

# Mesabi Range Foundation Newsletter

Volume 1  
Number 6  
August 2023

## Foundation Update

By Scott Wirtanen, Foundation Coordinator

We hope you all enjoyed a wonderful summer, even with the smoke blowing in from our Canadian friends up north! The spring and summer seasons were busy around campus and in the Foundation office, so I wanted to provide you an update of the things we have been working on.

**Renovation of the Women's Locker Room** – The Foundation donated funds to the Mesabi Range Campus for the renovation of the Women's locker room. The women's locker room was renovated this summer to provide more modern locker facilities for our female athletes.

**Water / Ice Machine in the Commons Area** – The Foundation purchased a new ice machine, located in the commons, ensuring all students being able to keep their water bottles fresh as they proceed throughout the day on campus.

**2023-24 Scholarship Awards** – The Mesabi Range Foundation Board of Directors awarded over \$101,000 in scholarships for the 2023-24 academic year at the Minnesota North - Mesabi Range Campuses. A listing of the 2023-24 scholarship recipients can be found on page 6 and 7.

**On-line Donations through Walmart.com** – The Mesabi Range Foundation teamed up with Walmart.com to raise funds for our Foundation. The Foundation is registered with the Walmart **"Round-Up"** program. You can register on-line and **"Round-Up"** your purchases on Walmart.com or the Walmart app to make a donation to the Foundation. All of your on-line purchases will be rounded up to the nearest whole dollar and the Foundation will receive your donation. Information on how to register to **"Round-Up"** for the Foundation is on page 2.

Continued on page 2.....

## Board Accomplishments and Future Goals

- April/May: Elected John Klarich, Sue Long, and Gary Cerkvenik to the Board of Directors
- July: Scott Wirtanen and Sue Medure attended a Minnesota North College-wide Foundation meeting
- August: Completed the Women's Locker Room Renovations  
Hosted a Student "Back-to-School" BBQ
- October: Review and Revise Scholarship Program
- October—December: Organize and conduct annual appeal
- December: Begin Scholarship application process



### Board Members

Sue Medure . . . . .President  
Luke Chopp . . . . .Vice President  
Gary Picek . . . . .Secretary  
Elizabeth Pluskwik. . . . .Treasurer  
Annie Bachschneider-  
Perkio . . . . . Director  
Gary Cerkvenik . . . . . Director  
Mary Gorman . . . . . Director  
Tom Inforzato . . . . . Director  
John Klarich . . . . .Director  
Brenda Kochevar . . . . .Director  
Sue Long . . . . . Director  
Mark Muhich . . . . .Director  
Kim Pittman . . . . .Director  
Scott Wirtanen . . . Office Coordinator  
Office Phone: 218-550-2519  
Email: [Foundation-  
mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:Foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu)

### What's inside

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# Walmart “Round-Up” Program

**Donate to the Foundation through “Round-Up” at Walmart.com.** Follow these simple steps and help the Foundation continue to provide scholarship assistance for our students, while partnering within our communities to meet the workforce’s and community’s needs.

- Go to <https://www.walmart.com>
- Sign in to your Walmart.com account
- Top right-hand corner – under your name – click on “**Account**”
- Left side of the page – Under Manage Account – Click on “**Giving and Impact**”
- Find a local charity – Search Charities – Click on “**Mesabi Range College Foundation.**”  
Zip code 55768.
- Review the message from Walmart – Click “**Done**”

Please feel free to share this information with your family and friends. The “**Round-Up**” program is available to anyone who has a Walmart.com account or uses the Walmart app. If you have any questions or problems registering, please feel free to contact the Foundation office at 218-550-2519, or email us at [foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu). Thank you for your continued support of the Mesabi Range College Foundation!

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

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## Foundation Update

*Continued from page 1.....*

**Back to School BBQ** – The Foundation will collaborate with the Student Senate and the Iron Range Engineering program to sponsor a Back-to-School BBQ for approximately 250 students on August 31.

**Collaborative Efforts - Alumni Association** – The Mesabi Range Foundation has collaborated with Minnesota State University – Mankato to partner in offering scholarships for the Iron Range Engineering program for several years. This year the Foundation added the Alumni Association to our scholarship application program to provide one website for Mesabi Range students to apply for all the scholarships available to them. The Foundation continues to collaborate with several local civic organizations to provide their scholarship opportunities for students.

**Collaborative Efforts - Minnesota North campuses** – As the six campuses have merged to form Minnesota North College, the Foundations at each campus are also trying to find new ways in which to collaborate and share ideas. During the 2023-24 academic year we will begin sharing one scholarship website for all Minnesota North students. All Minnesota North college-wide scholarship applications will be available to students through this website, as well as the campus specific scholarships that were offered in the past. Through this collaboration there will be a significant savings to each Foundation for their scholarship application expenditures.



# Back-to-School Barbeque



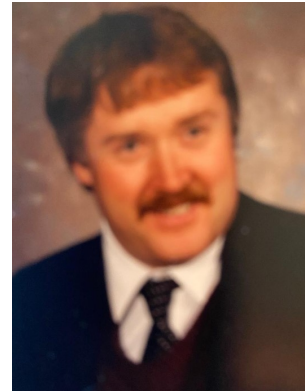


# Welcome New Board Members

## *John Klarich*

John Klarich, a native of Buhl, graduated from Martin Hughes High School and then earned a degree in Education from Bemidji State in 1973. His advanced degrees in School Administration were earned at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

During his professional career, which spanned 50 years, John served as an elementary school teacher, Work Experience Coordinator and Principal at Remer; Elementary Principal/Superintendent at Nashwauk-Keewatin; Elementary Principal/Superintendent at Mt. Iron-Buhl; served two terms as Mayor of Buhl; and finally, served as Superintendent at Ely. A stellar career, for sure!



He previously served as a board member for the Range Association of Municipalities and School Boards and the Arrowhead Regional Computing Consortium (for 20 years each). He has expertise in strategic planning, public relations, marketing, and legislative contacts. Currently John serves as a board member on the Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District, the St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant Committee; and, since 1995 has been a board member for the North East Service Cooperative. Through all of John's experience in education, he is keenly aware of pre-K through Grade 12 educational needs across the entire Iron Range, in addition to the needs of graduating seniors. He is a proud graduate of Hibbing Community College and supports the new visions of the Minnesota North College.



## *Sue Long*

Sue Long, a graduate from Mt. Iron High School, received her Associate in Applied Science Degree in Marketing/Management from Mesabi Community and Technical College in 1987. For ten years she put her skills to use at Herberger's and attained the title of Divisional Manager. Sue always had a passion for helping people and after her daughter and son were born, she returned to school in 1996, graduated two years later as a registered nurse and worked at Essentia Health and Fairview.

When asked to join the board, Sue immediately responded with "Yes! I always enjoy doing what I can to enrich the lives of others." She brings a lot of prior board experience to the foundation because she served as secretary on the board of directors of the United Way of NE MN, was a board member of the Iron Range Mental Health Task Force, and lead the Essentia Health AFSCME Local as Vice President and President.

Currently, Sue lives at Spirit Lake with her husband Dan and her two Yorkshire Terriers and volunteers at the American Legion. Her daughter, Alex, is a Nuclear Engineer at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Washington, D.C., and her son Kennedy is a Music Director in Brainerd, Minnesota. In her spare time, Sue is a casual employee at Canelake's Candies in Virginia.

## *Gary Cerkvenik*

Gary Cerkvenik, a hands-on organizer who brings creativity and passion to issues, is a strong communicator and consensus builder with broad experience in the private and public sectors. He has been a consultant in politics, economic development, federal/state lobbying, and in the energy field. His client work includes the Mesabi Trail, running from the Mississippi to the Boundary Waters, Heliene, Minnesota's only solar module manufacturer, Essentia Health's Vision Northland new Hospital, and most recently the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project.



