

SUMMER 2018

# NEXUS

**COMMITMENT TURNS 25**  
Flagship scholarship marks milestone



**DO TO LEARN**  
Experiential Learning strives  
for critical mass

**DENNOS DAZZLES**  
New galleries get rave reviews



Northwestern  
Michigan  
College

# NEXUS

THE NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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**For correspondence and address updates:**

1701 E. Front St.  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
(231) 995-1021

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Produced by MyNorth Media, 125 Park St., Suite 155,  
Traverse City, MI 49684. 231.941.8174. [mynorth.com](http://mynorth.com)



ELISABETH KURKOWSKI  
COMMITMENT SCHOLAR

*Noun.* **com-mit-ment.**

*Synonyms:* **Allegiance, dedication**

- a. an agreement or pledge to do something in the future
- b. something pledged
- c. the state or an instance of being obligated or emotionally impelled

That's the definition Merriam-Webster provides, and this issue of *Nexus* is full of living color examples. Not just the cover story, which details how NMC's venerable Commitment Scholarship program is being retooled so it's even more effective as it turns the quarter-century mark. We also share stories of:

- Commitment of dollars – the spectacular new galleries at the expanded Denno's Museum. If you haven't been yet, grab your summer guests and go! In the meantime, check out our story on p. 8.
- Commitment of effort and risk – the p. 12 story on Experiential Learning, which is approaching critical mass on campus. When I was in college, the semester ended with selling back textbooks and tossing lecture notes. Experiential learning aims to offer experiences that will stay with students for a lifetime.

As summer beckons, we appreciate you committing time to learn more about your community college by reading *Nexus*. Enjoy northern Michigan's favorite season.

COMMITMENT





- 2 Aerial View:  
Learning at LochenHeath
- 4 Letter from the President
- 5 Notes & Notables
- 7 My NMC:  
Julie Doyle, Coordinator / College for Kids
- 8 Art. Culture:  
Dennos Expansion Delights
- 10 Inside My Bag:  
Audio Technology



- 12 **FEATURE**  
Do to Learn
- 16 **COVER FEATURE**  
Committed to Commitment



- 22 Dualie Profile:  
Rocking Dual Enrollment
- 24 Alumni Notes
- 27 Past. Present. Future:  
Nursing



- 28 **FEATURE**  
NMC's Economic Impact
- 30 From Our Kitchens:  
Ed Sura, Chef de Cuisine
- 32 NMC Events Calendar
- 33 Get Social



# LEARNING AT LOCHENHEATH

In August, Michigan State University turfgrass management students will return to LochenHeath Golf Club in Williamsburg to complete a one-of-a-kind Unmanned Aerial Systems in agriculture training offered by NMC.

In the comprehensive course, NMC instructors teach students how to build and fly drones, certify them as pilots and provide hands-on training in multiple agriculture applications, from data collection to imagery to monitoring and surveying, all in a matter of months. Students train in settings specific to their studies. Turfgrass students are at LochenHeath (shown here at drone altitude of 400 feet), while fruit and vegetable students visit orchards and vineyards.

Enrollment in UAS in Agriculture training is expected to double this year, and continue to grow in 2019. "There's nowhere at MSU where a student can go to receive UAS training," said Brian Matchett, NMC plant science and MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology program coordinator. "It made perfect sense to partner with NMC to provide the personnel, the expertise and the aircraft to train our students." **N**

[nmc.edu/uas](http://nmc.edu/uas)









**BUSINESS INSTRUCTOR KRISTY MCDONALD, THIRD FROM LEFT, AND HER STUDENTS HAVE ORGANIZED THE BIG LITTLE HERO RACE AS AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROJECT AND FUNDRAISER. OVER FOUR YEARS, THEY'VE RAISED \$90,000 FOR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS. READ MORE ABOUT EL ON P. 12.**

## DO TO LEARN



**TIMOTHY J. NELSON,  
PRESIDENT**

this environment. To help us find the answers to that question, we have partnered with five other community colleges in the U.S. and the Business Innovation Factory, a consulting group in Rhode Island, to learn a new model based on design theory.

It's 2018. Ten years ago, who could have imagined the changes we would see over the coming decade? How we shop, how we connect with friends, how we use technology, how we work and how we live are all transforming. If there is one thing for certain, the rate and breadth of change is increasing and transforming our world.

We at NMC are constantly asking ourselves how to continue to make learning and education relevant in

A first step is to start by asking a simple, yet often overlooked question: What do our students tell us makes the most relevant and meaningful learning experiences? So we asked them through intense interviews and observations. They told us they want to use what they are learning. They want to practice it. They want more than the transfer and accumulation of knowledge. They want to do in order to learn.

These insights, along with national research, have driven us to establish a faculty-led project that seeks to incorporate meaningful experiential learning throughout our curriculum. Following a disciplined design process, we will establish rapid prototypes in areas of community projects, team and leadership skills development, project management and more.

NMC faculty and staff have always been sensitive to the development of life skills for our students. This is simply a more disciplined and comprehensive approach. We will continue to design and redesign what we do in order to meet the expectations of our stakeholders. **N**





### NMC GRADUATE IS STATE'S TOP STUDENT

An NMC student has again been named the top community college student in the state, the third time in the last four years.

Alexandra Briggs, a 2018 liberal arts graduate, is Michigan's 2018 New Century Scholar. The 21-year-old from Elk Rapids received a \$2,250 scholarship to continue her education in leadership studies. Briggs is president of NMC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international community college honor society, and an NMC

Commitment Scholar, one of a cohort of promising, mostly first-generation college students awarded full NMC scholarships while in high school. Read more about Commitment Scholars on p. 17

Previous NMC New Century Scholar winners are Roxanne Scrivener, 2016; Kathy Tahtinen, 2015; Jessica Abfalter, 2013; Nicholeen Frusti, 2005 and Sally Beemon, 2004.



### RUTKOWSKIS NAMED FELLOWS

Longtime Dennon Museum Center supporters Dr. Edward and Sharon Rutkowski are the 2018 recipients of the NMC Fellow award, the college's highest honor.

