UPDATE TO THE BOARD
in advance of the March 5, 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting

KEY UPDATES

Northwestern Faculty Named to National Academy of Engineering
Two members of the McCormick School of Engineering faculty have been elected to the prestigious National Academy of Engineering, among the highest professional distinctions accorded to an engineer. J. Edward Colgate, mechanical engineering professor, and Hani S. Mahmassani, the William A. Patterson Distinguished Chair in Transportation and professor of civil and environmental engineering, were among 129 new members admitted to the Academy. Membership honors those who have made outstanding contributions to engineering research, practice, or education, by pioneering new and developing technology fields, making major advancements in traditional engineering fields, or developing and implementing innovative approaches to engineering education. Colgate was recognized for his development of haptic interface technologies, including surface haptics for touchscreens. Mahmassani’s contributions include the modeling of intelligent transportation networks and successful interdisciplinary collaboration in transportation engineering.

Undergraduate Applications Increase for Fall 2021 Admission
The quality of undergraduate applications to Northwestern continues to improve as the quantity has increased significantly over the previous year. As of February 10, Northwestern has received 47,621 undergraduate applications for fall 2021 admission, a 21.3 percent increase over last year’s applicant pool and a 35.6 percent increase overall from five years ago. Some peer institutions also saw similar increases in applications. The number of early decision applicants was up 3.0 percent over last year and increased 46.5 percent from five years ago. The University admitted 1,105 students in Early Decision (ED) from a very strong pool. With anticipated melt, ED students are projected to make up approximately 56 percent of the incoming class. Of the 1,105 ED admits, 602 students were rated as “academic ones” (top academic performance) compared to 609 last year. Due to the testing challenges created by COVID, Northwestern is test-optional for the Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 application cycles.

Amy Falls Named Vice President and Chief Investment Officer
The search for Northwestern’s next Vice President and Chief Investment Officer has been completed. Amy Falls, currently Chief Investment Officer for Rockefeller University, was announced in this role on February 19. Amy has served as CIO of Rockefeller University in New York since 2011 and before that was the founding CIO at Phillips Academy Andover. Her performance record is outstanding: she has achieved consistent top decile performance in both of these roles. She is well-established among top tier investment managers and will enhance the university’s already extensive access to such funds. Amy also demonstrates influential thought leadership as a board member at the Harvard Management Corporation, Finance Chair of the Ford Foundation, and board chair of Phillips Academy Andover. She will formally assume her role on May 1
but begin transition activities immediately, including joining the next Investment Committee meeting in March. A search committee chaired by Investment Committee chair Tim Sullivan and Senior Vice President Craig Johnson advised on candidates.

**Jim Phillips Selected as ACC Commissioner**
Combe Family Vice President for Athletics & Recreation Jim Phillips concluded a transformative 13-year tenure in Evanston in order to begin serving this month as the new Commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference. During Phillips’ time at the helm, ten Wildcats programs won Conference or NCAA championships, the football program won five (of six all-time) bowl games, and men’s basketball made its March Madness debut. Academically, Wildcats student-athletes surpassed 200 Academic All-Big Ten honorees each of the last 10 years, including a record 288 honorees in 2019-20.

In December, President Schapiro charged a search committee to develop a slate of candidates for the next Combe Family Vice President for Athletics and Recreation. Senior Vice President Craig Johnson is serving as the search chair. The committee consists of representatives of trustees, faculty, current and former student-athletes, and head coaches. The committee has met twice to review the current state and the future opportunities for Athletics and Recreation as well as to discuss the key qualifications and experiences of the next Athletics Director. Over 100 stakeholders have been interviewed as part of the search process so far. DHR International has been retained to support the search. After Phillips stepped down on February 1, Deputy Director of Athletics for Administration and Policy Janna Blais began serving as interim vice president.

**Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Dean Search**
A search for the next dean of Northwestern Pritzker School of Law was announced on October 21, 2020. The search committee, which is chaired by Erin F. Delaney, Professor of Law and includes members selected from the Law School faculty, staff, student body, and alumni, was charged by Provost Hagerty in early November. Storbeck Search & Associates has been engaged to support the search. The search committee has gathered input from Law School faculty, students, staff, and alumni through a survey, listening sessions, and individual outreach, and has worked with Storbeck Search & Associates to gather nominations and reach out to potential candidates. The committee is on track to recommend a slate of finalists to Provost Hagerty in the spring. Finalists will be invited to campus (in person or virtually, depending on what is advisable at that time).

**Winter Quarter COVID-19 Update**
Winter quarter is successfully underway. All students were invited to come to campus for the Winter Quarter, and 6,500 undergraduates and 4,500 graduate students have reported they are in the area and on campus for periods of time. Of those, about 2,500 undergraduates are now in on-campus or fraternity/sorority housing. Students completed the Wildcat Wellness modified quarantine period on January 17 with high compliance that was enhanced by many virtual activities. In-person activities began after the conclusion of the Wellness period, although most classes remain remote delivery. Use of University quarantine and isolation rooms remains low (under 30) and the daily positivity rate has remained below .5%. There has been strong student and community compliance to health and safety guidelines; any behavioral concerns
identified are investigated by the Office of Community Standards. Planning for spring quarter is now underway with another wellness period anticipated to follow the upcoming late-March Spring Break. Additional detail will be provided at the Board meeting.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The FY 2020 financial statements were reviewed and approved by the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee in December 2020. The University ended the year with an $83.4 million operating surplus, the result of considerable community sacrifice. Revenue overall decreased slightly, notably in auxiliary services due to decreases in room and board revenues. Expenses decreased slightly more than expenses driven by reductions in services, supplies, maintenance, and other as the university implemented cost containment early in the pandemic. Net assets increased by $434.1 million driven by investments return and higher use of short-term borrowing.

The finance team continues to analyze and manage the pandemic’s financial impact on Northwestern. Management is focused on tracking projections for FY 2021 and planning for the FY 2022 budget for the Board of Trustees’ approval in June.

Planning is also under way for the development of a three-year financial plan (FY 2022-2024) as a supplementary update to the 7-Year Financial Framework to address strategic needs in an evolving environment. The plan will incorporate a return to full on-campus activity following the pandemic, compensation programs aligned with market to attract and retain top talent, increased investment in facilities and IT infrastructure, and strategic investment to support research growth. Additional information will be provided at the March Finance and Full Board meetings.

**Liquidity and Debt Management**

Treasury, Investments, and Budget and Planning continue to collaborate closely with respect to liquidity monitoring, planning, and debt management in support of the University’s operating and capital needs.

**Investments**

As of December 31, 2020, the Long-Term Balanced Pool had an estimated value of $12.2 billion based on preliminary returns. For the past twelve months ended December 31, 2020, the return to the Long-Term Balanced Pool was 10.6 percent versus a policy benchmark return of 10.1 percent. As a reminder, the fourth quarter returns for illiquid categories such as Private Investments and Real Assets are not yet reported.

**Alumni Relations and Development Update**

As of January 31, 2021, Northwestern raised $311.9 million in new gifts and commitments towards the $520 million fiscal year goal, compared with $244.2 million last year at the same time. Much of the increase in giving from Northwestern Medicine’s related entities is due to a grant from St. George Foundation, as part of an affiliation agreement between Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Palos Health. The net
amount raised without Northwestern Medicine giving from related entities is $115.6 million, compared to $151.7 million for the same period last year. The “We Will” Campaign has raised $5.321 billion to date, or 106 percent of the total $5 billion goal.

**RESEARCH UPDATE**

**Research Award Funding**
Northwestern’s research award funding for the first quarter of FY 2021 reached $138.1 million, a 2 percent increase ($3.1 million) over the previous year’s first quarter. The number of awards totaled 623, representing a 3 percent increase from last year’s first quarter total (598). The dollar volume of proposals submitted in the first quarter of FY 2021 was $1.2 billion, a 36 percent increase from the prior year. The number of proposals submitted (961) decreased 1 percent over FY 2020’s first quarter. Typically 15 percent of annual awards arrive in each of the first two quarters of a fiscal year, followed by 25 percent in the third quarter and the remaining 45 percent arriving in the final quarter of the fiscal year. Proposals tend to be distributed evenly across all four quarters of the fiscal year.

