

Connections

Alumni Association and Development Foundation

::: Fall 2025



*Kramer
continues to
champion the
Magic City*



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings from the midst of a busy semester at Minot State University.

We were excited earlier this fall to welcome our largest freshman class since 2011. We also had a strong number of transfer students and an overall 3% increase in full-time equivalent (FTE) students compared to last year. This fall's overall FTE enrollment is our largest in four years, and we look forward to building on this growth momentum with some new initiatives on the horizon.

Minot State recently announced plans to add a Bachelor of Science in Innovation Engineering, along with a Master of Science in Mental Health and Substance Use Counseling. These are two major additions within MSU's academic portfolio. With the undergraduate degree in

engineering, we are working closely with industry partners to build the curriculum while recognizing there are so many opportunities in this field across the state, particularly in central and western North Dakota. The new master's degree in counseling will allow us to build on the outstanding depth and expertise we already have at the undergraduate level with our addiction studies program; again, helping create solutions in an area where our state (and nation) has major workforce shortages. These are two significant academic additions that will certainly help us attract future students, thereby fueling more growth on top of our current enrollment momentum.

Other highlights this fall included a busy week of Homecoming activities in mid-September. The MSU Alumni Association's highest honor, the Golden Award, was awarded to Lisa Johnson, Randy Hedberg, Gregg Blikre, and Don Selk, along with Joe Davis being recognized with the Young Alumni Achievement Award. You can read more about these impactful alumni on pages 24-25. Terry Eckmann and Mary McCarvel-O'Connor were inducted into MSU's Academic Hall of Fame, and you can learn more about their accomplishments on page 22. The annual MSU Athletics Hall of Fame banquet was also held, with the 1994 football team and four individuals honored; they are featured on pages 20-21. The busy week also included our annual President's Club luncheon, recognizing donors who support Minot State and our MSU Development Foundation.

Other fall highlights included a busy sports schedule with so many young men and women admirably representing MSU through Beaver Athletics on the field, court, course, and ice. Additionally, in Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, the Minot Symphony Orchestra's 100th season is underway, as well as a staging in September of Western Plains Opera's stirring performance of Don Giovanni. The 2025-26 theater season began this fall in the recently renovated Aleshire Theater with a performance of Macbeth, and our annual NOTSTOCK arts event in September brought hundreds of high school students to campus to see and hear various artists. The annual Northwest Festival of Music also saw hundreds of area high school students converge on campus over two busy days in early November.

MSU's 25th annual Tech Day brought high school students from across the region to compete in activities in business and technology, along with our fifth annual NODAKON conference featuring technology and cyber experts sharing the latest industry information with students.

We look forward to seeing you back on campus or attending alumni events throughout the year. Best wishes as we conclude 2025, and as always, **GO BEAVERS!** 🍷

Steven W. Shirley, Ph.D.
President

Medora Musical is a dream come true for Wallace

By Michael Linnell

Minot State University professor Zebulon Wallace fulfilled a life-long dream under the glowing lights of the Medora Musical's 60th anniversary show.

As co-host of the famed production, Wallace stepped onto the stage of the Burning Hills Amphitheatre, nestled in the rugged North Dakota Badlands, and found himself in front of enthusiastic crowds each night.

"I've wanted to be in that show for so long but never thought it would be possible," Wallace said. "Helping lead the anniversary production was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. Theater is my first love. I've been performing since high school and have tried to stay involved as much as possible over the years."

The road to the Burning Hills Amphitheatre wasn't simple.

In 2024, Wallace auditioned for the cast but didn't make the cut. Instead, he worked for the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, which operates the musical and many of the surrounding attractions. That experience connected him with cast members and the production team, and when auditions opened again, Wallace tried out for a hosting role. This time, the call came with the words he had been waiting for: he was in.

"I couldn't believe it," he said. "It took me a while to believe it was happening, and honestly, I'm still not sure if it did happen or if it was just a dream. The whole summer was just an incredible opportunity. The theater overlooks the beautiful buttes of the Badlands and offers a stunning view. Being outside also presented some challenges with wind, heat, rain, insects – you name it, we dealt with it. Each show is different in some way based on the conditions, but it also kept things exciting. Every night felt unique."

The Medora Musical itself is a beloved tradition, combining Western music, comedy, and patriotic themes against the breathtaking backdrop of the Badlands.

Wallace, who is in his eighth year teaching geography at Minot State, is grateful for both the opportunity to perform with the Medora Musical and the flexibility MSU offered as he chased his dream.

"There was an overlap with the show and the semester, but we were able to make it work," he said. "I don't think that would have been possible at other institutions, and for that I am extremely grateful."

Looking ahead, Wallace doesn't know if he will return next summer. Each season introduces new hosts and characters, and with the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library opening soon, the show may shift directions. Still, he wouldn't hesitate if invited back.

"I would go back in a heartbeat if they asked me," he said. "But if not, I am thankful for the time I had and the opportunity to perform on such an incredible stage with some of the most talented and amazing people." 🍷🍷🍷



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black blazer over a bright red top and black trousers, stands on a city street. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a row of brick buildings, some with awnings, and a street with a few cars and trees. The lighting suggests it might be late afternoon or early evening.

KRAMER continues to champion the Magic City

By Michael Linnell

There was no doubt in Brekka (Nybakken) Kramer's '98 mind that she was in her forever job.

Kramer had risen through the ranks over a 20-year career for a regional advertising, communications, and governmental affairs firm to become an owner.

Then life provided her with a unique opportunity.

"One hundred percent," she said when asked if she thought she would retire with Odney. "I loved the work, my clients, and the impact we had on many key initiatives across the state. I never in my wildest dreams thought I would leave a very successful agency."

"The merger of the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce and the Minot Area Development Corporation started during my year as chair, and we started the transition. I was on the board in 2022 when we initiated the search for the President | CEO of the new organization. I remember my oldest daughter, who was working for me at the time, said, 'Mom, make your volunteer job your day job – everything you love to do is tied to the community.' I gave it some thought and decided to do just that."

Kramer was named President | CEO of the Minot Area Chamber EDC in 2022. The position kept the Kenmare-born, but Minot native, home, allowing her to focus on doing work for the community she grew up in and loved.

Her connections to Minot and, even more so, Minot State, significantly influenced her decision-making process.

"This is home for me," she said. "I attended Minot High and went to Minot State. I didn't plan on staying in Minot, but I'm glad I did. I have so many connections to MSU, both my parents and stepparents attended MSU, and my grandmother worked in admissions."

Some of Kramer's earliest memories are of her mother working in the library, before the Gordon B. Olson Library even existed. She recalls tagging along, riding the old elevator with its accordion gate, and hiding away in corners with stacks of books.

"I kind of grew up on campus," she said. "My grandmother, Ardell Boyeff, worked in admissions, and I'm a part of 13 of 19 grandkids who attended MSU. She is an amazing lady and had a big influence on us."

"My mom, Colette {{Ludwig} Nybakken '73}, worked at the library before it was known as the Gordon B. Olson Library. I can remember visiting my mom at the library. I would go to the basement and find a corner with my books. My dad (Ken Boyeff '75/'91) and my stepdad (Jack Nybakken '69) both played football at MSU. I was fortunate to spend a significant amount of time growing up on and around campus."

When it came to deciding on college, Kramer thought she'd pursue engineering elsewhere. But a combination of family influence, friendships, and the supportive environment of Minot State convinced her to stay.

"I was pretty set on getting my generals and then transferring to another school," she said. "But that shifted once I was at Minot State. I switched paths to the marketing and communication side and ended up staying."





Shortly after graduation, Kramer joined Odney, and over two decades, rose from managing the Minot office to becoming general manager, partner, and eventually co-owner. She built campaigns, guided strategic communications, and collaborated with clients across the state.

"It was a great experience," she said. "The agency evolved during the 20-plus years I was there, and we helped build it into a great agency."

"I probably feel more connected to Minot State now than I did as a student. It feels like home. And it always will."

While she felt uniquely qualified for her new role with the Minot Area Chamber EDC, it was certainly a change from her normal day-to-day.

"I was always the behind-the-scenes advisor, helping others craft their messages," Kramer said. "Suddenly, I was the spokesperson, the one in the hot seat."

Her role also meant spending more time in larger arenas – state policy discussions, military advocacy, and national recognition. Kramer has served on Task Force 21 since 2010, and in 2015, she was appointed as an Air Force Global Strike Command Civic Leader. Earlier this year, she became the only active North Dakotan serving as a U.S. Air Force and Space Force Civic Leader, giving Minot a voice in national defense conversations. Under her leadership, Minot was named one of the Great American Defense Communities, a distinction given to only 50 communities nationwide in the past decade.

Despite the scope of her work, Kramer strives to maintain her focus on the local level.

"Our role is to be the champion and advocate for businesses," she said. "If we're moving things forward for Minot, then we're doing it right."

Looking back, Kramer sees Minot State as the foundation for everything that followed.

"I didn't realize it at the time, but the connections, the professors, even the projects we worked on – all of it shaped me," she reflects. "I had a great experience then, and I feel like I've continued to be pulled toward the University and have been able to be a part of so many events and watched it change over the years with different leaders. Minot State is a place where I feel compelled to give back to try to make a difference."

Her journey hasn't followed a straight line, but that's exactly what makes it meaningful. From her days studying in the library basement to guiding Minot onto the national stage, Kramer embodies the resilience and adaptability of her community.

"I probably feel more connected to Minot State now than I did as a student," she said. "It feels like home. And it always will." 🌈



Top left: Kramer with her parents, Jack and Colette Nybakken (left) and Ken Boyeff (right) | **Top middle:** Kramer and her daughters Haley (left) and Emma (right) | **Top right:** Kramer with Jonn Knecht '92 | **Bottom left:** Minot Area Chamber EDC team, who all attended Minot State! Back row: Mark Lyman '18, Kelly Johnson, Brekka Kramer '98, Keli Rosselli-Sullivan '93, Carla Dolan '87; Front row: Marie (Boyeff) Sanders '03, Chanda DeCent '94, Jaime Hauge '25, Katie Dotson '17 | **Bottom right:** Kramer, North Dakota University System Commissioner Brent Sanford, and Minot State University president Dr. Steven Shirley present during the Economic Development Association of North Dakota 2025 Fall Conference in Aleshire Theater.



Burckhard finds purpose in radiation therapy

By Veronica Corey

Austin Burckhard '23 believes that once you find your passion and match it with drive, the rest starts to fall into place.

His original idea was to pursue nursing at Minot State University, but after a conversation with his sister, Janell Gieser '07, he decided to explore radiologic technology.

"She was like, 'I really think you'd like radiation therapy,' and the first stepping stone for radiation therapy is going to radiologic technology school," Burckhard said. "Family is big to me, so I wanted to be where my family was, and Minot State has a great program."

During his time in the program, he had numerous hands-on experiences through his clinicals and the program's partnership with Trinity Health.

"I felt like it made me better in my clinicals and as a health-care employee," Burckhard described. "You get to see so much and get to experience everything. I love the patient care aspect of my job."

After completing the program at MSU, Burckhard applied to radiation therapy programs at Mitchell Technical College in South Dakota, Weber State University in Utah, and Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science in Minnesota.

"The program at Mayo was pretty competitive," he said. "I applied, and they interviewed me. About two weeks later, they reached out and said they had a spot for me. I accepted immediately."

