



Advancement Report July 18, 2025

Agenda Item #1: Dashboard

☒ Information

☐ Action

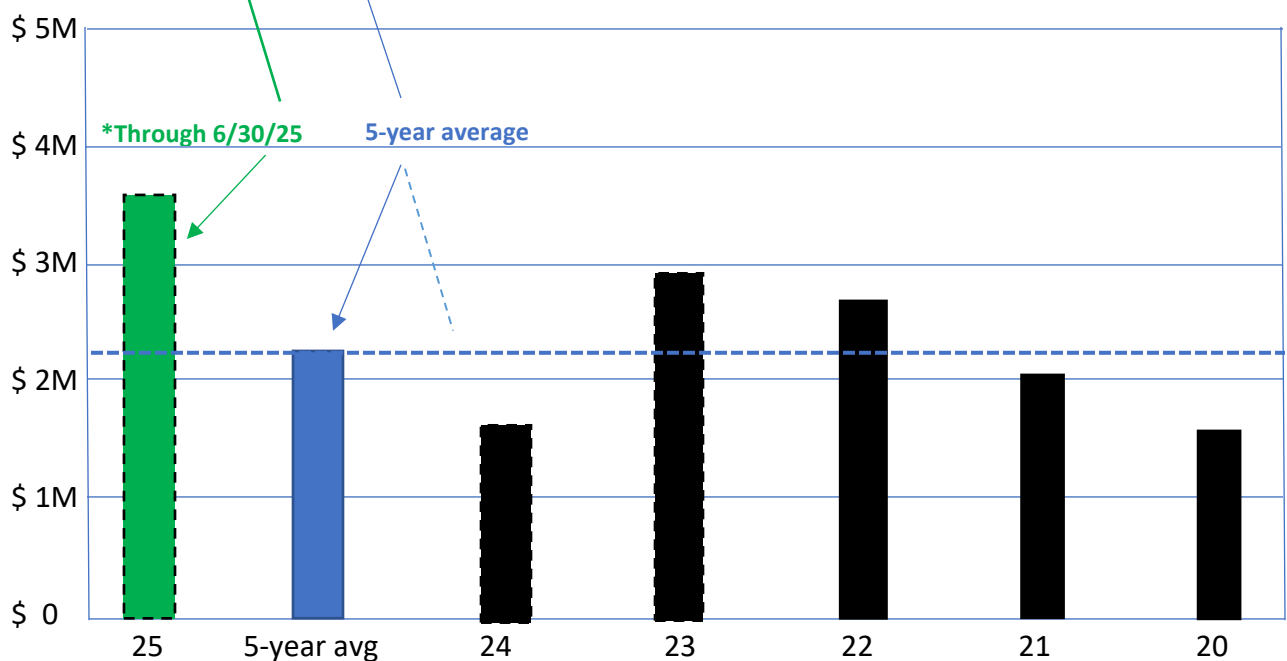
☐ Discussion

Purpose: The dashboard below compares **current fiscal year fundraising** to the previous five years by quarter. The **five-year average** is also included for comparison.

Note: Financial data follows CASE industry standards and represents cash gifts, and documented pledges and estate gifts.

Dashboard 1 ~ Total Fundraising Five Year comparison: Year to Date (YTD) by Quarter (Q#)

Fiscal Year (7/1 – 6/30)	To date 2025	'20 – '24 5-year avg	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
YTD							
July - Sept Q1	148,898	473,007	277,550	450,901	586,835	618,111	431,637
Oct – Dec Q2	527,192	588,777	241,543	289,855	1,347,312	311,982	753,192
Jan – Mar Q3	169,406	503,588	428,669	530,640	573,531	513,088	472,013
Apr – June Q4	*2,785,324	637,744	717,111	1,643,509	198,225	593,960	35,917
Total	\$3,630,820	2,203,116	1,664,873	2,914,905	2,705,903	2,037,142	1,692,759



Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



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Agenda Item #2: Major Gifts and Grants Update

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Discussion

Background:

Major Gifts are defined by LSSU Advancement as gifts received in excess of \$10,000. The following summary represents the recent major gift activity in support of the University's current key initiatives since the September meeting.

