

# Mesabi Range Foundation Newsletter

Volume 1  
Number 7  
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## *What's Happening in the Foundation Office*

*By Scott Wirtanen, Foundation Coordinator*

It has been another exciting and eventful few months in the Foundation Office as we disburse the Spring semester scholarships and begin to work with our donors for contributions for the 2024-25 academic year. The Donor Recognition Wall was a major undertaking for the Foundation this past fall and looks wonderful in the Commons area on the Virginia campus.

We are very excited to begin a new collaborative effort with all of the Minnesota North College campuses to formulate one scholarship portal for all students / potential students attending the Minnesota North College. This new venture includes the Hibbing, Itasca, Mesabi Range, Rainy River and Vermilion Foundations. The scholarship portal will provide opportunities for students to make one application to all of the scholarships they qualify for at the campus they are attending, as well as any additional scholarships provided through the Minnesota North College administrative offices.

The Foundation Office has been working with the Athletic Department to develop etched plexiglass panels to honor those inducted into the Mesabi Range Athletic Hall of Fame. Chris Vito (Interim Athletic Director) has been working with Randy Washenesky (Welding Instructor – Eveleth Campus) and his students to prepare the panels and have them installed by March, 2024. In addition, we plan on having a list of Mesabi Range NJCAA All-Americans and Minnesota College Athletic Conference Hall of Fame Inductees on display in the gymnasium area on the Virginia campus.

If you have any questions regarding the Foundation, I can be reached at 218-550-2519. My office hours are 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, Monday-Thursday, so please feel free to stop in and visit when you visit the Virginia Campus.

## **Board Accomplishments and Future Goals**

- July: Met with MN North College "Campus" Foundations – Collaborative Ideas
- September—November: Conducted a successful Annual Fund-Raising Campaign
- January: Installation of the Donor Recognition Wall
- February: Installation of Mesabi Range Athletic Hall of Fame Recognition Wall
- February—April: Foundation Scholarship Application Portal open
- May: Award 2024-25 Foundation Scholarships



### Board Members

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## *Calendar of Events*

<i>January 8</i>	Spring Semester Begins
<i>February 27</i>	Foundation Board Meeting
<i>March 4-8</i>	Spring Break
<i>March 26</i>	Foundation Board Meeting
<i>March 31</i>	Easter Sunday
<i>April 23</i>	Foundation Board Meeting Selection of Scholarship Recipients
<i>May 8</i>	Graduation at 4 PM at Iron Trail Motors Event Center

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*The Board of Directors of the Mesabi Range Foundation  
meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 12:00 noon.*

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## *Keep up to date through the Foundation Website*

As the college has transitioned from the Mesabi Range College to the Minnesota North College – Mesabi Range Campuses, several changes have been made to our website. You can keep up to date with the Mesabi Range College Foundation through our website, located at:

<https://minnesotanorth.edu/campuses/mesabi-range-virginia/foundation/>

A current listing of all the scholarships offered through the Foundation is available, along with an on-line portal to make donations directly to the Foundation. You can find the “Donate Now” link as follows:

Go to the Mesabi Range College Foundation webpage (see web address above)

Scroll down to “Ways to Give”

Click on “Donations”

Click on the “Donate” button

OR directly at - [https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted\\_button\\_id=B6NLHEQR8MDJA](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=B6NLHEQR8MDJA)

# Campus Update

**By Jodi Pontinen, Director of Operations and Jessalyn Sabin, Academic Dean**

Spring semester 2024 started off smoothly for Minnesota North College with enrollment numbers staying stable compared to last year. Enrollment is up for the first time since 2011 and applications for new students for the 24-25 academic year are up by 23%. Over winter break, staff returned over 300 phone calls to prospective students who have shown interest in Minnesota North College. A few highlights of the amazing things that faculty and staff are planning this spring are:

- On February 29, from 9 am—2pm, the Enrollment/Recruiting department will hold a Women in the Workforce event highlighting women in the trades, to students in grades 10-12, on the Eveleth campus. The Spring Open House, on both Virginia and Eveleth campuses, will be held on Thursday, March 14 from 3pm-6pm. Eveleth will host their annual Skills and Knowledge Fair, which allows high school students to engage in hands-on projects within the departments on campus. These projects will be highlighted at the Open House that same evening.



