: 1) ensuring the safety & well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and communities; 2) assuring our students advance their educational plans; and 3) committing to the economic continuity of our communities and college. Coupled with the care, compassion, and dedication of our faculty and staff, our determined focus on these priorities brings an innovative energy to our commitment to students and region we serve.

Education and training are essential to the social and economic recovery of Southwest Minnesota. Minnesota West's portfolio of well-established transfer courses, relevant career/tech & management programs, and accredited nursing/allied health offerings are paired with tele-support systems that assure our students complete their education and transition immediately into a career or a four-year educational institution.

Minnesota West's proven history in distance education enables us to provide essential programs and training to our students. We have been delivering award-winning education via distance for over 20 years; our faculty have developed and honed their approaches through informed and tested methodologies. Our portfolio consists of online classes enhanced with simulations and engagement strategies, flexible programs which online and essential face-to-face education (hybrid/flex), and small group, on-campus courses delivered with personal safety protocols & social distancing expectations.

Supporting our Students and Families

We understand many students and their families are experiencing hardships, uncertainty, and difficult decisions. Our student support functions are fully accessible to all students and have been expanded to include food pantries, social & mental health services, and emergency grants. The Minnesota West Foundation Board has prioritized its efforts to solicit financial support from our friends and alumni. These donations will help offset unexpected financial hardships witnessed by our students and their families. Collectively, we are dedicated to supporting those who are just beginning college, those in midst of their educational plans, and our neighbors who are seeking a new career.



Together, Moving Forward

In the wake of our current civil unrest, Minnesota State Chancellor, Dr. Devinder Malhotra, stated, "My thoughts go out to also the residents impacted by the unrest. Times like these require unity and strong resolve. We must work together to strengthen our connection and commit all of our efforts to addressing longstanding societal ills and help create places we not only take pride in, but where we can all feel safe, valued, and respected." We know that education is the pathway to social and economic prosperity for our students, their families, and our communities. Minnesota West is laser-focused on providing safe, affordable, relevant, and highly-supportive educational programs. This is the resolve of your college, and we are investing entrusted resources and reserves for the social and economic well-being of our region - it is our purpose and our privilege.

Sincerely, Your President

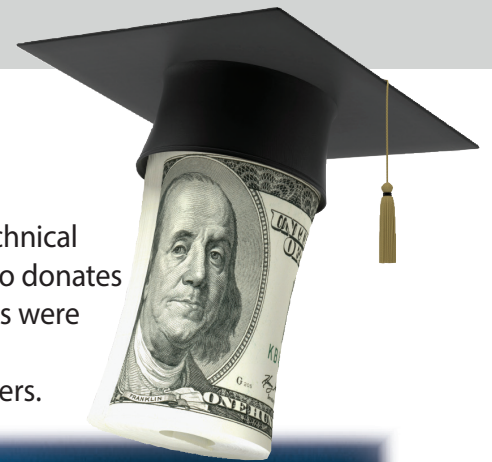
Dr. Terry Gaalswyk



Scholarships

Over \$250,000 Awarded in Scholarships to Minnesota West Students

Over 150 scholarships were awarded to Minnesota West Community & Technical College students for 2020 fall semester. Thank you to every one of you who donates and invests in our students! Although many of our spring awards banquets were cancelled this year, we still collected photos from a variety of our Fall 2020 scholarship winners. Pictured below are just a few of the scholarship winners.



Wood Legacy Transfer Scholarship

As a bridge between two Minnesota State colleges, Dr. Ron Wood worked with the Minnesota West Foundation to create the Wood Legacy Transfer Scholarship. Dr. Ron Wood served as the President of Minnesota West Community and Technical College from 1998-2007 and served as Interim President at SMSU from 2011-2013. The new scholarship will be awarded to select Minnesota West students transferring to SMSU. Pictured from left to right: Minnesota West President Terry Gaalswyk Minnesota State Trustee Ashlyn Anderson, Dr. Ron Wood, Chancellor Devinder Malhotra, SMSU President Kumara Jayasuriya, Minnesota West Foundation Director Michael Van Keulen.



