



# staying CONNECTED

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

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

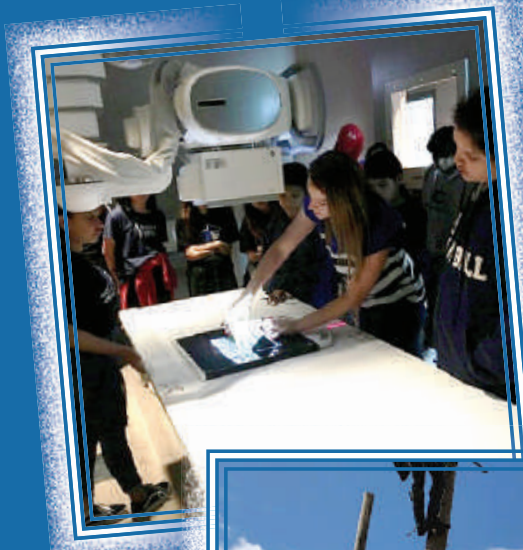
The Minnesota West Foundation believes in affordable and accessible educational opportunities for students. Because of this belief and commitment to education, the Minnesota West Foundation provides funding for scholarships and development opportunities for students attending Minnesota West Community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



## STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Minnesota West Community & Technical College made a focused commitment during the 2019-20 academic year for one-time strategic investments in its programs and infrastructure, totaling approximately \$1 million.

The college focused on innovative investment that would promote the college's mission, vision and values. See some of the results of these strategic investments on pages 4 and 5.



Our Mission:  
Preparing learners for a lifetime of success.



# From the **PRESIDENT**

It is surprising how quickly the academic year flies by. It seems like we just graduated last year's class, and we are already almost halfway through the next school year. This year marks the beginning of year five of my presidency of this great institution. And as I reflect upon our college's success, I am ever cognizant of the need to continue looking forward in our efforts to train the workforce of the 21st century. We must always be listening to the needs of our stakeholders and exploring ways to provide education in the most productive and cost-effective means possible.

With that in mind, our college made a conscious effort to strategically invest in its programs this year, as we made one-time investments that will promote our mission, vision and values. As you will notice in this issue of our newsletter, these investments have resulted in an expansion of program offerings as well

as needed investments in our physical infrastructure. We will continue to look for cost effective ways, with the help of our industry partners, our alumni, and taxpayer dollars to make good on our mission to prepare learners for a lifetime of success.

I am continually amazed by our faculty, staff, and students as I witness individuals committed to serving others, to overcoming hardships in order to prepare themselves for a career, and to creating opportunities for themselves and others however they can. I would like to wish you all a happy holiday season and blessings for the new year!

Sincerely, Your President



Terry Gaalswyk



## Graduation 2019

**During the 2018-19 academic year, 939 students completed a total of 1092 certificates, diplomas, or degrees from Minnesota West!**



# New Employees

We welcome the following new employees to the Minnesota West Family!



- Maria Peterson, Resource Specialist, Jackson
- Wendy Anderson, Dental Instructor
- Brad Milbrath, Farm Business Management Instructor
- Derek Hennager, Plumbing/HVAC Instructor
- Shawn Berning, Carpentry Instructor
- Kent Dahlman, Speech Communications Instructor
- Jeremy Daberkow, Farm Business Management Instructor
- Jon Danielson, General Maintenance Worker, Canby
- Salome Chonko, Academic Advisor, Jackson

# Retirements

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

*Thank you for your dedicated service!*

- Rebecca Potts, English/Philosophy Instructor...32 years
- Debra Peterson, Speech Communication Instructor...30 years
- Teresa Jansen, Surgical Technology Instructor...14 years
- Alan O'Neil, English/Speech Instructor...26 years
- Kathy Handke, Academic Advisor...20 years
- Bob Roesler, Farm Business Management Instructor...32 years

# Foundation Board of Directors Retirements and New Members

The Minnesota West Foundation saw the retirement of two long-time Board members in June 2019 and the addition of four new Board members.

## Retirements of Board Members

- Kevin Paulsen, Pipestone, MN • Board Member – 2013-2014, Board Chairperson 2014-2019
- Harry Davis, Redwood Falls, MN • Board Member – 2013-2019



Kevin Paulsen



Harry Davis

## New Board Members

• **Jose Lopez** – Jose lives in Truman, MN with his wife and four children and is currently employed as the Sales Manager at Elizabeth Chevrolet in Truman, MN. He is also the Co-Chair for MCSAP (Martin County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition) and dedicates his spare time to coaching his children's sports - soccer, baseball, softball, and wrestling. His oldest daughter Cassandra became the first high school student to graduate from the Minnesota West Nursing Program at the age of 18 by taking advantage of Minnesota's Post-Secondary Enrollment Option for high school students.

• **Alexandra Larios** – Alexandra is the International HR Talent Acquisition Manager for PIPESTONE company in Pipestone, MN. She is a graduate of Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls, SD where she studied Marketing and was an active member of the Student

Government Association (SGA) as well as being part of the Latino Outreach Program.

