

# NMC Aligns Resources to Meet Regional Workforce Needs

At the annual fall semester opening conference, NMC President Timothy J. Nelson announced to faculty and staff that the college would be making changes to meet the training needs of the area's workforce. As part of a larger institutional transformation to align resources with regional needs, these changes showcase NMC's flexibility in responding to a changing environment — a fundamental strength of a community college.

"NMC has a history of changing its offerings to reflect the community we serve," said Nelson. "We are developing models of delivering education through our new construction programs and Health Education and Water Studies institutes which make sense for today's dynamic marketplace."

As part of the changes to address workforce training needs, Marguerite Cotto was named Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning. In this role, Ms. Cotto is responsible for facilitation of continuing education as well as noncredit workforce development. This will involve programs at the NMC University Center; Extended Educational Services; Training and Research Services; M-TEC programs and NMC strategic partnerships (such as the Health Education Institute and Water Studies Institute).



Marguerite Cotto

"The changes are not just about grouping things together under one umbrella," says Ms. Cotto. "It is about acknowledging that the regional landscape in terms of economic development is changing rapidly and we need to test some assumptions about whether or not our programs are configured to address student and employer needs. It is really a healthy process."

The process will explore additional partnerships as well as certificate and other program options in an effort to continue to meet regional learning needs for workforce development and professional education. Included in this alignment will be the expansion of the construction technology program at the M-TEC facility, which has grown to over 300 students since 1999.



The Construction Technology Program is experiencing strong growth.

"This is a forward-thinking approach to recognizing the new, emerging job sectors and developing an entrepreneurial focus to our programs so that we can successfully partner with the community in addressing future workforce needs," explains Ms. Cotto.

"These changes are part of a larger institutional transformation to align our resources with regional needs."

Timothy J. Nelson

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# Alumni Updates

## 1970's

**Ash, Charley 1969-71**

1665 Riva Ridge Drive #4, Mansfield, MI 44904

Mr. Ash studied Liberal Arts at NMC. He likes to vacation in Traverse City. Mr. Ash invites fellow alums to visit his website: [www.geocities.com/oneinspirit777](http://www.geocities.com/oneinspirit777)

**Johnson, Steven C. 1972-74**

1906 Rittenhouse Square, Tully, NY 13159  
[stevejohnson@mullenindustrial.com](mailto:stevejohnson@mullenindustrial.com)

Mr. Johnson studied Parks & Recreation Administration at NMC, and received a B.S. from Michigan State University. He has three "great kids" who are currently pursuing their bachelor's and master's degrees. He enjoys visiting Traverse City at least twice a year and watching NMC grow.

**Kirt, Mary Ann (Schramski) 1973-75**

Ms. Kirt received an Associate of Science from NMC. She manages The Oral Surgery and Hospital Dentistry Clinic at the University of Michigan Hospital. She loves living in a small country town and is involved in martial arts and music entertainment.

**Kraker, Lorraine R. (Fedorchak) 1971-73**

Ms. Kraker studied Medical Assisting at NMC and earned a B.S. in Education at Ferris State University in 1975. Before retiring in 2001, she owned four medical clinics. After retiring, she earned an Advanced Master Gardeners Certificate and Michigan Certified Nurseryman.

Ms. Kraker now teaches medical assisting at Glen Oak Community College in Centerville, MI.



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**NMC President**

Timothy J. Nelson

# Message from the President



**Timothy J. Nelson**

*As you look around the campus this fall, the changes that can be seen are remarkable. There is new public art to enjoy, such as the Nexus sculpture situated in the plaza of the Health and Science Building. This sculpture has a particularly special meaning because the artist, Sally Rogers, is an NMC alumnae from a family with a long history of strongly supporting the college and its programs.*

*Other physical changes evident on campus include renovations at the Osterlin Building, where important support services reside such as the Library, the Center for Learning, Career & Employment Services, and Tutoring & Support Services.*

*Off campus, we are involved in important changes taking place within our greater community. In this issue you will read about our effort with the Rotary Charities of Traverse City whose generous grant of \$1 million to NMC's Water Studies Institute is funding projects such as the stabilization of the erosion on the Kid's Creek riverfront.*