International Fluid Power Society Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to Brandon Miller of Worthington, Minnesota, who was recognized as the Minnesota West Outstanding Mechatronics student for 2020 and was presented with a \$5,025.40 scholarship! The scholarship was made possible by the International Fluid Power Society Chapter 5 Past Presidents, working in conjunction with the Minnesota West Foundation. Pictured left to right: Ty Bowen - Minnesota West Mechatronics Instructor; Brandon Miller and his family Amy, Aryiah, Eliza; George Beniek - International Fluid Power Society; Michael Van Keulen - Minnesota West Foundation Executive Director; Dawn Regnier - Minnesota West Dean of Careers & Workplace Solutions.

Food Pantries

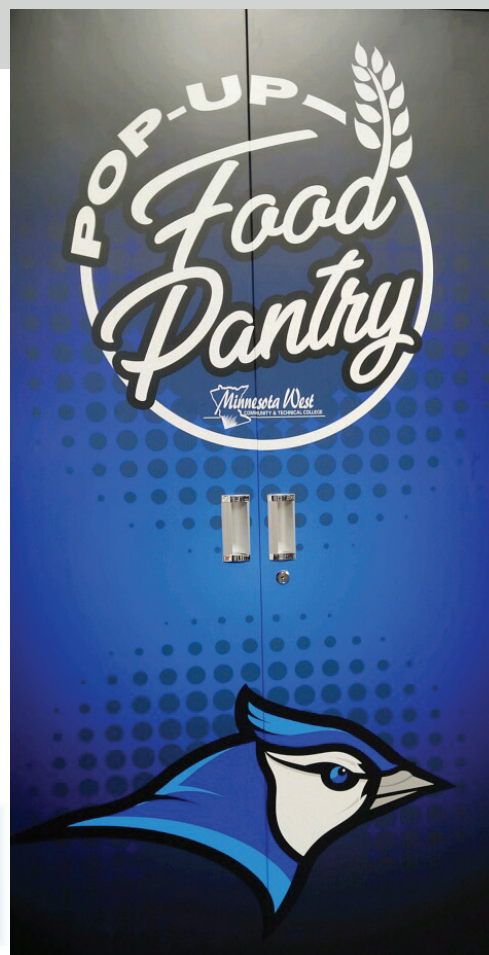
Food Pantries on Campus

During the past year, Minnesota West made visible strides in addressing the plight of food insecurity among its students. At any one time, at least a third of community college students experience food insecurity, defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life (USDA, 2019). In Spring 2020 all five campuses and the Luverne center were able to establish food pantries for students in need. They have been stocked with non-perishable food items, diapers, and personal care items. Behind



the scenes Minnesota West continues to build an infrastructure for addressing food insecurity as well, through collaboration with local partners such as Southwest Minnesota State University, the University of Minnesota, Second Harvest, Nobles County Community Services, Prairie Five Community Action, and the Minnesota West Foundation. In 2020-21, an AmeriCorps VISTA representative will develop procedures and work to ensure the health of our students through food support and education.

President Gaalswyk and Dean Gordon accept a generous donation from Fulda Area Credit Union (Melissa Gehl) to the Worthington Campus food pantry!



Blue Jay Emergency Funds

Emergency Support for Students

In addition to its role in providing scholarship and college support funding, the Minnesota West Foundation focused its efforts in recent months to building an Emergency Student Support Fund for its students in order to provide immediate, short-term relief due to unforeseen needs arising from the COVID-19 crisis.

The truth is that many Minnesota West students struggle. They struggle with:

- Keeping their families and themselves fed.
- Paying rent.
- Filling their car with fuel.
- Paying their utility bills.
- Purchasing books.
- Purchasing laptops.
- Paying for WIFI.