- On March 12, the Welding Department at Eveleth will co-host the annual “Behind the Mask” competition with the Arrowhead Section of the American Welding Society (AWS). Welders from the region, area businesses, and other sister colleges are invited to enter different competition categories. At the end, scholarships and prizes are awarded for those that placed within the focus areas of competition. Many employees also attend to see how students perform - a great sneak peak at spring’s hiring pool!

• Thanks to grant funding you will start to see some new advertising as Minnesota North College Billboards begin to pop up along the Hwy 169 and Hwy 53 corridors. Watch for one in Canyon as you Head North!

- The Mesabi Range Equity and Diversity team, led by Antavius Thomas, hosted a successful Martin Luther King March and Rally on Monday, January 15. The event included a one-mile walk, a great lineup of powerful speakers, a bouncy house and face painting. Several Eveleth campus programs attended the Bois Forte program fair on January 26, showcasing the great opportunities Minnesota North College programs have to offer.



- Minnesota North College website 2.0 is coming..... Early this summer we will see a new and improved Minnesota North College website. This will include updated graphics, a more streamlined appearance, and increased speed.
- Minnesota North College is in the midst of submitting accreditation documents for the Higher Learning Commission to review prior to their visit on April 8 and 9. This is a regular 4-year cycle review in line with the legacy college past reviews. We look forward to visiting with the HLC team and showing them all of the great strategies we have implemented to reach our goals in promoting student success.
- MaryKay Riendeau and the Addiction Studies department will host a Multi-Cultural Addiction event, “A Disease that Doesn’t Discriminate,” along with Narcan training on the Virginia campus on April 25. Four amazing speakers will talk about how addiction affected their lives. It will be attended by over 200 Minnesota North faculty and staff, Addiction Studies program students, and area treatment center and human services behavioral health employees. Since 2019, MaryKay has successfully obtained over \$2,838,000 in grants from Blue Cross Blue Shield, St. Louis County, and The Department of Human Services to support students in the Addiction Studies and Human Services Program.

# *Donor Profiles*

## *Dan and Yvonne Webb*

Dan and Yvonne are one of the four major donors to contribute over \$250,000 to the Mesabi Range Foundation. Dan is a graduate from Hibbing High School after attending Gilbert High School until grade 10. Dan received his college degree from the Michigan Technological University. Yvonne went to work immediately after her high school graduation in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio.

In 2015 they established the Dan and Yvonne Webb Scholarship at the Mesabi Range Foundation – a scholarship given to Engineering students who are in their junior or senior year attending the Mankato State University Iron Range Engineering program at the Mesabi Range campus. As a former Iron Range resident, Dan wanted to give back to the students in our area who share his passion for Engineering.

Dan and Yvonne are granting \$24,000 in scholarship funding annually. Women from Northeastern Minnesota are given preference for this award, and scholarships are given to first semester students in the “Bell Academy” as part of the I.R.E. program. In addition to the scholarships given in their name at Mesabi Range, Dan and Yvonne have been active in providing funding for engineering students at Itasca Community College and Michigan Tech.

Dan and Yvonne currently reside in Santa Ana, California, and are an important part of the Iron Range Engineering Program at Mesabi Range. The Mesabi Range Foundation Board of Directors and Mesabi Range faculty and staff are extremely grateful for the Webb’s charitable contributions and their support of the students attending the Mesabi Range campuses.

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*Thank you for your generosity!*

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## *Peter and Colette Johnson*

Peter and Colette Johnson are one of the major donors to the Mesabi Range Foundation, contributing over \$250,000 to the Foundation since 2002. Colette is a graduate from Mesabi State Junior College, while Peter received his degree from the Michigan Technological University. The Johnson family’s initial scholarship donation was made in honor of their children. They gave their children an opportunity to donate to any charity of their choice, and they selected the Mesabi Range Foundation.