• **Larry Griffin** - Larry worked for Minnesota West as a Farm Management instructor from 1992-2010, and again from 2017-2019. He was born and raised on a cattle ranch in Mandan, ND and graduated from NDSU in Fargo, ND with a degree in Animal Science. He has also been a county extension agent, an instructor of post high Production Agriculture for young farmers and vets, a store manager and sales manager for IBM, and a TAA financial consultant for the U of M. He and his wife live in Jackson, MN.

• **Lori Sisk** - Lori has been employed at Sanford Health for over 25 years and currently oversees all operations of Sanford Canby Medical Center in Canby,

MN and Sanford Clear Lake Medical Center in Clear Lake, SD. Lori graduated from South Dakota State University with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nursing and received her Master's in Healthcare Administration from the University of Minnesota. Lori is married and has three grown children and in her spare time enjoys walking, boating and reading.



Jose Lopez



Alexandra Larios



Larry Griffin



Lori Sisk



# INVESTMENTS

## ACROSS THE COLLEGE

Each campus of Minnesota West benefited from focused investments in infrastructure and program enhancements this year. Here some highlights of strategic investments across the college.

### CANBY CAMPUS

The Canby Campus Electrician and Wind Labs underwent a significant expansion over the summer of 2019. The updated Wind & Electrical Lab is 4,700 square feet and allows for lab work in multiple courses to be run simultaneously.



### GRANITE FALLS CAMPUS

The Powerline Technology program expanded to the Granite Falls campus in 2019, with new students beginning their Powerline training over summer.



A new digital sign replaced the current college sign along the highway that had been in place for over 30 years.



### JACKSON CAMPUS

The Cosmetology program reception area was remodeled and expanded for a more modern look and feel, and the campus welding lab was also expanded for students.





# PREPARING FOR GROWTH AT MINNESOTA WEST



## LUVERNE CAMPUS

New Radiographic Imaging Systems were installed at the Luverne Center to ensure up-to-date training for Radiologic Technician students.

The Dental Assistant program was expanded to the Luverne Center in 2019.



## PIPESTONE CAMPUS

An updated nursing simulation lab was built on the Pipestone Campus.

The Plumbing and Heating Technology (originally HVAC) program has also been re-vitalized on the Pipestone Campus.



## WORTHINGTON CAMPUS

The Worthington Campus updated the look and feel of its campus for the public, including updates to the student commons, furnishings in the LARC (Library and Academic Resource Center), and its main entry.



# Donations & Partnerships

## Minnesota West Foundation Receives \$15,000 AT&T Foundation Grant



The Minnesota West Foundation received a \$15,000 grant from the AT&T Foundation to support its scholarship programs during an event on campus October 16, 2019.

The AT&T Foundation grant will support scholarships for tuition, fees and supplies so that under-served students without a high school diploma can take college level classes that will prepare them for careers in high demand occupations. Students in these courses will gain the skills and training they need for high-demand jobs in the tri-state area of southwestern Minnesota, northwestern Iowa and southeastern South Dakota.

"With this grant from the AT&T Foundation, we are excited to provide scholarships to students enrolled in courses in high-

demand occupations, including welding, information technology and community health among others," said Terry Gaalswyk, Ph.D., President of Minnesota West Community and Technical College. "We know these are high-demand fields for our tri-state area, and we need to make sure we have a workforce trained for these jobs. We are grateful to the AT&T Foundation for helping our students with financial need gain the education they need for the workforce."

"For more than a century, education has been a top priority for AT&T," said Paul Weirtz, president of AT&T Minnesota. "On behalf of the AT&T Foundation, we are proud to support the scholarship programs at Minnesota West and help local students receive the education they need to be prepared for careers in the 21st Century."

## Wind Turbine Nacelle Donation

The Wind Energy program in Canby, MN received the donation of a wind turbine nacelle from NextEra Energy Resources LLC this past summer.

Weighing approximately 180,000 pounds, the nacelle houses all the generating components of a wind turbine. The nacelle will be incorporated into the program's curriculum and will provide students with hands-on training. NextEra Energy Resources' subsidiaries currently own and operate two wind facilities in Minnesota. This particular nacelle was transported from its Lake Benton II Wind Energy Center in Pipestone County, MN.

"The nacelle provided by NextEra is coming directly from a working wind farm," stated Bruce Peterson, Minnesota West Dean of Energy Technologies and interim Provost. "We greatly appreciate the benefits our students will have to enhance their educational experience."



"We are proud to partner with Minnesota West Community and Technical College's Wind Energy Technology program and contribute to such a prestigious training program for wind turbine technicians," said Danell Herzig, NextEra Energy Resources project director. "Wind technician is one of the fastest growing jobs in the United States, so the direct experience these students can receive from working with the equipment will help them as they progress in their journey to becoming a wind technician."