In politics, he was elected the youngest Chair of the St. Louis County Board to playing a lead role in the 1988 Mike Dukakis for President campaign. He has worked for Congressman Jim Oberstar, Governor Rudy Perpich, Senator Paul Wellstone, Senator John Kerry, the Carter-Mondale campaign, and was the first Executive Director of the Minnesota DFL Party.

From organizing the largest event in the history of New England—Earth Day 1990 in Boston under Earth Day Founder Denis Hayes—to managing the first two stages of the Nature Valley Grand Prix professional bike races, Gary has a unique work history. He taught government and philosophy at the local college and was a co-founder/U.S. patent holder at Spring Creek Outfitters.

Gary's government relations and consulting firm, The Costin Group, Inc., is highly ranked in Minnesota. He holds the distinction of winning the Minnesota Border to Border Triathlon from Luverne, Minnesota on the Iowa border to the Canadian Border. He graduated Cum Laude, BS in Government, Minor in Philosophy, and earned a MA in World War II Studies at Arizona State University.

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*Great Things Are Happening at Mesabi!*

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## *2023—24 Foundation Goals*

As the 2023-24 academic year begins, the Foundation has established the following goals:

- Design a Donor Recognition Wall
- Complete the Athletic Hall of Fame Recognition Wall
- Continue diverse scholarship offerings
- Increase outreach to former graduates and alumni
- Continue collaboration with Minnesota State University—Mankato, the Mesabi Alumni Association and our local civic organizations

# Foundation Scholarship Overview

The Mesabi Range Foundation’s mission is simple – we support the Minnesota North College – Mesabi Range Campuses (Virginia and Eveleth) in the work it does to provide an extraordinary education to our students!

The Foundation, incorporated in 1970, has a rich tradition of supporting the efforts of Mesabi Range Campuses through: scholarships; conveying in-kind donations of physical assets, equipment, technology to various programs; and acting as a fiscal sponsor for grants.

Since its inception, the Foundation has disbursed over **\$2.8 million** in tuition support to over **5,100** students! The Foundation is incorporated under the statutes of the State of Minnesota, classified as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization under IRS guidelines, and operates with the sanction of the Minnesota State System. Thus, all gifts are tax deductible!

In these times of rising tuition costs and decreasing state aid, the Foundation’s role is more important than ever in helping Mesabi Range Lead the Way! Join us in helping Mesabi Range deliver on its mission of extraordinary education.

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*Thank You to Our Wonderful Donors!*

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## 2023—24 Scholarship Recipients

American Association of University Women Scholarship

Recipient: Kelly Ables

The Megan Ashley Anderson Scholarship

Recipients: Johanna Westby and Bear Clemens

The Artisan Scholarship

Recipient: Ethan Trenberth

The Marjorie Bangs Schmitt Scholarship

Recipient: Carter Orent

The Carl G. Carlson Scholarship

Recipients: Jordan Howard and Brenden Swan

The Roy K. Carlson Scholarship

Recipients: Samantha McIntyre and Lance Young

The Ruth Kaniainen Education, Bob Clark Journalism Scholarship

Recipient: Morgan Heckman

The Cleveland Cliffs Mining Scholarship

Recipients: Nathan Johnson and Dillan Olson

The Dr. George A Erickson/Emil A Erickson Scholarship

Recipient: Carter Orent

The Eveleth Elks Club Scholarship

Recipient: Russell Koski

The Barb Garni Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Madison Asleson

The Ray Garni Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Hudson Line

The Marian E. Hajj Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Sydney Krekelberg

The Archie Hill Scholarship

Recipients: Rachel Wulfekuhle and Tynan Selsing

Continued on page 7.....

