

Ahoy Crew,

Here's the "All Hands on Deck" update (April 1, 1310hr):

Three weeks ago, the President and Board shocked us with the announcement that we needed to raise \$12M by April 3rd or they would close the school at the end of this academic year. Since then, our community has organized and charted a path forward.

Now we need the board to rescind the threat of closure and buy us time to realize that vision. There is no reason we should close—we have no long-term debt, a mission that is more important than ever, and a beautiful campus with space to open to community partners. Though we have not been operating in a financially sustainable way for some time, there are real, creative, solutions for building a stable Northland. We have to change. And we can. All we need is time, courage, and integrity.

Thank you for the continued community support: **Thank you** to people who came to the budget focus group on Sunday: Bri, Paul, Lisa, Kelly, Tom, Danny, Andrew, Mark, Peter, Em. **Thank you** to Bayfield County for its proclamation of support. **Thank you** to Charlie Kryzinski for scones and **thank you** to Danny Simpson for Easter dinner.

Progress Updates:

True Northland, the community-led vision for Northland's future is available at TrueNorthland.org. You can join the 1,199 people who have already signed a [letter of support](#) for the vision, asking the board to keep the college open and move forward with this vision.

True Northland budget modeling (see attached Executive Summary):

The GinGins (a.k.a. the faculty ad hoc response committee) created two draft budget models for the *True Northland* vision. The budget models show how bringing all operations in line with our mission and opening our campus to the community can make us financially sustainable. This will require aggressive fundraising, but we believe that a coherent plan for the future, a strong team, and a little time are all that is needed. Current supporters will be needed to help us finish this year and start the next, but that is not a surprise given the hole we are in.

The models bolster revenue generating departments including advancement and grant writing, which have both been severely understaffed. They also add sources of new revenue—in line with the "True Northland" vision that emerged from community meetings, was overwhelmingly endorsed by the faculty, and brought by President Dayton to the Board of Trustees on March 27th.


The models reduce expenses in ways that are strategic and significant. Thank you to all the employees at Northland who reviewed their budgets to let us know how much they could realistically cut for one lean year. We were able to achieve these cuts without lowering salaries for staff making under \$100K.

The two models vary based on assumptions of student retention (80% and 60%). Both show a financially sustainable path forward. Even more encouraging—the models still work even if we assume even lower retention for next year (even down to 40%).

We shared the draft budget models with our Board liaison. Faculty Council will discuss the draft models at our meeting this afternoon, and we will forward the result of the discussion to the board.

These models were created from information that is publicly available, discussions with budget managers, and summary information shared with faculty.

Community-organized work groups:

- **Northland Forever** has raised \$241,326.11 in pledges as of 8:44 a.m. April 1st. They are “taking pledges as a way to coordinate funds from alumni, community members, and other potential donors for several reasons: To provide a way to donate free from the influence of the Board of Trustees, to provide a way to donate that will **not** be used to help the school close, and to create an incentive (i.e. money) to ensure that Northland’s administration and board of trustees follows the plan that the community is creating and building.”
- **Student Organizing Committee**
 - Finalizing the  [schedule for Camp Northland](#), the “camp in” scheduled for April 3 – 7th (to coincide with the deadline set by the board)
 - [Sign up to help](#)

Media Coverage:

- Northern News Now: [“Alumni raise \\$200,000, outline a new vision for the school”](#)
- Wisconsin State Journal: [“Next week ‘critical’ for Northland College’s hopes to stay open”](#)
- Thank you to Northland College Marketing & Communication Team:
 - Abigail is producing videos for TikTok, Grace and Tori launched “Our Stories” on Instagram (cross-posting on Facebook). Heidi has been pushing out content hard on our two main institutional FB channels (5-8 posts/shares daily) which has a reach of 13,000 followers.
 - Grace has been updating the website whenever we get new FAQ answers, clarification on information, or press releases from the Board.
 - MarComm has also been publishing news stories on our website (letters of support, BOT updates, etc.) which have been getting picked up by local, regional, and national outlets.

Personal note: The past three weeks have been a fruitful case study for my Group Process & Leadership class. It’s thrilling to see how large groups—when they include diverse voices, work well together to analyze problems, and openly share and receive information—can make much better decisions than small groups working in isolation.

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