In 2003, Peter and Colette created a scholarship in memory of her parents – Bud and Lillian Kishel. Her parents were strong proponents of education, with the expectation that their children would go to the local junior college after graduating from high school. Colette’s mother, Lillian, attended Eveleth Junior College, while Colette and her brothers attended Virginia Junior College.

The C.E. “Bud” and Lillian Kishel Scholarship was given to a returning sophomore student demonstrating dedication and aptitude in their chosen field. The initial scholarship was given to a student attending Mesabi Range – Eveleth campus, and in ensuing years two scholarships were awarded – one scholarship to a student attending the Virginia campus, and one scholarship to a student enrolled at the Eveleth campus.

Peter and Colette continued their charitable giving to the Foundation each year, and in 2007 made an additional \$50,000 contribution to create the Johnson Family Scholarship – a scholarship given to a student majoring in engineering, math or science fields. Because of their kindness, generosity and subsequent donations, this \$5,000 scholarship continues to be awarded.

Sadly, Peter passed away on September 26, 2023, at the age of 87. He was a devoted husband and father, a respected local entrepreneur and business owner, and an avid outdoorsman. He had a dynamic personality and a keen sense of humor. Colette resides on Lake Vermilion, Tower, MN. The Mesabi Range Foundation Board of Directors and Mesabi Range faculty and staff are extremely grateful for the Johnson family’s charitable contributions and their support of the students attending the Mesabi Range campuses.

# Mesabi Range Foundation Donor Recognition Wall

The Donor Recognition Wall was installed in January, 2024, in the Commons area on the Virginia Campus. The Mesabi Range Foundation Board wanted to honor those individuals and companies that have made substantial contributions to the Foundation and have awarded scholarships to the students attending the Mesabi Range campuses. The Mesabi Range Foundation is very appreciative of the grant from the Minnesota Power Foundation to assist in recognizing the major contributors to our Foundation.



*Thank you, Minnesota Power!*

## Minnesota Power Foundation Awards Grant for Donor Recognition Wall

The Mesabi Range Foundation was recently awarded a \$6,000 grant from the Minnesota Power Foundation to support the Mesabi Range Foundation Donor Recognition Wall. The Minnesota Power Foundation gives in ways that strengthen communities and enhance the quality of life for people served by Minnesota Power/ALLETE. Each year, the Minnesota Power Foundation distributes nearly \$1 million in grants, scholarships and sponsorship support to advance its priorities in education, community enrichment, arts and culture, and health and human services. It is one of the region's foremost supporters of the United Way and serves as a valuable resource for organizations and individuals across the region.



AN ALLETE COMPANY

# Scholarship Review

## MN North Campus—Foundations Collaboration Initiative

In July, 2023, all five Foundations representing the Minnesota North College campuses met at the Minnesota Discovery Center to discuss collaborative opportunities for the Foundations. MN North College President Dr. Michael Raich spoke about the colleges support for each local Foundation, and gave an update from the Iron Range Higher Education Committee. Through Dr. Raich’s leadership, the Iron Range Higher Education Committee will provide funding for three years for a collaborative scholarship application program for all MN North campuses which will be available for the 2024-25 application timeline.

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### 2024 Spring Scholarship Recipients

The following students received Foundation Scholarships for the 2024 Spring semester year:

The Soroptimist Club Scholarship

Recipient: Wendy Sanchez

The Voiture 634 408 Scholarship

Recipients: Jordan Howard and John Sime

The Dan and Yvonne Webb Scholarship

Recipients: Amarah Langner, Lexie Huber, Arian Rodriguez, Dane Kennedy and Zach Sandnas

For more information contact Scott Wirtanen at (218)550-2519 or

[foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu).

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### New Scholarships for 2024-25

The Foundation is excited to announce the following new scholarship opportunities for the 2024-25 academic year for students on the Mesabi Range Campuses. A complete listing of the scholarship opportunities available for students attending MN North College – Mesabi Campuses are found on our website at <https://minnesotanorth.edu/campuses/mesabi-range-virginia/foundation>

Dr. Barbara Avern Memorial Scholarship – This \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a non-traditional female student who is planning on attending a four-year college after graduating from MN North College – Mesabi Range.

