



Advancement Report November 21, 2025

Agenda Item #1: Dashboard

☒ Information

☐ Action

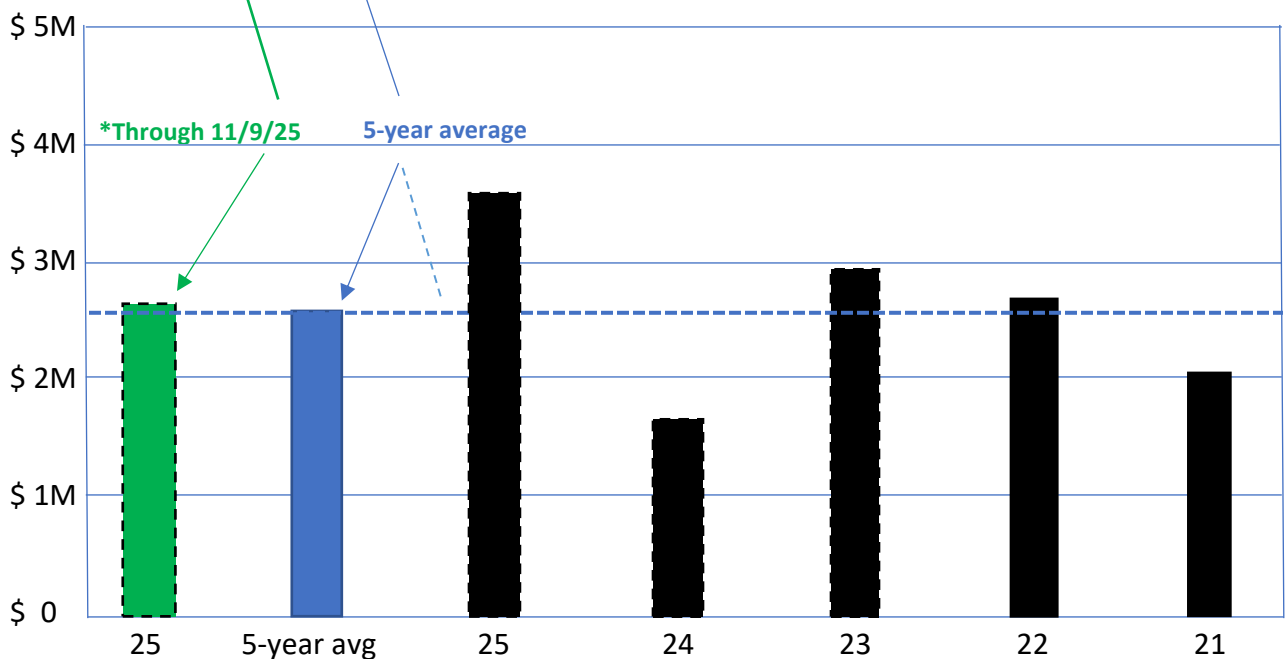
☐ Discussion

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 2026	'21 – '25 5-year avg	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
YTD							
July - Sept Q1	2,266,415	416,459	148,898	277,550	450,901	586,835	618,111
Oct – Dec Q2	390,683	543,577	527,192	241,543	289,855	1,347,312	311,982
Jan – Mar Q3		443,067	169,406	428,669	530,640	573,531	513,088
Apr – June Q4		1,187,626	2,785,324	717,111	1,643,509	198,225	593,960
Total	2,657,098	2,590,729	\$3,630,820	1,664,873	2,914,905	2,705,903	2,037,142



Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



Advancement Report November 21, 2025

Agenda Item #2: Major Gifts, Planned Giving, and Grants Update

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Discussion

Background:

Major Gifts:

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 July, 2025 meeting.

An anonymous \$200,000 gift was made in support of new LSSU signs. Three signs will be created; one on campus visible from the International Bridge, one downtown Sault Ste. Marie, MI, and a new digital sign will be located near the International Bridge U.S. point of entry and will be highly visible to the 1.5M vehicles that cross annually.

A gift of \$10,000 was received from John and Kelly Berry in support of the Dr. Madan Saluja Endowed Scholarship. John "JJ" Berry is a 1982 graduate of LSSC, and a longtime supporter of the scholarship as well as the Lukenda School of Business.

Ken Carstens made a generous \$10,000 donation to the Jason Carstens Memorial First Responders Scholarship, created in memory of his son, Jason Carstens, a 2000 LSSU graduate.

Mike Jacob, on behalf of AMT (Applied Manufacturing Technologies) has generously donated \$15,000 to the IAB Engineering Growth Fund.

The Dr. Lou and Mae Lukenda Charitable Foundation made a \$50,000 gift in support of their pledge designated to the College of the Great Lakes Ecology and Education.

Viridis Labs made a \$10,000 gift towards their pledge in support of the LSSU Chemistry Department.