After his year at Mayo Clinic, he was very thankful for his time in the radiologic technology program at MSU.

"Honestly, because of the X-ray program and the program directors, Michelle Bratton '95 and Renae (Schell) Stratton '04,

I think I was more prepared for my X-ray boards than I was for my therapy boards," Burckhard said. "Just because of how much Michelle and Renae really got on us about prepping. They are both amazing."

After his clinical experiences, the radiation therapist had no hesitation about where he would work. He had a personal connection to the Trinity Health oncology department, as his father was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2014 and his mother was recently diagnosed with esophageal cancer. He wanted to provide the same support his family received during their treatment.

"I want to treat all my patients like they're my own family, because not everyone has a good support system," he said. "It's a very emotionally stressful job, but when you get them through all their treatments, and see them ring that bell, it's so rewarding."

Burckhard recently volunteered to be dunked at the Trinity Health Foundation's Fuel the Fight event to raise money for cancer patients who travel for their treatments. He was also invited to speak to a class at Minot State, the same course that helped solidify his career decision. He offers the following advice for students.

"If you want to do something and you have the drive to do that, it makes it so much easier," Burckhard said. "You just have to find your purpose, and if radiation therapy is that purpose, I commend you. It's such a rewarding field to be a part of." 🌈



CHESS PRO

passes on knowledge to North Dakota schools

By Emily Schmidt

Todd Wolf's first chess tournament started with seven students and a station wagon.

When Midway Schools' chess coach couldn't take her team to the state tournament, they begged Wolf '87 to take her place. At the time, he was only a casual player, but Wolf couldn't say no. The eight of them hopped in the wagon and rode together for three-and-a-half hours from Inkster to Bismarck.

Since then, Wolf has won the North Dakota chess championship three times and has been inducted into the state's chess hall of fame.

His weeks still look a lot like that first trip, only now he drives across the state to meet students at their own schools and teach them chess. Wolf has put both his experience as a student-athlete and a Bachelor of Science in Business Education degree from Minot State to good use – teaching and coaching various subjects and sports for 21 years – but his favorite is chess.

"I enjoy playing with anyone," he said. "I enjoy playing strong players because I enjoy a challenge. I enjoy challenging games against players who are roughly equal to me. I enjoy playing inexperienced players and watching the 'a-ha!' light go on when they have acquired an understanding of something new."

Wolf coaches students of all grades and skill levels. After coaching the game for over 35 years, he can recognize if students have played other strategy games before.

"You can see the focus in their faces," he said.

But chess isn't only for students with strategy experience. Teachers recommend that many of their students play chess to improve other skills, like concentration or emotional regulation.

"The knowledge of chess resources and how they can be used is somewhat limited for many people," Wolf said. "One thing that most people recognize, though, is that the benefits of chess are many and often extend beyond just the game. Hopefully, by me going into

schools and meeting students, parents, and educators, this information can be shared."

Wolf's students see great success with his coaching. In fact, many have become scholastic champions at state tournaments and at home.

"It's usually around third or fourth grade when parents start telling me that they don't win against their children very often anymore," he said. "Then many of my students reach a point somewhere in the middle school grades where they will beat me for the first time."

Having traveled to over 50 schools in North Dakota, students across the state know Wolf as "The Chess Guy." While he may see some of them only once a year, that's enough to make a lasting connection.

"Being part of so many communities is extremely rewarding," he said. "When I walk into a school that I have presented at previously, I will hear students say, 'Hey! It's the Chess Guy!' or, 'I love playing chess!' And students will often tell me, 'I didn't know chess would be so much fun.'" ::::



"Students will often tell me, 'I didn't know chess would be so much fun.'"





WHERE are they NOW

LINDA and JAMES HAIDER

By Veronica Corey

Linda (Johnson) Haider '80 dedicated 54 years to the nursing profession, spending 25 years at Trinity Health, followed by 29 years in the Minot State nursing department.

The Minot native always knew she wanted to be a nurse.

After graduating from Minot High School in 1962, she started in the Diploma Nursing Program at Trinity School of Nursing (graduating in 1965) and took supporting courses at Minot State University. When Minot State developed the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, she continued her nursing education and obtained a BSN in 1980. Her education continued at the University of Mary, where she obtained a master's degree in 1986. While at Trinity, she worked in OB/GYN, taught in the School of Nursing, and in patient and staff education.

Then came the opportunity to teach at Minot State.

"I started teaching at MSU in 1989, teaching adult health nursing courses during the school year and nursing internships during the summer," Haider said. "I was on the steering committee for beginning the Omicron Tau chapter of Sigma Theta Tau and was an integral part of the development of the RN to BSN program, teaching online. This program was especially meaningful, as it facilitates the RN and their journey to obtain a BSN, a journey I was familiar with. Connections made with colleagues and students became a fulfilling life and career."

Linda's biggest support, best friend, and husband of 46 years, James Haider '72, attended MSU in 1963 on a football and golf scholarship. After a short hiatus, the marketing/economics major returned to MSU at 24 years old and was lovingly referred to by his teammates as "grandpa" for being the oldest member on the team.

"I had some great teachers at MSU that helped shape my life, Walter Piehl, art; Helen White '31, speech; Carl Kalvelage, political science; Galen Brown, history; and Floyd Fairweather, humanities," James listed. "And in sports, Rod Caufield '53, Ken Becker, Dean Bachmeier, and Bert Leidholt."

James started working for BNSF Railroad in 1970. In addition to their busy careers, the couple took on many business ventures throughout the years.

"We've always had side businesses during our marriage," James said. "Our businesses were Big Jim's Lounge, circa 1980-1983 (now Nola's), Wild Pitch Bottle Shop and Lounge circa 1983-1986 (now The Landing), and several others. I was a real estate broker from 1975 to 1999."

James retired from BNSF in 2005 at the age of 60 after 35 years of service. After years of hard work, the couple built their Minot home, where they now spend their summers; a Strawberry Lake cabin where you can find them most weekends; and acquired a home in Surprise, Arizona, where they like to spend their winters playing golf, enjoying the sun and friends, and catching up with fellow MSU alumni.

After a long and fulfilling career, Linda started to receive some encouragement from her husband to retire, and 13 years after James, she did.

"I finally retired in 2018 with Jim's continued nudging. I engaged myself in a passion of duplicate bridge, earning my life master in the game," Linda said. "I loved my career, and I am grateful for the opportunity offered by MSU, caring for patients and teaching students. The best of both worlds." 🌈

Alum from DAY one



FRESHMAN

Morgan Schwartzkopf
Minot • general studies

Why did you choose Minot State?

I chose Minot State because of its strong sense of community. It's hard to feel alone or isolated when the campus is small and everyone looks out for each other.

How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

As someone who is still exploring potential career paths, MSU has provided me with the space to discover new passions and interests.

What has been your favorite class?

It's a tie between introduction to leadership with Jim Sturm (director of the Looyenga Leadership Center) and honors community with Jessica Smestad (director of the honors program). Both courses are teaching me how to grow as a person within my community and how to use that growth to set an example for others.

Who has been your most influential professor?

Mark Singer (history). He has a gift for engaging students and sparking curiosity about the subject matter. Even though this is my first semester, his teaching methods have already encouraged me to think more critically and grow as a learner. He is dedicated to helping new students understand their purpose at MSU while also connecting what we learn to real-world applications.

What is the best-kept secret about Minot State?

All the cozy study nooks hidden throughout campus buildings. They're perfect for waiting between classes, getting out of the dorms, or meeting new people, sometimes even meeting professors to ask questions and build connections.

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

Participating in the Homecoming week events. These activities bring students from all backgrounds together and create a real sense of school spirit and belonging.

Why did you choose Minot State?

In high school and junior high, I had many positive experiences with the music department through events like small group contests and the Northwest Music Festival.

How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

I have grown so much as a musician while attending MSU, and I've connected with a community of musicians that I can learn from and collaborate with.

What has been your favorite class?

It's so hard to pick! There is a special place in my heart for opera scenes, which I took in the spring semester of last year. We learned bits and pieces from several operas in this class, and at the end of the semester, we held a gala where we performed for the public.



SOPHOMORE

Rayna Falcon
Minot • music education

Who has been your most influential professor?

Erik and Dianna Anderson (music) have been big influences on me since I have been at MSU. They were my introduction to the music department through freshmen music classes and have continued to be wonderful professors and mentors since then.

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

Last semester, I went to Norway with the MSU concert choir. It was such a wonderful trip. We sang in beautiful Stave churches built in the 13th century and celebrated Syttende Mai, which is Norway's Independence Day. We also saw the Oslo Philharmonic Symphony and lots of beautiful art and historic sites.

Why did you choose Minot State?

The community and people. I have attended two other colleges besides MSU, one of which is about the same size, and the other is many times larger than MSU. I can confidently say that MSU is unmatched in the people you get to be around, the professors you get to interact with, the level of education you receive, and the opportunities you have access to at every corner of the campus.

How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

It's a community of like-minded students who all want to succeed, helpful and caring professors who want to see you accomplish your goals, and the endless opportunities and classes that give you every chance to challenge yourself and truly see what it is that you plan to do with your future.

JUNIOR



Isaac Keller
Minot • geology

What has been your favorite class?

All of my geology classes, but choosing one, it would be igneous and metamorphic petrology.

Who has been your most influential professor?

Katherine McCarville (geology). She has helped me advance my knowledge and expand my limits both academically and as a human. She has shown me new ways to think about and process problems, while also bringing a positive attitude to every class, making it all the more enjoyable to be around her.

What is the best-kept secret about Minot State?

The people! Everyone around here is a kind face and a simple hello will open so many doors to friendships and professional relationships that can take you places you never imagined going.

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

The geology field trip in the spring of 2025. We embarked on a journey across the country through Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, getting to see the most spectacular and peaceful national parks in the nation, all while it was for a geology class.

SENIOR



Drew Feist
Minot • nursing

Why did you choose Minot State?

After spending a semester at an out-of-state college, I transferred to MSU, and I'm so grateful I made that decision. I love the small class sizes, where professors know your name and genuinely want to see you succeed.

How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

During my first summer at MSU, I completed an internship at Trinity Health Same Day Surgery, and the following summer, I interned at Trinity CancerCare. These experiences allowed me to apply the knowledge I've gained in the classroom to real clinical settings and significantly increased my confidence and competence in nursing skills.

What has been your favorite class?

It's so difficult to pick! I really enjoyed introductory chemistry with Bob Crackel (chemistry). I also found public health nursing with Melissa Fettig '06 (nursing) to be very interesting and directly applicable to my future career.

Who has been your most influential professor?

I want to thank all the nursing professors for being such a positive influence throughout my time at MSU. They are the reason I am the student nurse I am today, and I look up to all of them in so many ways. Especially Amy Roberts '01 (nursing), who taught me in women's health and maternal newborn nursing classes. She also supervised both of my summer nursing internships!

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

Walking in the graduation ceremony in May 2025. It was an amazing feeling to see all my time and hard work pay off.

Why did you choose Minot State?

Minot State provided me with the opportunity to pursue my master's degree while continuing to play the sport (volleyball) I love.