# 2023—24 Scholarship Recipients

The Iron Range Engineering Scholarship

Recipients: Hudson Line and Carter Orent

The Iron Range Rotary Scholarship

Recipients: Colton Langanki and Jazlynn Svaleson

The Jeremy Jindra Scholarship

Recipients: Destiny Collins and Brayden Carson

The Johnson Family Scholarship

Recipients: Carter Orent, William Bittmann and Tynan Selsing

The Joseph & Emily Kraker Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Jacob Majerle

The Joe Kraker Jr Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Dillan Olson

The Gene Kishel and Brynhild Kishel Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Kristchan Lenarz

The Eino Kopponen Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Deetra Davis

The Lake Country Power Les Beach Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Jacob Mackai

The LaMarche Creek Foundation

Recipients: Macy Westby and Alexa Ismil

The Andrew A. Lang Scholarship

Recipient: Crystal Hillman

The Joanne Lindgren Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Sydney Kregelberg

Mesabi Range College Foundation Scholarship

Recipients: Lovely Tshibanda and Tynan Selsing

Mesabi Range Campus Faculty and Staff Scholarship

Recipients: July Abernathy and Nakaiyah Nimene

The Tony & Joyce Nigro Education Scholarship

Recipient: Dana Markasich and Morgan Heckman

The Rod and Jackie Orezovich Scholarship

Recipient: Jazlynn Svaleson

The Louanne Picek Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Lovely Tshibanda

The Pro-Print Scholarship

Recipient: Johanna Westby

The Rainy River Recovery Scholarship

Recipient: Racheal Petty

The Joseph J. Rebovich Memorial Scholarship

Recipient: Carson Howard

The Matt Rozinka Memorial Scholarship

Recipients: Kylee Huusko and Rachel Wulfekuhle

The Tom Rukavina Engineering Scholarship

Recipient: Kristchan Lenarz

The Christine Springhetti Memorial Nursing Scholarship

Recipient: Jordan Howard

The Dave Stillman Scholarship

Recipient: Jaxson McCray

The Trenti Law Firm Scholarship

Recipient: Kendra Rosati

The Twin Cities Iron Ranger Scholarship

Recipients: Anna Fink and Toby Inforzato

The Virginia Ladies of Kaleva Scholarship

Recipient: Alex Yrjanson

The Virginia Lions Club Scholarship

Recipient: Anna Fink

The Voiture 40 and 8 Scholarship

*Two nursing scholarship recipients will be selected in the fall semester*

The Walker, Giroux and Hahne Scholarship

Recipient: Thomas Johnson

The Dan & Yvonne Webb Engineering Scholarship

Recipients: Kristchan Lenarz, Madelien Millard, Mason Gladen, Matthew Haley, Scott Waara and Amarah Langner

The Bill & Joan Wirtanen Memorial Scholarship

Recipients: Kate Peck and Hudson Line

# Fall Sports



Tom and Sara

Mesabi Range’s fall sports began on August 6 with 54 football players and 15 volleyball players showing up for preseason practice. Both squads brought a lot of enthusiasm, energy, and passion to their workouts in anticipation of a successful season.

The Norse Football team is led by head coach, Tom Inforzato, who is entering his seventh year at Mesabi. This year’s recruits include an interesting mix of local players, out-of-state players, and international players. Yes, international players—four from Canada, two from London, England, and one from Du Bhai. Tom claims, “My expectations are high for a good season. This group is coming together as a team, both on and off the field.” Sophomores Ty Selsing (Milwaukee),

Braydan Carson (Phoenix), and Ethan Trenberth (Hibbing) see a lot of team camaraderie this year and agree that “We are lucky to have coaches who care more about us as people rather than just football players!”

The Norse Volleyball team, coached by Sara Matuszak, is looking to defend their Northern Division Championship. The team has three sophomores and 12 freshmen and they are excited to meet the challenges that await them in the upcoming season. Sara states, “Although we have a young squad, I see so much potential for us to make a run for the conference championship and have a strong showing at the region tournament. We are setting our goals high, with the ultimate goal of getting to the national tournament.” Go Norse!!