The Traverse City residents are founding donors to the Dennon Museum Center, making a planned gift commitment for the Thomas A. Rutkowski Discovery Gallery, named in memory of their late son, in 1992.

Concurrent with the expansion of the Dennon, the Rutkowskis again made a significant contribution to upgrade the exhibits of the Discovery Gallery.

Beyond the Dennon, the Rutkowskis have supported the college since 1984. They are loyal attendees of the annual Lobdell's Scholarship dinner, supporters of Munson Medical Center, where Dr. Rutkowski was a trustee for 25 years and a general surgeon now retired, and the Leelanau Conservancy. Sharon was the French teacher and a trustee at The Pathfinder School and co-founded the Young People's Theater Series in 1976. *Past winners: [nmc.edu/fellows](http://nmc.edu/fellows)*



### OKERSTROM FINE ARTS BUILDING SELECTED FOR ARCHITECTURAL TOME

Constructed on main campus in 1972, the building was one of 34 modern structures selected for "Michigan Modern: An Architectural Legacy," published in March.

It was designed by a group of architects that included Walter Gropius, who gained fame as the founder of Germany's Bauhaus school of art and architecture. The Bauhaus school also pioneered the open concept that was intended to allow art and design students to learn from each other. Pictured is the Walter Beardslee Fine Arts Auditorium. Beardslee, one of NMC's original four faculty members, had a chance meeting with a Gropius architect which led to the firm taking on the NMC project.

In 2000 the building was named for Shirley Okerstrom, a former member and the first female chairwoman of NMC's Board of Trustees. Purchase the book at [michiganmodern.org](http://michiganmodern.org)



### THREE NAMED 2018 OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

The award recognize alumni with significant professional achievements and/or exemplary leadership in the local or global community.

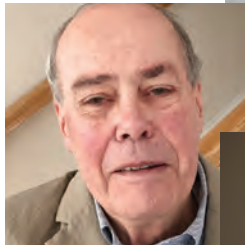
Ed Reynolds, 1973-78: Reynolds is the president and CEO of Quantum Sails, the world's second-largest sail maker with headquarters in Traverse City and operations internationally. Reynolds turned heads and broke into the elite sailing market in 2008 with a surprise victory on the MedCup Circuit. Quantum has prospered ever since, achieving double-digit growth from 2007 to 2015.

Dr. Robert Tanis, 1958-59: The son of NMC's first president, Tanis went on to a

career in the sciences which culminated on the Harvard Medical School administrative team. In 2015 Tanis established the President Emeritus Preston N. Tanis Scholarship, a \$100,000 endowment providing scholarships for NMC students studying the sciences.

Trevor Tkach, 1995-97: Tkach is the president and CEO of Traverse City Tourism, a position he began in 2016. Prior to that he spent a decade at the National Cherry Festival, including five years as Executive Director, where he won respect for building bridges between the festival and the community.

*Past winners: [nmc.edu/outstandingalumni](http://nmc.edu/outstandingalumni)*



FROM TOP:  
ED REYNOLDS  
DR. ROBERT TANIS  
TREVOR TKACH



### MATH, SCIENCE INSTRUCTORS WIN 2018 FACULTY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Math instructor Steve Drake is the Imogene Wise Faculty Excellence Award winner. Biology instructor Julia Sheerin is the Adjunct Faculty Excellence Award winner. Chosen by a student selection committee, criteria for both awards includes teaching excellence, rapport with students, innovation in the classroom and a sense of dedication.

Drake began his career at NMC in 1971. The longest-tenured member of the NMC faculty, he also earned the distinction in 2010. Sheerin began her career in 2004.



### NMC WRAPS UP INSTRUCTION IN CHINA

About 50 Chinese students are poised to earn an NMC associate's degree after NMC completed its pioneering overseas delivery of instruction in technical programming.

"I don't think anyone in the United States has done this, in terms of a technical, applied program being delivered," said Hans VanSumeren, one of five NMC faculty and staff members who visited China in February and March to complete the instruction begun last June at the Yellow River Conservancy Technical Institute in Kaifeng.



### NURSING INSTRUCTOR JOINS NAMI BOARD

Nursing instructor Carole McKee was appointed to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) board. McKee is the Mental Health nursing instructor in NMC's Health Occupations division. She joined the faculty in 2005 as an adjunct and became a full-time instructor in 2015. She

said the appointment dovetails well with her instructor role, since nurses will frequently encounter people with mental health issues in their professional life.



### NEXUS WINS GOLD

NMC's newest publication has been named the top community college magazine by the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations.

Produced by NMC's Public Relations, Marketing & Communications department, Nexus received the 2017 gold Paragon award.

*Past issues: [nmc.edu/nexus](http://nmc.edu/nexus)*





# MY NMC

Julie Doyal  
Coordinator / College for Kids

Every summer, more than 1,800 children ages 3-17 flock to campus for classes in art, technology, science, outdoor education and much, much more (pictured—a Quidditch match, part of a class for fourth, fifth and sixth graders based on the *Harry Potter* books.) Since 2005, Doyal has coordinated what she calls “disguised learning” where kids have fun yet parents feel confident about the quality of the content. Most are taught by certified teachers. Doyal’s also proud of a junior counselor program she developed in 2010 that gives teachers an extra set of eyes and hands, especially in classes for the youngest children.

“I am a former teacher, so that part of working with kids, and working with teachers to deliver quality programming has always been close to my heart,” said Doyal, who retired in 2018.

Interested? Classes run each week of summer through Aug. 17. Check out [nmc.edu/kids](http://nmc.edu/kids) for options and to register. **N**





## DENNOS DELIGHTS:

In the expanded Denmos Museum Center, vision is captured visually.

New floor-to-ceiling windows in the northeast corner offer a view of NMC's main campus and iconic pine trees. The captivating view is a dramatic change from the museum's original 1991 design—situated as if it had its back to campus. The new visual connection reinforces a key goal of the expansion: Enhance the connection to teaching.

