

**Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs
COMMITTEE MEETING
August 15, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 11:40 by Committee Vice Chair Rita Athas in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Jessica Cima conducted a roll call of. Members present were Trustee Rita Athas, Trustee Montel Gayles, Trustee Veronica Herrero, Trustee Bob Pritchard, Trustee Madalynn Mershon, Trustee Eric Wasowicz, Board Chair Dennis Barsema, and Committee Chair John Butler (by phone at 11:43).

Also present were President Lisa Freeman, Committee Liaison Jerry Blazey, General Counsel Bryan Perry, Board Liaison Matt Streb, Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah McGill, and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Sarah Marsh and Jason Hanna.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel, Bryan Perry, indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Perry also advised that a quorum was present.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Vice Chair Rita Athas asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Board Chair Dennis Barsema so moved and Trustee Montel Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Rita Athas asked for a motion to approve the minutes of February 7, 2019. Board Chair Dennis Barsema so moved and Trustee Montel Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Rita Athas commented: I would like to recognize the members of the University Advisory Committee representing the Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Committee. Professor Jason Hanna; Professor Kendall Thu, Faculty Senate President; Cathy Doederlein; and Jeffrey Royce. Do any of you have any comments you'd like to make to the board?

Kendall Thu commented: I'm going to defer my comments to the full Board meeting in a few minutes hopefully, but I do want to introduce my colleague Jason Hanna who's new to the UAC and Jason do you want to say a couple words. No?

Jason Hanna: I'm glad to be on the UAC, I'm from the Department of Philosophy.

Kendall Thu: Jeffrey Royce to my left side is the new president of the Operating Staff Council. Jeffrey do you have anything to say?

Jeffrey Royce: No thank you.

Kendall Thu: And you already know Cathy. Her reputation precedes her so. Thank you.

Rita Athas: Thank you very much. You probably noticed that I am not Chairman Butler. He is not here today, and I've had the privilege of filling in for him at this meeting. He had an unavoidable absence, but I believe he's on the phone.

Matt Streb: Confirmed that John Butler was present on the Phone: The Board will have to approve his participation via phone, assuming they do approve, he can participate in the meeting.

Rita Athas: I'd like to entertain a motion to allow Trustee Butler to participate in the meeting. Board Chair Dennis Barsema so moved and Trustee Montel Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

Rita Athas: Okay, the motion was approved. You can participate in the meeting so that's great.

John Butler: participating in the meeting via phone

Rita Athas: While I am very new to all of this, I did have the opportunity during my trustee orientation to meet with Dr. Blazey and the people representing the RILLA committee and I must tell you how extremely impressed I am with the work that's being done at the university. When you're on the outside you have a feel for what you think is going on, but when you really get to sit down and talk to people it's very impressive. And along those lines, this weekend in another hat that I wear, I'm working on an immigration and refugee committee and we were looking for speakers for that committee and someone told me that they knew of a young man who worked for the Illinois Business Immigration Coalition and I should reach out to him and see if he would be a speaker. And so, I did call him and as we were talking, and I looked through his bio, I saw that he was an NIU grad from the College of Law. So, I told him that I had just been appointed to the Board of Trustees and completely unsolicited, he said to me that NIU had changed his life. That he was a DACA student and that he wanted to go to law school, he didn't know if he'd have the opportunity, came here, met with a law professor, they found a way for him to go through the program and he did receive his law degree. Then, when he graduated, he said he had numerous opportunities to go into private law firms, but he felt after what NIU had given him he needed to give back. And so he went ahead. I think it's one of those stories that I was extremely impressed with and I'm very, very proud to serve on this Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

General Counsel Perry indicated that there were no requests for public comment.

UNIVERSITY REPORTS

Agenda Item 7.a. – Jerry Blazey

Vice Chair Rita Athas asked Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships, Dr. Jerry Blazey for comments.

Vice President Jerry Blazey: Thank you Trustee Athas and thank you for chairing the committee this morning and good morning to the rest of the Board. Before I begin, I would like to welcome the newest member of RIPs to our team and that's Mark Hankins who is our Assistant Director for Technology Transfer. Welcome Mark. Today's agenda includes state, federal, and sponsored programs reports followed by a faculty presentation. First, Jenna Mitchell our state legislative liaison will give us an update on the budgetary and legislative year. After that Dr. Anna Quider, Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations will give the FY19 summary of her work in DC and some observations on the federal scene, which is always of great interest. Next Dara Little, Assistant Vice President for Sponsored Programs Administration will give the FY19 summary of activities in Sponsored Programs. Finally, Dr. Nicole LaDue will present on STEM education research. Before turning the podium over to Jenna I'd like to give a brief update on the Northern Illinois Center for Communities Sustainability or NICCS as we've taken to calling it. As a reminder, NICCS reflects our scholarly vision to prepare Northern Illinois for a century of change through preparation for a changing climate, changing demographics and advancing technology. As Jenna will report, funding for the Discovery Partners Institute and Illinois Innovation Network

led by the University of Illinois system was re-appropriated this year and that re-appropriation also funds NICCS. We've learned that the funding will now be handled by the Capital Development Board and we are awaiting word from the board and the U of I system about how and when to proceed. We consider the movement of the funds from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to the Capital Development Board a positive development. It will have somewhat less reporting requirements and we are used to working with the development board on large projects. The Illinois Innovation Network comprised of all state universities has now formed and offers a venue for NICCS to integrate with other efforts at other campuses. While waiting for the funding to be released we are preparing to engage our faculty on the design of the NICCS facilities and programs. So, I would like to pause for a moment to see if you have any questions on NICCS or where we are with the project.

Rita Athas: Are there any questions.

Jerry Blazey: Okay then Jenna would you like to give your report?