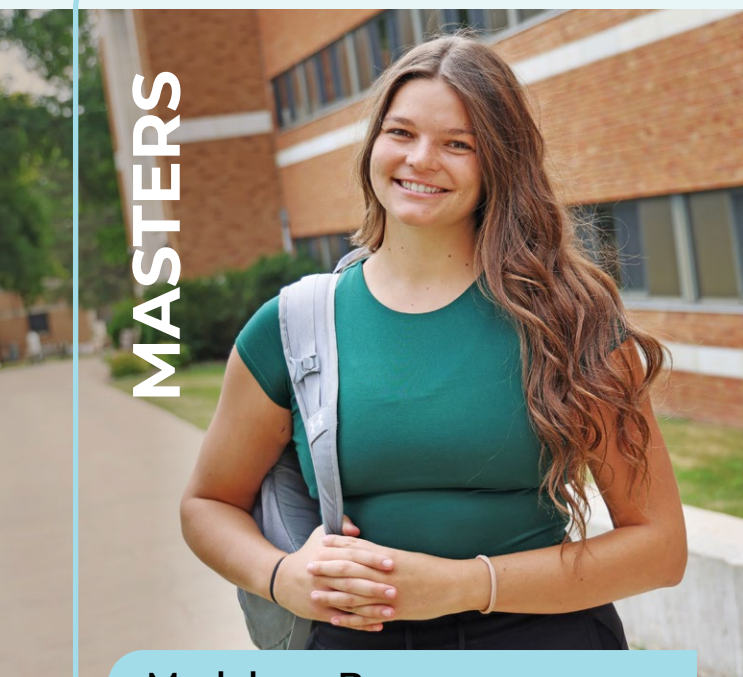
How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

Serving as a graduate assistant in marketing, promotions, and ticketing while pursuing my master's degree has allowed me to gain valuable experience in the administrative and financial side of athletics. Taking on responsibilities such as event and fundraiser planning has broadened my perspective and strengthened my skills.

Who has been your most influential professor?

Terry (Ferebee) Eckmann '81/'82 (teacher education and kinesiology) has been an incredible source of support during my transition and transfer to Minot State. Not only have I had the honor of taking several of her courses, but she has also served as a counselor and mentor throughout the process.

MASTERS



Madelynn Boop

Reno, Nevada • sports management

What is the best-kept secret about Minot State?

The balance – you can compete at a high level in athletics while also getting a quality, personalized education.

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

During the 2024-25 volleyball season, I reached a rare milestone by joining the 1,000-career kill club – an achievement I'm especially proud of.



STAFF

Kyle Patterson '13/'20

Norwich • broadcasting / sports management

Why did you choose Minot State?

I originally chose Minot State because it was close to home, affordable, and offered a hands-on broadcasting program that aligned perfectly with my interests. After completing my undergraduate degree, I returned to MSU to pursue my master's while working as an admissions counselor. The opportunity to earn another degree at a discounted rate was a huge benefit, and the program aligned well with my background in sports broadcasting and play-by-play announcing.

How has Minot State helped you further your academic career?

Minot State has been more than just a place to earn degrees – it's been a launchpad for continuous professional and academic growth.

What has been your favorite class?

My favorite classes were broadcasting courses, especially audio production and video production. Those classes laid the foundation for my broadcasting career.

Who has been your most influential professor?

It's hard to choose just one, because two professors had a major impact on my academic and professional journey – Neil Roberts (professional communication) and Nancy Pearson '82 (professional communication). Neil's vast knowledge and genuine encouragement to explore new ideas played a big role in my decision to choose Minot State. I took every speech class Nancy offered, and those experiences were instrumental in building my communication skills. Her classes didn't just prepare me for public speaking – they gave me tools I've used in every professional role I've held.

What is the best-kept secret about Minot State?

The Academic Support Center. Students can access academic advising, career services, peer tutoring, and more, all in one location on campus!

What is your most memorable moment at MSU?

Meeting my wife, Kelsey (Wagner) '14, during college orientation the summer before freshman year.

MSU ALUMNI
UNDER
30

PHYSICAL THERAPY MAY BE
HARD TODAY, BUT IT WILL
LEAD TO A BETTER TOMORROW




FIRST CHOICE
PHYSICAL THERAPY
"get you back to work or play"



Harvey builds confidence at MSU

By Adam Papin

When Kari (Clements) Harvey '19 first came to Minot State University, she majored in athletic training but soon realized that she liked helping athletes and patients after injuries instead of on the field.

"I like the part of rehabbing patients and getting them back to normal function," she said. "That's kind of what led me to physical therapy."

Not long after arriving at Minot State, she chose corporate fitness and wellness management as a major to prepare her for physical therapy school. She also took business management classes in case one day she might own or operate a physical therapy clinic.

She credits Terry (Ferebee) Eckmann '81/'82, MSU professor in teacher education and kinesiology, with pushing her out of her comfort zone and developing leadership skills that benefited her in graduate school and as a physical therapist.

"I enjoyed her classes," Harvey said. "They definitely got me out of my comfort zone, which helped me because we did a lot of things that I was uncomfortable doing."

"I remember a dance class where we had to teach a dance. Leading and teaching those things helped me with evaluating patients because now I have to lead sessions."

Acknowledging a distaste for public speaking, the classes helped Harvey speak up more confidently which helps in evaluating patients.

After graduating from MSU, Harvey earned a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Concordia University in Mequon, Wisconsin. However, she returned to Minot to be with her husband, Dylan Harvey '21, whom she met while both were student-athletes at Minot State.

Kari played basketball for the Beavers, while Dylan ran track & field. Minot's close-knit community left a lasting impression on Harvey, and she cites it with easing the

transition to college.

"When you're out in the community, people notice who you are, and everyone would come to games to support you. Then they would tell you 'Nice game' and stuff like that," Harvey said. "I think that's kind of what drew me to come back here."

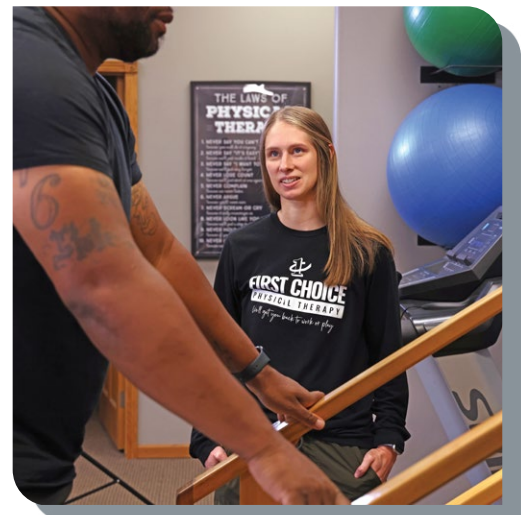
For Harvey, the two things that shaped her most at Minot State were the friends she made and confidence she built through her classes and public speaking.

"I'm still talking to friends I roomed with here," she added. "One of my roommates just became a doctor, so we talk about schooling, etc."

She credits her Beaver parents, Jim and Verla (Forness) '76 Rostad, with helping ease the homesickness many new students feel when leaving home for college.

"I got Beaver parents through basketball, so I pretty much have parents away from home here, so I'll go and have dinners with them every once in a while," Harvey said. "When my parents came to watch games, they would stay at their house, so they didn't have to get a hotel room every time."

"I'm still really close with them. They are like my second parents." ::::



Family, community drives entrepreneur Mujakovic

By Michael Linnell

Admir Mujakovic '14 laughs a little bit when he thinks about the scarcity of official jobs on his resume.

"I feel like I've done a lot of different jobs. I worked with my stepdad in Florida growing up, doing a little bit of everything," he said. "But on paper, I've only had Papa John's."

He's come a long way since he first started slinging pizzas at a local Papa John's in Florida as a 15-year-old.

Mujakovic and his business partner and mentor, Harold Rose, have bought and sold multiple Papa John's locations in various midwestern states. They continue to own very successful franchises in North Dakota, Idaho, and Utah and have opened the first standalone Popeyes restaurant in North Dakota.

But Mujakovic's story goes back much further.

He immigrated to the United States from his home in Bosnia in 2001 to escape the war between Bosnia and Serbia – a conflict that would ultimately take his father's life. His perspective on life is shaped by his loss.

"I grew up without a dad," he reflects. "So much of what I do is about being there for my kids; I just want to be around for them as much as possible. You can have 18, 20, 30 stores, and money buys a lot of stuff, but I don't want stuff for my kids. Family life is happiness to me, not money."

While his pursuit isn't rooted in making exorbitant amounts of money, that doesn't mean Mujakovic isn't a shrewd business leader. He and Rose turned around the Minot Papa John's franchise through hard work and an

employee-first mantra.

"When Harold first bought the Papa John's in Minot, I was just getting ready to graduate from Minot State and had offers in IT from the City of Minot and SRT," he said. "The store was struggling a little, and the guys who were working there said, 'You've got to call Admir.' Harold didn't know me at all and was, like, who's this guy? But those guys knew me and told him to trust them. He called me, and that's how it really got the ball rolling for me."

Together, they transformed the store, eventually winning Papa John's Franchise of the Year in 2016. The recognition sparked rapid growth. At one point, the duo operated 18 Papa John's across multiple states before scaling back to focus on North Dakota.

"I'm very competitive still, and so much of what we do is trying to put smiles on people's faces," he said. "We work with MSU and the area high schools as much as possible and have done a lot with Prairie Grit. If someone needs pizzas for an event, I don't want them going to some other pizza place; I want them to come to us."

The duo's next chapter is chicken. In 2024, Mujakovic and Rose opened North Dakota's first standalone Popeyes in Minot. Expansion plans are underway in Bismarck, Williston, and Dickinson, with hopes of continuing to grow the Louisiana-inspired chain across the state.

"We always loved the brand," Mujakovic says. "The product was great, but the bigger opportunity was in service. We felt we could really make a difference there."

Football brought Mujakovic to Minot State after playing junior college football.

"I really connected with coach Ford (former assistant coach Joe Ford), and the program just felt right. The decision to come to MSU was pretty easy," he said. "I took a couple business classes, but I narrowed it down to management information systems because I liked computers. But in the end, I just couldn't see myself sitting in a cubicle."

The atmosphere around the program and the city of Minot helped his decision to choose MSU. The sense of family for him and his wife, Samantha (Vega) – also a former MSU student-athlete in volleyball, has kept him here.

"I grew up in Florida with millions of people around me, and that's just not something I want," he said. "The people in Minot have been nice, and it's easy to talk to people and get along with people. It's that feeling like it's a big 'ol family." ❄❄❄





PAPA JOHN'S
BETTER INGREDIENTS
BETTER PIZZA

PIZZA
PAPA JOHN'S

BETTER
INGREDIENTS
BETTER
PIZZA





ATHLETICS





The Magic City always felt like home for Deibert

By Mike Stetson

For Beaver football legend Scott Deibert '98, Minot always felt like home, even before he stepped on the Minot State campus.

Growing up in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Deibert recalls vacationing with his family in Minot, so when he started receiving offers from colleges in Montana, North Dakota, and Washington, he made sure to let the Beaver coaching staff know he was interested, as well.

"I'd actually decided that I was going to stay up in Canada and just go to university," Deibert recalled, "but I would change my mind, and I just actually called to see if they were still interested."

A recruiting trip to see the campus led to a historic partnership.

