From the Vice Chancellor

Success in college is defined in many ways. In the classroom, success might be acing the first calculus test, delivering a strong presentation in class, finishing a huge project or paper on time, or passing that taxonomy class. In athletic competition, success might be beating an archrival, hitting a grand slam home run, or a long run in the conference playoffs. (Go Golden Eagles!) Success might also mean becoming fast friends with your roommate, stepping into a club leadership role, or staging an outstanding event, such as Monday’s Night of Expression. Success can be defined in many, many ways specific to who we are as individuals.

Success in college also means graduating. We celebrate the success of all graduates, whether it takes four years or five years or longer. We celebrate success for students who have returned to college after taking time out to work or raise a family and graduate eight, ten, or fifteen years after they first began in college.

Increasingly over the past several years, however, the definition of college success has also been defined by state and national policy makers and higher education critics as graduation in four years. State funding formulas in many states, including Minnesota, are tied, in part, to the four-year graduation rate. Enter college in Fall 2015 and graduate in May 2019—success!

I recently attended the winter Academic Affairs meeting of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), where the focus was clearly on promoting success for students in the first year of college. Speakers presented intriguing results on the effect of “micro-interventions,” changes in class scheduling, completion grants, and the probation process. Focus on the retention of students, semester by semester, is driving many colleges and universities to reduce unnecessary barriers that sometimes cause students to stumble on the path to graduation.

At the University of Minnesota Crookston, we, too, are working on student success toward graduation. We are applying to the Higher Learning Commission’s Persistence and Completion Academy. Across campus, departments and units have defined retention (and recruitment) goals and action plans. And 91% of new entering high school students in Fall 2015 returned to campus in Spring 2016. That may be an all-time high in the spring-to-fall retention rate at UMC. These students are on the path to graduation in four years. Success!

Fall-to-spring retention was up across the board, with athletes and students of color experiencing an even higher increase in retention than other sub-groups. Commitment from coaches in all sports, stronger support structures through the GEMs (Golden Eagle Mentors) peer mentoring program, and other intensive activities, including work led by Dr. Alvin Killough and Eryn Killough with freshman football players, almost certainly played a role in the increased rate of retention. As one striking example, Fall 2015 freshman football players returned for their first spring semester at a rate more than double that of freshman football players who entered in Fall 2014. That is success!
All across campus and online, faculty, staff, and students are working toward success for all students. Congratulations on the encouraging early results of those combined efforts. Thank you for your commitment and good work!

Barbara Keinath
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
University of Minnesota Crookston

**Featured Events & Activities**

**Spring Thaw Social for UMC Faculty and Staff, Wednesday, February 24** – 4 to 6 p.m. in Bede Ballroom, Sargeant Student Center

**NSIC Women’s Basketball Playoff Game: UMC Golden Eagles vs. Minnesota State University Mankato, Wednesday, February 24** – 6 p.m., Lysaker Gym, UMC Sports Center

**What’s on Wednesday (WOW): Juggler Charles Peachock, Wednesday, February 24** – 8 p.m., Kiehle Auditorium

**UMC Hosts Section 8A High School Boys Basketball Tournaments, Thursday, February 25** – 6 to 10 p.m., Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center

**Saturday Admissions Visit with Focus on Prospective Students Interested in Majors within the Business and Liberal Arts & Education Departments, Saturday, February 27** – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., check-in at Northern Lights Lounge, Sargeant Student Center

**UMC Hosts Section 8AA High School Boys Basketball Tournaments, Saturday, February 27** – 1 to 9 p.m., Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center

**UMC Hosts Section 8AA High School Boys Basketball Tournaments, Monday, February 29** – 6 to 10 p.m., Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center

**Thursday Commons: Spring Semester Convocation, Thursday, March 3** – Noon to 1 p.m., Kiehle Auditorium

**President Kaler’s 2016 State of the University Address, Thursday, March 3** – 1 to 2 p.m., Coffman Memorial Union, Twin Cities campus, ITV viewing on Crookston campus in 101 Dowell Hall

**UMC Hosts Section 8A High School Girls Basketball Tournaments, Thursday, March 3** – 6 to 10 p.m., Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center

**Service-Learning Brown Bag Lunch Discussion on Assessment, Friday, March 4** – Noon to 1 p.m., Bede Ballroom, Sargeant Student Center

**UMC Hosts Section 8AA High School Girls Basketball Tournaments, Friday, March 4** – 7:30 to 10 p.m., Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center

**Music on Monday (MOM): Landon Austin, Monday, March 7** – 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Northern Lights Lounge, Sargeant Student Center
2016 International Dinner Series: “Made in China” Featuring UMC Student Naying Zhang – Monday, March 7 – 6 to 8 p.m., Bede Ballroom, series tickets are $50 for adults, individual dinner tickets are $15, contact Rae French for tickets at rfrench@umn.edu or 218-281-8339

Spring Break, Monday, March 14 through Friday March 18 – classes excused, campus offices open

For details on these and a comprehensive listing of other events or to discover what’s happening this week, visit UMC Today at www.umcrookston.edu/today or review our news page at http://news.crk.umn.edu/news.
Learn more about events across the entire University of Minnesota system via Brief: http://brief.umn.edu/.