At the end of the first quarter of FY 2021, the dollar volume of awards from the National Institutes of Health reflected a 21 percent increase (to $69.1 million). The dollar volume of proposals submitted to the National Institutes of Health was up about 40 percent (to $871.9 million), while that to industry sponsors was up 12 percent (to $39.4 million).

**Research News and Faculty Updates**

**Medical device using Northwestern-invented biomaterial receives FDA clearance**
An innovative orthopedic medical device fabricated from a novel biomaterial pioneered in the laboratory of Northwestern professor Guillermo A. Ameer has received clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in surgeries to attach soft tissue grafts to bone. The anti-inflammatory biomaterial is the first thermoset biodegradable synthetic polymer ever approved for use in an implantable medical device. Its unique chemical and mechanical properties enable cutting-edge implant designs that protect the soft-tissue graft during insertion and optimize graft fixation to bone. Ameer is the Daniel Hale Williams Professor of Biomedical Engineering and the director of the Center for Advanced Regenerative Engineering.

**Six professors named AAAS fellows**
Six Northwestern faculty members have been chosen as 2020 fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the largest general scientific society in the world. AAAS recognizes faculty who have made significant contributions to science and its applications. Shi-Yuan Cheng, André de Gouvêa, William Dichtel, Kenneth Forbus, Jiaxing Huang and Michael Jewett have been elected in recognition of their distinguished efforts to advance science.

**Carol Lee elected president of the National Academy of Education**
The School of Education and Social Policy’s Carol D. Lee, professor emeritus (the former Edwina S. Tarry Professor) of education and of African-American studies has been named president-elect of the National Academy of Education. Her four-year term at the
highly prestigious organization dedicated to advancing high-quality education research, will begin in November. Lee is best known in academia for her work helping minority students excel in an environment of low expectations, poverty, negative stereotypes, and other barriers. She is the author of two books, *Culture, Literacy and Learning* and *Signifying as a Scaffold for Literary Interpretation*.

**Three professors named to National Academy of Inventors**
Northwestern University professors Daniel Brown, Michael Jewett and Thomas O’Halloran have been named 2020 fellows of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). NAI fellow status is the highest professional distinction awarded solely to academic inventors. The Northwestern faculty members are among 175 new fellows admitted to the academy this year.

**Wearable COVID-19 sensor receives major award from the U.S. Department of Defense**
Sibel Health, a Northwestern spinout commercializing a new wearable COVID-19 monitoring device developed by Northwestern researchers, has received $2.4 million from the U.S. Department of Defense through a highly competitive Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium award. The award will support the technology’s continued development. The Northwestern team is led by John Rogers, the Louis Simpson and Kimberly Querrey Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, Biomedical Engineering and Neurological Surgery. The researchers have put their monitoring innovation through a flurry of tests, updates, and improvements since unveiling it last May. Sitting at the base of the throat, the Northwestern device uses an electrocardiogram and a motion sensor to measure subtle vibrations from the body to continuously capture heart rate, breathing, coughing and temperature (fever). A second paired device wraps around the finger to measure blood oxygenation levels and non-invasive continuous blood pressure. The ICU-grade data outputs can be stored on the sensor or displayed on any standard smartphone.

**Martin H. Redish Wins 2021 Daniel J. Meltzer Award**
Martin Redish, the Louis and Harriet Ancel Professor of Law and Public Policy at the Pritzker School of Law, will receive the 2021 Daniel J. Meltzer Award from the Association of American Law Schools (AALS). Redish earned the distinction for his pathbreaking scholarship and award-winning teaching, which have made significant contributions to the field of Federal Courts. Redish is one of the most-cited legal scholars and one of the nation’s leading experts on constitutional law and the federal courts. His work has been cited 22 times in Supreme Court opinions. In 2017, the AALS Section on Federal Courts established the Meltzer Award, which is intended to honor the life and work of the late Daniel J. Meltzer, the former Story Professor of Law at Harvard Law School.