More museum windows line a new Front Street promenade, which envelopes two new permanent collection galleries. While rotating exhibits will continue in the original galleries—National Geographic's *Monster Fish* is on deck for summer—the new spaces make possible long-term display of the growing collection of works the Denmos owns. That creates an opportunity for NMC instructors to design curriculum around a sculpture, a photo or a painting.

THE  
**Denmos**  
MUSEUM CENTER





## Expansion opens to rave reviews

“(When) exhibits come and go, there’s nothing you can build into a syllabus. Now that’s possible,” said Executive Director Gene Jenneman.

Educational outcomes could even help guide future acquisitions, he said. “Now there’s an opportunity for faculty to become curators,” Jenneman said. “That should be the future of the conversation.”

The permanent collection galleries are also expected to spur new gifts. “Nobody wants to give a gift of a fine work and have it sit in storage,” Jenneman said.

He doesn’t intend to crowd the new galleries, however. The airy, open feel, helped along with the significant use of glass and 18-foot ceilings, are inspired by the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. “They’re anything but ‘filled up.’ I want what’s there to be able to sing,” Jenneman said.

Funded with lead gifts from Diana and Richard Milock and Barbara and Dudley Smith, the expansion also increased exhibition space for the Dennos’s signature Inuit art collection, added space for the Museum Store and storage, a new loading dock and a classroom that will enhance NMC’s Audio Technology program.

“I’m thrilled this has happened,” said Jenneman, 68, the Museum’s founding director. The expansion, for which he commissioned conceptual drawings more than a decade ago, will cap his Dennos career. **N**

*For current exhibitions, concerts  
and events visit [dennosmuseum.org](http://dennosmuseum.org)*





# INSIDE MY BAG AUDIO TECHNOLOGY



Find out more about Audio Technology degrees and certificates at [nmc.edu/audio](http://nmc.edu/audio)



## MICHALA JAMISON, 20 AUDIO TECHNOLOGY STUDENT

If you're at a show at the National Cherry Festival next month, you might hear Michala Jamison's work—but not on stage. The NMC Audio Technology student will be helping with sound and lighting from her favorite place—backstage. Jamison, 20, a homeschooled student from Traverse City, just finished her second year in the program. She also works as an Audio Lab assistant. **N**

From left to right, Michala's backpack, which she inherited from a friend, contains:

1. Laptop, small notebook (one of three she carries) for lists and phone numbers, Earplugs, for running live shows
2. Earbuds
3. Phone
4. Keys—as the assistant in the Audio Tech lab, she's responsible for securing equipment
5. Nucleus board for sound editing
6. Bandana she keeps tied around backpack strap as emergency hairband
7. Textbook for Digital Audio II class
8. Large notebook for class notes
9. Leatherman with pliers and screwdrivers for adjusting mic stands and other live show stage equipment



# DO TO LEARN DO TO LEARN DO TO LEARN

"It's helped me grow. It really has, just on all levels, professionally and personally."

— ABBY GUDITH, BUSINESS STUDENT



## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

### Flips classroom scripts, advances across campus

Voices in headphones clamped over Kami Azevedo's pink hair whisper in the 20-year-old's ears that she's been chosen. She's special. She's the one.

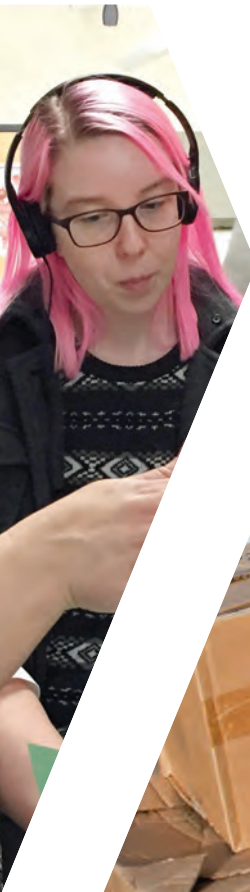
Suddenly, the flattery stops. The voices' solicitous tone ends. Now through the headphones, the voices tell the NMC psychology student she's wrong, bad and dirty, adding in obscenities for good measure.

Positive or negative, sometimes not even intelligible, the recorded voices distract Azevedo (above) from the questions her class partner's asking simultaneously. Other student pairs call the hearing-voices experience frustrating, confusing, even scary.

Reaching those conclusions themselves is the whole point of the simulation, which students underwent to experience the abnormal psychology they were studying.

"They'll remember that a lot longer than seeing a (video) clip or hearing me talk about it," said social sciences instructor Lisa Blackford.





## INCUBATION

## ACCELERATION

Welcome to Experiential Learning, a high-impact instructional style that until recently existed mostly in pockets at NMC, and typically in applied fields like visual communications and culinary, or health fields like dental assisting or nursing—from whom Blackford borrowed the hearing-voices simulation. But since late 2016, a core group of faculty have been working to take EL to critical mass campus-wide.

Co-chair Kristy McDonald, a business instructor, sums up EL as flipping the “learn to do” instructional style that’s dominated higher education for decades into “do to learn”—skills like teamwork, communication and flexibility. Not only do those skills transfer between job settings, cultivating them benefits students holistically, as citizens, family members and for other roles they’ll take on in everyday life. Along the EL way, students are engaged and learning is deepened compared to a traditional, lecture-style class.

“Traditionally, education has put the emphasis on content, and skills are very secondary,” said Brandon Everest, a social sciences instructor who co-chairs the

EL group with McDonald. Research shows, however, that skewing the approach toward building skills yields better results, especially with first-generation students.

“It changes their investment in learning,” Everest said. “Students want more of it, and teachers who do it want to do it more.”

Blackford is one of those teachers. As a social work instructor, she’s collaborated with Everest and others on EL projects for three years, notably Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in November. The success of that led her to experiment with incorporating EL in her psychology class for the first time this past semester. In addition to the hearing voices simulation, her students also visited NMC’s Child Care center to test some of the child development theories covered in class.

“It motivates me to see the transformation,” Blackford said. “Instead of students just passing through your class and hoping it’s making a difference, I’m very confident it’s changing students’ lives.”







HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WALK

## EL AT A GLANCE

- Students work in teams
- Project-based
- Opportunities to apply knowledge directly
- Often “flipped” classrooms where faculty guide and help rather than impose and instruct



FOOD DRIVE



BIG LITTLE HERO RACE

“You were actually doing something that mattered to the community. You got to see what your results were.”

– KYLE BROWNLEY, NMC BUSINESS STUDENT

McDonald uses EL in four classes. Her best known are semester-long projects that also benefit the broader community. Over the last five years, regional food pantries have come to rely on an annual fall food drive organized by McDonald’s students to fill up their shelves for the holidays. The food drive’s spring semester counterpart, the Big Little Hero Race, has raised more than \$90,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan in just four years. McDonald sees other benefits, too.

“Grades go up. You have no absences,” she said. “(Students) stay in touch. They go out together.” They might even call their teacher from a downtown restaurant, where a project strategy session wound up.

As Blackford and McDonald’s approaches show, EL can be scaled from an individual assignment to a whole-course syllabus. Online classes can be experiential, too.

In 2017, as Everest and McDonald embarked on their critical mass challenge, they visited Guttman Community College, a branch of the City University of New York founded on principles of experiential learning. NMC’s not far away from what they saw there. The renovation of West Hall into the Innovation Center, which gets underway this summer, will accelerate the adoption of EL, with the flexibly-designed space open 24-7. With a building that doesn’t close, students can keep their project buzz alive and skip the trip downtown.

“Any student coming to NMC will be touched by this high-impact approach to learning,” Everest said.

“We are going to be a leader for EL,” McDonald vowed. ■



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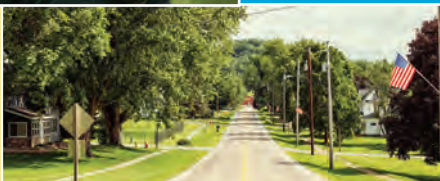
TALENT



BUSINESS



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Kathryn Ianni  
Class of 2015



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ELISABETH KURKOWSKI



ISAAC DEDENBACH





# COMMITTED TO COMMITMENT

## SCHOLARSHIP STRIVES FOR MORE STUDENT SUCCESS

“

**I probably wouldn't have gone to college if it wasn't for Commitment. It really opened doors for me and put a light at the end of the tunnel.**

Elisabeth Kurkowsi  
NMC Class of 2020 / Alba HS 2017

When Frankfort High School counselor Ann Gwaltney gets a phone call from someone in tears, she can often guess who's on the line.

It's likely the parent of an NMC Commitment Scholar, who's just been notified that their student has been named to the program, which offers a full-tuition scholarship to northwest Michigan students who show promise, are typically the first in their families to go to college, and have financial need.

"Usually I have a parent contact me, crying, saying 'Thank you so much!' " said Gwaltney, who in her counselor role nominates students for consideration. "It is really meaningful. We are able to reach kids who might think college is unattainable for them."

Since 1993, Commitment has offered that attainment opportunity to 1,500 students from Frankfort to Northport, Alba to Kalkaska. Yet Northwestern Michigan College is pushing for even higher levels of performance as Commitment enters its second quarter-century. This year, administrators made significant changes to the program's structure and requirements, changes designed to encourage more students who are offered the scholarship to take full advantage of it and complete a degree.

"I'm excited that NMC keeps looking at how to tweak it to make more students successful," said academic adviser Taylor Nash. In one of those changes, Nash was assigned to be a dedicated academic advisor for Commitment students. He will help students stay on their academic path, fostering engagement and completion.

Other Commitment changes:

- Recruiting students in ninth grade instead of eighth, concentrating all the program's players into the high school years.
- Increasing the high school cumulative GPA requirement to 2.5 from 2.33.
- Adding an application/interview process. At each of the 18 participating high schools, counselors like Gwaltney still nominate a pool of candidates, but Commitment coordinator Kevin D'Alessandro leads an application and interview process from which the final recipients are selected.
- Engaging students after enrollment. Enrolled students speak at meetings and events for future Commitment cohorts and chaperone events like the Campus Takeover for incoming juniors and seniors and the overnight camp experience for just-inducted students.

Many of the changes were initiated by D'Alessandro, who also oversees Early College at NMC, another program for high school students. By boosting the GPA requirement and adding the interview step, which includes parents and guardians, he's aiming to make the program—and NMC—more prestigious.

"It's a checks and balances system. It's a lot more rigorous," D'Alessandro said of the revamped selection process. "My goal is making sure (Commitment) is a program, not just, 'here is your blank check.'" ➤







1,500 STUDENTS SERVED, 1993-2018 • 60 SCHOLAR INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN 2018



\$3,000/YEAR: AVERAGE VALUE OF TUITION



KEVIN D'ALESSANDRO

COORDINATOR TRAVEL MILES: 3,227



864 SLICES OF PIZZA SERVED AT FOUR SOARING SATURDAYS IN 2017







When I got the Commitment Scholarship and brought it home, my mom and I just cried. We were so happy and grateful.

Olivia Cesaro  
NMC Class of 2021 / Bellaire HS 2017



The best decision I've ever made is going to NMC.

Alex Briggs  
NMC Class of 2018 / Elk Rapids HS 2015

“I definitely support the interview process,” said Katie Lee, counselor at Forest Area Schools, noting it makes the idea of college more concrete for students to whom the future feels far away.

D’Alessandro also refined a year-round program so that each of the four incoming classes plus currently enrolled students are supported. (See calendar box p. 21.) More than 400 students are in some phase of Commitment. About 75 are currently attending, and the remainder are in the pipeline, including the class of 2021, inducted just last month.

It’s important to have a comprehensive program that offers both academic and social support because many Commitment Scholars are making a huge leap. Elisabeth Kurkowski’s graduating class of 2017 at Alba High School had just seven students. Still, she was the valedictorian, and felt like she was prepared for college expectations. First semester, she got a jarring awakening.

“First semester was really hard. Procrastination was really bad. Once I got ahold of how college works, it went a lot better,” she said.

Kurkowski, who’s pursuing a degree in surgical technology, felt better adjusted second semester, after having learned some time-management lessons the hard way and enrolling in a yoga class to help with stress. She said her fellow Commitment students were a saving grace during that tough first semester.