Jerome “Jerry” Welch Scholarship – This \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a student enrolled in the Industrial Mechanical Technology (Millwright) program at the MN North College – Eveleth Campus.

The Ulseth Family Scholarship – This \$1,250 scholarship will be awarded to a Freshman or Sophomore Engineering student enrolled in the Minnesota North – Mesabi Iron Range Engineering program. This scholarship is funded by a family of three generations of Minnesota North College alumni.

# *Cleveland-Cliffs Increases Scholarship Offerings*

The Mesabi Range Foundation was recently awarded a \$8,000 grant from The Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation to provide student scholarships for students attending Minnesota North College - Mesabi Range campuses.

The Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation was established in 1962 and has been a dedicated resource for charitable giving activities in the United States for over 60 years. The Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation strives to have a positive impact in the areas where Cleveland-Cliffs operates by partnering with and investing in non-profit organizations that enhance educational opportunities, protect and improve the environment, promote human health, and support vibrant communities.

“The Mesabi Range Foundation is pleased to receive this scholarship grant award from The Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation, and will assist us in continuing the mission of our Foundation – in promoting extraordinary educational opportunities for the students attending the Mesabi Range campuses,” said Sue Medure, President of the Mesabi Range College Foundation. “We are proud to offer 50 scholarship programs for students, and assist with projects on our campuses.”



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## *Additional Scholarship Opportunities*

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# *New Range Copper Nickel Grant*

The Mesabi Range Foundation was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant from NewRange Copper Nickel to support the Foundation’s effort to expand the promotion of scholarship opportunities, provide continued program support for the Foundation Office, and help support creative initiatives for the students attending the Mesabi Range campuses.

NewRange Copper Nickel is a joint venture partnership between PolyMet and Teck. Their partnership is advancing the responsible and sustainable development of copper, nickel, and platinum-palladium resources in the mineral-rich Duluth Complex of northern Minnesota. NewRange Copper Nickel’s mission is to responsibly deliver a multi-generational supply of critical minerals that supports the North American clean energy transition, and lead in delivering minerals and metals that accelerate North America’s transition to a low-carbon economy, creating a positive legacy.



# 2024 Norse Women's Basketball

Mesabi Range recruited some great local talent this season in Nakaiyah Nimene from Floodwood, Madeline Kallberg from Ely and Katie Peck from Grand Marais. Nakaiyah is currently the leading scorer at 11.2 points per game and 2.7 steals per game. Deetra Davis is a close second on the team averaging 11.0 points per game. She is Mesabi's team leader in rebounds, averaging 12.3 rebounds per game; and, Elizabeth Hey is Mesabi's assist machine, averaging 3.2 assists per game.

This season, Mesabi Range has a great group of sophomore leadership with five returners from last year:

- Kataja Young from Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Janie Potts from Virginia, Minnesota
- Elizabeth Hey from Carlton, Minnesota
- Deetra Davis from Hibbing, Minnesota
- Kylie Anderson from DeForest, Wisconsin

Even though Mesabi Range has had their ups and downs this year and have been dealt with injury after injury, they keep competing in every game. Currently, they sit fourth in their conference and hold the last playoff spot as of January 28. The second half of the season starts in February and they are looking to go on a playoff run. All five sophomores were All-Academic last year as freshmen and all five sophomores will also be graduating this spring. "That is something to be proud of and is better than any win or loss," claims Head Coach Brad Matuszak.