*These changes are tangible and add tremendous value to NMC and our community. However, there are other transformations going on that are not as visible but are equally as significant. With the creation of our new division of Lifelong and Professional Learning, we continue a tradition of aligning our resources with regional workforce needs. The leadership of this vital function has been assigned to Marguerite Cotto, who recognizes the importance of developing workforce programs that successfully meet the needs of a changing local and regional economy.*

*As always, I encourage you to visit the campus and experience the changes for yourself. As our Annual Community Campaign so fittingly points out...*

**"YOU are NMC."**

## NMC Names Jean Rokos 2004 Outstanding Alum

Jean Rokos, Academic Chair of the NMC Health Occupations Academic Area, was named NMC's Outstanding Alum for 2004 at commencement in May and honored at a June dinner.

A 1975 graduate of NMC's Associate Degree in Nursing Program, Jean continued her education to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Michigan in 1981 and a Master of Science Degree in Nursing from Wayne State University in 1984.

In 1981, Rokos returned to NMC as a nursing instructor. She has served as academic chair since 2000 and during that time, the nursing program enrollment has increased by 50%. She was instrumental

in developing an online nursing option for the college – the first in the state and a valuable alternative to those who seek nursing education.



**Jean Rokos**

Jean has played a leadership role in the creation of the "Health Education Institute," a partnership between NMC and Munson Healthcare to enhance training and education opportunities for Munson and the community. In 2002, Jean was part of a nursing delegation that visited the People's Republic of China. She has also participated in a grant-writing effort that brought funds for the innovative "I-CAN Program" at the Interlochen Community School.

Congratulations Jean!

## 1950's

**Gipson, Sara (Case) 1954-55**  
Box 356, Beulah, MI 49617

After earning an A.A. from NMC, Ms. Gipson attended Central Michigan University and then earned a Masters in Special Education from Eastern Michigan University. She taught early education and special ed. She and her husband, Bill, have six daughters. They semi-retired to Beulah, Michigan in 1994. Ms. Gipson thinks NMC is a "great institution!" "I feel I learned as much or more there than at institutions of 'higher' learning." She hopes to hear from some of her former classmates.

**Merchant, Edwin R. 1956-58**

878 Hammond Place N., Traverse City, MI 49686  
Mr. Merchant received an A.S. from NMC, a B.S. from Michigan State and a M.S. from the University of Michigan. He taught biology and physiology at Traverse City Central High School for 30 years. He enjoys hunting, fishing, golf and wintering in Destin, FL.

## 1960's

**Opperman, Cheryl C. (Carlsen) 1965-66**  
46750 Peck Wadsworth Rd., Wellington, OH 44090  
umpires@netxinternet.com

Ms. Opperman studied liberal arts at NMC. She has five children and nine grandchildren, and likes to travel to Europe. Ms. Opperman is an Ohio high school NSA-ASA softball, baseball and volleyball official.

# Annual Campaign Promotes NMC's Community Presence

This year the NMC Annual Community Campaign will focus on a familiar face. **Yours.**

The campaign, which began October 20, concentrates on the strength of NMC as a community resource. The campaign theme, "YOU are NMC," was chosen because it represents how NMC has transformed itself into an institution that provides lifelong learning opportunities to over 50,000 people every year. The impact of NMC on our local and regional community is vast and significant.

While academic programs remain at its core, NMC has something to offer people at all stages of life. In addition to educational programs, NMC has been building a stronger community through cultural events, partnerships and major building projects, some of which have given the Grand Traverse Bay a "whole new view." Almost everywhere in the region, whether visible or behind the scenes, NMC's

presence provides considerable value to our economy.

*In other words, we all benefit from NMC.*

The goal for this year's Annual Community Campaign is \$275,000. With recent State of Michigan funding decreases, your gift is more important than ever. This valued contribution can be used for NMC's most significant current needs, designated to a program or facility of your choice, or committed to a preferred scholarship. Whatever the amount or designation, your gift will be a long-term investment in all of us.