Agenda Item 7.b. – State Legislative Update

Jenna Mitchell: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all this morning on what has been happening in Springfield over the course of the last year and the 2019 spring session. This spring session was particularly positive for higher education. A welcome change in trends. The final budget for fiscal year 2020 included a five percent increase for NIU operations. While this is a step in the right direction and a welcome increase, NIU's state funding remains six percent below where we were in FY15, the last year before the budget impasse, so there is still much work to be done. The general assembly also passed a multi-year capital program for the first time since FY10. This included \$130 million total for NIU, \$77 million for new construction, and \$53 million for capital renewal and deferred maintenance. It's very important to note that this funding is not something that is immediately made available to the university in FY20 or in any given fiscal year. This is going to be a six-year process and the release of funds depends on a lot of different factors such as bond sales, project expenditure approval from the governor's office, grant agreement execution with state agencies, etc. As mentioned by Dr. Blazey, in addition to new capital funding, the \$500 million for Discovery Partners Institute was re-appropriated this year—of which NIU is slated to receive \$15 million. We're waiting for that process to move forward as well, but we are poised organizationally to move forward. Lastly, Governor Pritzker delivered on year one of his commitment to increase MAP funding by fifty percent over the next four years. The 12.5 percent increase in FY20 equates to an increased investment of \$50 million. It's projected to increase the number of awards by 10,000 students in fiscal year 20 and it can only go up from there—closing the gap of unfunded eligibility that we have in Illinois, which is currently around 82,000 students who are eligible for MAP but don't receive it due to a lack of funding from the state. NIU had a significant presence in Springfield over the course of the last year. Chicago as well when hearings were held there. President Freeman personally testified at six committee hearings and we received very positive feedback. I want to specifically highlight that following our testimony before the Appropriations II Committee and the Senate where we were making our request for FY20, I received an email from the Higher Education Chairman who said the following: *"Dr. Freeman's presentation was impressive and showed committee members that NIU is a pacesetter."* Under her leadership we can expect this reputation to continue. NIU also hosted and cohosted three events in Springfield this past year. We held our first annual advocacy day in April which was attended by 38 advocates including alumni, faculty, staff, and Chairman Barsema. We look forward to increasing attendance and expanding the reach of NIU's advocates in 2020. We cohosted a public university advocacy day with our sister institutions. And for this event a small team of campus leadership including Trustee Athas and Catherine Squires traveled down to Springfield to meet with legislators and then attend an evening reception. And lastly, we

cohosted a joint caucus breakfast with the University of Illinois at which President Tim Killeen and President Freeman addressed members of the NIU caucus and the University of Illinois caucus over breakfast to discuss all our legislative priorities for the upcoming session and also to discuss the status of Discovery Partners Institute as NIU was the first non-U of I campus to be announced as a hub. Aside from committees and events, the largest piece of my role this last year involved the tracking of legislation. Since the start of the calendar year, there have been over 6,000 bills filed with nearly 20 percent having a direct or indirect impact on the university. The bills impacting NIU are not specifically limited to higher education as policies from pensions to state government regulation to labor, etc. all impact the way that NIU operates, the funding that we have, and our employees and our students in different ways. To manage this process of tracking all the bills that were impacting the university, we've procured a subscription to Hannah Illinois which is a software that helps with status updates and filing notices based on different statutes that are being amended or added. However, the true heavy lift here was bill analysis and understanding how exactly NIU was impacted and the analysis process would not have been possible if it weren't for the relationships that I've established with leaders across campus and the time and commitment that their offices have contributed to this effort. I want to specifically note that Police Chief Phillips played a significant role in breaking down various pieces of legislation at different times speaking directly with legislators to educate on the accompanying impacts and in some instances NIU helped brainstorm the policy ideas that turned into legislation. For example, Rebecca Babel NIU's Director of Financial Aid, was asked to help think of ways that we could improve the MAP grant program, and one of her ideas ended up being filed in both chambers. This demonstrates the capabilities that we have to guide and improve state policy. There were various pieces of legislation moving this past year on which NIU took the lead or played a leadership role in driving forward. On this piece I want to specifically note the passage of legislation that will allow NIU to sell university owned property that is deemed surplus and retain the funds for deferred maintenance expenditure. This was a significant piece of NIU's legislative agenda in 2019 and it was a big win for that to be signed into law by the governor last week. I also want to quickly note the leadership of Sherrie Taylor from NIU's Center for Governmental Studies. This is ongoing this summer. Not necessarily in the spring 2019 session, but she is doing significant work to help the state prepare for the 2020 census. Sherrie and her team not only created a statewide index map of the hard to count populations, but she is personally advising the governor's advisory committee on as it determines how to allocate the nearly 30 million that was appropriated this year for census efforts in Illinois. There are a few miscellaneous policy pieces that I'd like to highlight. First, Illinois just became the third state to mandate Illinois high school seniors to fill out a free application for federal student aid. Louisiana saw very positive outcomes from this policy in terms of increasing the number of students, high school graduates, that go on to apply and enroll in their postsecondary institutions in state and we hope that this will have the same impact in Illinois. It was very exciting to be at the front of an up and coming policy trend that other states have seen positive outcomes from and that kind of gives you a sense of the change in direction that we're seeing at the state level in Springfield in terms of higher education policy. Illinois also passed gambling expansion and legalized sports betting. It's important to note that NIU athletic teams are thankfully exempt from this legislation, which is something that we were not certain would be the case until the very end of negotiations. In January, the state voted to increase the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour over the next five years and this will impact NIU's finances. It's currently estimated to be an eleven-million-dollar impact by full implementation. The new unfunded mandate is one of many that we hope the general assembly and the governor's office will take note of when making budget decisions in future years. Lastly, come January 1, 2020, recreational cannabis will be legal in Illinois. It's important to note that the bill does contain a provision that Illinois universities and colleges must still abide by the federal drug free schools act. Therefore, the legalization of cannabis does not apply to NIU on this campus. Over the course of the next four months and throughout the

spring 2020 session, I will continue to advocate for NIU's priorities and educate members on the importance of investing in higher education. My main points of focus being getting NIU back to its FY15 pre-budget impasse funding level, which I believe the board just voted to approve, advancing the process of funding release to initiate new capital projects on campus, and see that the \$130 million that NIU received this year re-appropriated and trickled out over the next six years; and seeking appropriate regulatory reforms to promote efficiencies. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Rita Athas: Are there any questions for Jenna? Just before – Jenna can you talk a little bit about the NIU caucus in Springfield? How many people are alumni of the university and how many people have joined?

Jenna Mitchell: There are 24 members of the NIU caucus. Currently, ten are alumni. So, state representatives and senators who attended NIU whether undergrad or law school. And the other 14 have ties to NIU or are regionally located around here. Senator Syverson represents the DeKalb campus. He's a member of the caucus because he has the university in his district, and he cares about its success. And then we have Senator Don Dewitte whose son attended NIU and he's relatively close to the proximity as well. So those are some of the non-alumni members that are part of the caucus.

Rita Athas: I had the opportunity to meet with several of those members. It is amazing how supportive they are of NIU and how knowledgeable they are of NIU. Are there any other comments, questions?

Bob Pritchard: Jenna I'd just like to compliment you on a very successful legislative agenda this year and what you've done in many different areas. Can you elaborate a little bit more and maybe someone else will need to on the impact of the minimum wage on the university? Is this going to be phased in over four years? How can we manage how the minimum wage applies to our student employees or others?

Jenna Mitchell: I can speak to the phase in because it's in the legislation. It's over the span of five years and it starts, I believe this next January. It becomes effective January 1, 2020. So, it's a six-month impact in the first fiscal year and then ramps up four more times. But I will have to defer to someone from Human Resources or Finance for additional comments on the impact.