Around Campus

Administrative Affairs –

All UMC faculty and staff are invited to attend the annual Spring Thaw Social on Wednesday, February 24, from 4 to 6 p.m. in Bede Ballroom, Sargeant Student Center. This casual event is strictly for fun—an opportunity to socialize with friends and colleagues and to energize everyone for the push through winter. Appetizers and beverages will be provided, and a cash bar will be available. Guests and spouses are welcome. Two special door prizes will be given away. Stop by before the UMC Women's Basketball playoff game.

Academic Affairs –

As of the February 8, 2016, meeting of the Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission, the University of Minnesota Crookston’s accredited status has been continued with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in or before 2025-26. Official notification has been received by Chancellor Wood.

Student Affairs –

Two-Time Gold Medalist and World Champion Juggler Charles Peachock will perform on Wednesday, February 24, at 8 p.m. in Kiehle Auditorium. The event is free for UMC students. Peachock has appeared on NBC TV’s “America’s Got Talent” and has been featured in People Magazine. Learn more at www.charlespeachock.com.

Spring Semester Convocation is set for Thursday, March 3, at Noon in Kiehle Auditorium. Brandy Chaffee, UMC’s chief development officer, will be the featured speaker. The UMC Band and UMC Choir will perform musical selections; Chancellor Wood and Vice Chancellor Keinath will recognize the students named to the Chancellor’s 4.0 Club for fall semester 2015; students, faculty and staff members, and clubs of the month will be announced; and varsity coaches will provide season updates.

Landon Austin, a 20-year-old singer-songwriter, will be the featured performer for the Music on Monday Series on Monday, March 7, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Northern Lights Lounge, Sargeant Student Center. As a junior in high school, Landon's talent was recognized when he won Dallas' local "Texas 10 Under 20" contest. Learn more at www.youtube.com/user/LandonAustin.
International Programs –

The University of Minnesota Crookston now welcomes new international students on campus as part of the U.S. Department of State’s Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (Global UGRAD-Pakistan). Joining the UMC family for spring semester 2016 is Kainat Panwar, the first student to attend UMC through this program. Global UGRAD-Pakistan is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and is administered by IREX (the International Research & Exchanges Board). For more information about the program, visit www.irex.org/projects/ugrad-pakistan.

The 2016 International Dinner Series kicks off on Monday, March 7, at 6 p.m. in Bede Ballroom with "Made in China." Naying Zhang, a business management major, will speak about business relationships, the year of the Monkey, and the Confucius Institute at UMC. Tickets for the entire series are $50 for adults and $35 for children/students (18 and under). Tickets to individual dinners in the series are $15 for adults for the meals in March and $20 for the final International Festival on April 6, and $10 for each meal in March and $15 for the final International Festival for children/students (18 and under). Contact Rae French at rfrench@umn.edu or 218-281-8339.

Development & Alumni Relations –

At the Sixth Annual Justin Knebel Memorial Ice Fishing Tournament, held Saturday, February 6, more than $3,300 was raised allowing the scholarship fund to surpass the $25,000 needed to endow the Justin Knebel Memorial Scholarship. Knebel, who played basketball for the U of M Crookston Golden Eagles, grew up in Warroad, Minn.

University Relations –

Adam Yust, alumni advocacy director at the U of M Alumni Association, and Mike Miller, legislative advocacy coordinator at the U of M Office of Government and Community Relations, will visit the Crookston campus on Wednesday, March 2. The goals of the visit are to preview the Minnesota legislative session, to tour the campus, and to meet with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community leaders in order to discuss local issues. Miller will meet with student leaders at 1 p.m. and with faculty leaders and department heads at 2 p.m. in 116 Kiehle. Yust will meet with local alumni at 1 p.m. and with community leaders at 2 p.m. in 105 Kiehle.

Athletics –

The UMC Golden Eagle Women's Basketball Team will face the Minnesota State University Mankato Mavericks in a first round NSIC playoff game on Wednesday, February 24, at 6 p.m. in Lysaker Gymnasium, UMC Sports Center. The first 500 fans will receive a Golden Eagle hand fan, and the first 300 fans will also receive a “Golden Eagle Pride” t-shirt.

