

Achieving Greatness

In two weeks, this University will be celebrating its 90th birthday. Bemidji Normal School began its first fall session in Sept. 2, 1919. There was an unmistakable sense of excitement and accomplishment in the air.

- The first summer school with 130 enrolled students was successful (including 6 male students).
- The fall enrollment was about 40 students; 10 were male students.
- The school began with a faculty and staff of about 10.
- Students were taught in one building – Main (we know it as Deputy Hall)
- Compromise was accomplished on the size of another building – a dormitory - being planned because of costs (later named Sanford Hall).
- The library had its first acquisitions – a Webster’s dictionary and first donation, a second-hand set of Encyclopedia Britannica’s.
- Only one extracurricular activity existed: Drama Club.

Today-Bemidji State University has:

- Just completed a summer session with 1650 students, including 1000 on line.
- About 5000 are expected for the start of fall semester (from approximately 34 states and nearly 40 countries).
- We have a faculty and staff of about 600.
- Sattgast Hall is opening with a new addition and remodeled space. And
- The library has 375,000 catalogued books.
- There are over 75 clubs and organizations.

As we reflect upon the past year, there were numerous successes, including:

- Recognized as a Tier One Midwest master’s institution by US News and World Reports.
- A new college structure
- The third annual Community Appreciation Day.
- The hiring of the University’s first sustainability coordinator.
- A faculty member received the Wellstone Social Justice Award.

- Celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Madrigal Dinners.
- Opened the Clinical Research Laboratory for nursing and held the first white coat ceremony for the 4-year nursing students.
- Celebrated the Bemidji State University Council of Indian Students 36th Annual Traditional Powwow.
- Sponsored the 10th annual Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference.
- Celebrated the 40th Festival of Nations.
- Moved beyond \$20 million in legacy bequests to the University.
- Received over \$2 million in external grants.
- Assisted small business clients in raising over \$9.5 M in new business development capital and provided over 3,000 hours of consulting time to small businesses, through the SBDC.
- Competed in the Frozen Four and later earned membership into the WCHA.
- Held the 62nd Funtastic Dance Follies.
- Developed a new liberal education curriculum.
- Won the Minnesota Energy Challenge.
- Received accreditation of our business and accounting programs and the reaccreditation of the our social work program
- A faculty member received a Fulbright research fellowship
- Completed the first 100 smart rooms

I want to thank each and every one of you, who in some way, touched the lives of our students.

What will we need to ensure our University's enduring success for the next 90 years? What will guide us?

As Jim Collins notes in his book, Good to Great and the Social Sectors, organizations that endure have greater discipline. A discipline that does not stifle creativity and innovation, but is:

- **Reflective** in its thinking.
- **Deliberative** in its responses
- **Consistent** in operating with integrity
- **Purposeful** in achieving its mission.

As we enter our 90th year, remember, that each of us has a vital role to play in helping the University prepare competent, confident and connected graduates --graduates who must be ready for leadership roles in their personal and professional worlds. We must continue to recognize our role and responsibility to Minnesota and Northern Minnesota, in particular. I believe that we will be prepared for the April visit and ultimately successful in receiving full re-accreditation. We have learned much through the self-study process which will enable this university to better realize our mission of educating, engaging and embracing.

Finally, I bring exciting news. First year students enrolled will exceed 800 for the first time in more than two decades. The combined freshman and transfer enrolled will exceed 1200. This number also has not been achieved in over two decades. In addition, the residence halls are at capacity.

We begin the year with real momentum. The pathways for the next 90 years will be exciting. Remember, we are a learning organization where each of us makes a difference. After all, our graduates' success is our greatest achievement.

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Accreditation

Enrollment