A grant consultant was retained to identify potential grant funders in support of select LSSU strategic priorities. The consultant also provides background information on each grantor, a calendar of submission dates, and proposal review services.

Major Gifts:

An estate gift of \$500,000 was received from the W. Albert Hakala Revocable Trust in support of the Earl and Minnie Walker Scholarship.

Ken Carstens donated \$10,000 to the newly established Jason Carstens Memorial First Responder Scholarship, honoring his son Jason, a 2000 LSSU graduate, firefighter, and paramedic who passed away unexpectedly in September 2024.

Planned Gifts:

A renewed focus is starting to be placed on planned giving. An increased communication cadence around estate giving is planned once staffing is addressed in the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Grants:

A grant consultant was retained to identify funding opportunities for LSSU based on a list of LSSU priorities.

To date 56 prospective grant making organizations have been identified.

Next steps: An alignment of three key variables.

- Timing of proposals (many grantors limit proposals to certain times)
- Priority ranking of grant with LSSU strategic priorities (preparing proposals in consideration of how high a priority is to LSSU, and in consideration of a grantor who may be interested in more than one LSSU priority, and LSSU's ability to prepare a fixed number of proposals)

- Leveraging relationships between grantor boards and LSSU stakeholders (it helps to know grantor board members; ex: to be invited to apply, to get attention with the granting board)

The process requires ongoing attention and follow up for each grant opportunity. The Advancement team has not had a grant writer in over four years. Advancement is seeking approval to hire a Grants, Alumni, and Annual Fund Director.

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



Advancement Report July 18, 2025

Agenda Item #3: Annual Fundraising & Alumni Relations Update

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Discussion

Purpose:

This agenda item provides a summary of the LSSU Advancement's recent Annual Fundraising and LSSU Alumni Relations activities.

Background:

Annual Fundraising activities provide financial support for University initiatives and assist in the identification of potential major gift donors. Alumni Relations activities and communications facilitate the initial engagement of alumni and friends to LSSU beginning the cultivation process for joining the Alumni Membership Program and potential future giving.

LSSU Advancement Annual Fundraising Activities:

Laker Club and Athletic Related Activity

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Number of Donors
2024-25 YTD	\$77,274	126
2023-24	\$61,819	120
2022-23	\$49,802	85
2021-22	\$54,411	113
2020-21	\$50,855	103



Laker Meal Sponsor Program

The meal sponsor program continues to be the main driver for increased Laker Club revenue. This year, the meal sponsor program raised nearly \$30,000 across all sports — double the approximately \$15,000 raised last year. A major driver for this was the men's basketball run to the Elite 8, which resulted in approximately \$10,000 being donated to the meal sponsor program during that stretch.

Headwinds going into 2025-26 will be the reduction of four sports (Men's and Women's Golf and Men's and Women's Tennis), as well as no guarantee of a playoff push for any of our sports. To help off-set this, our ACHA hockey programs have now been added in as part of Laker Club.

Pledge Per

Pledge Per will be back for its 3rd season in support of Laker Club. The annual program is looking to grow into the five figure realm this year. This allows donors to donate for every goal and assist for our hockey programs, rebound and 3-pointer for basketball, and sets and wins. You can click here to sign up: https://lssulakers.stagingdpx.com/?gameId=pledge&subroute=%2Fhome%2F*#/game

Laker Men's Basketball Locker Room Renovation Campaign

The Laker Men's Basketball Locker Room Renovation Campaign continues to receive pledge payments, with approximately \$250,000 raised — surpassing our \$225,000 goal. Construction is currently paused while engineering adjustments are determined.

You can click here to view the full scope, photo, and commitments to the campaign:

<https://advancement.lssu.edu/laker-basketball-facility-renovation/>

Laker Women's Basketball and Volleyball Locker Room Renovation Campaign

Preliminary work continues for the Laker Women's Basketball and Volleyball Locker Room Renovation Campaigns.