Golden Eagle women's basketball player Katrina Nordick, a senior from Perham, Minn., majoring in applied studies, was awarded her third Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) Player of the Week honor of the 2015-16 season on February 15. She averaged 18.5 points, 8.05 rebounds, and 5.5 assists as the UMC Women’s Basketball Team picked up a sweep on the weekend with wins over University of Mary and Minot State University. Nordick had 12 points, five rebounds and eight assists against Minot State on Friday as UMC
picked up a 78-62 win. Saturday, she had one of the best games of her career with 25 points, 11 rebounds, and three assists in a win over the University of Mary.

Katrina Nordick also has been named to the Academic All-District Team selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) for District 7. One of five student-athletes who earned placement on the All-District 7 team, Nordick is the only honoree from the NSIC for the 2015-16 season. She has been a four-year starter on the Golden Eagle Women’s Basketball Team and maintains a 3.81 grade point average.

**U of M Extension**

U of M Extension will present Nitrogen Smart on Wednesday March 2, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Northwest Research and Outreach Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota Crookston. The event is open to the public, and with generous support from Minnesota Corn Growers there will be no cost to attend. Nitrogen Smart is a three-hour program for farmers that delivers foundational knowledge on nitrogen behavior in the environment and looks at research and technology to guide nitrogen management decisions. Participants will receive recognition as being "Nitrogen Smart" and will be expected to continue their nitrogen education into the future to retain that status. The program will be subsequently offered at other locations across the state. This program is a collaborative effort between University of Minnesota Extension, Minnesota Corn Growers, and the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center. More information is available at [http://z.umn.edu/nitrogensmart](http://z.umn.edu/nitrogensmart).

**University of Minnesota System**


University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler will offer his 2016 State of the University Address on Thursday, March 3, from 1 to 2 p.m. in Coffman Memorial Union Theater on the Twin Cities campus in Minneapolis. The address will conclude with a moderated question-and-answer period. The address will be broadcast live via ITV to all campuses, and on the Crookston campus viewing will be held in 101 Dowell Hall. Students, faculty, and staff may submit questions prior to the address online at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1fzZeubnbrKaV8GCDYVMSnCK7zBdijlT83CVPdTQdEwY/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1fzZeubnbrKaV8GCDYVMSnCK7zBdijlT83CVPdTQdEwY/viewform) and beginning at 1:30 p.m. on March 3 via Twitter (#UMNsotu). The address also will be streamed online live via a link from [http://president.umn.edu/sotu-2016](http://president.umn.edu/sotu-2016).

**Accolades**


Francis Boateng, Ph.D., assistant professor, Liberal Arts & Education Department, serves as author or co-author of two recently published articles:


Eric Morgan, online student personnel coordinator, Admissions; Janessa Quanrud, assistant academic advisor, Liberal Arts & Education Department; and Susan Klassen, lecturer, health management, Math, Science & Technology Department, attended the LeadingAge Minnesota Institute, held February 10-12 in St. Paul, Minn. LeadingAge Minnesota is the largest association of organizations serving Minnesota seniors. Its mission is to transform and enhance the experience of aging.

Michelle Christopherson, Nan Thurston, and Eric Morgan of UMC’s Office of Admissions will present at the U of M’s systemwide conference *Meeting Grand Challenges Through Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning* on Thursday, March 31, at the Commons Hotel on the Twin Cities campus in Minneapolis. The presentation will be part of the building coalition case study and will offer details of and experiences from the College Collaboration IMPACT 20/20 Education Task Force. Christopherson will share good practices and experiences on educating regional (northwest Minnesota) high school students on career opportunities and increasing their college and career-readiness. The College Collaboration is successful through the strong relationships and commitment of staff from the University of Minnesota Crookston, Bemidji State University, Northwest Technical College, Northland Community and Technical College, and White Earth Tribal and Community College.

**Student Stories**

*An internship with the Minnesota Vikings was a dream come true for University of Minnesota Crookston Junior Chad O'Shea*. The sport and recreation management major from Grand Forks, N.D., and Red River High School graduate, has always loved sports. [Learn more](http://news.crk.umn.edu/news/interns-minnesota-vikings).

*With her eye on the ball, senior guard Alexa Thielman prepares meticulously for the upcoming playoff game, but she’s also looking beyond the basketball*. Thielman, a health sciences major from Buffalo, Minn., will graduate in May from the University of Minnesota Crookston and is focused on a career in the medical field. [Learn more](http://news.crk.umn.edu/news/alexa-thielman-focused-future).

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