Since April 1st, donations from alumni, employees, and friends of the college have helped to provide almost \$13,000 that has gone directly to students struggling to complete coursework while dealing with the economic challenges of the pandemic. "The range of student needs has been heartbreaking, but I am very happy that we have the ability to provide some short-term relief," stated Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Linda Pesch, who reviews and approves student funding requests.

Fortunately, federal higher education monies from the recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act have provided students with additional financial assistance. It is likely, though, that needs will continue to arise as the economic fallout from the pandemic continues.

If you are interested and able to help invest in our students, simply text [STUDENT2020](https://www.minnesotawest.edu/student2020) to 44321 for online donations. As always, checks can be sent to the Minnesota West Foundation, 1011 First St. West, Canby, MN 56220.

Assistance from the Southwest Initiative Foundation:

The Minnesota West Foundation received a \$5,000 grant from the Southwest Initiative Foundation to provide emergency support assistance to its students. The grant, which is a "Grow Our Own Responsive Grant," is intended to provide emergency assistance to those Minnesota West students whose financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic are preventing them from successfully completing their education.

Michael Van Keulen, Executive Director of the Minnesota West Foundation stated, "The majority of our student body lives and works in the communities that our college serves. We are extraordinarily grateful to the Southwest Initiative Foundation for assistance in helping our communities."

Awards/Honors

Top School For Online Learning In Healthcare

Minnesota West Community & Technical College has been named one of 2020's best schools for online learning in healthcare by EduMed.org. Minnesota West earned top honors for its online programs and courses in the following areas:



"Hundreds of schools offer distance learning options in healthcare," said Wes Ricketts, founder of EduMed.org. "But it can be tough to find one with a great balance of quality, affordability and student support. Minnesota West Community & Technical College has that."

Minnesota West's recognition comes at a time when colleges and universities across the country are transitioning more of their programs online. "Online learning may not be the 'new normal' just yet, but it's fast developing into a primary mode of lesson delivery," said Ricketts. "Even in healthcare education where patient interaction and lab work are critical, many of the academic courses can be taken 100 percent remotely."

Military Friendly

Minnesota West is proud to have been named a Military Friendly School by VIQTRY and to be ranked 3rd in the nation among small community colleges! The Military Friendly® designation measures an organization's commitment, effort and success in creating sustainable and meaningful benefit for the military community.



Law Enforcement Instructor Publishes Book

Minnesota West Law Enforcement instructor, **Ron Schwint** recently published "Field Patrol Officer Guidebook To Calls for Service," which will be an open resource text available to all Professional Peace Officer Education Schools.



Minnesota West Instructor Travels to West Africa

Minnesota West Community & Technical College History Instructor, **Anita Gaul**, was one of 16 community college faculty in the nation to participate in a 2 1/2-week fully-funded Faculty Development Seminar in Senegal, West Africa in January, funded and organized by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) in partnership with the West African Research Center (WARC).



The seminar, themed "Diversity, Religion, and Migration in West Africa." was based in Senegal's capital city of Dakar but also involved visiting the historic towns of Touba and Saint-Louis, where participants grappled with the complexities of diversity, religion, and migration in contemporary West Africa.

With the goal of strengthening her cultural awareness and helping her identify ways to assist many of her minority students in succeeding in her classroom, Gaul stated that the experience "changed my thinking, altered my perspective, and re-oriented my gaze.... Africa is life-giving and vibrant. It is foundational. It is an integral part of our world, both past and present, and its importance will not be forgotten or overlooked in my curriculum."

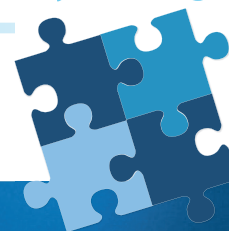
Minnesota West Chemistry Instructor Published

Research by a team of chemists, including Minnesota West Chemistry instructor **Tyler Wadzinski** was recently published in the periodical "Science Direct." An internship he did with the pharmaceutical company Bristol-Myers Squibb between his undergraduate and graduate school studies landed him a co-authorship of the recent publication. The research focused on developing reactions to synthesize new antibiotic compounds. The article, "Selective Opening of Nucleoside Derived Acetals to Form Highly Functionalized Vinyl Ethers," is his fifth publication.