“It really helped to see a familiar face walking around,” she said.

Since Commitment scholarships cover tuition and fees, it can make it affordable for some students to live on campus, which helps students transition. Isaac Dedenbach graduated from Leland High School, one of 28 in his class. There’s more students than that on his dorm floor in East Hall. He enjoys playing intramural soccer and hanging out at the Civic Center skate park right across from campus.

“It’s just a little step of independence,” said Dedenbach, whose summer job in Leland’s Fishtown and winter gig as a weekend snowboarding instructor pays

for room and board, while Commitment covers tuition. He’s also appreciated learning from his Chinese roommate—cultural diversity Leland lacked.

“A lot of opportunities I didn’t have in Leland,” said Dedenbach, who’s considering history, anthropology or archaeology as a major.

Abby Siddal of Manton agreed. She considered attending Michigan Technological University in Houghton. But additional scholarships, which helped cover her first semester of on-campus housing, too, convinced her to take advantage of her Commitment Scholarship.

“Tech’s really expensive and really big, and it’s eight hours away,” said Siddal, who’s studying engineering and jumped into campus life with both feet. She enjoyed movie nights and parties at East, joined the Women in STEM student group, and traveled to Washington D.C. with them in January for a conference: Wonder Women in Tech.

“I like that there’s a lot of stuff to do around here,” said Siddal, who wrapped up her freshman year with a study abroad experience in Indonesia.

Post-NMC, Commitment Scholars choose a range of options, from transferring to working. Alex Briggs graduated this year. In her three years at NMC she not only earned her associate’s degree, but became president of NMC’s chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international community college honor society, served as a resident adviser in North Hall, and worked in the Advising Center. She’s still considering where to continue her education in leadership studies next.

“I found such a sense of community here,” said Briggs, a 2015 Elk Rapids High School graduate. “The best decision I’ve ever made is going to NMC.”

Yet she’s also eager for the next step.

“I kind of want to spread my wings and see what opportunities I can make for myself,” she said. “I’m really excited to see where it goes from here.” **N**







# OPENING DOORS: Commitment program

Fifty miles of forest and farms separate Fife Lake schools from Frankfort, yet counselors in the two rural districts tell the same story: Students capable of college who can't afford it.

"A lot of the kids that are college-bound, that's their biggest worry, the finances," said Katie Lee, counselor at Forest Area Schools, one of 18 districts that award NMC Commitment scholarships to promising, mostly first-generation college students with financial need.

For a couple students every year, Lee and Ann Gwaltney, a Frankfort High School counselor, can be the genie in the bottle, nominating them for Commitment scholarships — a ticket to an all-tuition-paid associate's degree. Yet for just as many more, they can't.

"I had two slots that I could have nominated students for, and I had six students, all worthy," Gwaltney said.

Commitment is 100 percent donor-funded and currently supports about 40 students per year. It peaked at 100 a couple years ago and Rebecca Teahen, executive director of the NMC Foundation, would like to see the number rise again.

"This program truly offers some of the greatest potential for life-changing outcomes, which is why we believe so strongly in continuing to raise resources to sustain and grow it," Teahen said.

That will require millions in endowment funds, or up to \$350,000 in annual support. Marti Keep is a current supporter, as a trustee of the D.P. Sheetz Family Foundation, established by her mother. Mary Sheetz would have fit the profile of a Commitment Scholar.

"She had such a heart for people who couldn't go to college," Keep said of her mother. Meanwhile, "My dad always valued community colleges," graduating from a Pennsylvania community college en route to earning his Ph.D.





## COMMITMENT CALENDAR

### FALL

- Commitment coordinator visits all 18 participating high schools twice
- “Soaring Saturdays” held for sophomores—four on-campus sessions of tours, financial aid and dual enrollment information and panel discussions featuring currently enrolled Commitment Scholars.

### WINTER

- High school counselors identify prospective Commitment candidates.
- Interviews held

### SPRING

- Coordinator revisits high schools and meets with selected Scholars twice
- Evenings @NMC conducted for senior Scholars
- Induction of new Commitment Scholar class (freshmen) on NMC campus
- Scholars volunteer at NMC Barbecue

### SUMMER

- Campus Takeover overnight for junior and senior Scholars
- Overnight camping trip to Leelanau Outdoor Center for new Scholar class
- Welcome weekend for fall semester

[nmc.edu/commitment](http://nmc.edu/commitment)

## seeks investment to expand

“(Commitment) really combined their two feelings,” Keep said. “All in all, I just think it’s a fabulous program.”

Ed Walker was on the Foundation board and helped establish and fund Commitment 25 years ago. Noting he was lucky to receive an athletic scholarship to college himself, Walker said the incentive Commitment offers remains necessary today.

“It was really set up for students who showed capability of succeeding,” Walker said. “Frankly, nobody makes it on their own. It’s a matter of circumstance, it’s a matter of outside influence, it’s a matter of having the opportunity at the right time in your life.” **N**

*Find out more about providing opportunities to students via the Commitment Scholarship at [nmc.edu/foundation](http://nmc.edu/foundation) or call (231) 995-1021.*

“

**I feel at home.**

Abby Siddal  
NMC Class of 2020 / Manton HS 2017







# ROCKING DUAL ENROLLMENT

TC West student riffs on  
simultaneously attending NMC

Dual enrollment is like a drum roll for college.

It's an apt analogy for Kyle Skarshaug, anyway. As he wraps up his junior year at Traverse City West High School, Kyle is also finishing his second semester dual-enrolled at NMC. He's taken classes as varied as jazz band, applied percussion, biology and introductions to psychology and sociology.

"I'm trying to do what I can to make the course load a little less packed in college," said Skarshaug, 17, who hopes to double major in jazz studies and political science. At West he's a member of the marching band and the model United Nations and debate teams.