A true freshman joining a dominant Beavers football team that made the NAIA playoffs the previous three seasons, Deibert knew the team needed a starting running back in the fall of 1994.

He also knew the team had other options.

"They brought me in, and it was a competition, and I mean, luckily I got it," said Deibert, who admits he didn't feel any pressure to take over and just worked hard to earn his spot.

That hard work led to the fifth-best rushing season all-time by a Beaver as Deibert rumbled for 1,036 yards in 1994, helping lead MSU back to the NAIA playoffs, to a first-ever home playoff victory, and kick-started his Hall of Fame career.

In four years in the Beaver backfield, Deibert distinguished himself, becoming Minot State's all-time leading rusher with 3,144 career yards and all-time leading scorer with 350 points.

A career that earned him four straight All-North Dakota College Athletic Conference (NDCAC) honors and induction into the Minot State Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006 for football, while he also competed in track & field for three years and was the 1998 NDCAC Indoor Track champion in the 55-meter dash.

"I was lucky enough to be the guy that got to carry the ball a bunch of the times, but we had such a good O-line," he said.

The 1994 team was honored this fall with induction into the Minot State Athletic Hall of Fame, a special honor for Deibert. He had already planned to return for Homecoming with some other teammates, but the added honor made for a very memorable reunion.

"Some of those guys from 30 years ago, I haven't seen them since I've been out of school," Deibert said, "It was like it was yesterday; it was just so awesome."

While the reunion was an incredible experience, the Beaver star running back adds that being back in the Magic City also meant so much to him.

"I just always felt welcomed in that town," he said. "I'll never forget it, that's for sure."

His trip to Minot was also a special reunion with his former communications professor, Neil Roberts.

The Magic City proved so welcoming that Deibert spent his summers working in Minot during college. After earning his degree in broadcasting in 1998, he was set to stay in Minot, having just landed a job at KMOT, when fortune took him back to Canada to continue his football career.

Drafted in the third round by the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League (CFL), Deibert went on to play eight seasons in the CFL with Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Calgary, where he won the Grey Cup in 2001.

While playing in the CFL, he started his current career working for Alberta Tubular, a pipe company, and says he has no regrets in the eventual path he took.

Now a successful businessman in Alberta, he still stays in touch with his home in the United States, donating to the school and following Beaver Athletics, even though he might not get to visit nearly as much as he might like.

Still, the memories of Minot State never fade, nor do the feelings of home.

"I like the town, I like the people, I like the community," Deibert said. "Like I said, I always felt like I was a part of it." ❖❖❖



MINOT STATE ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

EST. 1980

The Minot State Athletics Hall of Fame Committee selected three former star student-athletes, one coach, and one team as its Class of 2025. The class was inducted on Sept. 12 in a special ceremony and honored at halftime of the Beavers' Homecoming game against Concordia-St. Paul on Sept. 13.



Caroline Folven
Women's
basketball:
2007-2011

An NAIA All-American and two-time All-Dakota Athletic Conference (DAC) selection, Folven is truly one of the best Minot State women's basketball players ever, as the 6-foot post from Byron, Illinois is No. 8 all-time in Beaver history in both career points (1,092) and rebounds (515), and shares the all-time Minot State record for games played with 120.

Folven added milestone records as she is No. 2 all-time in offensive rebounds with 227, No. 6 all-time in field-goals made with 428, No. 7 in games started with 77, and No. 10 in free-throws made with 205.

During her time at Minot State, the Beavers compiled a 78-43 overall record and qualified for the NAIA National Tournament twice, advancing to the quarterfinals of the 2007-08 NAIA Division II National Tournament.

Folven graduated in 2011 with a double major in criminal justice and psychology and a 3.79 GPA.



Jeffrey Nelson
Wrestling:
1982-1986

An NAIA All-American on the mats and a two-time conference runner-up champion, Nelson was a four-year letterwinner and three-year team captain for the Minot State men's wrestling team.

During his four-year career, he compiled a 67-43-4 record, and his 67 career wins rank tied for ninth all-time in Beaver history.

During his junior season, the 142-pounder from North Pole, Alaska, finished seventh at the NAIA National Tournament to earn All-American honors, one of his three berths to the NAIA National Tournament.

Following his graduation in 1986 with a degree in education, he went on to be an impactful teacher in Southern California, where he had the opportunity to teach three NFL players, two Olympic track & field athletes, and a NASA astronaut.



Tyler Rudolph
Men's
basketball:
2014-2018

Statistically the greatest men's basketball player of all-time in Minot State history, Rudolph is a 6-foot, 6-inch forward from Bismarck. He was an All-American – the first to earn the honor in the Division II era – a two-time All-Region player, and a three-time All-Conference performer for the Beavers.

During his time on the hardwood, Rudolph rewrote the record books, scoring an all-time high 1,987 career points and making a record 769 field goals. He added an all-time record 921 rebounds and proved prolific all over the court as he ranks No. 2 all-time with 307 made free throws and No. 5 all-time with 142 career 3-pointers.



During his four seasons with the Beavers, Rudolph played in 117 games, starting 89, and helped Minot State to a 63-54 record during that time.

After graduating with his degree in accounting, Rudolph went overseas to play professional basketball, earning team MVP honors his first year out of college playing in Spain, then leading the NBL1 South division in 2023 in scoring as he played two seasons professionally in Australia.



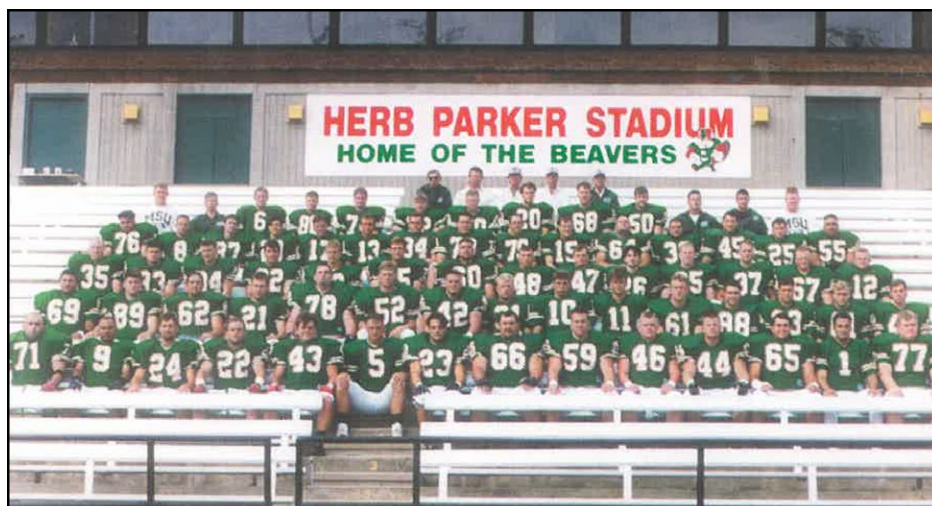
Mike Hultz
Men's
basketball:
1998–2010

Minot State's all-time winningest men's basketball coach, Hultz joins the Hall of Fame after 12 seasons and 194 career wins as the Beavers head coach.

A product of Notus, Idaho who earned degrees from the College of Idaho and Northern State, Hultz took over the Minot State men's basketball program in 1998-99 and over the next dozen years racked up an all-time career record of 194-159, the most wins by any Minot State men's basketball head coach. He also spent six distinguished seasons as the Minot State men's and women's golf coach.

Hultz's success includes winning the 2004-05 Dakota Athletic Conference (DAC) regular season and tournament championships, being named 2004-05 DAC Coach of the Year, and earning Minot State's first NAIA National Tournament berth since 1995 that season. The trip to the NAIA Division II National Tournament was the first of two for the Hultz-led Beavers, who returned to nationals following the 2007-08 season, as well as Minot State's fifth and final trip to the NAIA National Tournament in team history.

As head men's and women's golf coach, Hultz guided the Minot State men's golf program to the NAIA Region III championship in 2000 and 2003, earning NAIA Region III Coach of the Year honors in 2003. During his tenure, the Beavers also won the inaugural DAC-10 men's golf title in 2001 and took home the DAC-10 title again in 2003. Hultz also oversaw the inaugural Minot State women's golf team in 2000-01.



1994 Football

The 1994 Minot State football team went 8-3 and qualified for the NAIA National Playoffs for the fourth consecutive year and fifth time in school history. The team earned a first-round home playoff game, the second time in program history, and Minot State's 20-13 victory over Sioux Falls is the lone home national playoff win in program history.

The Beavers advanced to the national quarterfinals that fall where their post-season run ended on a last-second field goal with a 28-26 loss at Northwestern (Iowa).

The 1994 Minot State team thrived on a power running game and a stingy defense as the Beavers won defensive NAIA statistical national titles as the No. 1 run defense in the nation and for allowing a nation's lowest 13.5 points per game.

Along with team accolades, offensive lineman Sheldon Warawa, defensive lineman Chad Petschke, linebacker Jason Obenauer, and kicker/punter Cory Stevens were named NAIA All-Americans. Warawa, Obenauer, Petschke, Stevens, offensive lineman Derek Gackle, defensive lineman Jay Balkar, linebacker Terry Brossard, tight end Mike Upton, and running back Scott Deibert all earned All-North Dakota College Athletic Conference (NDCAC) honors, as well.

The 1994 Minot State team set single-season records on offense running the ball that lasted until this past season, rushing for 2,449 yards and 30 touchdowns on 550 carries. The 2024 Minot State team tied that single-season rushing touchdown record (30),

and with 2,693 yards on the ground on 586 carries, moved the 1994 team to No. 2 all-time in a single season in those categories.

Members of the 1994 Minot State football team are: Steve Alford, Gus Anchondo, Mike Anderson, Trevor Bakken, Jay Balkar, Tom Ball, Reiss Barnett, Steve Bartz, Matt Bays, Dan Beck, David Benjestorf, Chad Bjornson, Taan Borhot, Terry Brossard, Dave Butterfield, Ken Campbell, Jeff Carew, Chad Chalmers, Brian Cook, Kelvin Daniels, Cameron Deschamp, Scott Deibert, Anthony Diaz, Josh Duhamel, Milo Epling, Alex Etta, Josh Fordyce, Pat Free, Daniel Fry, Derek Gackle, Geoff Gerlitz, Adam Gillespey, Steve Gilpin, Mike Hampton, Brad Handel, Tom Hansen, Scott Hauge, Joel Huberdeau, Rich Kadrlik, Chris Kelly, Mike Kennedy, T.J. Kinchen, Jr., Trevor Kittelson, David Lavigne, Darwin Maasjo, Scott Mayer, Brian McIntosh, Ryan Munson, Corey Nieuwsma, Jason Obenauer, Derek Olean, Ed Parise, Chris Perkes, Mark Perkes, Chad Petschke, Brian Prestholdt, Russ Reder, Brian Robb, Aaron Roed, Mike Schmidt, Jason Smith, Scott Sorg, Bill Spitler, Cory Stevens, Donovan Swinnerton, Mike Upton, Travis Vannatta, Sheldon Warawa, and Jeremy Weller.

The coaching staff for the Beavers consisted of head coach Dave Hendrickson and assistant coaches Dean Bachmeier, Joel Gullickson, Ryck Hale, and Steve Kissel. Additionally, the team had student coaches Aaron Bayer, Bill Gackenhimer, Todd Lindstrom, Jerry Obenauer, and Dennis Rekedal, as well as manager Scott Dillenburgh. ...