The first \$25,000 lead gift has been received, and an additional \$8,000 was raised through the celebration of 50 Years of Women's Athletics at LSSU last fall.

Once the job has been bid out and we receive accurate costs, we can continue the silent phase of the project.



Annual Lake State Golf Classic

The 36th Annual Lake State Classic will take place on Friday, August 1st at Wild Bluff. For this first time in almost a decade, we are bringing back a Thursday Night event that we're calling the "Classic Social", taking place at Wild Bluff. This allows an additional opportunity to connect with LSSU supporters, and raise additional funds for Laker Athletics. We hope to sell out the event for the 3rd straight year, and expect revenues to be similar to the last two years.

Click here for more information and to sign up: <https://advancement.lssu.edu/lake-state-classic-2025/>

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Net Revenue	Golfers	Location
2024	\$50,620	\$38,604	*144	Wild Bluff
2023	\$52,892	\$35,931	*144	Wild Bluff
2022	\$45,450	\$34,315	110	Wild Bluff
2021	\$41,686	\$34,161	108	Wild Bluff
2020	COVID	COVID	COVID	Virtual
2019	\$44,720	\$32,326	90	Wild Bluff
2018	\$32,740	\$17,897	76	Gaylord

* Sold Out

Give-a-thon

The annual give-a-thon with student callers ran from late February through mid-April 2025. This year, we shifted back to using primarily evening callers, which allowed for more callers to be together at the Lukenda Alumni House.

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Number of Donors
2024-25	\$19,175	171
2023-24	\$19,925	143
2022-23	\$20,395	144
2021-22	\$16,485	137
2020-21	\$15,860	109
2019-20	\$8,971	104

Alumni Association:

Events



LSSU Day at the Tigers – June 7, 2025

LSSU Day at the Tigers took place on Saturday, June 7th at 1:10pm as the Tigers took on the Chicago Cubs. We sold out of our 50 ticket block, and hosted a pre-game meet up the Comerica Landing in right field prior to the start of the game.

Upcoming Events



Lake State Classic – August 1, 2025

The 36th Annual Lake State Classic is set for Friday, August 1 at Wild Bluff. For the first time in nearly a decade, we're bringing back a Thursday night "Classic Social" on July 31 to connect with LSSU supporters and raise additional funds for Laker Athletics. Register your team or become a sponsor here: <https://advancement.lssu.edu/lake-state-classic-2025/>



Lake State After Hours - TBD

Laker State After Hours will return once again as part of Great Lake State Weekend. This Alumni Association Funded event is a way for local LSSU Alumni to gather and celebrate LSSU.



Great Lake State Weekend – October 24-25, 2025

GLSW is set for October 24-25, 2025. Plan to join us for a memorable homecoming celebration that includes exciting Laker hockey games vs. Bowling Green State University, Alumni Awards and Hall of Fame ceremony, Board of Trustees Tailgate Party, and more! Visit our website for more information as it becomes available:

<https://alumni.lssu.edu/great-lake-state-weekend-2025/>



Volleyball Alumnae Weekend – November 7-8, 2025

Join our LSSU Volleyball Alumnae for a weekend celebration of Laker Volleyball on November 7th and 8th. Friday night we will celebrate Senior Night, and the weekend will feature opportunities for alumni to engage with the team, as well as a local social.

Alumni Awards Recipients

The LSSU Alumni Awards and LSSU Athletic Hall of Fame Inductions will take place on Saturday, October 25, 2025, as part of this year's Great Lake State Weekend activities. Tickets for the event will be available on the [Alumni Association website](#), so be sure to check back for updates and ticket sales



This year's Alumni Award honorees include:

- Outstanding Alumni Award: Richard Gray, M.D. (Class of '91) — This is the highest recognition given by the Alumni Association, honoring significant personal and professional achievements, as well as engagement with LSSU.
- Kenneth J. Shouldice Achievement Award: Christopher Merrett, Ph.D. (Class of '86) — This award highlights graduates whose successes serve as powerful examples to the LSSU community.
- Paul E. Ripley Award for Young Alumni: Marisa Berlinger, J.D. (Class of '13) — This honor recognizes exceptional success early in a graduate's career and is awarded to alumni under 40 or within 15 years of graduation.