# A Simple Request

Thanks to your generosity, the Minnesota West Foundation was able to award over \$110,000 in scholarships last year.

As one our students wrote in her scholarship thank-you letter, "Without this Foundation and donors, I would never have been able to obtain my goals and dreams." We are hopeful that as you consider your end-of-the-year giving, that you consider a gift to the Minnesota West Foundation. Our students and our graduates amaze us every day, and we are grateful for the part you play in that success.

Our goal is simple: To replenish our scholarship dollars that we spend each year. We are reaching out to you to help make that happen. Simply return the postage paid envelope insert with your donation. Or, if you would prefer to donate online, go to [www.mnwest.edu/foundation/giving](http://www.mnwest.edu/foundation/giving).

Whether you give or not, thank you for your support of Minnesota West Community and Technical College.

**By donating to scholarship funds, we can make a difference in students' lives.**

*Let's make it happen.*

*give the gift of education*

## Alumni Updates

*What have you been up to? We would love to hear from you! Go to [www.mnwest.edu/profile-update](http://www.mnwest.edu/profile-update) and let us know!*

*Be sure to check us out on facebook at  [www.facebook.com/minnesotawest](https://www.facebook.com/minnesotawest) and post a selfie!*

### 1970s

*Rodney Burkard* (1973, Diesel) – Rodney started his own tractor repair business in 1985 - Rod's Tractor Repair – and is still in operation today in Reading, MN.

### 1980s

*Leon Bullerman* (1989, Liberal Arts) - Leon, a two-time All American Wrestler at Minnesota West, was recently inducted into Southwest Minnesota Athletic Hall of Fame.

### 1990s

*Adam Hale* (1997, Liberal Arts) - Adam is coaching high school football in Grantsburg, WI. In 2017, Adam was inducted into the Worthington, MN High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

*Kyle Dahl* (1995, Electrician) - Kyle worked his way up from apprentice and journeyman electrician to master electrician and licensed electrical inspector before being hired by the state of South Dakota in 2018 as a State Electrical Inspector assigned to Brookings-Moody-Deuel-Hamlin counties in SD. Kyle also retired from the Navy Reserve as a Construction Electrician 1st Class in 2012. He and his wife Becky live in Brookings, SD and have four children.

### 2000s

*Zach Traphagen* (2008, Liberal Arts) - Zach became the girl's High School Basketball Coach with Brandon Evansville School District in Minnesota this year.

*Chris Aggen* (2008, Liberal Arts) - Chris was named Assistant Softball Coach this fall at the University of Sioux Falls, in Sioux Falls, SD.

### 2010s

*Logan Markus* (2011, Radiologic Technology) – Logan is currently working as a radiologic technician at Sanford Hospital in Worthington, MN.

*Leyvi Hinojosa* (2012, Liberal Arts) – Leyvi began a new career this year, teaching newcomer and beginner English Language (EL) classes at Worthington, MN High School.

*Donald Nothem* (2014, Energy Technical Specialist) – Donald went back to school after retiring from the military and updated his skills in the field of solar and geothermal energy. He now travels the entire state of South Dakota, maintaining the heating and cooling systems of about 65 facilities. He and his wife Teresa live in Rapid City, SD.

*Heath Quiring* (2014, Radiology Technician) - Heath was named in November as Employee of the Quarter at the Windom Area Hospital in Windom, Minnesota.

*Dayna Braaten* (2016, Radiologic Technology) - Dayna is currently the Radiology Manager at Avera Flandreau Hospital in Flandreau, SD.

*Eli Stevens* (2017, Powersports) - Eli currently works with Stockmen's Motosports, a Polaris Dealership in Yankton, SD.

*Madison Stearns* (2018, Law Enforcement) - Madison began her new career as an officer with the Worthington, MN Police Department in June of 2019. She completed her law enforcement skills training with Minnesota West in the summer of 2018.

*Colton Antonson* (Electrical, 2019) - Colton is currently employed with Mitlyng Electric in Montevideo, Minnesota. "I live in Granite Falls so Minnesota West was close to home and convenient for me and the Electrical Program here has a great reputation."

## Consider a personal charitable giving mission statement

Just about every organization today has a mission statement – a succinct summary of what the organization strives to be – its reason for existing. You may have even thought about or created your own personal mission statement that helps guide the decisions you make in life. This same focus on “mission” can be applied to charitable giving.

Creating a “giving mission statement” can help you focus on issues and causes that you most value; it can help you to feel more connected to charities that coincide with those values; and it can provide you with peace of mind when saying “no” to causes that don’t fit with your mission.

So, where do you start?

1. Identify the values and beliefs that most fundamentally shape your actions.
2. Identify the issues and the population that you want to have the most impact on.
3. Consider your long-term goals when it comes to impact and giving.

These questions can help guide not only your day-to-day giving, but legacy giving as well, as you think about what you want to leave behind when you are gone (i.e. estate planning).

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