## WHAT SHAPED ME:

- **DAD:** Sean Skarshaug is Kyle's "music mentor" and has passed on a love of hard rock, teaching him Cream's "Sunshine of Your Love" on bass at age seven and taking him to see Rush for his first concert (back-to-back performances in Detroit and Cleveland, where they also visited the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.)
- **FACING STAGE FRIGHT:** "I was terrified," Skarshaug says of his first gig in public at age 13, a pre-film slot at the Traverse City Film Festival. Since then the drummer/guitarist/bassist has played at venues from Left Foot Charley to the Little Fleet, gigging with many stars of the local music scene.
- **LOVE OF POLITICS:** He's a member of TC West's debate and model UN teams.
- **COOL SOUVENIR:** A guitar stand he received from The Accidentals.

Through dual enrollment, he's also getting assurance that his effort will translate to college credits. Skarshaug's older sister Sara took Advanced Placement classes in high school hoping to get a head start on her credits. She found credits depended on her exam score at the end of the year, and sometimes only transferred as electives.

"You're putting a lot of stress on yourself over the course of the year to get a chance at possible credit," Skarshaug said. With dual enrollment, the credits are secured after only a semester.

"If I knew with my daughter what I know now, she would have been dual-enrolled far sooner," said Kyle's father, Sean

Skarshaug. "As a family, we are all in for dual enrollment."

More pluses, according to Kyle: "interesting classes" not available in high school, and more independence.

"It's a really different atmosphere," he said of campus life vs. high school.

After he graduates from West in 2019, Skarshaug's considering Western Michigan University, Michigan State, where he's already attended big band camp, Temple University or DePaul. After college, he hopes to perform for a few years, and then teach jazz drums at a university. **N**

"As a family,  
we are all in for  
dual enrollment."

– Sean Skarshaug, dad

*Dual-enrolled high school students are the fastest-growing segment of enrollment at NMC. Find out more at [nmc.edu/dualenroll](http://nmc.edu/dualenroll)*





# ALUMNI NOTES

**DUANE SMITH**, 1981, has been re-appointed to the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) for a four-year term through 2021.

MCOLES sets standards for the selection, employment, licensing, retention and training of law enforcement officers in Michigan.

Smith, of Saline, has been a labor representative for the Police Officers Labor Council for 12 years. Previously, he served 21 years with the Romulus Police Department.

**JEAN DERENZY**, 1982, is the new CEO of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority. Prior to her DDA appointment, Derenzy, a Traverse City native and Central Michigan University graduate, helped oversee planning, development and brownfield activities for Grand Traverse County for two decades.

**KEVIN SCHLUETER**, 1988, is the 2018 chairman of the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce. In his Chamber role, Schlueter, also president and CEO of Kalkaska Screw Products, wants to be a liaison between the manufacturing industry and the economic development and business community to help boost the skill set of potential employees. Schlueter also serves on the NMC Foundation Board, the Scholarship Open golf committee, and the Alumni Relations steering committee.

**DR. AMANDA KIESSEL**, 1995, is a recipient of the Ashoka Fellowship for 2018. Ashoka Fellows work in more than 90 countries around the globe in every area of human need. Fellowship selection is based on five criteria: New Idea, Creativity, Entrepreneurial Quality, Social Impact of the Idea and Ethical Fiber.

Kiessel, who has lived and worked in Asia since 1999, earned the fellowship as co-founder of Good Market, a curated online platform for social enterprises and responsible businesses. Originally specific to Sri Lanka, Good Market is now being expanded beyond the country's borders.

**JACQUELYN ABEYTA**, 2003, assumed a new role as Grand Valley State University student services coordinator at the Traverse City University Center. After NMC, Abeyta earned a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and then a master's degree in education, both from GVSU. She has worked in various capacities at GVSU's Traverse City office since 2001 and is a staunch advocate for adult students.

**CAPT. M. BENJAMIN FEINMAN**, 2004, recently achieved a promotion to Permanent Captain at Interlake Steamship Company,



DEVON HAINS

where he has worked since 2004. He is a Traverse City resident and teaches at Great Lakes Maritime Academy in the winter when the sailing season on the lakes is shut down. He is also the treasurer of the GLMA Alumni Association.

●●● **GARRET ELLISON**, 2006, has been named the 2017 Michigan Journalist of the Year by the Michigan Press Association. Ellison was cited for his “watchdog work” on environmental issues, including water use and Great Lakes protection, which reach a reported online audience of 11 million readers a month via MLive.com. MLive also feeds seven Michigan newspapers. While at NMC Ellison served as editor of the White Pine Press, the campus newspaper, an experience he says led him to find his career calling.

●●●● **MAJIDA HALAWEH**, 2014-2015, was one of nine outstanding juniors named to the Princeton Institute of International and Regional Studies’ 2018 cohort of undergraduate fellows.

Halaweh (middle row, left, in white jacket) is from Benzie County and attended NMC as a dual-enrolled high school student,

before transferring to Princeton University, where she is majoring in history. During her fellowship this summer in Dana, Jordan, Halaweh will study natural resource management in the Middle East.

**RACHEL WARREN**, 2015, began a new position as a mental health therapist with Kid’s Creek Family Counseling in Traverse City. Kid’s Creek Family Counseling offers individual, couples, family, children and adolescent and EMDR therapy services.

Warren earned her LLMSW from Ferris State University.

●●●● **DEVON HAINS**, 2015-16, an Upper Peninsula-based nature and outdoor photographer, accepted a position with the Michigan Predator-Prey Project, a study conducted by Mississippi State University’s Forest and Wildlife Research Center. Hains will live on the project’s housing in the Ottawa National Forest in Baraga County this summer.

Hains’ outdoor photography received international exposure this winter when several United Kingdom media outlets printed his photos of “Surfer Dan,” a well-known winter surfer on Lake Superior. The former White Pine Press photographer’s

images were later used by Merrell Footwear at the Outdoor Retailer Expo in Denver, Col.