MSU Academic Hall of Fame adds Eckmann, McCarvel-O'Connor

By Michael Linnell

Minot State University inducted two new members into its Academic Hall of Fame as Terry (Ferebee) Eckmann '81/'82 and Mary McCarvel-O'Connor '97 represent the Class of 2025.

Eckmann and McCarvel-O'Connor were honored with a reception ceremony on Sept. 12, at the Student Center Conference Center during MSU's 2025 Homecoming events.

"Minot State is excited and proud to announce Dr. Terry Eckmann and Mary McCarville-O'Connor as members of the Academic Hall of Fame," said Laurie Geller, MSU vice president for academic affairs. "Their contributions have made a difference in their disciplines and in the lives of thousands of people. Congratulations, Terry and Mary!"

The Class of 2025 joined 13 past recipients, including 2024's class of Vicki (Greel) Michels '88 and Jacob Schillo '15. Becky (Fred) Becker '91 and Tim Henry were enshrined in 2020. Veronica (Cavallo) Pinnick '04 was inducted in 2019, Robert Hubbard '91 in 2014, Kim (Baldridge) Siegel '82 in 2013, Robert Holmen '83/'88 and Joe Alme '68 in 2012, and Carrie (Forshner) Evans '90, Lisa (Christensen) Feldner '86/'90, Delane C. Kristky '65, and Rosanne Olson '72 were a part of the inaugural class in 2011.

Eckmann is a professor in kinesiology within the Minot State Department of Science. She holds bachelor's degrees in speech-language pathology and elementary education and a master's degree in speech-language pathology from Minot State. She later earned a master's degree in physical education and exercise science from the University of Montana and her doctorate in educational leadership from the University of North Dakota. Eckmann is a certified exercise physiologist through the American College of Sports Medicine, an ACE and AFAA certified group exercise instructor, a 500-hour registered yoga teacher, and a NASM-certified senior fitness and behavior change specialist.

For over 35 years, Eckmann has presented internationally on topics related to healthy aging. Her presentations have



included Network New Zealand in Auckland, the Asia Fitness Conference in Thailand (where she was joined by 13 MSU students in 2018), and over 20 years at CanFitPro in Toronto. She is the author of "101 Brain Boosters" and "101 Ways to Age Gracefully" and co-author of "101 Practices of Mindfulness and Meditation," written with her daughter, Katie (Eckmann) Heupel '19. She has been actively involved in research and has published numerous articles examining how lifestyle choices impact physical and cognitive aging.

McCarvel-O'Connor has over 25 years of experience in special education, with a career dedicated to improving educational outcomes for students with disabilities. She currently serves as the director of the Office of Specially Designed Services at the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), where she leads statewide efforts to enhance special education programming, staffing, and quality instruction.

She began her career as a teacher for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, working across Iowa and Wisconsin. She earned both her Bachelor of Science degrees in education of the deaf and elementary education, as well as a Master of Science in Special Education, from Minot State.

Since joining NDDPI in 2009, McCarvel-O'Connor has played a key role in the implementation of several recruitment and retention initiatives, including the Resident Teacher Program, the Speech-Language Pathology Paraprofessional grant, the Speech-Language Loan Forgiveness Program, and the Traineeship Scholarship. She has funded innovative North Dakota teacher preparation programs such as the Special Education Technician project, Para-to-Teacher Pathway pilot, Project Resilience, and Discretionary Grants for Special Education Units to address recruitment and retention of special education and related services. She has also developed recruitment and retention initiatives such as the Educator Pathway and the Goalbook Toolkit project. ...

A LASTING LEGACY THROUGH GIVING

The benefits of a charitable bequest to the Minot State University Development Foundation

When people think about the kind of legacy they want to leave, many hope to make a lasting impact that continues well beyond their lifetime. One of the most meaningful ways to do this is through a charitable bequest to the Minot State University Development Foundation. By including the Foundation in your estate plans, you are investing in future generations of students, faculty, and programs that will shape lives for decades to come.

A charitable bequest offers a unique blend of benefits. First and foremost, it allows you to make a significant difference without impacting financial security during your lifetime. Your gift is arranged through your will or trust, ensuring your personal needs and those of your loved ones are met first. This flexibility makes bequests accessible to donors of all means.

Beyond flexibility, charitable bequests also carry potential tax advantages. By designating the MSU Development Foundation as a beneficiary, you may reduce the taxable portion of your estate, leaving more of your assets to the people and causes you care about most. It's a practical and purposeful way to align your values with your financial planning.

Most importantly, your bequest serves as a powerful statement about your commitment to education and the role Minot State University plays in strengthening our region and beyond. Your generosity can help ensure scholarships for future students, support for dedicated faculty, or resources to maintain and enhance academic programs.

Every bequest, no matter the size, contributes to a culture of philanthropy that fuels opportunity and excellence. By remembering the MSU Development Foundation in your plans, you join a community of alumni and friends who believe in the transformative power of higher education.

Creating a legacy is about more than what we leave behind – it's about the lives we touch and the opportunities we create. A charitable bequest to the MSU Development Foundation ensures your impact will be felt for generations to come.

There are many planned gift options such as bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, just to name a few – and they can be confusing, but we can assist. To see what might work best in your situation, you can visit our website at MinotState.giftlegacy.com or contact me or one of our Development officers at 701-858-3399. Together, we can ensure your legacy helps students dream big and achieve more. ::::



Rick Hedberg '89
Vice President for Advancement
Executive Director,
Development Foundation
rick.hedberg@minotstateu.edu
701-858-4483

North Dakota CHALLENGE GRANT

The North Dakota Challenge Grant Program offers a **50% match** on gifts supporting scholarship endowments, technology, infrastructure, and equipment. **Minot State has \$2.045 million** in available matching funds for eligible gifts received **July 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2026**. Donors may also make multi-year pledges (up to seven years) and receive the full match immediately.

The current North Dakota Challenge Grant program, paired with the North Dakota Tax Credit for Charitable Giving, creates a unique opportunity to have the impact of your gift multiplied. For more information, contact Rick Hedberg at 701-858-4483 or rick.hedberg@minotstateu.edu.

North Dakota TAX CREDIT

The North Dakota Tax Credit for Charitable Giving offers a **40% state tax credit** on gifts of **\$5,000 or more** to qualified endowments. Unused credits may be carried forward for **up to three years**. The maximum credit is \$10,000 per individual or \$20,000 for joint filers, applicable to North Dakota income taxpayers only.

2025 Golden Awards and Young Alumni Achievement Award Recipients

The Minot State University Alumni Association honored four individuals with the Golden Award and one with the Young Alumni Achievement Award in September. The Golden Award is the highest award bestowed by the Alumni Association. Selections are based on outstanding service to the University or Alumni Association and distinguished leadership in the recipient's career or community. The Young Alumni Achievement Award recipient is between the ages of 21 and 39.



Gregg Blikre '77

Blikre was born and raised in Williston, graduating from Williston High School in 1967. He is a Vietnam veteran, having served in the U.S. Navy as an electronics technician from 1968 to 1972.

As a student at Minot State, he served as president of the Minot State Collegiate Veterans and the North Dakota State Collegiate Veterans Association and was also a member of Minot State's Student Senate. Studying history and English literature, Blikre graduated in 1977 with a Bachelor of Arts in History.

He then moved to Gillette, Wyoming, where he established a career in business with a perspective that enabled him to connect with clients and customers, thanks to the excellent liberal arts education he received at Minot State.

While at Minot State, Blikre was given opportunities to participate in service to the broader community, and that became a springboard to a life of service. He has been a softball coach, a Sunday school teacher, and president of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gillette Jaycees, Energy Rotary Club, and Heritage Village Water and Sewer District, among others.

He also served as a member and chairman of the Campbell County Land Board, was elected twice to the Campbell County School Board, and served as president of the Wyoming School Boards Association.

Blikre served three terms in the Wyoming House of Representatives, holding committee assignments in judiciary, revenue, corporations, and appropriations, along with other committee assignments. He was House chairman of the Select Committee on School Facilities and a member of the Education Committee of the States and the Energy Council. He is also a graduate of the Council of State Governments Western Legislative Academy. Currently, he serves as the chairman of the Wyoming Community College Commission and is a member of the Wyoming Sesquicentennial Planning Task Force - WYO250.

He is married to Jackie (Jost) Blikre, from Burlington. Their daughter, Kelly, lives in Houston, Texas, with her husband, Lucas Howell, and their son, Jack Blikre Howell.



Randy Hedberg '77

Hedberg grew up in Parshall, where he spent most of his time avoiding farming, which led to his determined and disciplined nature as well as his success as an athlete.

His high school sports career included four years as a quarterback, pitcher, trackster, and forward on the basketball team. He chose Minot State University because it offered the opportunity to play more than one sport, and it was close to home. At MSU, Hedberg was the starting quarterback every year, setting a school record for passing, 5,737 yards and 49 touchdowns. He also started in basketball as a forward, pitched four years, and threw javelin. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in physical education and mathematics education.

Hedberg was drafted by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the eighth round of the NFL Draft, and he played for the Buccaneers for two years, including six starts. He also spent time with the Oakland Raiders and the Green Bay Packers.

He returned to MSU for his first coaching experience. Hedberg coached football for 10 years, the last eight as head coach, winning a conference title in 1985. He served as an assistant basketball coach from 1980 to 1984 before being named head basketball coach in 1985. Finally, he served as the head baseball coach from 1985 to 1988. In 1987, Hedberg obtained his master's degree in physical education and recreation from the University of North Dakota.

Leaving North Dakota, Hedberg then went to Central Missouri State where he served as associate head coach/offensive coordinator (OC)/quarterback's (QB) coach from 1990-95. He returned to North Dakota, where he served as OC/QB/wide receiver coach for three years at the University of North Dakota before moving to St. Cloud State University Minnesota, where he was the head coach from 1999-2007. There he developed a team that won one of only two conference championships in school history. Hedberg went on to Southern Illinois University from 2008-2013, where he served as the OC/QB coach, winning two conference titles and developing his first two professional quarterbacks.

In 2014, Hedberg was able to return to his home state to finish his career at North Dakota State University as assistant head coach/QB coach. He was part of seven national titles and coached four consecutive quarterbacks who were drafted in the NFL draft: Carson Wentz (second overall pick), Easton Stick (fifth round), Trey Lance (third overall pick), and Cam Miller (sixth round).

He was inducted into the MSU Athletics Hall of Fame in 1985, named one of North Dakota's 50 greatest sports figures of the 20th century, and named the American Football Coaches Association FCS assistant coach of the year in 2021.

Hedberg has had a positive impact on hundreds of athletes, coaches, and workers in the field of college football. He is particularly proud of his small-town, small-state players, like himself, who he recruited and mentored to excel. Like them, he prides himself in being a small-town boy who worked hard and earned his success.



Lisa A. Johnson '95/'00

Johnson graduated from Powers Lake High School in 1987 and soon after entered the United States Air Force and served at Minot Air Force Base as a dental laboratory technician.

She began taking courses from Minot State University on base before completing her tour of duty in 1991. Within months of her arrival on campus, the MSU student records office contacted Johnson and asked if she was interested in a position as a student worker. She worked in the records office for three years while completing an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree in marketing. Later, she completed a master's degree in management.