Bob Pritchard: And it's my understanding that minimum wage applies to interns as well as part-time employees or full-time employees?

Jenna Mitchell: That's not something that I can say for certain, but I'll look into it.

Bob Pritchard: Comment also if you will about the university liaison caucus and how that is going. If it's effective or does your success really relate to your efforts independent of what others have been doing?

Jenna Mitchell: The liaisons at the other eight public institutions and I work very closely together. During session we have weekly meetings. We're always in communication over group chat and I would say that the success this last year is a combined effort of everyone. There are certain pieces of legislation where someone takes the lead, but I would say the success and the way that higher education is being looked at more positively in Springfield is a combined effort across all public institutions.

Bob Pritchard: Well again, congratulations.

Rita Athas: Are there additional questions?

Dennis Barsema: I would echo Bob's comments what a great job you're doing. So, thank you Jenna. And I think it was imperative that we have our own representative in Springfield versus

using contractors and clearly you have proven that to be the case, so thank you. The advocacy day that I attended was well done, thank you to Trustee Athas for helping to organize that and for your previous role with the Alumni Association. I would encourage all the board members and I would encourage everybody in this room that when we have our next one, which I'm assuming there will be, to participate in that. It was a great experience for me. It was my first time in Springfield in a long time. I was very impressed with how well it was organized and with how willing the different legislators were to talk to us. I was impressed with how hard it is to find them sometimes. But it was a very worthwhile day. I found it to be a very great use of my time. So as the next one rolls around whenever it does, I would really encourage the trustees and everybody in this room to participate in that. I think this year we had 45 or 50 people, somewhere in that ballpark?

Jenna Mitchell: There ended up being around 38, but we're shooting for over 50 this year.

Dennis Barsema: Right, right. I mean so what's an ideal number that you'd like to have down there that you could manage?

Jenna Mitchell: I'd like to see it ramp up over time. If we have over 100 next year, I don't know logistically how that would work just yet. We look forward to the day when that is the case.

Dennis Barsema: Well thank you.

Eric Wasowicz: If you could get the date out as soon as you know when it will be that will be great to get that on the calendar.

Jenna Mitchell: Yes, we're waiting for the legislative calendar to be released. It usually comes out right after veto session. So, end of November, early December and we have four tentative dates on the calendar so that we could get everything reserved in Springfield. But once we see how the calendar shakes out, we'll pick a date and send out a save the date.

Eric Wasowicz: Thank you. And the eleven million that you stated for the minimum wage hit to us, is that an annual cost for us or is that accumulative over a certain amount of time?

Jenna Mitchell: I'd like to defer to Vice President McGill.

Rita Athas: I think Vice President McGill has some additional comments to make on that.

Sarah McGill: The eleven million that Jenna referenced, is over the expected duration of the ramp up, so that would take us through 2025 when the new minimum wage of \$15 goes into effect. The first increase happens in January 2020 and I'll just preface this with what are very preliminary estimates, of course they're going to get more refined, but it's about \$350,000 in that first year and then it ramps up to about \$2.5 million in that final year.

Eric Wasowicz: Okay, thank you.

Montel Gayles: Does it include all employees? Are any exempt from that?

Sarah McGill: Not to my knowledge. This would include all employees including student employees.

Veronica Herrero: I have a question about the FAFSA mandate. Do we expect to see any changes or implications whether they be positive or negative or do we basically expect to see no change here at NIU?

Jenna Mitchell: I would say that it's positive because a large part of students not even applying to school is because they just presume that it's not affordable. And filling out the FASFA makes you eligible for monetary award program grants, PELL eligibility, and a lot of financial aid assistance starts with FAFSA. You must fill that out to qualify and to even receive notice that you're eligible for a certain award. I think it will show a lot of students in Illinois that they can afford to carry on

their education, and I think that we will see a positive impact like Louisiana.

Veronica Herrero: Okay, thanks.

Rita Athas: Are there any additional questions? Thank you, Jenna. I appreciate the report and I would just like to add putting on my previous hat as a board member of the alumni association, in addition to hiring Jenna which was a brilliant move, Dr. Freeman and Dr. Streb have been so open to the alumni who are just waiting to be unleashed, the word we use, to work with the general assembly to being open to having them be part of an advocacy. The whole team that's been together has been important and impressive. So, thank you all.

Lisa Freeman: Well thank you Trustee Athas. As you indicated in your beginning comments no one tells our story better than our alumni and, so we appreciate the alumni participation.

Rita Athas: Thank you.

Jerry Blazey: Okay at this time Dr. Quider will shift us to the federal scene.

Agenda Item 7.c. – Federal Relations Report

Anna Quider: Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I will provide a brief overview of the Office of Federal Relations activities from the past fiscal year and provide a brief update on current federal relations issues. Outlined here are the types and frequency of activities that we have led or facilitated this past year. This data along with more details are included in the federal relations written report in your packets. I will provide a few illustrative highlights to discuss. In March of 2019, NIU hosted our second annual congressional reception on Capitol Hill. This event was done in partnership with Federal Relations, the Alumni Association, and the Foundation and it was timed to align with the Political Science Department student spring break trip to Washington, DC. I'm highlighting this event today because it unites numerous facets of this office's service to the university, which includes policy advocacy, relationship building with congress and the federal agencies, student engagement, alumni engagement and visibility raising for NIU. The reception convened about 90 attendees including NIU alumni, Congresswoman Robin Kelly and Congresswoman Don Bacon, as well as Congressman Bill Foster and Myanmar Ambassador U Aung Lynn. Other federal stakeholders in attendance were staff from eleven congressional offices and the National Science Foundation. We sponsored the attendance of five federally funded NIU faculty researchers who ahead of the reception participated in meetings with federal agencies or on Capitol Hill and they showcased their work at the reception. The faculty were Karen Samonds of Biological Sciences, Victor Gensini of Geographic and Atmospheric Sciences, Nicole LaDue of Geology and Environmental Sciences whom you'll hear from shortly and, Eric Jones of History and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, and Federico Sciammarella of Mechanical Engineering. This was a marquee event that we intend to hold next year. We seek to support faculty in their interactions with the federal government through a variety of ways listed here. As I just mentioned, showcasing faculty excellence and providing opportunities for engaging with federal policy makers is a key objective of our annual congressional reception. Pictured here is Professor Ralph Wheeler, Chair, of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. He is discussing his million dollar federally funded STEM education programs with Professor Diane Souvaine who oversees the National Science Foundation as the Chair of the National Science Board and is a leading voice in federal science and technology policy. Meetings during this trip in April led to Professor Wheeler's joint nomination to the National Science Board by NIU and his professional association the American Chemical Society. In the center is Dean Don Peterson of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology pictured during his visit to the House Science and Technology Committee in May. He spent the day on Capitol Hill discussing his internationally renowned expertise in exoskeletons and exosuits as well as the newly proposed engineering PhD programs