**Dashun Wang named to Thinkers50 Radar List**
Dashun Wang of the Kellogg School of Management has been hailed by Thinkers50 as one of the world’s preeminent management thought leaders. Wang was chosen for the 2021 Radar List for his “refreshing ideas on how we think about — and do — science and innovation.” Wang is a professor of management and organizations and the director of the Kellogg Center for Science of Science and Innovation, a multidisciplinary
Kellogg gift from Ann Drake will accelerate advancement of women in business
Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management has received a transformative gift from Ann M. Drake ’84 to establish the Drake Scholar Network, a powerful, intergenerational network of women students, faculty and alumnae fostered through Kellogg. The launch of this formal, global network will underscore Kellogg’s long-standing commitment to training future women business leaders. The Drake Scholar Network will focus on enhanced educational programming and intergenerational network building, recruitment of faculty thought leaders, and continued scholarship support through the Drake Scholars program, which has provided significant student funding since 2017.

Research Highlights
Black hole ‘family portrait’ is most detailed to date
An international research collaboration including Northwestern astronomers has produced the most detailed “family portrait” of black holes to date, offering new clues about how black holes form. An intense analysis of the most recent gravitational-wave data available as well as multiple tests of Einstein’s theory of general relativity led to the new insights, published in a trio of new papers. The scientists who make up the LIGO Scientific Collaboration (LSC) and the Virgo Collaboration shared the discoveries. The work includes a total of 39 new gravitational-wave detection candidates, representing a variety of black holes and neutron stars. The observations could be key to solving the many mysteries of exactly how binary stars interact. A better understanding of how binary stars evolve has consequences across astronomy, from exoplanets to galaxy formation. “Gravitational-wave astronomy is revolutionary — revealing the hidden lives of black holes and neutron stars,” said Christopher Berry, an LSC member, co-author of the new papers, and CIERA Board of Visitors Research Professor in Northwestern’s Center for Interdisciplinary Exploration and Research in Astrophysics. “In just five years we have gone from not knowing that binary black holes exist to having a catalog of over 40.” Other Northwestern authors include CIERA members Maya Fishbach (postdoctoral fellow) and Chase Kimball (graduate student). CIERA is home to a broad group of researchers in theory, simulation and observation who study black holes, neutron stars, white dwarfs and more.

Cholesterol starvation kills lymphoma cells
Northwestern Medicine scientists have developed a novel therapy to trick cancer cells into gobbling up what they think is their favorite food — cholesterol — which actually triggers their destruction. What appears to the cancer cells as a cholesterol-loaded particle is actually a synthetic nanoparticle that binds to the rogue cells and starves them to death. The research, which was published in the January edition of the Journal of Biological Chemistry, examined lymphoma cells and built on prior work published by the group. However, the new experimental drug from Northwestern could be effective in other cancers with a similar appetite for cholesterol, such as kidney and ovarian cancer. “Our ability to identify the novel mechanism of cell death gets us closer to translation to the bedside, where we can use this approach in patients with lymphoma who are not responding to more standard therapy,” said co-corresponding author Dr. Leo I. Gordon, the Abby and John Friend Professor of Cancer Research at Northwestern’s Feinberg
School of Medicine and a Northwestern Medicine physician. This research builds on previous work at Northwestern in collaboration with Dr. Shad Thaxton, associate professor of urology, who is a co-corresponding author of this publication. “We discovered the cell tries to compensate by turning off pathways it requires to stay alive,” said Thaxton. “We hope that this novel mechanism may be a blueprint for targeting other types of cancer.”