That was the humble beginning of a 30-plus year career in higher education, serving as registrar and director of admissions at MSU, and more recently serving as the vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the North Dakota University System (NDUS), advocating for and supporting the system's 45,000 students.

As vice chancellor, Johnson works with the state's 11 public colleges and universities that comprise the NDUS. She develops academic policies, provides testimony before the North Dakota legislature, coordinates implementation of new initiatives, and provides support to the ND State Board of Higher Education. The ND Student Association presented her with the Student Advocate Award in 2018 for her support of student initiatives and legislative priorities.

Johnson serves on several state, regional, and national academic advisory committees and is a member of the Bismarck Historical Society, Bismarck Arts and Galleries Association, the Capital Gallery, and the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation.

In her spare time, she and her good friend Jim Christianson take to the sky, enjoying flying throughout Western North Dakota in search of a good breakfast and photographing the ever-changing rural landscape below.

Johnson has one daughter, Emily Roen, who lives in the Minot area with her husband, Garret, and her first granddaughter, Harper.



Donald C. Selk '72

Selk was born and raised in Minot. He graduated from Minot State University in 1972 with a bachelor's degree in earth science, with concentrations in mathematics, physics, and geography. When Selk was a sophomore and junior, he was lab assistant for the geology and historical geology classes.

He started graduate studies in geophysics at the University of Utah in the fall of 1972 and received a research assistantship to update and maintain the university's gravity database covering the state of Utah. He was also a lab and teaching assistant for the

graduate-level gravity and magnetics classes. Selk graduated in 1976 with a Master of Science in Geophysics.

After graduation, Selk started employment with Chevron as an oil exploration geophysicist in Houston, working with seismic data acquisition, processing, and interpretation. Some of the technologies that were used in Chevron's oil exploration efforts included computer mapping, 3D computer modeling, and data visualization of the Earth's subsurface.

In 1979, he was at Chevron's headquarters in San Francisco as supervisor of a seismic crew exploring for oil in California. In 1980, Selk moved to Khartoum as the consulting geophysicist of four seismic crews exploring for oil in the Sudan. During the 1990s, he was in New Orleans working on large databases that combined seismic, well logs, and stratigraphic information that were used to create 3D computer models of the Earth's subsurface that aided Chevron's shallow water oil production and deep-water exploration in the Gulf of Mexico.

Selk was with Chevron for 27 years and had assignments in Houston; Denver; San Francisco; New Orleans; Calgary, Alberta; and Khartoum, Sudan.

Lectures by MSU professors DeWayne Martin in geology and Charles Hoffman in biology were especially inspiring and were major factors in Selk pursuing a career in the sciences. The mathematics and science classes at Minot State proved to be most valuable in graduate school and in his career.

Selk retired in 2003. He enjoys travel and spends time between Deadwood, South Dakota; Phoenix; and Minot.



Young Alumni: Joe Davis '13

Davis is an award-winning spoken word artist and bestselling author who uses poetry to power possibility.

He is the founder and director of Finding Your Freedom Practice, an artist collective teaching holistic health and wellness practices through spoken word, writing, music, theater, film, and dance.

During his time at Minot State, Davis dove wholeheartedly into arts and humanities. He loved studying theater and participated in several plays and productions, including the 24-hour play festival. Davis served as president of the Black Student Association and helped start the annual Soul Food Celebration where members' families cooked traditional Black American soul food. It was a success, especially with their Scandinavian friends.

Davis was a member of campus ministries, the Spanish club, the English honors program, and the Sigma Tau Delta fraternity where he often presented poetry at national conferences. He hosted a series of open mic nights at the Beaver Dam and eventually at a local coffee shop. Joe and a good friend, Dan Hansen, started the yearly music festival Rock the Leaves that continued for over a decade. Davis, Hansen, friend Anthony Noble, and several other MSU students started several bands and even won the MSU Battle of the Bands.

Davis holds a Master of Arts degree in theology of the arts and heads a multimedia production company, a soul funk band, and a racial justice education program. His work has been featured on BET, MPR, CNN, VH1, and the Twin Cities CW.

Based in Minneapolis, he tours internationally to join schools, faith spaces, nonprofits, businesses, and correctional facilities to practice envisioning and embodying a world of collective liberation and human flourishing. ::::

::: Alumni and friends EVENTS :::

Arizona Socials





Fargo Social



Friend-Raising Golf Tour





Alumni Night at
Summer Theatre





Homecoming



MSU Luau



North Dakota State Fair Parade



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Upcoming EVENTS

MinotStateU.edu/alumni



Basketball
Alumni & Friends
APPRECIATION
NIGHT
Jan. 23



FLORIDA
Alumni & Friends Social
Feb. 12



ARIZONA
Alumni & Friends Socials
March 5 - 7

Alumni
Association
GALA
May 1

CLASS NOTES

Send us your news:
MinotStateU.edu/alumni

1964



Gary Knutson was named to the Watford City High School 2025 Hall of Fame. His many accomplishments include being named WDA Coach of the Year in 1986 and being one of 138 in the U.S. to receive the Presidential Scholars Program Teacher Recognition Award in 1999.

1971



Mary Ellen Backes, one of 12 Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph of Maple Mount, Kentucky, celebrated her 60th anniversary of religious profession.

1972



Rosanne Olson had three songs featured on the Minot State University Concert Choir's recording, "Toward the Light," in its world premiere.

1978



Angela (Foster) Bartholomay, associate professor of science at Dakota College at Bottineau, received the 2025 Project Learning Tree Leadership in Education award for her work promoting environmental stewardship through education for more than 30 years.



Ron Garcia, longtime contributor to the Minot American Legion baseball program, was named to the Minot Baseball Hall of Fame.

1984



Lisa (Lizotte) Gathman, administrative assistant at Devils Lake High School, was selected as DLPS Support Staff of the Year.



Curt Kraft was named to the University of Nevada 2025 Athletics Hall of Fame class. He spent 14 seasons on the track & field staff, the final 10 as women's head coach.

1985



Borgi (Engh) Beeler was named one of Women We Admire's Top 50 Women Leaders of North Dakota for 2025. She previously served as president and CEO for Kalix.



Bryan Kramer, former Bishop Ryan baseball coach, was named to the Minot Baseball Hall of Fame.

Pam (Pister) Podell was recognized for her 25 years of service as volunteer instructor for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

1987



Randy Johnson received the Carey E. McDonald National Citation Award from the North Dakota High School Coaches Association. The award is given annually to a person in a leadership role who has made a unique contribution to high school and promotes the highest ideals of coaching.



Lora (Cooper) Soderholm joined Trinity Health in Minot as director of Total Rewards programs, which includes compensation and benefits, as well as HR operations, compliance, and systems.

1988



Dave Draovitch, Bismarck Police chief, announced his plan to retire after 36 years of service with the department. He started his career as a patrol officer in 1989, later being promoted to sergeant, lieutenant, and deputy chief before becoming chief of police in 2018.

1989



Bruce Mack, head baseball coach of the Surrey Public School's Mustangs, celebrated his retirement after 32 years. He was recently a recipient of the Special Achievement Award by the North Dakota Associated Press Sportscasters and Sports-writers Association.



Mike Lucy, American Family Insurance, was inducted into the Dakotas Hall of Fame for North Dakota and South Dakota. The honor recognizes his dedication and commitment to both his professional and personal life and the mark it has left on the insurance industry and his community.

1990



Michael Casey joined the USA Softball Elite Fraternity. The Elite award program is the highest honor a USA Softball umpire can obtain other than selection to the National Softball Hall of Fame.



Derek Druse has taught for 30 years in the Thief River Falls, Minnesota school district as orchestra director for grades fourth through 12th. He was named to the Minnesota Music Educators Association's 2025 Wall of Honor.



Perry Erdmann retired from SRT Communications after 23 years of service. He joined the company as controller in 2002 before advancing to chief financial officer in 2004.



Steve Lipp was selected as president and CEO of the North Dakota Community Foundation Board of Directors.



Lester and Taryce (Evanoff) Malnaa retired fall 2024. Taryce spent 34 years with Brady Martz & Associates, while Lester worked with Ward County and the State of North Dakota for 34 years.

1991



Mike Hendrickson was a recipient of the Special Achievement Award by the North Dakota Associated Press Sportscasters and Sports-writers Association. He retired after 35 years of coaching high school boys basketball, the past 28 at Fargo South.

1992



Scott Johnson, mathematics professor at Dakota College at Bottineau, has been selected as one of the latest Dale P. Parnell Distinguished Faculty for the American Association of Community Colleges. The designation recognizes individuals making a difference in the classroom.



Mitch Lunde was nominated for the National High School Athletic Coaches Association's 2025 NSACA National Coach of the Year. The Minot High School athletic director was one of eight finalists from throughout the U.S.

1993



Becky (Allan) Arthur and her husband, Chad, are owners of Pedal Pub Lexington, Kentucky. Their party bike business was named 2024 Rookie of the Year at the national Pedal Pub conference.



Lori (Pendley Gazzier) Knowles is serving as senior vice president, chief human resources officer at Memorial Hermann Health System in Houston, Texas.



Brian Michalenko was inducted into the Dakota Musician Association Hall of Fame.

1994



Cory Gibbons has been with Trinity Health in Minot for 31 years as a medical laboratory scientist in transfusion medicine. He is also a U.S. based scout for the Portland Winterhawks of the Western Hockey League.



Tammy (Rademacher) Vetter has joined First Western Bank & Trust as a loan administration manager at their main bank in Minot.

1995

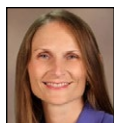


Wade Strilcov has joined Trusted Tire and Auto as operations manager for the company's four Trusted Tire & Auto Change locations in Minot and Bismarck.

1996



Jeremy Brandt is the new coach of Minot High School's boys basketball team. He was previously an assistant with Minot State's men's basketball team.



Laurie (Randolph) Geller was named one of Women We Admire's Top 50 Women Leaders of North Dakota for 2025. She serves as vice president for academic affairs at Minot State University.

1997

Jason Heinz was recognized for his 15 years of service as volunteer instructor for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

1998



Dale Plessas became deputy chief for the Minot Police Department after most recently serving as acting chief. He has been with the department for 23 years.

1999

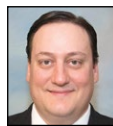


Christy (Burckhard) Donahue is a board-certified nurse practitioner bringing 25 years of neonatal medicine experience to Trinity Health.



Dean Winczewski, Minot High head boys basketball coach, retired from coaching after 17 years with the Magicians. He was recently a recipient of the Special Achievement Award by the North Dakota Associated Press Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association.

2000



Tom Rafferty was re-elected to fill a Minot seat on the Town & Country Credit Union Board of Directors.

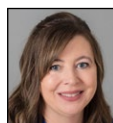
2001



Candy (Olson) Brekke received awards in the North Dakota Professional Communicators' 2025 Communications Contest, including first place awards in the categories of advertising poster, billboard or banner; web copy; and single advertisement.



Corey Gorder has been appointed interim campus dean for Dakota College at Bottineau.



Sharella (Berg) Stein was promoted to loan operations processor III at First Western Bank & Trust, Minot main bank.