Recognized by the Aspen Institute as a Top 150 U.S. Community College

Thanks to all faculty, staff and students!



Memorial

In memoriam: Sally Vogt (1950 – 2020)

Minnesota West Foundation Board member, Sally Vogt, passed away on June 8th from complications due to cancer. Although she served the Minnesota West Foundation for two years, her lifelong support for the community of Canby, MN, its businesses, and its educational system will be sorely missed.



Board Retirement *Thank you Ric!*

Ric Dalrymple retired from the Minnesota West Foundation Board of Directors after six years of service, most recently as the Board Chairperson. A former Worthington Campus faculty member, Ric also served on the local Worthington Campus Foundation Board before serving on the collegewide Board in 2014. He continues to be heavily involved in volunteering in his local community.

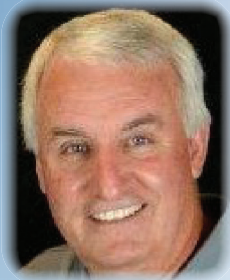


Retirements

This past year, we said goodbye to a number of long-time employees.

Thank you all for your dedicated service!

Daryl Bartholomaus
Customized
Training Faculty
20 years



Jackie Lage
Cosmetology
Faculty
20 years



Terry Peterson
Nursing Services
Tutor
20 years



Mark Temple
Auto Mechanics
Faculty
24 years



Kathy Janssen,
Computer
Science Faculty
37 years




Le Lucht
PTK Advisor, Diversity
Coordinator Faculty
25 years



Connie Hacker
Customized
Training Support
31 years



Alumni Updates

What have you been up to? We would love to hear from you! Go to www.mnwest.edu/profile-update and update us on life since Minnesota West. Also, "Like" us on  and message us your selfie! - www.facebook.com/minnesotawest

Ernest Parker (1967, Fluid Power) - Ernie Parker was one of 11 people worldwide inducted into the 2019 Fluid Power Hall of Fame. With over 42 years writing and presenting curriculum for fluid power courses, Parker has been active with both the national International Fluid Power Society and the local Minnesota chapter. He was also awarded Minnesota Educator of the Year in 2009 as well as the International Fluid Power Society's National Educator of the Year in 1988. He has worked tirelessly with student programs – both secondary and post-secondary – including FIRST, Project Lead the Way, Minnesota Technical Challenge, and Minnesota Skills USA. Parker has monthly published "Air Teasers" in the Fluid Power Journal for many years.

Ivan Winger (1969, Construction Electrician) – After graduating from Minnesota West, Ivan traveled the world in the Navy as a construction electrician. Upon leaving the Navy, he worked in Minnesota, Wyoming, North Dakota, Louisiana and Oklahoma, where he retired. "After picking rock to put myself thru trade school I did not dream that I would do as well as I have and I credit trade school for the start of my success."

Lyle Stelter (1978, Accounting) – Lyle has been teaching accounting for Dakota County Technical College about 35 years. He is also a licensed real estate agent in Minnesota and Wisconsin. He and his wife Julie live in Red Wing, MN.

Lyle Enderson (1987, Industrial Electronics) - For 20 years Lyle worked in power electronics (power supplies, battery chargers, and electric fence energizers) at several companies, becoming an Associate Engineer. He worked on circuit board layouts, product testing, and some microcontroller programming. He now works as a Sr. Engineering Technician for a pool & hot tub company, where he has been for the past 10 years. "You never know what industries you'll end up in or what abilities you'll find in yourself, but it is important to get started and finish that first degree / diploma."

Juhl Erickson (1994, Liberal Arts) - Juhl is the Chief Sales Officer with Bank Midwest. He currently lives in Windom, Minnesota with his wife Angie and four kids, Sydney, Shelby, Henry and Charlie.