New semiconductor detector shows promise for medical diagnostics and homeland security
Northwestern researchers have developed new devices based on a low-cost material to aid in the detection and identification of radioactive isotopes. Using cesium lead bromide in the form of perovskite crystals, the research team found they were able to create highly efficient detectors in both small, portable devices for field researchers and very large detectors. Detectors like these are critical for national security, where they are used to detect illegal nuclear materials smuggled across borders and aid in nuclear forensics, as well as in medical diagnostics imaging. Northwestern’s Mercouri Kanatzidis, professor of chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, led the research. He said that in addition to being less costly than typical devices, the new method for detecting gamma rays is highly capable of differentiating between rays of different energies, allowing users to identify legal versus illegal gamma rays.

Aquatic robot inspired by sea creatures walks, rolls, transports cargo
Northwestern researchers have developed a first-of-its-kind life-like material that acts as a soft robot that can walk at human speed, pick up and transport cargo to a new location, climb up hills and even dance in a way that lets it release a particle. Nearly 90 percent water by weight, the centimeter-sized robot resembles a four-legged octopus and moves without complex hardware, hydraulics or electricity. Instead, it is activated by light and walks in the direction of an external rotating magnetic field. The researchers imagine customizing the movements of miniature robots to help catalyze different chemical reactions and then pump out the valuable products. Samuel I. Stupp, the Board of Trustees Professor of Materials Science & Engineering, Chemistry, Medicine, and Biomedical Engineering and the Director of the Simpson Querrey Institute, led the experimental research and is affiliated with Northwestern’s McCormick School of Engineering, the Feinberg School of Medicine and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. The research project’s theoretical work was led by the McCormick School’s Monica Olvera de la Cruz, the Lawyer Taylor Professor of Materials Science and Engineering. “By combining walking and steering motions, we can program specific sequences of magnetic fields, which remotely operate the robot and direct it to follow paths on flat or inclined surfaces,” said de la Cruz. “This programmable feature allows us to direct the robot through narrow passages with complex routes.” The research was published Dec. 9 in the journal Science Robotics.

New electron microscopy technique offers first look at previously hidden processes
Northwestern researchers have developed a new microscopy method that allows scientists to see the building blocks of “smart” materials being formed at the nanoscale. The chemical process is set to transform the future of clean water and medicines — and for the first time people will be able to watch the process in action. “Our method allows us to visualize this class of polymerization in real time, at the nanoscale, which has never
been done before,” said Northwestern’s Nathan Gianneschi, the Jacob and Rosaline Cohn Professor of Chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. “We now have the ability to see the reaction taking place, see these nanostructures being formed, and learn how to take advantage of the incredible things they can do.” The research was published Dec. 22 in the journal *Matter*.

**Japanese art technique inspires new engineering technique**

Horacio Espinosa, the James N. and Nancy J. Farley Professor in Manufacturing and Entrepreneurship at the McCormick School of Engineering, and his team have been able to apply concepts of design and *kirigami* — a Japanese art form that involves precisely cutting paper — to nanostructures. Espinosa led the research that was published Dec. 22 in the journal *Advanced Materials*. “By combining nanomanufacturing, in situ microscopy experimentation, and computational modeling, we unraveled the rich behavior of kirigami structures and identified conditions for their use in practical applications,” Espinosa said. The engineered kirigami structures could be employed in a number of applications ranging from microscale grippers (e.g. cell picking) to spatial light modulators to flow control in airplane wings. These capabilities position the technique for potential applications in biomedical devices, energy harvesting, and aerospace.

**In new step toward quantum tech, scientists synthesize ‘bright’ quantum bits**

With their ability to harness the strange powers of quantum mechanics, qubits are the basis for potentially world-changing technologies — like powerful new types of computers or ultra-precise sensors. Qubits (short for quantum bits) are often made of the same semiconducting materials as everyday electronics. But an interdisciplinary team of chemists and physicists at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago has developed a new method to create tailor-made qubits: by chemically synthesizing molecules that encode quantum information into their magnetic, or “spin,” states. This new bottom-up approach could lead to quantum systems that have extraordinary flexibility and control, helping pave the way for next-generation quantum technology. “Molecular chemistry creates a new paradigm for quantum information science. Our results open up a new area of synthetic chemistry,” said Danna Freedman, professor of chemistry at Northwestern’s Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences who co-led the research, which was published Dec. 11 in the journal *Science*. One potential application for these molecules could be quantum sensors that are designed to target specific molecules. Such sensors could find specific cells within the body, detect when food spoils or even spot dangerous chemicals.