2002

Shane Jordan joined Bismarck Cancer Center as a certified medical dosimetrist. He previously served as director at Trinity Health CancerCare Center in Minot.

2003



Renata (Rensch) Buen has been promoted to senior vice president of mortgage and retail at Town & Country Credit Union. She joined TCCU in 2008 as an

executive mortgage officer and most recently served as senior vice president of mortgage.



Matt Pfau was nominated for the National High School Athletic Coaches Association's 2025 NSACA National Coach of the Year. The Minot High School head soccer coach was one of eight finalists in his respective sport from throughout the United States.



John Reimer, a Brady Martz shareholder who leads the firm's Fargo office, was named among Forbes' list of America's Best-In-State CPAs for 2025.



Lisa (Harris) Thuner was voted best loan officer by readers of the Minot Daily News. She works at Town & Country Credit Union in Minot.

2004



Shannon (Dunn) Racine, senior accounting specialist, recently celebrated 25 years with Town & Country Credit Union.

2006



April (Keller) Duchscher was named the 2025 Excellence in Education Teacher of the Year Award recipient at Lake Region State College in Devils Lake.



Jessica (Haider) Henderson has been promoted to senior vice president/chief financial officer at Town & Country Credit Union.

2007



Kyle Bittle, Minot State assistant professor, recently co-authored a paper titled "Generative AI and Academic Integrity in Higher Education: A Systematic Review and Research Agenda" that has been published in the journal "Information."

2008



Dan Erdmann joined North Dakota State University as a video coordinator after spending eight years with Farm Rescue.

2009



Donovan Lambert was named Teacher of the Year for Johnson O'Malley Program (JOM) Region 5. He serves as the culturally responsive coordinator for Bismarck Public Schools and is an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Tribe.

2010



Kayla (Strand) Christopherson was named the 2025 Educator of the Year by the North Dakota Center for Distance Education.



Evan Meiers joined the Lewis & Clark Berthold School District as K-12 principal. A Synod Appointed Minister (SAM) for a small rural church in Palermo and a farmer, he previously served as a band teacher for Minot Public Schools.



Ali (Guitain) Monley was named NDSHAPE Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. She teaches at Jim Hill Middle School, Minot.

2011



Leigh (Ulfers) Dykins has retired following a 35-year career teaching English and Spanish at Beach High School.



Lacey (Berentson) Krueger has joined Town & Country Credit Union as accounting manager.



Melissa (Hoots) Rowe has been promoted to business administrative assistant at the Ackerman-Estfold Minot office. She joined the team in August 2021.



Michael Wald was promoted to the rank of sergeant with the North Dakota Highway Patrol and serves as the NDHP planning officer.

2013



Rebecca (Ryan) Beaufaux was the recipient of the 2025 Herb Kohl Teacher Fellowship. She

teaches general music and visual arts to kindergarten through fifth grade at Holy Ghost Elementary School in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.



Ashley (Hynson) Hammer has been promoted to director of finance for Ackerman-Estfold.

She joined the company in 2016 as finance administrator.



Kalvin Larson, vice president of Williston Basin with Creedence Energy Services, was selected as board chair for Town & Country Credit Union's executive committee.

2014



KayLee (Fenner) Bourquin was promoted to branch manager II at Town & Country Credit Union's Minot main location. She has been with the credit union since 2022.

Kory Houston, highly decorated area baseball player, was recognized as one of the Minot Baseball Hall of Fame's newest members this summer.



Cassie Reid joined Minot State University as human resources coordinator.

2015



Keisha (Hana) Adams has joined the Trinity Health Western Dakota in Williston team. A board-certified nurse practitioner, she provides the full spectrum of family medicine services.



Jennifer Grivos-Bauer achieved a milestone for herself and Sidney (Montana) Health Center when she performed the facility's first total ankle replacement surgery. She also earned her board certification in foot and ankle surgery from the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery.

2016



Courtney (Johnson) Olson, Minot State communication sciences and disorders instructor, graduated with her clinical doctorate in speech-language pathology from the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professionals.



Amanda Skinner was appointed to the North Dakota Council on the Arts board of directors, representing region one. She has spent over a decade teaching high school math, physics, robotics, and computer science and earned the NDATL's Techie Teacher of the Year award in 2017.



Dakota Brekhus has been named head men's and women's golf coach for Minot State University. He previously served as assistant coach for the Beaver golf program.

2018



Emily (White) Lindquist has joined the Souris Valley United Way as director of outreach and engagement.



Jennifer (Ellis) Reynolds has joined the Tioga Medical Center as a provider.

2019



Ashlee Gathman is the Minot Park District's director of marketing and development. She has been a member of the team since 2018, most recently as program specialist.



Katie (Cushman) Minnis has joined Trinity Health's general surgery team as a board-certified nurse practitioner.

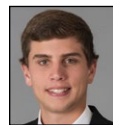
2020



Kaylee Webb, Florida State University career center liaison, earned a certificate in interpersonal

communication from Tallahassee State College and was recently chosen to join Ascend, A Practitioner Mid-Level Management Program, by the Cooperative Education and Internship Association Academy.

2021



Cole Brose was promoted to consumer lending manager at First Western Bank & Trust, Minot region. He joined First Western in 2022.



Jaxon Lundeen has been promoted to store manager for Trusted Tire & Auto at its Minot Air Force

Base location.

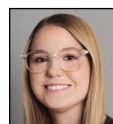
2022



McKenzie (Jerome) Day works as a licensed addiction counselor at the Turtle Mountain Community High School.



Hannah Pederson has been hired as a development officer with Trinity Health Foundation.



Maycee (Odden) Gutierrez was promoted to loan administrator II at First Western Bank & Trust, Minot region. She has been with the bank since 2020.



Sam Paszek joined Ackerman-Estfold's Minot office as an environmental specialist and recently earned his Environmental Protection Agency and ND Department of Environmental Quality Asbestos Inspector Certifications.

2023



Quaid Frantsvog is a commercial banker at First Western Bank & Trust, Minot. He has five years of experience in the finance industry, including his previous role as a credit analyst at First Western.

2025



Jake Swirple was drafted to the Alabama Beavers during the International Football Alliance's inaugural 2025 Draft. He joined the Beavers in Huntsville, Alabama as the IFA kicked off its inaugural season in May.

Attended



Justin LaBar, Stanley Community Schools fourth-grade teacher, was named 2025 Geography Teacher of the Year by the North Dakota Geographic Alliance.

Darian Morsette, who served as the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Tribal Tourism director and president of the North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance, posthumously received the Wade Westin Award at the North Dakota Travel Industry Conference.



Aaron Wick is the new operations manager for West River Telecom (WRT). He has been with the telecommunication company for 24 years. He was promoted to installation and repair department manager in 2014.

Friend



Dean Aberle, owner of Homesteaders Restaurant, was awarded the Minot Area Chamber EDC Impact Award for Outstanding Leadership. The award honors an individual who sets an example and paves the way to help make the Minot area a more prosperous place.



Kevin Black, chief executive officer with Creedence Energy Services in Minot, has been appointed to the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis's Ninth District Advisory Council for a three-year term.



Kathy Gaddie
announced her retirement from the Kalix Board of Directors after serving for 35 years.



Mike Offerdahl
was promoted to sergeant with the North Dakota Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation. He brings 15 years of leadership from his employment with University of Mary and joined the North Dakota State Penitentiary in January 2024.



Barb Solberg
participated in the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. this fall. She also participated in readings and discussions at select North Dakota libraries after being selected to represent the state by the North Dakota State Library's Center as her book, "What We Leave Behind" was selected as one of North Dakota Great Read's titles.

2025 North Dakota County Teachers of the Year

State School Superintendent **Kirsten (Schafer) Baesler '01** congratulated the following North Dakota educators who were named Teacher of the Year in their respective counties:

- **Candace Brannan '95, Mandan High School, Morton County**
- **Deanna (Erickson) Donnelly '86, Ray Public School, Williams County**
- **Robin (Pastian) Rivinius '11, Taylor-Richardton Elementary School, Stark County**
- **Dan Seykora '06, Rugby High School, Pierce County**
- **Amber (Wyman) Thorenson '00, Bottineau Public School, Bottineau County**
- **Brooke (Hollekim) Wisthoff '23, Powers Lake School, Burke County**

Awalt, Hjelmstad join MSU Development Foundation Board



Awalt



Hjelmstad

The Minot State University Development Foundation is pleased to announce two new members to its board, welcoming **Megan (Perdue) Awalt '11** and Cassidy Hjelmstad.

Awalt, a 2011 Minot State graduate in accounting, is the chief financial officer at Farmers Union Oil Company of Minot (Enerbase and Agrabase). Hjelmstad is the chief executive officer and general manager of SRT Communications.

The duo will replace longtime board members Karen Krebsbach '62 and Kathy Aas '11, who have each served on the board since 2010.

Awalt, who is originally from Ray, joined Farmers Union Oil Company in 2023. Following graduation from MSU, she spent 13 years in public accounting and earned her CPA designation in 2013. Beyond her professional career, she is devoted to her most important role – being a wife and a mom to her four children.

Hjelmstad, originally from Newburg, has been CEO/general manager of SRT since 2022, previously serving as chief marketing officer. Prior to moving to Minot, she served as director of community relations for the Phoenix Suns.

MACEDC Eagle Award

The Minot Area Chamber EDC honors individuals who have excelled in customer service with the Eagle Award. The following Minot State alumni were recipients of the Eagle Award:



Lynda Bertsch '83
Minot State University



Talli (Jeressen) Danelson '95
Gymagic Gymnastics



Lucas Havig '09
Scheels



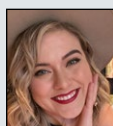
Katelyn (Burns) Richter '14
CHI St. Alexius Medical Plaza



Andrea (Billings) Brown '11
Trinity Health



Sierra Erdman '18
Sunnyside Elementary School



Emilee (Baggett) Helstedt '18
John Hoeven Elementary School



Tiffany (Lee) Gunville '05
Minot Housing Authority



Lisa (Jones) Burckhard '02
Longfellow Elementary School



Liz Gjellstad '73
Scandinavian Heritage Park



Shawn Holen '11
John Hoeven Elementary School



ReAnna Salinas '24
Trinity Health



Peggy (Bowers) Cales '24
Hospice of the Red River Valley



Rachel (Luckey) Gruenberg '06
CHI St. Alexius Medical Plaza



Lori (Waagen) Nord '95
Washington Elementary School



Shaun Sipma '01
Farmers Union Insurance



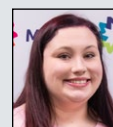
Lexi Clark '19
Lexi Lou Floral



Jolene (Carlson) Haffner '99
CASO Come AlongSide Others



Ashley (Bernsdorf) Regier '10
John Hoeven Elementary School



Ashlee Swartwout '19
Thrifty White Pharmacy

Not pictured: **Marsha Streitz '92**, David Hance CPA

It is with honor we dedicate this section to recognize alumni and friends who have passed away from approximately February 2025 through October 2025 or as submitted.