Planned Giving:

Planned gifts are contributions that require advance planning and are typically made through a donor's financial, tax, and estate plan. These gifts are made during a donor's lifetime but take effect later, often after their passing, or they involve the donor retaining some benefit, such as lifetime income. Examples include bequests in a will, charitable remainder trusts, gift annuities, and gifts of non-cash assets like real estate or retirement funds.

Andrew Rubinstein is now leading Planned Giving for LSSU in addition to his other responsibilities.

An increased communication cadence is underway and will increase once staffing is addressed and we move into the 2025-26 fiscal year. We are actively working with Crescendo to build up our planned giving page and in a recent outreach we had three donors request additional information about estate gifts. Moving forward we will engage with all respondents in a structured and consistent way.

To date, Lake Superior State University has received two (2) anonymous estate gifts, each valued at \$1,000,000 (\$2,000,000 total - Q1). Additional details are pending and will be available soon.

Grants:

Ana Robbins, from the LSSU Advancement team, will be leading grants moving forward.

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.

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)

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



Advancement Report November 21, 2025

Agenda Item #3: Annual Fundraising & Alumni Relations Update

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Discussion

Purpose:

This agenda item provides a post-event summary of the LSSU Advancement Alumni Relations activity, Great Lake State Weekend.

Great Lake State Weekend October 24-25, 2025



Great Lake State Weekend, held October 24–25, was a tremendous success! The event welcomed community members along with past, present, and future Lakers to LSSU's campus for a weekend full of activities, celebrations, and Laker pride.

A highlight of the weekend was the recognition of accomplished alumni. Alumni Award recipients included Marisa Berlinger '13, Dr. Chris Merrett '86, and Dr. Richard Gray '91. The Athletic Hall of Fame welcomed new inductees Kord Cernich '90, Lee Ann (Huffman) Wise '83, Jerry Cheynet, and the 1972–73 men's wrestling team.

L to R – Chris Merrett – Shouldice Achievement Award, Marisa Berlinger – Ripley Young Alumni Award, Kord Cernich – Hall of Fame, Members of the '72-'73 wrestling team, Jim Fallis, Jerry Cheynet (Coach and individual HOF inductee), Jim Leyndyke, Mike Srock, Frederic Johnson, Tom Black. LSSU President, Dr. David Travis, Lee Ann (Huffman) Wise, Hall of fame, and Rick Gray – Outstanding Alumnus Award.

The weekend also featured plenty of opportunities for fun and connection, including LSSU Hockey vs. Bowling Green, an open house celebrating the 21st birthday of the Arts Center, 5K Fun Run, Bedlam in the Cooper, Rock the Rink concert, and the 3rd Annual Board of Trustees Tailgate Party. The tailgate offered food and drinks, bouncy houses, the Yooper Pasty Company, games, face painting, and, for the first time, the oozeball tournament was played as part of the festivities.

New this year were several events held throughout the week just for Laker students, including mini golf, cards and board games, a roller-skating extravaganza, the Y2K Rewind Party, and the Parking Lot Pre-Gamer.



A SOLD OUT crowd (over 200) visit before the Alumni Awards and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.



Bedlam in the Cooper



Chris Merrett Presentation



5K Fun Run



Arts Center 21st Birthday Party!



Engineering & Robotics Open House



Board of Trustees Pre-Game Tailgate!



Oozeball tournament at the Tailgate



Laker hockey vs. Bowling Green



Hall of Fame Inductees on ice intro! L to R – Jim Fallis, Mike Srock, Frederic Johnson, Jim Leyndyke, Lee Ann (Huffman) Wise, Jerry Cheynet, Kord Cernich and Seamore.



On-ice recognition of our Alumni Award recipients during the 1st intermission of the Friday night hockey game. L to R – Rick Gray, Marissa Berlinger, Chris Merrett and Seamore.



Rock the Rink post game concert in the Bud Cooper Gym

GLSW recap and feedback

3rd Annual BOT Great Lake State Weekend Tailgate campaign:

Once again, the LSSU Board of Trustees – current and past members – supported the annual pre-game tailgate event. Current and former Trustees participated and through their generosity, attendance for approximately 425 students, alumni, families, and community members was FREE.

Our initial \$7,000 goal was surpassed and the final amount raised was \$10,250! Additional funds were used to rent a photo booth and have the Yooper Pasty Company participate. We also incorporated the Oozeball tournament into the Tailgate event and it was a great success with many student teams taking part. We plan to do the same next year, and based on feedback from the students, we will start the tournament earlier in the afternoon (prior to the 4pm start of the tailgate), allowing students more time to clean up and attend the hockey game. This year's participants received a complimentary Lake State beach towel, which was a big hit with them!

Arts Center Turns 21 Open House:

This year marked the 21st Anniversary of the LSSU Arts Center, and an open house was planned to celebrate its 21st birthday. The LSSU Foundation Board donated funds last year to support the 20th anniversary of the Arts Center, and remaining funds from that campaign were earmarked in support of this year's event. The open house featured music by the LSSU Jazz Band, a cash bar, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, and members of LSSU student clubs and programs in theatre, music, dance, art and more. We also handed out free GLSW t-shirts to students who attended the event. The event was well attended and a great success!