**COVID-19 Research**

**Surveying COVID-19 Testing Speeds**

The average turnaround time for COVID-19 nasal swab tests decreased from an average of 4 days in April to 2.7 days in September, according to results of an ongoing national survey of attitudes about COVID-19, a project that includes Northwestern political scientist James Druckman and doctoral student Jennifer Lin. Despite the quicker testing speed, the results are still too slow in most cases to support successful contact tracing. A university consortium between Northwestern, Harvard, Northeastern, and Rutgers developed the larger State of the Nation: A 50-State COVID-19 Survey. “This suggests that contact tracing is not as ideal as it could be, and the lack of tracing is
surely contributing to the spread,” said Druckman, who is also a faculty affiliate of Northwestern’s Institute for Policy Research.

Computer model can predict how COVID-19 spreads in cities
A team of researchers has created a computer model that accurately predicted the spread of COVID-19 in 10 major cities last spring by analyzing three factors that drive infection risk: where people go in the course of a day, how long they linger and how many other people are visiting the same place at the same time. Northwestern University researchers partnered on the model with Stanford University researchers. Beth Redbird, assistant professor of sociology and a faculty fellow with Northwestern’s Institute for Policy research, and Jaline L. Gerardin, assistant professor of preventative medicine (epidemiology) at the Feinberg School of Medicine and McCormick School of Engineering, were involved in the research. “This study demonstrates that the way low-income neighborhoods are constructed, with smaller establishments that serve more customers, is one of the drivers of racial and economic inequality in infections,” Redbird said. “It also shows that, by reducing density in these locations, we might reduce this disparity.”

Surveillance and Risks of SARS-CoV-2 in Wastewater
McCormick School of Engineering faculty members Aaron Packman and George Wells are co-authors on a review of wastewater surveillance and risks that was recently published in Nature Sustainability. The article, “Rethinking wastewater risks and monitoring in light of the COVID-19 pandemic,” focuses on the impact of SARS-CoVs. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted public health and the worldwide economy. Converging evidence from the current pandemic, previous outbreaks and controlled experiments indicates that SARS-CoVs are present in wastewater for several days, leading to potential health risks via waterborne and aerosolized wastewater pathways. Conventional wastewater treatment provides only partial removal of SARS-CoVs, thus safe disposal or reuse will depend on the efficacy of final disinfection, according to the researchers. This underscores the need for a risk assessment and management framework tailored to SARS-CoV-2 transmission via wastewater, including new tools for environmental surveillance, ensuring adequate disinfection as a component of overall COVID-19 pandemic containment. Packman is professor of civil and environmental engineering and the director of Northwestern’s Center for Water Research. Wells is associate professor of civil and environmental engineering.

Post-COVID pain or weakness? MRI can pinpoint nerve damage
After recovering from COVID-19, some patients are left with chronic, debilitating pain, numbness or weakness in their hands, feet, arms, and legs due to unexplained nerve damage. A new Northwestern Medicine study shows how advanced imaging technology can pinpoint what may have caused patients’ nerve damage and help determine the best course of treatment, said lead author Dr. Swati Deshmukh, assistant professor of radiology at Northwestern’s Feinberg School of Medicine and a Northwestern Medicine radiologist. “We offer advanced imaging that shows even really, really small nerves, which helps us localize where the problem is, assess the severity and suggest what might be causing it,” said Deshmukh. This is the first known publication to summarize how these advanced imaging techniques can help physicians identify and treat nerve damage in COVID-19 patients. The study was published Dec. 1 in the journal Radiology.
Why COVID-19 pneumonia lasts longer, causes more damage than typical pneumonia