including the industry fellows program. Pictured on the right is Vice President Jerry Blazey, whom you know, and other senior research officers of leading public and private universities after meeting with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in July of 2018. He participated in the discussion of challenges and opportunities facing research universities at a critical time for this office when it did not have a senate confirmed director. Providing enriching opportunities and content for students is also a priority. We work with students in a variety of ways. Here are a few examples from this past year. Pictured on the left is Teeanna Brisco who is one of our four NIU Sponsored Congressional Summer Interns in our annual program. Here she is receiving a scholarship for the Illinois State Society of Washington DC from its president former Illinois Congressman Jerry Weller, as well as her internship host NIU alumni Congresswoman Robin Kelly. Pictured in the center is Vanessa Garcia, who joined students for the University of Illinois and Northwestern University in discussing federal science and education issues with Congressman Rodney Davis. With NIU sponsorship, she joined over 60 research one universities from across the nation at the catalyzing advocacy and engineering workshop and congressional visit day. On the right are Environmental Science and Mechanical Engineering students Kayla Koenig and Di'Quan Ishmon respectively who received sponsorship to join the political science spring break trip to Washington. As a scientist myself, I enjoy mentoring NIU's talented STEM students to explore policy making and consider opportunities to contribute to evidence-based policy making. This past year saw continued discussion of numerous federal policies that would affect NIU with little resolution. Assistant Vice President Dara Little will discuss some hot topics in research policy during her remarks so I will focus on briefly updating you on higher education, immigration and appropriations. The Higher Education Act is unlikely to be reauthorized this year. The House has completed its scheduled hearings covering college affordability and accountability, college noncompletion, the role of community colleges in historically black colleges and universities, and minority serving institutions in economic mobility and alternative pathways to a degree. The Senate has just begun its hearings. We could see draft texts from either chamber as early as the fall of this year, but more likely it will be released in 2020. Regarding immigration, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA program continues to make its way through the courts with the US Supreme Court expected to hear arguments in November and release its ruling in the spring or summer of 2020. We are closely monitoring students in high skilled employment immigration policy as well. Regarding appropriations, fiscal year 2019 saw modest year-on-year increases to researched focused agencies as well as sustained support for student aid programs and international education. In July, Congress and the White House struck a deal to raise the budget caps for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. All indications are that we can expect flat to slightly increased funding levels for NIU appropriations priorities. That's said, policy issues can impact the budget timeline, so we are not out of the woods yet for fiscal year 2020 proceeding smoothly. On these and other issues, we engage policy makers individually and collectively. We work with the University of Illinois system, the University of Chicago, Northwestern University on a near daily basis as well as other Illinois institutions and through professional associations and topical national coalitions some of which are listed here. We maximize our impact through these partnerships. I serve on the Government Affairs Executive Committee of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and last year I served as President of the Science Coalition. In these roles I lead government affairs colleagues from top American research universities. Now I work to elevate the policy priorities that matter to NIU such as the democratization of science, access to education, and our federal funding priorities. For example, last year I encouraged APLU to include two programs of importance to NIU in their annual appropriations priorities that are distributed widely on Capitol Hill and among public research universities. These programs were an advanced manufacturing program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and a regional innovation program at the Economic Development Administration. I'm also working to bring our message of inclusive excellence to Capitol Hill by creating stronger ties between public research

universities and the influential congressional tri caucus which is composed of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Also, this year I was appointed to the Marshall Scholarship selection committee at the British Embassy. And I'm excited to bring that national scholarship expertise back to campus. During the upcoming year, we plan to continue to build on our advocacy and engagement successes while remaining nimble and responsive to the needs of federal stakeholders and our campus community. This year is off to a great start. Just last week Congressman Bill Foster and Congresswoman Lauren Underwood invited Provost Beth Ingraham to join them on a public panel discussing student loan debt and college affordability. Also last week NIU and the City of DeKalb cohosted Congressman Adam Kinzinger for a tour of the city and campus focused on economic development. And thank you to Trustee Pritchard for participating in that. Looking ahead to September and October we are planning to host Congresswoman Underwood for her first official visit to campus and Congressman Foster and Congressman Underwood are tentatively scheduled to attend our annual STEM fest in October. We are also working with the office of Congressman Krishnamoorthi to plan his first official visit to campus. Looking even further ahead, 2020 is a presidential election year which brings considerable uncertainty to the policy agenda for congress and the administration. We are prudently working with our peer institutions in Illinois and our national organizations to monitor campaigning as it progresses. Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Rita Athas: Are there any questions or comments for Dr. Quider?

Montel Gayles: What are the top three things that we're looking for to get out of our federally elected officials, what would those things be? The top three.

Anna Quider: So, I would say number one favorable policy and funding positions. Number two understanding of the university's portfolio and opportunities to shine a light on the great work that's happening here. And number three I would say opportunities for our students. We work hard across the Illinois delegation to ensure that we have strong relationships that will place our students for our congressional internship program. I defer though if Vice President Blazey or President Freeman or others have thoughts.

Jerry Blazey: So, I would make a comment especially with respect to Dr. Quider's last priority. We do this as a very long gain and we want our students to start getting involved in Washington and that's why we have the interns and that's why we have the spring break and our faculty visits as frequently as we can so that we start influencing policy in a significant way with a number of our grads and our faculty say in the next five to ten years.

Rita Athas: Any additional questions?

Dennis Barsema: Just make a comment, I know we're about to receive a presentation on funding grant-wise and a good piece of that is from federal sources so thank you for your efforts in being a part of that and the great work you continue to do for us in Washington. Again, I said the same comments about Jenna and her role in the state. I think it's very important for us to have representation in Washington that wears the NIU hat. So, thank you for all your hard work on it.

Anna Quider: Thank you very much.

Rita Athas: Thank you. Oh, wait we have one more.

Bob Pritchard: I would just ask for a little elaboration on the interns that go out to Washington. I'm assuming a lot of that is done through the department, but you must be a good liaison. How many do we generally get in Washington and is that a good way of spreading the good will of Northern?

Anna Quider: So actually, I'll defer to Professor Streb to discuss the program because he's been – you founded the program I believe back about a decade ago.

Matt Streb: This year is our tenth anniversary of sending interns to DC. So, we send four interns every year that are university sponsored. There may be other students who are out there on their own. But we give them a \$6,000 stipend. Anna works very closely with us to make sure that we have appropriate placements. What I'll say is there's competition among congressional offices to get our interns because we've been providing them such really, really impressive interns. When I moved into this role, Cathy Doederlein has done a superb job of taking over the internship program and it's something that I'm very proud of and we have incredible students that go there and have transformational experiences. I just heard from one of them the other day that said it was the greatest summer of her life. So it's really a cool thing. Cathy, I don't know if you want to add anything.