Chris Koser (2002, Telecommunications) – Chris currently works for Republic Airways, where he started in 2008 as a First officer flying an Embraer 170. In 2015, he upgraded to Captain, and in 2017 he started instructing new hire first officers how to fly the EMB-170/175. "Flying and teaching is a great joy and looking down at gridlocked streets while I'm in my "office" is a pretty neat thing." Chris currently lives in Pickerington, OH.

Jay Scheidt (2007, Liberal Arts) - Jay is currently the Assistant Manager of Strategic Partnerships with Bedford Industries in Worthington, MN.

Nick Schwager (2010, Electrician) – Nick recently purchased Anderson Electric in Blue Earth Minnesota from Randy Anderson, who retired in December, 2019. Nick and his family live in Winnebago, MN.

Christina Baker (2012, Cosmetology) - Christina opened her own salon - Christina's Hair & Nail Salon - in Sheldon, IA on May 16th, 2020.

Tiffany Gehl (2014, Liberal Arts) – Tiffany is currently employed as a Physical Therapist for Sanford Health after completing her Doctor of Physical Therapy in 2019.

Melissa Gehl (2015, Liberal Arts) - Melissa currently is employed as Assistant Vice President of Marketing with Fulda Area Credit Union, a career she began in October of 2019 after serving for two years as Senior Bookstore Director at Minnesota West.

DeAndre Pennington (2015, Liberal Arts) – After graduating from Minnesota West, DeAndre continued his education and basketball career overseas. He is currently living in England playing basketball and working on his Master's Degree in Business Administration.

Darrius Johnson (2019, Agriculture) – After graduating from Minnesota West, Darrius began pursuing his Bachelor's Degree in Agricultural Science from South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD. He is currently interning with Crystal Valley in Lakeland, MN.



Joel Krekelberg (1975, Liberal Arts) - Joel serves as the Athletic Trainer at Minnesota West and for the Worthington District 518 student athletes and was recently inducted into the MCAC Hall of Fame. "A long time ago I selected Minnesota West because being from Worthington I could live at home and get my generals done. I also wanted to continue playing basketball competitively, and the school had a very good coach and winning tradition. I graduated in 1975 and continued my education at what is now Minnesota State, Mankato. Minnesota West was small enough to meet and get to know people and the Instructors cared about our success. They took the time to mentor us, and as far as I can see the same culture exists today! You can go as far as you want from here. I ended up in the NFL with the Houston Oilers for seven years as an Athletic Trainer before returning to the area." Currently, Joel also works as a residential real estate appraiser in Worthington, MN.

PHILANTHROPY Corner

For many, 2020 has felt like one long crisis. During times such as these, it is natural to want to be cautious but also to do some good for others. And the latter is very important, as charitable organizations need your support more than ever during difficult times. Consider the following tips when making a philanthropic gift, as suggested by charitynavigator.org

React with intention – Your gift during a time of crisis is powerful. Take a few minutes before you give to research the organization you plan to support to ensure that your gift will have the maximum effect you desire.



Give to an established charity – Similarly, ensure that you are giving to a legitimate charity with 501(c)(3) status. Unsavory actors will look to take advantage of people's inherent generosity during difficult times.

Do the most good (Hint: Give money) – A monetary donation allows the charity the most flexibility to adapt their relief efforts to the most important needs at the moment.

Consider the long-term – Many charities see a spike in donations when a crisis hits and then a tapering off after a few weeks. Yet, the needs arising with crisis recovery can continue for months or even years.

Verifying crowdfunding campaigns – Crowdfunding campaigns can be very effective, but the money may not always go to the exact cause you intend. Consider donating to online fundraisers created by individuals with one degree of separation, unless the fundraiser was created by a registered public 501(c)(3) organization.

1011 First Street West • Canby, MN 56220



Non-Profit Org
US POSTAGE
Paid Permit
Slayton, MN
Permit No. 22