In memory

Graduates

'44 Skowronek, Eileen; Minot
'50 Knutson, LaVaughn; Tulsa, Okla.
'51 Hager (Deck), Margaret; Cooperstown
'53 Clark (Satterlund), Marjorie; Williston
'53 Jensen (Emmel), Annie; Minot
'57 Anderson (Kjelden), Patricia (Patty); Minneapolis, Minn.
'57 Hummel, Beverly; Detroit Lakes, Minn.
'57 Opperud, James; Spokane, Wash.
'58 Windfaldet (Beckedahl), Louise; Crosby
'59 Knapp, Myrna; Mendota, Ill.
'60 Berg, Vivian; Cape Coral, Fla.
'60 Blada, Maurice; Racine, Wis.
'60 Feller, Donald; Tigard, Ore.
'60 Hansen, Marcy; Ryder
'60 Harper, Stella; Minot
'61 Bolton, Fred; Aurora, Ill.
'62 Barnard, Edward; Vallejo, Calif.
'62 Brietzke (Norgard), Grace; Nora Springs, Iowa
'62 Ostby, Mercedes Ruth; Maple Valley, Wash.
'62 St. Aubin, Mary; Kalispell, Mont.
'63 Georgeson, Betty; Sheyenne
'64 Armstrong, David; Minot
'64 Hardy, Etna; Salem, Ore.
'64 Johnson (Seter), Shirley; Surrey
'64 Nachatilo, Bill; Spearfish, S.D.
'65 Anderson, Hilman; Center Point, Iowa
'66 Haugeberg, Darrell; Salem, Ore.
'66 Opstad, Gordon; Grand Forks
'66 Ryyth (Folman), Helen; Rolla
'66 Shaffner (Gjerde), Karen; Mesa, Ariz.
'67 Nesheim, William (Bill); Broomfield, Colo.
'68 Lee, Bonnie; San Tan Valley, Ariz.
'68 Schulz, Meredith; Rugby
'68 Torske, Gary; Bismarck
'69 Brey (Strain), Joyce; Minot
'69 Fredrickson, Allan; Kalispell, Mont.
'69 Heine, Patricia; Minot
'69 Jacobson (Ralph), Beverly; Minot
'69 Tinjum, Larry; Powers Lake
'70 Fairbanks (Shashagvay), Jane; Holland, Mich.
'70 Flynn, Minnie; Dunseith
'70 Henry, Dale; Minot
'70 Wilburn (Nelson), Constance; Tioga
'72 Kramer, Marian; Fargo
'72 Thurow (Kopseng), Jennifer; Bismarck
'72 Wiedrich, Albert; Blairsville, Ga.
'73 Bowlinger, Wanda; Bismarck
'73 Doede, Richard; Carson City, Nev.
'73 Elich, Anthony; Minot
'73 Hill, Marshall; Layton, Utah
'73 McIntyre, Edward; Battle Ground, Wash.
'73 Otto, Joan; Mohall

'74 Foran, Darrell; Tucson, Ariz.
'74 McCarthy, Kay; Sitka, Alaska
'76 Harvey, Frederick; Bismarck
'77 Lochthowe, Richard; Minot
'78 Rintoul (Schaan), Susan; Minot
'79 Kvale, Joanne; Minot
'81 Bannister, John; Minot
'82 Kraljic (Knopic), Mary; Bismarck
'82 Wenzel, Daniel; Minot
'83 Mosser, Stanley; Minot
'83 Schwan (Effertz), Carol; Minot
'84 Collins, Audrey; Minot
'84 Dippong, Kyla; Brooklyn, N.Y.
'88 Christenson, Gary; Minot
'88 Harris, Joseph; Elizabethtown, Ky.
'91 Bachmeier, Alice; Minot
'91 Strader, Glenn; Wolf Point, Mont.
'92 Fitchner, Mary Ann; Minot
'92 Linster, William; Superior, Wis.
'92 Mosser, Jonathan; Broken Arrow, Okla.
'92 Rioux, Sheila; Minot
'93 Birkeland (Brodin), Carol; Bismarck
'93 Bohnsack, William; Mayville
'93 Counts (Peltier), Theresa; Dunseith
'93 Rygg, Jonathan; Seguin, Texas
'95 Obenauer II, Jerry R; Hazen
'96 Huber (Kniffin), Jo Ellen; Mesa, Ariz.
'98 Goldschmidt, Paul; Minot
'99 Knutson, James (Jim); Ocala, Fla.
'01 Gripentrog, William; Watertown, S.D.
'02 Goodwin, Myrna; Oxon Hill, Md.
'04 Clark, Paul; Minot

Attended

Allman, Jr., Council; Staten Island, N.Y.
Blikre, June; Bothell, Wash.
Davidson, Kena; Minot
Goodman, Jerry; Rugby
Grilley (Smette), Donna; Minot
Hageness, Shirley; Pleasant Lake
Harvey, Josh; Washburn
Johnson, J. Philip; Fargo
Kalenze, Jessica; Berthold
Keele, Anna; Stayton, Ore.
Kirby, Geraldine; Williston
Koppelsloen, Jerome; Minot
Landsiedel, John; Dillingham, Alaska
Larson, Don; Minot
Nelson, Monte; Warrensburg, Mo.
Neshem, Raymond; Des Lacs
Nielsen, Mary "Kathy"; Beulah
Rein, Clay; Minot
Rubbelke, Ross; Minot
Selmek, Beverly; Minot
Sheppard, Ruth; Ellendale
Ungerecht, Sherrill; Glen Ullin

Vossler, Idella; Wishek
Winger, Edgar "Ed"; Evergreen, Colo.
Wurtz, Rachel; Bismarck
Zepeda, Michael; Minot

Friends

Adamski, Edward; Apache Junction, Ariz.
Atwood, Brad; Antler
Bellet, Dennis; Williston
Bohan, Marilyn; Carrington
Bosworth, Barry; Minot
Cameron (Meyer), Elizabeth (Betty); Minot
Caroline (Weinberger), Marie; Minot
Driessen, Garry; Bismarck
Feldner, Roger; Bottineau
Fyllesvold, Randy; Antler
Geinert, Helen; Nortonville
Gibson, Nathan; Minot
Haas, LaVern; Jupiter, Fla.
Hatchard, Loren; Minot
Hintz (Dobson), Shirley; Minot
Hoover (Rennick), Lenore; Minot
Horne, Robert; Fargo
Hulberg, Allen; Minot
Klein, Marianne; Minot
Kvam, Llyod; Reno, Nev.
Lockrem, Ella Mae; Bismarck
Markwart, Caroline; Bismarck
McDonald, LaRae; Minot
Moran, William; Minot
Nevland (Lysne), Marion; Saint Paul, Minn.
Olson (Crosby), Eleanor; Williston
Pretzer (Seright), Patty; St. Louis Park, Minn.
Rice (Handeland), Marian; Pagosa Springs, Colo.
Rice, Leonard; Pagosa Springs, Colo.
Robinson, Larry; Valley City
Teske, Darrell; Westhope
Thoreson (Pfeilschifter) Carol; Voltaire
Undlin (Tyler), Peggy; Lansford
Undlin, Gerald; Minot
VanWinkle, Chad; Minot
Wald, Helen; Surrey
Wald, James; Surrey
Weber, Ralph; Elm Grove, Wis.
Wheeling, Roger; Jamestown

Faculty and Staff

Falkinburg, Delores; Minot
Goebel, Francis, retired staff emeritus; Minot
Jagd (Westby), Ruth, retired staff emeritus; Minot
Schaan, Blanche; Williston
Solberg, Kathleen; Katy, Texas

BABY BEAVERS

Wallace made his debut on Oct. 26, 2023, to **Anzley (Harmon) '14 Bieri** and her husband, Matt.



Bieri



Brekhus

Hartman Timothy was born June 6, 2025 to **Dakota '18 and Courtenay (Burckhard) '12 Brekhus**.

Julian Rey entered the world on Oct. 22, 2024. He was born to **Christina Martinez '09** and her husband, Brandon Corral.



Corral

Bray Lawrence entered the world on Dec. 14, 2024. He was welcomed by **Will '10 and Audra (Wyman) '08 Butler**.



Butler

Dean Leeland was born April 8, 2025, to **Caleb '20 and Adri (Helle) '18 Grindy**.



Grindy

Kristin (Kjelshus) '15 Hall and her husband, Trevin, welcomed their first little one, Walker Lee, on Feb. 27, 2025.



Hall

Krahler



Bryan '12 and Morgan (Klose) '15 Krahler welcomed twins, Carter and Collins, on June 9, 2024.

Kunnanz

Peder and **Chelsea (Anhorn) '17 Kunnanz** welcomed Dawson on July 20, 2024.



Jansen



James and **Danielle (Renner) '10/'12 Jansen** welcomed twin daughters, Hannah and Maggie, on May 27, 2024.





Larson

**Michael '16 and
Alexus (Arthur) '17
Larson** welcome their
first little one, Emma
Lynn, on Nov. 30, 2024.



Morris

MSU assistant professor
emeritus **Timothy Morris
'77/ '91, and his wife Kim
(Eltz) '79 Morris**, are proud
grandparents of Kaysen,
welcomed in spring of 2023
by parents Sean and Abby
Morris and big brother Karter.



Murphy

Loock was born
April 13, 2024, to
Max and **Courtney
(Albertson) '14
Murphy**.



Myers

Posey Rae entered
the world Sept. 22,
2025. Proud beaver
parents are **Brody
'17/'18/'20 and Jade
(Teske)'18/'20 Myers**.



Pelham

Michael Pelham
and **Shelby
Pederson '17**, had
Jensen James on
July 2, 2024.



Sawicki

Mitch and **Jordan
(Marken) '20 Sawicki**
welcomed Bowen Lee
on Jan. 23, 2025.

Sheppard

Shane Sheppard '18
and his wife, Jazzmin,
welcomed Izzabelle
July 2023.



Talbot

Ollie Annie joined
the Talbot Family
on July 7, 2024.
Proud parents are
Colin and **Deanna
(Mitchell) '12
Talbot**.



Volk

Crew was born
Nov. 30, 2024,
to **Kyle '16 and
Kristin (Long)
'17 Volk**.

Have you had an addition to your family recently?

We want to know! Contact Kate Marshall, director of foundation operations, at kate.marshall@minotstateu.edu to receive a free T-shirt for your new little Beaver. Please be sure to tell us your baby's name and date of birth. Also please provide your graduation year, spouse's name, and contact information. After you receive your T-shirt, email your baby's photo to Kate.



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For our family, Minot State University is more than a campus; it's part of who we are.



We, along with our daughters Kaylie and Kelsie, proudly carry on the Beaver tradition as lifelong supporters of education, service, and community.

Kevin '98, a Minot native, is in his 25th year as an educator with Minot Public Schools and has coached wrestling in the area for over 40 years. His dedication extends to volunteering with the Minot State wrestling program and founding the Minot MatWrats youth wrestling initiative.

Tammy (Grabowska) '09 has served in multiple roles within MSU departments and dedicated 22 years to teaching in the Minot Public Schools. In 2019, she founded Mrs. Field's Closet, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing students with essential items so they can focus on learning. The initiative has grown to four locations and continues expanding.

Our daughter Kaylie White '22 continues the family's legacy, having earned her nursing degree from Minot State. Since graduation, she has served as an ICU nurse and now works as a flight nurse at Trinity Medical Center.

Together, the White family embodies the spirit of education, community, and service – values at the heart of Minot State University. We are proud to call Minot home and proud to be part of the MSU family.

Go Beavers!

– Kevin, Tammy, Kaylie, and Kelsie White