Cathy Doederlein: Just would say and echo the comments that definitely our students represent us very well there and the feedback that they provide about the opportunity that it gives them and the growth and kind of mentorship that they experience from it is truly transformational.

Bob Pritchard: So those are internships that we fund, I mean Northern funds?

Matt Streb: Correct.

Bob Pritchard: So that would be what travel and housing?

Matt Streb: We give them a \$6,000 stipend which covers the cost of their housing. It gives them a little bit of spending money. They literally live right off Capitol Hill so they walk to work every day. It's a great experience. We just had this past year, Anna you could probably talk more about this, but Elizabeth and Brody both won Illinois State scholarships. You saw Tiana up on the – Tiana was actually last year's intern, part of last year's internship class. She won a scholarship. We had two more that won this year. They get a little extra money. They've done a wonderful job of representing – we just had – you were with me the other day when Congressman Kinzinger was here and he just talked about how wonderful the intern was that we sent this year. He was somebody that was mad at us for a while as Anna knows because we weren't giving him an intern and we had to rectify that.

Bob Pritchard: Very good. Thank you.

Rita Athas: Thank you.

Jerry Blazey: Thank you Dr. Quider. I'm going to spend a little time introducing the next talk not to steal Assistant Vice President Little's thunder, but rather to set the stage. So, I'm happy to report the university has seen a significant and sustained increase in our externally funding portfolio. And the credit for this great news belongs to our faculty and staff; from inception of ideas to submission and receipt of proposals and grants into execution and results. And on my part, I'd like to give personal thanks to all the staff in RIPS for their assistance and efforts in this success. Although this all starts with the hard efforts of the faculty and staff, they have been able to utilize several university programs supporting scholarship including external mentorships, intermural funding, and instrumentation and startup support. And I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for their support in providing those resources. Beyond those resources and as discussed in previous committee meetings, new doctoral programs, new clusters and new external relationships are important strategies for increasing campus scholarship and also are reflected in the presidential goals. And we are already seeing the impact of these new clusters and partnerships. And of special interest just to illustrate how broadly these strategies are reaching across campus, we have two joint positions with Argon National Laboratory that are of interest. One is with the School of Art and the other with the Department of Anthropology. So, although you might think that our

partnership with the labs would be limited to the physical sciences, we're actually now broadening them well beyond the physical sciences. We're also making new investments in the new doctoral programs and we will see the return on scholarship in the coming years. So that's just a bit of context about how we got to this position and I'll invite Assistant Vice President Little to elaborate.

Agenda Item 7.d. – Sponsored Programs Administration

Dara Little: Good afternoon. Thank you Vice President Blazey for the introduction and for setting the stage; and thank you Board of Trustees for the opportunity to present this year's FY19 Sponsored Funding Report. I will start again by echoing that it was another good year for NIU. As you can see here, we finished new external funding at \$35.5 million, that's a 17% increase over last year. As you can also see, we saw continued growth and this growth is across all sponsored activities. These funds include new awards and renewals that were competed as well as continuation funding for existing and multi-year awards. Faculty has successfully utilized the programs that Vice President Blazey mentioned in his earlier comments. And the combination of institutional investments and hard work and expertise of our faculty make this funding possible. That said, the administrators and staff in our academic departments and university business units who work hard behind the scenes to support these efforts are also to be commended. And I want to specifically acknowledge my staff in Sponsored Programs Administration who have worked very hard to keep up with this pace of increased external funding. And that's particularly true under the leadership of my stellar directors who are here today. Kellie Dyslin who oversees pre-award which is proposal development and submission and award acceptance; and Sue Gossman who oversees post-award and award management. It's been a big lift and I'm grateful for their efforts. In addition to proposal support submission and grants administration, SPA also has responsibility for managing faculty support and intramural grant programs offered through RIPS. As I noted in my written report to the board, funding this year is consistent with our usual makeup of federal and state agencies being our largest funders. While last year we saw more growth in federal funding, this year that distribution shifted. State funding this year increased by almost 50 percent, while the federal increase was nominal, about 8 percent. Based on our data, the increase in state funding is due to more outreach and engagement programming through our P20 center and ongoing survey research. We're still assessing this year's federal funding portfolio. While the makeup of state and federal funding will ebb and flow given the timing of various contracts, I expect that these funds will continue to make up the majority share of NIU's sponsored funding portfolio for the years to come. Another bright spot this year is that total funding is at its second highest level in a decade. These figures were adjusted to remove stimulus funding, student financial aid, and federally congressionally directed earmarks for a more equal year-over-year comparison. Given federal and state governments account for most of our funding, it's good to see this growth coming out of the recession, the federal sequester, as well as the state budget impasse. The funding distribution across campus units is fairly consistent with College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Outreach receiving the most funding. However, the College of Health and Human Sciences saw a nice increase this year as well. This increase is primarily attributed to State of Illinois funding. Looking forward, we anticipate growth for other areas in the coming years as Vice President Blazey mentioned as the Computer Science and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology build out their PhD programs and as we continue to develop collaborations with the area's national labs. So, all that said, the charts and graphs don't really do the work of our faculty justice. So, I'm going to spend a few minutes highlighting some of our faculty and their awards. In the top right-hand corner is Ralph Wheeler, Chair of Chemistry who led the acquisition of a one million-dollar NSF award to fund STEM scholarships to underrepresented and financially disadvantaged NIU students continuing NIU's commitment to building an inclusive STEM workforce. This was also the same award that Anna was referencing just a few minutes ago. To the top right is Melani Duffrin, Health and Human Sciences faculty, who brought with her to NIU