LSSU Alumni Association Board GLSW T-shirt Campaign:

Again this year, the Alumni Association Board and Sodexo sponsored the GLSW T-shirts, making them FREE to the first 200 students to attend Lake State After Hours at Moloney's Alley held on Wednesday, October 22nd. The event was very well attended, and remaining t-shirts were then given out at the Arts Center Open House on Friday. \$1,000 was raised toward the purchase of the shirts for the students.

Other feedback is strongly encouraged and we ask you to share your thoughts with the Advancement team.



Advancement Report November 21, 2025

Agenda Item #4: 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
2025-26 YTD	\$53,452	85
2024-25	\$78,954	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 2025-26 campaign once again has leaned on the meal sponsor program to help boost Laker Club giving. In 2024-25, close to \$30,000 came in across all sports for meal sponsors, nearly doubling the year prior (due, in part, to the men's basketball run to the elite 8.) We will continue to promote general Laker Club giving in addition to meal sponsors to help off-set the four-sport reduction and no guarantee of a post-season run.

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. Bids are in process for the final phase of the project. In late October, new branding and recognition displays were installed in both the main locker room entrance and the main locker room area. This includes a back-lit anchor, floor to ceiling wall wraps, and major donor recognition.

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

This project is in the same spot as we await engineering work and bids to be completed. 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.

Additional engineering plans are in progress to facilitate the campaign.



Annual Lake State Golf Classic

The 36th Annual Lake State Classic took place on Friday, August 1st at Wild Bluff. For the first time in almost a decade, we brought back a Thursday Night event that we called the “Classic Social”, taking place at Wild Bluff. This allowed an additional opportunity to connect with LSSU supporters, and raise additional funds for Laker Athletics. The event sold out for the 3rd straight year.

All of the additional revenue can be attributed to the Thursday event, as well as a slight increase in golfer fees.

The 2026 event will be on Friday, August 7, 2026.

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Net Revenue	Golfers	Location
2025	\$55,872	\$43,045	*144	Wild Bluff
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

* Sold Out

Laker Women’s Basketball Golf Outing

The inaugural Laker Women’s Basketball golf outing hosted 120 golfers and netted over \$18,000 at the Sault Ste Marie, Country Club on Saturday, September 20.

Laker Hockey Challenge Match

Laker Hockey will be launching a \$1,500,000 challenge match in support of Laker Hockey. This is on the heels of the \$1,500,000/year commitment for the hockey program, and will include estate, blended, and cash gifts to the program.

Give-a-thon

The 2025 Give-a-Thon ran from late February to mid-April, featuring student callers during evening sessions at the Lukenda Alumni House. With the new Alumni Director in place, we'll be seeking fresh opportunities to enhance the program.

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

Event Recaps

Lake State After Hours

Lake State After Hours – October 22, 2025

Lake State After Hours, as part of GLSW, boasted a full crowd as we took over Moloney's Alley. After multiple low attendance events, this one was a resounding success. There were multiple factors that contributed to this. Students were invited to join to pick up their shirts for GLSW, and faculty/staff were invited to join as the Galley Gathering was moved to LSSU After Hours – this was in addition to the community members and alumni that joined.



Great Lake State Weekend – October 24-25, 2025

See agenda #3 for recap of Great Lake State Week(end).

Upcoming Events



Superior Ice Showdown – January 23, 2026

Lake Superior State University Athletics, in partnership with the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, will host the 2nd Superior Ice Showdown on January 23, 2026, at the GFL Memorial Gardens. The Lakers will face the University of St. Thomas Tommies in a CCHA regular season matchup, celebrating the strong hockey connection between the Twin Saults and LSSU's many Canadian alumni. There will be a pre-game social at the GFL Memorial Gardens, and tickets can be purchased at the GFL Memorial Gardens Box Office or online at gflgardens.ca/LSSU.



Lake State Night at the Red Wings – January 31, 2026

Our popular Lake State Night at the Red Wings game will be on Saturday, January 31, 2026, as the Red Wings take on the Colorado Avalanche at 1pm. There will be a pre-game event at the UWM District Market beginning at 11:30am. Every attendee who purchases through the LSSU link will receive a co-branded hoodie, and LSSU will receive a \$5 donation back per ticket.

<https://www.gofevo.com/s/other/DRWLSSU26?purl=eacd5c150512>



Men's and Women's Basketball Alumni Weekend - Saturday, February 21st 2026

Join us for LSSU Men's and Women's Basketball Alumni Weekend as both teams take on GVSU (Women's Basketball at 1PM and Men's Basketball at 3PM. Please join us after for a social at Moloney's Alley.

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A



Advancement Report

November 21, 2025

Agenda Item #5: 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 dashboard provides a multi-year comparison of state capital outlay projects. 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
----------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	---

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.

Suggested Action/Motion:

No Action Required

President's Recommendation:

N/A