Bacteria or viruses like influenza that cause pneumonia can spread across large regions of the lung within hours. But a study by Northwestern Medicine investigators published Jan. 11 in the journal *Nature* shows COVID-19 pneumonia is different. Instead of rapidly infecting large regions of the lung, the virus causing COVID-19 becomes established in multiple small areas of the lung. It then hijacks the lungs’ own immune cells and uses them to spread across the lung over many days or even weeks, eventually damaging the kidneys, brain, heart and other organs in COVID-19 patients. “Our goal is to make COVID-19 mild instead of severe, making it comparable to a bad cold,” said study co-senior author Dr. Scott Budinger, chief of pulmonary and critical care medicine at Northwestern’s Feinberg School of Medicine and Northwestern Medicine. “This effort truly represents a ‘moonshot’ in COVID-19 research,” added study co-senior author Dr. Richard Wunderink, professor of pulmonary and critical care medicine at Feinberg and medical director of Northwestern Medicine’s ICU.

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES**

**Northwestern University - Qatar**

NU-Q unveils the Digital Advancement and Media Applications (DAMA) Lab – and holds international symposium

Northwestern Qatar’s Media Innovation Lab went under a recent transformation and is now the Lab Digital Advancement and Media Applications (DAMA). It is designed to build a community of designers, journalists, researchers, students, and educators together to work on experiments in storytelling and research, focusing on three primary areas of collaboration - creative space and open lab; collaborative course work; and research partnerships and sandbox. The changes will position the Lab to better support research and classwork at Northwestern Qatar so that it is more connected in helping and sustaining digital and interactive projects that are happening throughout the Journalism, Communication, and Liberal Arts Programs. The Lab hosted a symposium in January – *Media Innovation Symposium: Responses to the Pandemic* – which featured academics, journalists, communications specialists, and entrepreneurs in conversations about sports media, entrepreneurship, marketing, journalism, and creative writing in the post-pandemic world.

**Qatar National Research Fund awards grants to Northwestern Qatar faculty**

A new research project exploring the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives and livelihoods of migrants in Qatar is being led by Hasan Mahmud, assistant professor at Northwestern Qatar, along with three NU-Q students. Mahmud’s work deals primarily with migrants in Qatar while his teaching and research addresses broader topics in sociological theory, identity politics, global ethnography, and international migration and development. This project, “Surviving the Covid-19 Pandemic: Socio-cultural impacts of coronavirus outbreak on migrants in Qatar,” will highlight the need to recognize that migrants are the most affected segment of the population due to their involvement in the essential sectors of the economy. A second QNRF grant will study the obstacles and successes of women entrepreneurship in Qatar. Despite Qatar’s efforts to increase entrepreneurship within the Qatari population, women in the country continue to lag behind their male counterparts.
Winner of Man Booker International Prize, Omani author Jokha Alharthi, speaks at NU-Q
The author of the first novel written in Arabic to be awarded the Man Booker International Prize, Jokha Alharthi’s *Celestial Bodies* was this year’s One Book selection for NU-Q. Alharthi, who has published 10 books, including novels, short stories, children’s books, and academic studies, is an associate professor at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat, Oman.