her four-year \$930,000 National Institutes of General Medical Sciences Science Education Partnership Award to continue her work on the food master initiative. A compilation of programs aimed at using food as a tool to teach basic research, science, and math concepts to grades 3 through 8 youth. Again, if you were here earlier, I know Dean Block had recognized that work as well so that is one and the same. In the bottom left hand corner is Susana Das Neves, Director of Migrant Education Services at NIU in the Center for P20 Engagement who is overseeing one million dollars received from the Illinois State Board of Education to provide educational services and support to eligible migratory and seasonal agricultural youth, families and children in Illinois. This was a team effort spirited by Amy Jo Clemens the Center for P20 Director to bring migrant education program services to NIU. And finally, in the bottom right is Presidential Research Professor and physicist Phillippe Piot whose work with Fermilab and Argon is just one example of how NIU's collaboration with the area's national labs are critical for our research programs. This year funding from national labs exceeded two million dollars and we expect further growth as these relationships expand. As Vice President Blazey already mentioned, those relationships have expanded into the School of Art, Anthropology, as well as Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. NIU's continued rapid growth in sponsored funding is exciting and it's certainly to be applauded. As my office looks to the year ahead, we are watching several what we consider to be hot issues that are either already impacting research administration or have the likelihood to impact it. The first, and these are in no particular order, is regulatory burden. National studies continue to show that researchers spend almost half their federal research time on administration. That's something that the federal government is very interested in and it's also something that we as a research university are very interested in. So, demonstrations are ongoing between federal agencies and grantees to understand how to address this considering increasing regulations. The second is foreign influence into research and the impact on economic competitiveness. And sexual harassment in agencies commitment to ensuring safe working environments that are free of sexual and other forms of harassment. I don't believe Sarah Garner is here anymore, but I do want to thank her and her office for working with us. We have seen new regulations come down from the National Science Foundation and from NASA and in order to meet those requirements it was critical that we be able to coordinate with her office. So, I do appreciate her efforts and willingness to work with us. At the state level one of the state government regulations Jenna that you had mentioned is the grants accountability and transparency act. This act continues to add to the administrative burden of securing and managing state funds. This has been particularly felt by Sponsored Programs Administration and probably program staff as well given the significant increase in state funding this past year. So all of this has us thinking critically about how we balance compliance without impeding research. Me and my team are working closely with Vice President Blazey, Dr. Quider, our colleagues in RIPS and other universities to assess and manage these issues. In summary, total sponsored funding and research funding continues to increase. Most of the increase in fiscal year 2019 funding came from State of Illinois grants. NIU and area national laboratory collaborations remain strong and continue to grow. Rapid funding growth and hot issues will require coordination between Sponsored Programs Administration and university units. This concludes my report. Thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Rita Athas: Thank you. Thank you very much. That is a very impressive list of grants and programs that you have, but you alluded to at the end, the continued increase in regulations and stipulations. You have the increased funding, which is actually great, but then you have this increased burden of regulation and performance standards, are you able to handle all the increased funding and how is that affecting your faculty and your administrators?

Dara Little: We are able to handle it. My staff are working very hard to support faculty and to manage all of the compliance requirements that you just mentioned that accompany sponsored funding. At the same time, NIU systems and processes were not designed for grants. And so,

what's happening now is that a lot of time either in central administration, in my staff, or even in faculty as they're managing awards, a lot of the time is spent on manual actions and work arounds to make things work. We're fully committed to making things work because our job is to ensure that the university complies with the sponsor requirements, but it is getting very difficult as this funding increases. We want to make sure that we're both good stewards of our sponsored funds to protect the institution, but ideally not at the expense of research. So, it is getting more difficult to manage the volume and the complexity of the awards and so we've certainly taken steps to update our processes. We're working to find long term solutions, but more work remains. And I want to make a note about the complexity of our portfolio because it wasn't in my presentation. Over half of NIU's funding portfolio is contracts. So that means that in over half of our portfolio the terms vary widely from award to award. And so central administration staff need to understand all the varying terms on the different awards as do faculty. That also introduces a lot more complexity for the oversight which can increase some of the burden for the principal investigators. So, trying to figure out how to manage that burden so they have their time to actually do the research that they've been funded to do while still meeting compliance is something that we're trying to balance.

Rita Athas: I think the research component of this university is so incredibly important and the fact that you've been able to increase funding in light of all the additional burdens that have put on you is something I know that our resources are always stretched, but this is certainly an area that we need to give some additional consideration to. Are there additional questions?

Montel Gayles: I've got a question on the churning of funding, you said 50 percent more from the state and then you saw a dwindling from the federal government. Is that a trend? Was that an aberration or is that what it's going to look like now moving forward.

Dara Little: No and not a dwindling from the federal. So, we still saw an increase in federal funding as well, just not as significantly as last year. This year the difference between fiscal year 18 and fiscal year 19 of state funding that's where we saw a significant increase. So, funding overall has increased from all sponsors.

Dennis Barsema: Does state funding include the money for the Northern Illinois Community Sustainability? So, none of that money was in that number?

Jerry Blazey: No and it won't be. It will show up in the facilities and the capital development board. Which frankly given our burden relieves us because if it had been in commerce it would have been a lot of work to administer.

Eric Wasowicz: So how do we compare to other state universities then as far as the funding?

Dara Little: There's several different ways to compare. It's a little harder to compare what I've reported here of just new awards because each institution includes different types of awards if you will. So, some may even include financial aid so just looking on its face it may not be an apples to apples comparison. If we were looking at our Illinois peers, I believe that NIU would be behind the University of Illinois in terms of new funding coming in. For expenditures, I'll have that information at the November meeting once we have the NSF Higher Ed results. So, I can answer that a little bit more definitely.

Eric Wasowicz: Okay. And then another question I heard you mentioned foreign influence as an issue. Could you elaborate on it? I don't really know what that means.

Dara Little: Who would like to take that?

Jerry Blazey: We were anticipating a question, so I invited Shannon Stoker who is the Acting Director for the office of Research, Compliance, Integrity and Safety to bring us up to date on that.

Shannon Stoker: The main concern with foreign influence in research is coming from the federal government and it is pretty much from foreigners from countries that have been deemed to have anti American values or anti-American ideals kind of coming in and stealing research. It is a very sensitive issue because we want to balance it with global collaborations and we want people to be proud of their research and we don't want to stop any of that, but we also need to have faculty recognize that their research is important and we want to mix security along with encouraging collaborations. So, it's kind of a newer issue and most universities don't really know what to do yet, so there's been some steps taken. Myself and Stephanie Brown from the international office did attend an FBI summit so we got some information on there. There is a summit in Loyola on the issue in September and there's going to be several people from - I know someone from Student Affairs is coming. We've invited several people as this crosses multiple departments. And you know we're just going to try to develop a plan that we hope can again encourage collaboration, but also increase safety of our research.

Jerry Blazey: Thank you Shannon. Anna did you want to add anything to that?

Anna Quider: The only thing I would add is that we have not seen any – we have seen some stand alone in legislation introduced, but nothing that has really been moving forward. What we have seen move forward though are amendments to must pass legislation like the National Defense Authorization Act and so we've been working closely with other institutions in Illinois especially the University of Illinois system. In fact, my office is in the same office suite as them and we share a wall, so we work very closely together. So, we've been working with the Illinois delegation as well as universities around the country to address amendments as they come up and to make sure as Shannon said balancing the need for protection with the need for openness of research.

Lisa Freeman: This is a conversation nationally that's going on at the level of the vice presidents for research and the presidents of institutions. I haven't been at a meeting where this hasn't been on the agenda and haven't seen representatives talking about the pending legislation. We've had people from the Federal Bureau of Investigation going over case briefings and so it's definitely something that's getting significant concern right now and the research universities are really acting together as a learning community to try to find the balance that's been spoken about.