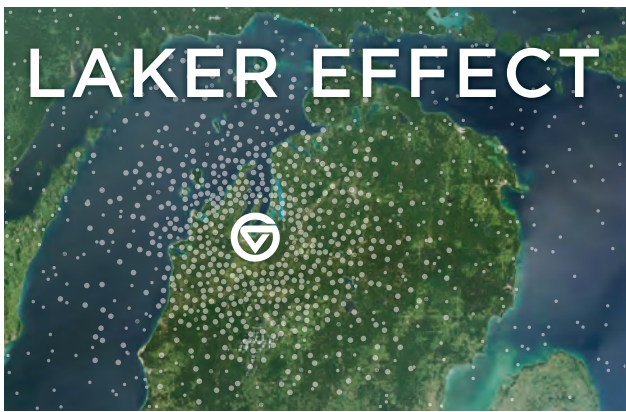
●●●●● **JACOB GILLIS**, 2016, is a 2018 recipient of the Michigan State Police Cpl. Samuel A. Mapes Criminal Patrol and Investigation Award. The annual award honors the top 5 percent of troopers in each district for looking “past the traffic stop” to excel in proactive criminal patrol and criminal investigations closed by felony arrests.

●●●●●● **ABBEY KASUSKE**, 2018, has been named a mess cook by Polar Tankers, a five-vessel fleet operated by ConocoPhillips in the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline System. The Great Lakes Culinary Institute graduate completed her internship aboard the T/S *State of Michigan* during its 2017 spring cruise. She is the third graduate to gain employment in the shipping industry since the Culinary Institute began collaborating with the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in 2016.

Share your alumni news by  
emailing [alumni@nmc.edu](mailto:alumni@nmc.edu)



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Learn more about the programs, people, and opportunities at our Traverse City Regional Center. Visit us at [gvsu.edu/traverse](http://gvsu.edu/traverse) or call Jackie Abeyta at (231) 995-1785.



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1963



1979



1981



2004



2016

## NURSING

White caps and dresses may be a relic of the past, but nursing remains an integral part of NMC's programs.

The first 15 students to earn an associate degree in nursing graduated in 1963.

In addition to the degree program, students today have the option of earning a certificate as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Simulation labs on campus and clinical rotations at Munson Medical Center complement the classroom education. Online classes are also available, increasing convenience to nursing students. In 2014, NMC earned accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

In 2018, NMC graduated 29 nursing students. Through two University Center partners, Davenport University and Spring Arbor, students can go on to earn a bachelor of science in nursing degree. Find out more at [nmc.edu/nursing](http://nmc.edu/nursing) **N**



# NMC is good for northern Michigan ...

## NMC ADDS LOCAL ECONOMIC WEALTH

**\$287.4m**  
*annually*

**NMC** WHOLESALE TRADE INDUSTRY

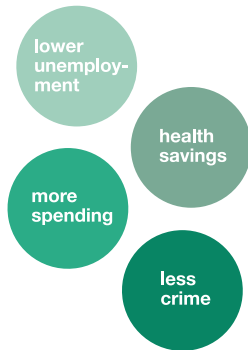
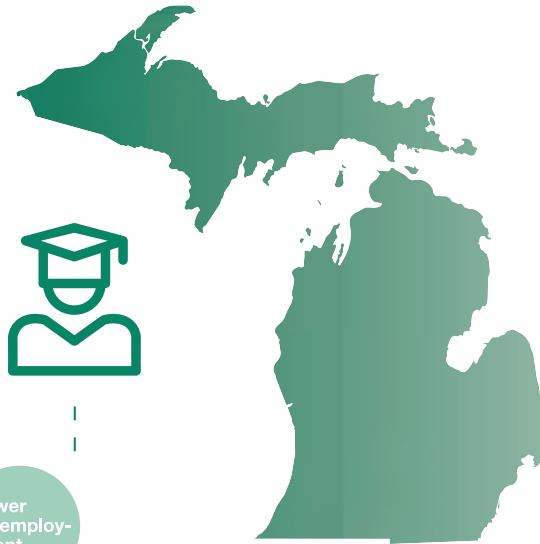


NMC adds \$287.4 million in income to the six-county region, or about 3.6% of the area's Gross Regional Product—nearly as large as its entire wholesale trade industry.

## NMC SUPPORTS 1 OUT OF 22 JOBS



One out of every 22 jobs in the region is supported by the activities of NMC and its students—an estimated 5,766 jobs in all.



**\$37.5m**  
*added value*

NMC graduates lead a better lifestyle, presently benefiting Michigan with \$37.5 million in value due to reduced crime, lower unemployment, and increased health.

*for every*  
**\$1.00**  
*spent*

**STUDENTS GAIN**  
**\$2.00**  
*in lifetime earnings*

**TAXPAYERS GAIN**  
**\$2.90**  
*in added taxes and public sector savings*

**SOCIETY GAINS**  
**\$5.40**  
*in added state revenue and social savings*

## NMC IS A REWARDING INVESTMENT FOR MICHIGAN

NMC creates significant positive impact on the business community and generates a return on investment to its major stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society.

	STUDENTS	TAXPAYERS	SOCIETY
<b>Present Value</b>	\$165,925	\$69,341	\$688,607
<b>Costs</b>	\$82,694	\$23,782	\$127,159
<b>Net Value</b>	\$83,231	\$45,560	\$561,448
<b>Rate of Return</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	--

## NMC GRADUATES SAVE TAXPAYERS MONEY

NMC graduates result in a savings of \$8.9 million to state and local taxpayers due to a reduced demand for government-funded services in Michigan.





# NMC is good for students

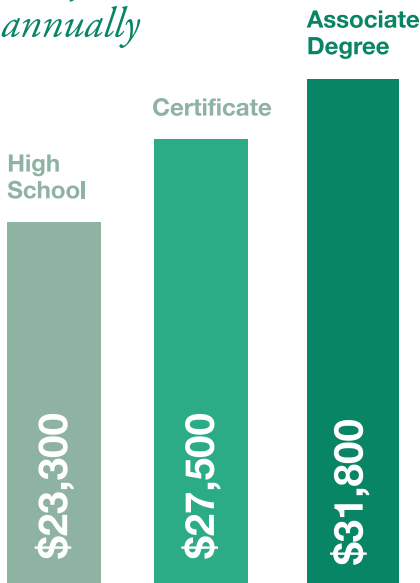
**\$227** million

NMC students generated \$227 million in added income for the region which is equivalent to supporting 4,518 jobs.