## 2023 Norse Football Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>SITE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug 26	St. Scholastica	Duluth (A)	10:00 am
Sept 2	Vermilion	Mt. Iron	1:30 pm
Sept 9	MN West	Worthington (A)	11:00 am
Sept 16	Rochester	Mt. Iron	2:00 pm
Sept 23	Central Lakes	Mt. Iron	1:30 pm
Oct 1	St. John’s JV	Collegeville (A)	12:00 pm
Oct 7	MN State FF	Fergus Falls (A)	2:00 pm
Oct 14	NDSCS	Wahpeton (A)	2:00 pm
Oct 22	Quarter Finals	TBD	TBD
Oct 29	Semi Finals	TBD	TBD
Nov 5	State Championship	TBD	TBD



## *2023 Norse Volleyball Schedule*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>OPPONENT</b>	<b>SITE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
August 15	Scrimmage	Virginia	9:00 am
August 18	St. Cloud Technical	Virginia	5:00 pm
August 18	Vermilion	Virginia	8:00 pm
August 25	Century	Coon Rapids (A)	10:30 am
August 25	Anoka-Ramsey	Coon Rapids (A)	3:00 pm
August 26	Ridgewater	Coon Rapids (A)	8:00 am
August 26	Iowa Lakes	Coon Rapids (A)	1:00 pm
August 30	Hibbing	Virginia	6:30 pm
Sept 2	DCTC	Inver Hills CC (A)	12:00 pm
Sept 2	Ellsworth	Inver Hills CC (A)	2:00 pm
Sept 6	Central Lakes	Virginia	6:30 pm
Sept 8	Alex Tech	Alexandria (A)	5:00 pm
Sept 9	Northland	Thief River Falls (A)	12:00 pm
Sept 13	Rainy River	International Falls (A)	6:30 pm
Sept 15	Itasca	Virginia	6:30 pm
Sept 20	Gogebic	Virginia	6:30 pm
Sept 22	DCTC	Virginia	5:00 pm
Sept 22	Rainy River	Virginia	8:00 pm
Sept 23	Vermilion	Ely (A)	12:00 pm
Sept 27	Hibbing	Hibbing (A)	6:30 pm
Sept 29	Alex Tech	Virginia	6:30 pm
Sept 30	Northland	Virginia	12:00 pm
Oct 4	Central Lakes	Brainerd (A)	3:30 pm
Oct 4	St. Cloud Tech	Brainerd (A)	5:30 pm
Oct 6	Itasca	Grand Rapids (A)	6:30 pm
Oct 7	Sisseton Wahpeton College	Virginia	11:00 am
Oct 7	Lake Region State	Virginia	5:00 pm
Oct 11	Rainy River	Virginia	6:30 pm
Oct 18	Gogebic	Gogebic (A)	6:00 pm
Oct 19	Vermilion	Virginia	6:30 pm

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**AS IT APPEARED IN THE**  
**MESABI TRIBUNE AND HOMETOWN FOCUS**  
**JULY 11, 2023**

**MESABI RANGE FOUNDATION RECEIVES \$2,000 GRANT**

The Mesabi Range Foundation was recently awarded a \$2,000 grant from Great River Energy 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.

Great River Energy is a not-for-profit wholesale electric power cooperative that provides electricity to 27 member-owner distribution cooperatives. Together, their systems provide power to approximately two-thirds of Minnesota geographically and parts of Wisconsin, serving 700,000 families, farms and businesses.

“The Foundation is pleased to receive this grant award from Great River Energy, and will put it towards continuing the mission of our Foundation, in promoting extraordinary educational opportunities for the students, faculty, staff, and administration of 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, including the completion of the Lesar Student Success Center and renovations in our athletic department.”

The Foundation, through its endowment, individual donors and local organizations, provides over \$100,000 each year in scholarship opportunities to students attending the Mesabi Range campuses. In addition, the Foundation assists with creative initiatives on the Mesabi Range campuses, including the Student Food Pantry, emergency student loan program, mini-grants for books and supplies, and scholarship support for students.

More information regarding the Mesabi Range Foundation can be found at <https://minnesotanorth.edu/campuses/mesabi-range-virginia/foundation>.

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*Thank You Great River Energy!*

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# 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 – \$2.8 million to over 5,100 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.

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

Mesabi Range Campus Foundation  
1001 Chestnut Street  
Virginia, MN 55792  
Phone: 218-550-2519  
E-mail: [Foundation-  
mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:Foundation-mesabirange@minnesotanorth.edu)