The Norse Women are set to see plenty of action in their remaining games:

- February 3 --- Mesabi Range versus Central Lakes at Virginia
- February 7 --- Mesabi Range versus Gogebic at Ironwood, Michigan
- February 16 --- Mesabi Range versus Northland at Thief River Falls
- February 17 --- Mesabi Range versus Itasca at Grand Rapids
- February 21 --- Mesabi Range versus Rainy River at International Falls
- TBD versus Vermillion at Mesabi Range (Sophomore Night)





# 2024 Norse Baseball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
Feb 29	DCTC	Lake Myrtle (A)	1:00 pm
March 1	Vermilion	Lake Myrtle (A)	10:30 am
March 2	Lincoln Land	Lake Myrtle (A)	2:45 pm
March 4	Lake Region	Lake Myrtle (A)	9:15 am
March 5	Ridgewater	Lake Myrtle (A)	9:00 am
March 15	St. Johns JV	Collegeville (A)	2:00 pm
March 16	St. Johns JV	Collegeville (A)	12:00 pm
March 19	Vermilion	Aurora (A)	12:00 pm
March 23	Ridgewater	Rock Ridge	1:00 pm
March 23	Northland	Rock Ridge	3:30 pm
March 24	MN State Fergus Falls	Rock Ridge	11:00 am
March 29	Alexandria Tech	Rock Ridge	1:00 pm
March 30	Century	Rock Ridge	11:00 am
April 3	Hibbing	Rock Ridge	10:00 am
April 6	Hibbing	Rock Ridge	12:00 pm
April 7	Hibbing	Rock Ridge	12:00 pm
April 13	Rainy River	Stock Field	12:00 pm
April 14	Rainy River	Int Falls (A)	12:00 pm
April 20	Northland	Stock Field	12:00 pm
April 21	Northland	Stock Field	12:00 pm
April 27	Itasca	Grand Rapids (A)	12:00 pm



# 2024 Norse Softball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
March 23	Northland	Blaine (A)	4:00/6:00 pm
March 24	Vermilion	Blaine (A)	4:00/6:00 pm
April 7	Central Lakes	Home	12:00/2:00 pm
April 13	Vermilion	Home	12:00/2:00 pm
April 14	Rainy River	Int Falls (A)	12:00/2:00 pm
April 21	Hibbing	Home	12:00/2:00 pm
April 24	Hibbing	Hibbing (A)	3:00/5:00 pm
April 27	Rainy River	Home	12:00/2:00 pm
April 28	Central Lakes	Brainerd (A)	12:00/2:00 pm
May 4	Northland	Thief River Falls (A)	12:00/2:00 pm



# Easy Ways to Donate!

The members of the Mesabi Range Foundation are grateful for your support of our students at Mesabi Range. The Mesabi Range College Foundation's mission is to support the Minnesota North College - Mesabi Range Campuses (Virginia and Eveleth) in the work it does to provide an extraordinary education to our students!

Your support has provided students with over \$100,000 in scholarships each year over the past several years. These funds make a real difference to our students, many of whom are adult learners, athletes away from home, and students from our community.

As the College has transitioned from Mesabi Range College to the Minnesota North College-Mesabi Range campuses, several changes have been made to the logo, name, and websites - but the mission of the Foundation and the students who rely on our support has not changed a bit. In fact, the need is great.

The Mesabi Range College Foundation:

- ★ Facilitates approximately \$100,000 of tuition support annually through Scholarships – \$1.7 million to over 4,500 students so far!
- ★ Accepts monetary donations from individuals, businesses, and organizations on behalf of Mesabi Range Campuses.
- ★ Facilitates in-kind donations and grant opportunities for the College.

## Be part of the positive impact!

Make donations online: go to this webpage →

<https://minnesotanorth.edu/campuses/mesabi-range-virginia/foundation/>

Scroll down to "Donations" and click the "+".

Donations +

Click the "Donate Now" button

Donate



- Mail a check made out to *Mesabi Range College Foundation* to Mesabi Range College Foundation Office  
1001 West Chestnut Street, Virginia, MN 55792



- Call Office Coordinator Scott Wirtanen at 218-550-2519



- Email [foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu)

Thank you for your support!

Keep your compass pointed north to find the education you need. Minnesota North College offers programs in a variety of areas of expertise all designed to give you an on-campus college experience unlike anything else you will find. Our six campus locations across Northern Minnesota will ensure you find plenty of off campus activities as well. Let us help you reach your goal of finding an educational experience leading to the career of your dreams. All while you...

## Head North



# Mesabi Range Campus Foundation

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