Jerry Blazey: I will add that with respect to the national labs the federal government has control of their relationships with foreign entities and they basically shut down any collaboration with China in particular. They don't quite know how to do that with universities and so it's sort of an ongoing discussion about how the federal government can maintain that openness and collaboration, but also control basic intellectual property so that we're not put in an economic disadvantage.

Dara Little: I could just tie that briefly back then to research administration, one of the things that we are seeing, again going back to the regulations, is agencies are already asking for additional information in proposals. So again, that's something that we're trying to wrap our arms around to understand how we collect that information and make sure that we're meeting those reporting requirements to the agencies. The National Science Foundation, one of our largest federal funders, their OIG has already directed the agency to go back and look at past grant applications and awards to vet for foreign collaboration. So, it's something that the agencies are taking very seriously and issuing new requirements already.

Rita Athas: Are there any additional questions? If not, thank you so much for the presentation.

Agenda Item 7.e. – Dr. Nicole LaDue

Jerry Blazey: Okay that's our final information item for the day and as an example of the faculty hard work and scholarship in the past year, Dr. Nicole LaDue will now describe her work and collaborations in STEM education and research. This research has had an impact on our students

now and will have an impact on students in the future. And furthermore, from my point of view STEM education research is a very active field, has continued support and perhaps even I expect increasing growth as this issue becomes more and more important in Washington. So, we see it as great potential for further growth at NIU as well. Dr. LaDue.

Dr. Nicole LaDue: Thank you and I just want to take a moment to say thank you in person because I recently earned tenure and I want to thank you in person because very few faculty get to do that. So now you have a face to put with the name that you signed off on. I'd like to start with a cartoon to lighten the mood a little bit, particularly given the heaviness of the conversation. If you've ever sat through a scientific presentation or a class that is geared towards science, then you may have been in the same shoes as the presenter here and this is a good example of the type of research I do. I'm very interested in how students understand visual representations, how they process spatial information in their brain. To give you a sense of the portfolio of my research, my first love comes from the world of cognitive science. I'm in the Geology Department and I do STEM education research and I pull methods from the world of psychology and cognitive science to understand how students think and learn and how to improve their learning. Visual/spatial thinking is a very important skill particularly in the sciences. A second area of my research that is a somewhat newer area of research for me is in promoting confidence and interest in STEM. We have great levels of attrition out of our STEM majors and we need to figure out how to fix that problem. All of these themes occur through the lens of active learning. So, this is an umbrella term that we use in undergraduate education that is really about engaging students in building their understanding and constructing knowledge themselves. We've all had the experience of sitting in a classroom where someone lectures at them and how effective it can be versus when you have hands on experience and you're really engaged with the material directly. What we try to do is build pedagogies that really get students engaged. As I said before, my first love is this visual/spatial thinking research which is how I ended up in Geology in the first place. Spatial thinking is best described as a set of skills. This may be disembedding a pattern in a bunch of noise as you see in the top right picture, which is a mineral fabric, a rock texture. You may be more familiar with it if you've gotten a CT scan or an MRI you have somebody at the other end of that computer looking at the slices and trying to understand the structure that is in your body. We also use this in chemistry and in biology in terms of understanding molecular structure and how those structures play a role in the types of processes that we're studying. So spatial thinking is pervasive in STEM fields and in engineering. Longitudinal studies have also shown that it is highly predictive of whether you'll be successful in STEM. Although it was once thought to be this static inborn ability that you were born with high spatial thinking or low spatial thinking, there's substantial evidence now that it's a malleable skill. We can train it. And that's very promising because if we can train it then maybe we can build the next generation of STEM scholars. It is very, very important for STEM to try to figure out ways to train this and the techniques are – there's many studies going on to try to figure out which techniques work. The first one I'll talk about is a way I've combined the spatial thinking training and active learning in my classroom. When I went to school, we had paper and pencil and now we have all kinds of new and exciting technologies in the classroom. One of those technologies is clickers and so clickers are used to be sort of like the remote control where you could click on a piece of – like a remote control and answer A, B, C, D to a multiple-choice question. And the way that it was implemented is that the instructor during the lecture would try to make sure that you're all awake and with them and you'd pose a question on the screen and you'd say click A, B, C or D and then as the instructor I get feedback, immediate feedback polling all of my students to see where are thinking and are they with me or do I need to reteach the material. This is an active learning technique. In recent years we all have smart devices, which provide a new world of feedback that we can get from our students. That comes in the form of these heat maps. I can now pose a question and students can answer that on their tablet on their smartphone and it gives the

distribution of their clicks, of where they clicked on the diagram. And so, the left-hand picture shows where they clicked before instruction and the right-hand picture shows where they clicked after instruction and thankfully that means that students learned something or at least switched their answer. This gives me immediate feedback as an instructor, but as a researcher I started to get excited about the power of this tool to start to reveal student's mental models of scientific processes while they're sitting there quietly in their seat and standing there in front of the room. There's now this new way of us exchanging information. And it's helpful even with very complex spatial ideas. Engaging students and making predictions about where things will be at a time in future and demonstrating that they understand structures and processes that go on in all areas of science; so, anatomy and physiology, and geology. As I said, the geosciences, the STEM fields are very spatial disciplines. There's this really cool toy that UC Davis developed. They use sand just like a kid's sandbox and they used and Xbox Connects, and they have a code that reads the elevation of the sand and projects the image of the sand elevation onto the sand. The purpose of this was to help promote understanding of how fluid dynamics works, but also if you see those lines that are kind of running around on the screen and they kind of go along with the colors. Those lines are topographic map lines. If you're into hiking or have an engineering background you may have seen these topographic maps. They're not particularly useful in Illinois because there's very little relief change, but they are very useful when you're navigating elsewhere in the world. This is a cognitively challenging problem to help people understand topographic maps and I can tell you from teaching in the classroom for over a decade it is a big hurdle for students to understand the topographic maps and yet they're very, very essential for high level geology skills that you need for the oil and gas industry for example and in engineering for building. We're always trying to figure out how to get past this hurdle and so when the sandbox came out everyone was excited and they're building them all over the country and universities are building them and museums are building them; and so of course geoscience education researchers are studying them and thus far after three years of studying this with large groups of collaborators, there have been no documented learning gains as a result of interacting with the sandbox which is really disappointing to many of us. So, what we did is we took that sandbox and we brought it into the laboratory, and we engaged students in a one-on-one interaction using a cycle of prediction and feedback. We had students build things in the sand and then make predictions about how close they were to the actual map they were trying to construct, and we actually found learning gains. My master student and I did this study in collaboration with Tom Pingle who is at Virginia Tech and Tim Shipley at Temple University and we're really excited that we have learning gains and now the next step is to bring this back into the classroom and do a bigger study to see that we can actually affect change on a bigger scale. The second area that I'll cover briefly is confidence and interest. You've heard already about Dr. Ralph Wheeler and his STEM grant from the National Science Foundation and I am fortunate to be a Co-PI on that project. We titled it "Belong in STEM" so what we want to do is build students sense of belonging that they are meant to be where they are. They've set these goals for themselves and it's very well documented in the literature that students don't feel welcome when they're in their sciences disciplines that some students don't and so we want to try to prevent that from happening. My responsibility in this project is to conduct some qualitative research along with my graduate student who will be leading a peer mentoring group. They will be meeting with a peer mentor weekly to talk about a variety of challenges and most of the things that you might not engage with your professor about. I'm struggling with this peer interaction and I don't know how to handle it and I don't really want to go to my professor and show this weakness. This provides another avenue where students can feel that they have support, so they draw from this social support. And I also want to take a moment to say that the entire project team just spent the last two days completing code training, which is the conversations on diversity and equity training that is led by Jocelyn Santana and that is out of Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden's office. We had a profoundly transformative experience. I can say that because those are actually the words