NU-Q Professor named Buffet Visiting Professor
Rana Kazkaz, an assistant professor in residence in Northwestern Qatar’s Communication Program, has received the Buffet Institute’s Roberta Buffett Visiting Professor of International Studies. Professor Kazkaz will spend the Fall 2021 semester on the Evanston campus, teaching two courses, giving a public lecture, and contributing to relationship development between Northwestern Buffett and Northwestern Qatar. Professor Kazkaz is an award-winning filmmaker and a member of the French Académie des César. Her films have been recognized at the world’s leading film festivals including Cannes, Sundance, Tribeca, Abu Dhabi, and others. She received her MFA degree from Carnegie Mellon University/Moscow Art Theater and bachelor’s degrees from Oberlin College in theater and Russian. She earned certificates from the American Film Institute where she attended the Directing Workshop for Women and from the National Theater Institute in Waterford, Connecticut.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Government Relations
In late December, Congress passed a $900 billion COVID-19 relief bill attached to a $1.4 trillion FY 2021 consolidated appropriations bill. The COVID-19 relief package includes a new Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund that will provide Northwestern with $6.4 million for student aid and administrative costs due to the pandemic. The consolidated appropriations bill will fund the federal government through September of 2021. It includes increased spending for most research and higher education programs of importance to Northwestern University, including a $150 increase in the maximum Pell Grant (to $6,495 per year); a $1.25 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health; and a 2.6% increase in DoD basic research funding including Congressionally-directed spending for Northwestern projects with the U.S. Army, notably a $10 million for research (led by Professor Michael Jewett) on cell-free expression for bio-manufacturing and $15 million for the Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Propulsion, a multi-university research consortium (led at Northwestern by Professor Jian Cao) with the Army Research Lab.

Global Marketing and Communication
Top News Stories
The fourth quarter of 2020 was the strongest in a remarkable year in which Northwestern doubled its number of news mentions. With nearly 30,000 news mentions (including 840 in priority outlets such as The New York Times, the Washington Post, Forbes and the BBC), Northwestern saw a gross reach of 2.2 billion
from October through December 2020. COVID-19 and election topics dominated Northwestern news coverage. Since October, top stories include Diane Schanzenbach’s research about rising food insecurity during the pandemic (period reach: 46 million); Beth Redbird and Jaline Gerardin’s research that used cell phone data to determine where COVID-19 spreads (period reach: 35 million); Geraldo Cadava’s insights as to the reasons so many Latinos voted for Donald Trump in the November election (period reach: 25 million); and Matthias Doepke and Jane Olmstead-Rumsey’s research finding that women are hurt more than men by the recession (period reach: 20 million).

COVID-19 Updates
OGMC continued to update the COVID-19 and Campus Updates website for top-level messaging and developments. For the period of October 20-January 19, high numbers of users (more than 120,000) visited the COVID site. Based on the site traffic, many used the COVID site to gauge health risks and learn more about health and safety protocols. OGMC has continued the University leadership video series on Instagram to reinforce positive and healthy behavior of the We’re N This Together communications campaign.

DEI and the Launch of the Social Justice Website
We have continued to enhance our communications efforts related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), including an expanded effort across channels such as Northwestern Now, Leadership Notes and Northwestern social media. Additionally, we committed to quarterly updates to the Northwestern community on our social justice commitments, with the fall quarter update sent on December 15.

Athletics Update

NCAA Graduation Success Rate
Northwestern posted the top overall Graduation Success Rate (GSR) among Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institutions for the third-consecutive year with a score of 98%. Fourteen Wildcats programs posted perfect scores for the current cohort, NU's highest total since 2009. For the fourth consecutive year, Northwestern football earned the highest Graduation Success Rate among FBS programs, posting a 97% mark.

Citrus Bowl Champions
Wildcats football got 2021 off to a superlative start with a dominant 35-19 victory over Auburn, and ended the season ranked No. 10 in the nation. Northwestern also won its second Big Ten West Division championship in three years. The Citrus Bowl marked the 400th career win for defensive coordinator Mike Hankwitz, who retired after a 51-year coaching career.

All-American Rookie
Safety Brandon Joseph became the first freshman in Big Ten history to earn consensus All-America honors on defense after leading the country with six interceptions. Joseph joins Dan & Susan Jones Family Head Football Coach Pat Fitzgerald as just the second Wildcats player to earn the recognition.
**Fitz Forever**
Dan & Susan Jones Family Head Football Coach Pat Fitzgerald, who earned his 100th career victory in the 2020 season opener, agreed to a contract extension that secures the winningest coach in school history in Evanston through the 2030 football season. Fitzgerald was honored as the 2020 Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year after leading his team to a second division title and fourth consecutive bowl victory, and also won the 2021 Stallings Award.