*"Over the years I have been impressed with the way NMC has responded to the changing needs of our community. The Culinary Arts and Construction Technology programs are just two recent examples of how NMC has responded to our transforming economy. The annual campaign is a way to support NMC's efforts to educate a workforce with marketable skills that directly benefit our region."*

Mark Ribel  
2004-2005 NMC Community Campaign Co-Chair

# Yes!

I/We will be a contributor for NMC's Annual Community Campaign with a gift of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Options:

A check is enclosed (payable to NMC Foundation)

Please charge to:  Visa  MasterCard  Discover

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## Please return to:

NMC Foundation  
1701 East Front Street  
Traverse City, MI 49686



Members of NMC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society of community colleges, NMC faculty, staff and friends paint the Fair Street fence of the Civic Center on the United Way "Day of Caring."

231-995-1021

# Nexus Sculpture Adds to NMC's Public Art Collection

When you walk through the plaza east of the Health and Science Building, you are greeted by more than the bustle of students on their way to class. You find yourself in the presence of a 12-foot-high stainless steel and granite sculpture that, with its gleaming curves and outstretched arms, dramatically reflects the environment around it.

*Nexus*, the sculpture designed and crafted by NMC alumnae Sally Rogers, instantly became a landmark on the plaza after its installation in May of this year. The sculpture was dedicated to former NMC Board of Trustee member and chair, Shirley Okerstrom, an active supporter of the arts who helped establish the Dennos Museum Center.

Todd McMillen, NMC alumnus, local business owner and major donor for *Nexus* spoke at the dedication ceremony in May. "NMC has given so many opportunities to me, it was great to have the

opportunity to give something back to NMC," he said of his involvement with the sculpture.

Sculptor Sally Rogers began her art career when she was 12 years old and enrolled in one of NMC's summer art classes for kids. Her talent and desire led her back to NMC as a young adult where she received her Associate of Arts Degree in 1981. She went on to earn a B.F.A and M.F.A and is currently a resident glass artist and instructor at Penland School of Crafts in Penland, North Carolina. Her work has been widely exhibited in major museums and galleries in the United States and Europe and she has received many significant outdoor sculpture commissions.

Public art has become an integral part of NMC's environment, with eleven different pieces of outdoor art on campus each communicating a personality of its own. Some of these beacons are prominent,



*Nexus*, designed and crafted by NMC alumnae Sally Rogers.

while others are quietly reserved. Whatever their compartment, they distinctly enhance the walkways and plazas of the campus and would be missed if found absent from their spot. That might be why after only six months, *Nexus* seems not like a freshman to the campus at all, but as if it's always been here.

And in some ways, it has.

# Water Partners Swing their Shovels for Restoration Project

Water, dirt and fish were the focus at Kid's Creek in Traverse City the morning of Saturday, September 11, where members of several local organizations picked up their shovels to move soil and rock, stabilizing approximately 500 feet of eroded riverfront.

The restoration effort was the result of a partnership with the members of Traverse City Rotary Clubs, NMC's Water Studies Institute, the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center and Grand Traverse Conservation District's Boardman River Project. Members of these groups got their hands and feet dirty for the Kid's Creek Restoration Project, one of several initiatives sponsored by the Alliance for Great Lakes Stewardship. This restoration effort was made possible by a \$1 million grant from the Rotary Charities of Traverse City to NMC's Water Studies Institute last February.



Volunteers work to construct a spillway at Kid's Creek.

A tributary to the Boardman River, Kid's Creek is located on the west side of US 31, near the Kohl's retail development. The riverfront had been eroded over time by the buffalo that formerly grazed there and by recent development activity in the area. The Rotarians and volunteers were able to stabilize the banks and construct a spillway to improve the fish habitat structure of the stream for the benefit of trout and other species.

There is still more work to be done on the Kid's Creek project. The Alliance will continue to work on preventing erosion of the banks and improving the fish habitat. For more information on the activities of the Water Studies Institute, contact Tim Ervin at 231-995-1787; Tervin@nmc.edu or Becky Cooper at 231-995-1793; Bcooper@nmc.edu.

## Osterlin Renovations Create Brighter Learning Environment

You get a whole different feeling when you walk into the lobby of the Osterlin Building these days. It is still home to the NMC Library, Center for Learning, and Career & Employment Services, but recent renovations have transformed the building into an environment that is much more conducive to engaging in the learning process.