that Dr. Wheeler used. He said that it was a transformative experience for him to participate in that and I think that the training is going to really help us support the students that are in the scholarship program. Another project that I've been involved with is funded by the National Science Foundation and the lead PI is Nathan Stansell in my department in Geology, and he's bringing teams of researchers over to Estonia to study climate change and do field research. And the unique aspects of this team approach is that we are recruiting two community college students; one from Triton College and one from Waubesa, both are Hispanic serving institutions, as well as a teacher, an in-service current practicing teacher from the region, and two graduate students work as a team and they go to Estonia and they do field research and laboratory research and then they come back, they just returned a week ago, and then they'll continue doing research throughout the academic year. We just finished our first cohort and my role in this project is to mentor the teacher and also to support the evaluation and education research to try to understand how this team works, how to engage community college students in early research experiences. They have very limited science training prior to this. We want to use this as recruitment tool into the STEM fields. In closing, I wanted to give you a framework for how I envision the work that I do at NIU. I think that all of the work I do – the end game of all of it is student success and persistence. From the one side when you do STEM education research your goal is to improve classroom practice and I start with my own classroom and I start with my research and then I try to disseminate to my colleagues. And the end goal of that is not to just improve learning, but to make sure that our learning aligns with the skills that our students need to be successful in those careers. And then the other side of it and something that's particularly poignant for NIU students, as we grow the diversity of our institution, is figuring out ways to support students that come from a variety of backgrounds. I think that that's a particularly challenging issue in STEM. We have a significant equity gaps and so we are engaged right now in doing research to understand how we can ameliorate the equity gaps and make our science departments reflective of the population of the US and also of the NIU student body. With that, I want to thank you for the opportunity to address you and tell you about the exciting work we're doing, and I'm open to any questions.

Rita Athas: Are there questions from any of the trustees?

Dennis Barsema: I have one. Dr. LaDue the million dollars that you received; congratulations that's awesome, over what period of time is that?

Dr. Nicole LaDue: It's a five-year grant.

Dennis Barsema: It's a five-year grant. Is it in even amounts over the five years or is it front loaded?

Dr. Nicole LaDue: It's not front loaded so we wanted to ramp up, so this year we have selected 12 scholars. I neglected to mention this. Each year we are selecting a set of scholars, half of those scholars will be juniors and seniors that are already at NIU. So, we're supporting them at the moment when things become the most challenging.

Dennis Barsema: Okay that was going to be my next question.

Dr. Nicole LaDue: And then the other half of the scholars are community college students that we're hoping to recruit here and we're trying to use that as a recruitment pipeline into our STEM fields. One of the big challenges our STEM students face is the fact that they're trying to manage jobs, sometimes fulltime jobs on top of being fulltime students, so we're hoping that this – the support is a lot of extra time for them to come to these peer meetings, but we're hoping to try to with the scholarship is reduce the amount of time they have to spend working at part-time jobs.

Dennis Barsema: And I assume there are milestones you need to reach in order to get the remaining monies or how does all that work.

Dr. Nicole LaDue: So actually, we have a little more time to prove ourselves than would seem.

We have five years to prove ourselves. We have the money for five years. I don't deeply understand how the money is released from NSF, but I believe on an annual basis.

Dara Little: I think this was an award that was funded up front. So we have the full million, but we do have a five-year project so of course you have to spread it out over the five years.

Dennis Barsema: Okay so we already have it.

Dr. Nicole LaDue: Yeah so, we have it, but then there's a track two and a track three. We are actually funded on the track two. NIU had money under a previous project similarly and there is another track beyond this that we can go for should we be hopefully successful.

Jerry Blazey: Just a comment on the mechanics. Generally, the agencies provide grants and you get the money and then you have to report at the end of it as opposed to a contract where you have to show progress. This happens to be a grant.

Veronica: I have a question. This is great. I really enjoyed your presentation. Thank you. The frameworks that you're using, I mean they're obviously really important in the STEM fields because of the attrition, but it seems to me that the frameworks you have and the approach you're taking is applicable to other disciplines as well and what is the plan to present what you've done to other departments so that they can also adopt a similar approach or apply for grants using that similar framework?

Dr. Nicole LaDue: Absolutely so there's many levels to answering your question and I think you know I immediately think from a research level that we are engaging with a collaborator in the College of Education Daryl Dugas and he helps us incorporate frameworks from educational psychology to make sure that our research is relevant beyond just the STEM fields, but in terms of how to convey that to other departments, my sense is that in many respects other, maybe I'm speaking out of turn here, but other departments at NIU are farther beyond where we are in the STEM departments. Does that make sense? So if you work in the Social Sciences you're very aware of social science issues and so I'm not saying that's free of problems, but I think one of the challenges as you become a scientist is that you don't have a lot of the engagement with social issues that you would necessarily have as a social scientist and so I think that part of what we're doing is actually catching up to what's going on in other fields.

Jerry Blazey: Trustee Herrero you're sort of anticipating something we've been thinking about and that's pulling together an interdisciplinary or a university wide center to do research across all the disciplines and apply the lessons.

Lisa Freeman: You may remember that in the fiscal 20 presidential goals, which I think we all recognize are really university goals, we talk about identifying immersing research initiatives that could form strong research centers and foci and certainly our choice of having Professor LaDue present here was in part because we suspect there may be a proposal coming.

Rita Athas: Any additional questions? Thank you so much for your presentation.

OTHER MATTERS

Rita Athas: Are there any other matters that need to come before this committee?

NEXT MEETING DATE

Rita Athas: Our next meeting date is November 14, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Rita Athas asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Eric Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Montel Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

Rita Athas: The meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Cima/Karen Campbell
Recording Secretary

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