Athletic Hall of Fame Recipients

The Lake Superior State University Athletic Hall of Fame, established in 1995, recognizes individuals for their athletic accomplishments and contributions to the LSSU athletic programs as a student, coach or administrator. Selection to the Hall of Fame is based on athletic accomplishments and contributions to the LSSU athletic programs as a student, coach or administrator. A nominating committee comprised of alumni, coaches, former athletes and other University officials make the selections.



This year's Hall of Fame inductees are:

- Kord Cernich '90 – A standout Laker hockey player from 1986–1990 and key contributor to LSSU's 1988 NCAA championship team, he ranks 15th all-time in assists and earned All-American honors three consecutive seasons.
- Jerry Cheynet – Head wrestling coach from 1969–1974, Cheynet turned a winless first season into a dominant run that included an undefeated dual season, multiple team titles, and three NCAA All-Americans, culminating in a top-10 national finish in 1974.
- 1972–73 LSSC Wrestling Team – They posted a perfect 13-0 dual meet record, captured the GLIAC and NAIA District 23 titles, and placed 11th nationally, marking one of the most dominant seasons in program history.
- Leeann (Huffman) Wise '83 – From 1979–1983, Wise led LSSU women's basketball as a record-setting guard, graduating as the program's all-time leader in assists and ranking 18th in career scoring.

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



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Agenda Item #4: Legislative Affairs update

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Discussion

Purpose:

The purpose of this submittal is to provide a summary of the linkage between the LSSU BOT approved strategic plan with LSSU Legislative Affairs and LSSU Advancement.

Background:

The following dashboards provide a multi-year comparison between key legislative priorities. For example, once approved by the LSSU BOT, traditionally a state capital outlay is necessary for any capital campaign undertaking. Capital outlays provide 75% of the funding for projects like the Richard and Theresa Barch Center for Freshwater Research and Education, with the remaining 25% raised through a capital campaign.

Capital Outlay table

Capital Outlay	FY26 \$30M CASET (request)	FY21 \$8.8M Barch CFRE Approved	FY18 \$9M Considine Approved	FY05 \$11.5M Arts Center Approved
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Budget

We hope to see an early fall budget passed.

The Prison Program and ensuring all eight paths to financial aid are available for those students is also a priority being tracked. If and when that occurs, Michigan will be the first state in the nation to allow it.

Recent activity

Local

The campus & community fund directs resources to promote LSSU and Sault Ste. Marie

- To enhance the proliferation of LSSU flags throughout town, 40 new flag poles were purchased.
- Sponsored movies in the LSSU Arts Center.
 - o “Twister”, Engineering Day to bring the community and tourists to campus
 - o “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” this fall, open to all but targeted at LSSU students

Advisors include:

- Craig Cooper, Chair DDA Board, local business owner
- Linda Hoath, Ex Dir SSM Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Don Gerrie, Mayor of Sault Ste Marie
- Andrew Rubinstein, City Commissioner, LSSU Advancement team member
- Lynsey Schwabrow, LSSU First Lady

State of Michigan

On June 11, the House Higher Education budget came out. President Travis identified talking points and tactics to engage both House and Senate elected officials to facilitate a productive dialogue.

On July 7, 2025 President Travis and Scott Smith met with State Representative Parker Fairbairn at the Barch CFRE. President Travis was able to elaborate on his thoughts regarding the House Higher Education Budget. Budget negotiations at the State level are ongoing with hopes of an agreement early this fall.

U.S. Congress and Senate

Submitted Congressional Discretionary Spending (CDS) requests to both U.S. Senators, Peters and Slotkin.

U.S. Senator Peters office confirmed Senator Peters is moving the LSSU CDS proposal forward.

Senator Peters office cautioned that although a positive step there are several other hurdles, including Congressional and the Executive branch approvals.

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President’s Recommendation:

N/A