The renovation had three objectives:

- Create a useful space for students involved in tutoring, testing and computer lab work.
- Provide a more welcoming space for study.
- Make the building safer in terms of fire suppression and improved heating and cooling mechanisms.

“We are very excited that the Osterlin building renovations have resulted in an environment that engages the student in the learning process,” says Craig Mulder, Executive Director, Learning Resources and Technologies. “The services in Osterlin support students in their learning efforts and the improvements have made it more efficient to facilitate those learning opportunities.”

With the rearrangement of bookcases, the library seems more spacious and inviting. Subtle changes have provided a distinctly brighter atmosphere. In the Center for Learning, where they provide support for learning across the entire campus, the computer pods have been repositioned for greater efficiency of movement and a new wall of windows provides ambient light that visually enlarges the room.

Other renovations include a new computer teaching lab with 24 flat screen monitors and two large classrooms on the second floor, which can accommodate 72 students.

After touring the new Osterlin building, one can see that the changes will benefit students, faculty and other users who access the resources available here for many years to come.



The newly designed Osterlin lobby conveys a sophisticated retro feeling.

## Alumni Updates

**VanAelst, Susan M. 1971-73**

202 Crane Avenue, Royal Oak, MI 48067

Ms. VanAelst studied law enforcement at NMC, and earned a B.S. from Michigan State University. She has worked at General Motors for 28 years. Ms. VanAelst now plays soccer instead of participating as a “soccer Mom,” and has returned to the OCC Pottery Lab. She values her family’s time at their Maple City home and with their friends and family in the Traverse City area.

**1980’s**

**Doyle, Dan 1982-83**

211 W. Fort St., Suite 1000, Detroit, MI 48226

Mr. Doyle studied liberal arts at NMC and earned a B.A. in Speech Communication from Wayne State University. He is currently the Convention Sales Manager for the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

**1990’s**

**Hart, James 1997-99**

4069 Ellsworth Road, Central Lake, MI 49622

cjapt1@aol.com

Mr. Hart studied nursing at NMC and works part-time as a charge nurse at a medical care facility. He is currently working on obtaining RN requirements.

**2000’s**

**Mienk, Shannon (Pependick) 1999-2002**

11735 Royal Grand, Redford, MI 48239

Shannon@netster.com

Ms. Mienk earned an Associate’s degree in Nursing from NMC. She is a floor nurse in the Oncology Department at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan.

### Tell us about yourself for publication in Nor’Wester

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Maiden Name

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City  State  Zip

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May we print your address?  Yes  No

What years did you attend NMC?

What programs of study?

Social Security Number

Tell us about other educational opportunities, occupations and recent activities.

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Email to: cpaul@nmc.edu

For Alumni & Friends of  
Northwestern Michigan College

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## Newsbriefs



### Weather Dampened Everything but Spirits at BBQ

Just like the mailman, rain or shine, the NMC Barbecue delivers. The spring, 2004 event was no exception. Despite the pouring rain, over 6,543 meals were served to the faithful who showed up on Sunday, May 23 to support NMC in a tradition that spans almost 50 years. The money raised at this year's event helped to fund several worthy projects at the college. **The 2005 BBQ date is set for Sunday, May 22. Hope to see you there — rain or shine!**



### NMC Golf Outing Tees Off at New Venue

Sporting a new location at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, the largest golf tournament in northwestern Michigan hosted over 300 golfers to raise money for NMC honors scholarships. The August 5th event was sponsored by over 200 individuals and businesses and raised over \$60,000 to benefit the NMC Honors Scholarship Program.

Mark your Calendar for next year's event:  
Thursday, August 4, 2005 at Crystal Mt.



### Fall Event Serves Up Great Wine, NMC Friendships

NMC Alumni attending the September 22 Fall Gathering for a Mission Peninsula progressive wine tour had a perfect evening.

**The next Alumni gathering is a tour of the newly renovated Osterlin Building, scheduled for Thursday, November 4 at 6:00pm. For more information on the NMC Alumni gatherings in the Traverse City area, contact Teri Hedrich in the NMC Alumni Office at (231) 995-1027.**



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