**\$272,000**  
lifetime

**\$8,500**  
annually



## NMC OUTPERFORMS THE U.S. STOCK MARKET

The average annual return for students is 9.6% compared to the 10-year average 6.9% return on the stock market.

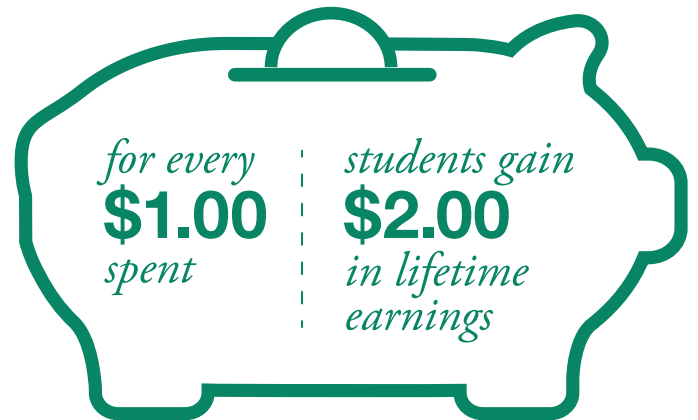


## STUDENTS GET BACK TWICE AS MUCH AS THEY INVEST

more wealth

healthier lifestyle

better citizens



## NMC GRADUATES ENJOY A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

NMC improves the lifestyle of students and generates health, crime, and unemployment savings.



SOURCE: Average earnings by education level at career midpoint in Michigan.









## MUSHROOM CONSERVA

- 1 pound mushrooms, cleaned.  
(Personal favorite: Hen-of-the-woods)
- 1 cup grapeseed oil
- 1 bay leaf
- 10 sprigs thyme
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 3 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- Salt and pepper

### STEPS:

1. Heat oil up to 170F and add mushrooms, herbs and paprika
2. Transfer to hotel pan, cook in 350 oven until mushrooms are tender, 30-40 minutes
3. Remove heat, season and add vinegar
4. Cool to room temperature



# MICHIGANDER ON THE MOVE

## 2009 culinary grad lands in Austin, Texas

For chef Ed Sura, great cooking is all about relationships. He first learned about the grower's connection to fresh produce as a child helping in his family's garden in Mt. Pleasant, Mich. He learned the importance of strong relationships in the kitchen while studying at NMC's Great Lakes Culinary Institute.

After graduation in 2009, Sura took those skills to the diverse and energetic Chicago restaurant scene, where he worked his way to executive chef at NoMi, overlooking the city's Gold Coast. There he explored the latest culinary trends, but found his own style infused a playful approach into classic Midwestern comfort food,

like the mushroom conserva (preserve) that accompanied the shortribs he prepared as a guest chef for the 2017 Great Lakes Great Chefs dinner. He established strong relationships with local farmers to ensure a menu built on fresh, high quality ingredients.

Sura's strengths have earned him several honors, including 2016 Rising Star Chef semi-finalist from the prestigious James Beard Foundation. This year, he embarked on a new venture as Chef de Cuisine at Uchiko, a Japanese farmhouse restaurant in Austin, Texas, where he'll continue to show the world what the chefs of the Great Lakes Culinary Institute bring to the table. **N**







# CALENDAR

## JUNE

• **Monster Fish: In Search of the Last River Giants—A Major Exhibition from National Geographic**

Dennos Museum Center visitors will embark on a global journey to storied river basins with explorer and ecologist Zeb Hogan on his quest to find, research, and protect freshwater giants. Through October.

19 •• **Cafe Lobdell's opens**

7–11 a.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays until July 26

Coffee and pastries served in NMC's teaching restaurant at the Great Lakes campus

21 **International Affairs Forum lecture—U.S./Mexico: Wall or No Wall, A Border in Turmoil**

6 p.m., Milliken Auditorium

*Tickets free for students and educators, \$10 others.*

## JULY 06

**Public Viewing Night**

9–11 p.m., Roger's Observatory  
Admission \$2/person or \$5/family  
Also July 21, Aug. 3 and 18

*Later 2018 dates:  
nmc.edu/rogersobservatory*

## AUGUST

••• **NMC Scholarship Open**

02

Grand Traverse Resort and Spa  
The region's largest golf tournament supports merit-based scholarships.  
*nmc.edu/golf*

18 **DK5K Tough Run**

In memory of student veteran Drew Kostic  
Twisted Trails off-road park, Copemish  
*dk5k.info*

25 **Fall semester classes begin**

*nmc.edu/fall*

28 **Pine Palooza student fair**

11 a.m.–2 p.m.  
*nmc.edu/studentlife*

## SEPTEMBER

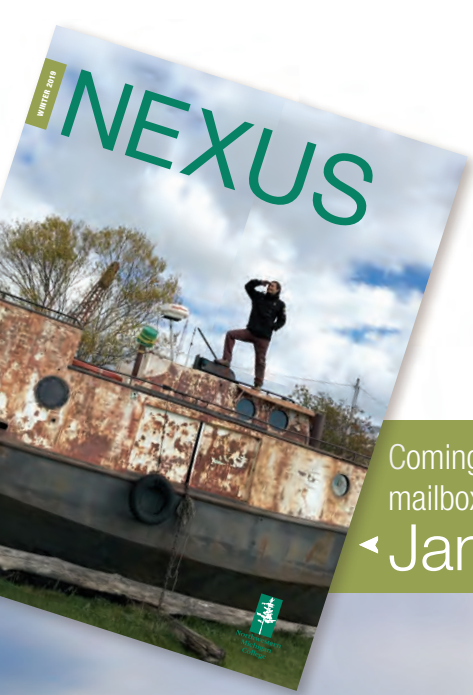
19

**Lobdell's opens for lunch**

Reservations available Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.  
(231) 995-3120  
*Menu: nmc.edu/lobdells*







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CHOICES THIS SPRING. [NMC.EDU/STUDYABROAD](http://NMC.EDU/STUDYABROAD)**