

**Metro State University**  
**Alumni Association Board Meeting**  
March 26, 2024, 5:30-7:00 p.m.  
<https://minnstate.zoom.us/j/98093119829>

**Members attended by Zoom:** Matt Christenson, Jim Houston, Matt Moe, Bryan Newman, Scott Pilgram, Ryan Ringwelski, Eric Rios, Shahbaz Shah, Shanasha Whitson

**Members not attending:** Deidra Isaac, Amanda Wong, Darrell Young

**Staff attendees:** Kristine Hansen, Rachel Hughes, Noriko Ramberg, Josh Windham

Ryan Ringwelski convened the meeting. As an ice breaker activity, he suggested that each Board member and staff share what he/she would name his/her ship if he/she were the captain of a pirate ship.

**University Updates by Kristine Hansen:**

The new Mission, Vision and Values statement has been approved by the Minnesota State Board of Trustees and has formally been adopted: <https://www.metrostate.edu/about/mission>.

The university will start working on a new strategic plan for FY25 that will be in line with the new Mission, Vision and Values. The Board may be asked for feedback during the process.

**Approval of Committee Notes:**

Board members reviewed the committee notes prior to the Board meeting. Motion to approve the committee notes moved by Ringwelski, seconded by Matt Christenson, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

**Alumni of the Year 2024:**

Nominations have not yet been received from outside the Board. In consideration of the contribution and leadership she offered through the Alumni Board, Ringwelski and Amanda Wong recommended that we honor Nancy Uden with the 2024 Alumna of the Year Award.

Information of Uden's condition and advocacy on end-of-life autonomy:

- <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/nancyuden>
- <https://www.startribune.com/nancy-uden-wants-to-live-but-also-wants-to-choose-when-shes-going-to-die/600347136/>

Uden had been very active in the Board work as a former president of the Board, including the recruitment of almost all the current Board members. Prior to her diagnosis, she had been very engaged, involved, and advocated in support of Metro State and its communities.

The Board agreed on the recommendation and also suggested a proclamation of her award, highlighting her avid dedication to Metro State in the past.

Hansen will provide the link to vote on the selection.

**Membership Committee Update by Scott Pilgram:**

- The Board needs to recruit a minimum of three new members by the end of 2025 as Shahbaz Shah is leaving after the completion of his first term and two more members are leaving in 2025 after completing their second term.
- The committee is planning a recruitment listening session at the end of April.
- The committee is planning a happy hour in the fall as a recruitment opportunity.
- The committee will reach out to other committee leads to get an idea on the recruitment count based on their committee attendance, engagement, etc.

- Josh Windham will update the recruitment form. Windham encouraged the Board members to share the recruitment effort through social media and refer any interested alumni to the updated form.
- Shah is leaving the Board after the completion of his first term, but he wishes to remain on the Membership Committee as a committee-only member.

### **Micro-learning by Ringwelski:**

Ringwelski shared his expertise and wisdom on the topic “How to inspire people to get involved and its process”. He taught effective ways to get students and alumni involved in university events.

Our goal is to inspire students/alumni through actions and events. Know that:

- your small acts/events could affect students/alumni in a way that could be life-changing or open doors of opportunities and interests.
- your actions could fill students/alumni with courage or strength of purpose.
- you could empower students/alumni with open communication, be relatable and involved in their lives.
- your positiveness is infectious; practice what you preach---be a volunteer yourself.
- encouragement, teamwork, and show of appreciation go a long way in promoting the social aspect of involvement.

The rest of the Board members are encouraged to host a micro-learning at future meetings and to let Hansen know if interested.

### **Week of Service Update by Windham:**

- Collection boxes for the Item Drive to support the Student Parent Center (SPC) have been placed in various campus locations this week, and we are receiving a fair number of donated items thus far despite the snow days.
- The Blood Drive was held today.
- SPC Open House is Thursday, March 28. If you have items for the Item Drive that you planned to give, SPC is accepting donations, tangible or financial, throughout the year. Windham encouraged the Board members to check out the newly renovated SPC.
- Windham thanked the board members who volunteered at the March 23 Commencement Expo.
- The month of April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. A couple of planned actions are:
  - Sending Thank-you cards to alumni volunteers
  - Recognizing and highlighting volunteers on social media

### **Breakfast at the Capitol Update by Hansen:**

- The event was a success and had a nice turnout of attendees. After the meeting, 15 people signed up to receive talking points about Minnesota State’s request at the legislature.
- Will Ruckel, Director of Annual Giving and Stewardship, sent out an appeal afterwards to the attendees to give gifts to Metro State.
- Survey responses are all-in-all positive.

### **Alumni Board Happy Hour:**

Six board members and Hansen gathered for a happy hour on Feb. 22. It was very casual and a great team-building opportunity to get to know each other.

### **Other Business**

- Hansen introduced the concept of “Metro in Your Neighborhood” to the Board, where we organize social gatherings in board members’ residing cities and invite alumni in the area to join for a happy hour—the Alumni Association will buy appetizers and drinks will be on each attendee.

Hansen would like to revive this previously-popular event in June, July and August and is looking for volunteers to host the event. Staff will work with the hosts on the logistics and financials; Hansen requests the hosts offer their social capital and welcome alumni attendees.

She will send a survey to the Board to inquire who is interested and to sign up.

- Hansen sought volunteers for the ad-hoc engagement committee to help her vet occasional business and event proposals she receives from alumni (e.g., promotion of events based on their businesses).

Jim Houston, Bryan Newman, Shah, and Shanasha Whitson volunteered during the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Ringwelski, seconded by Shah, and the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator