

# Southwest Minnesota State University *Presidential Search Profile*

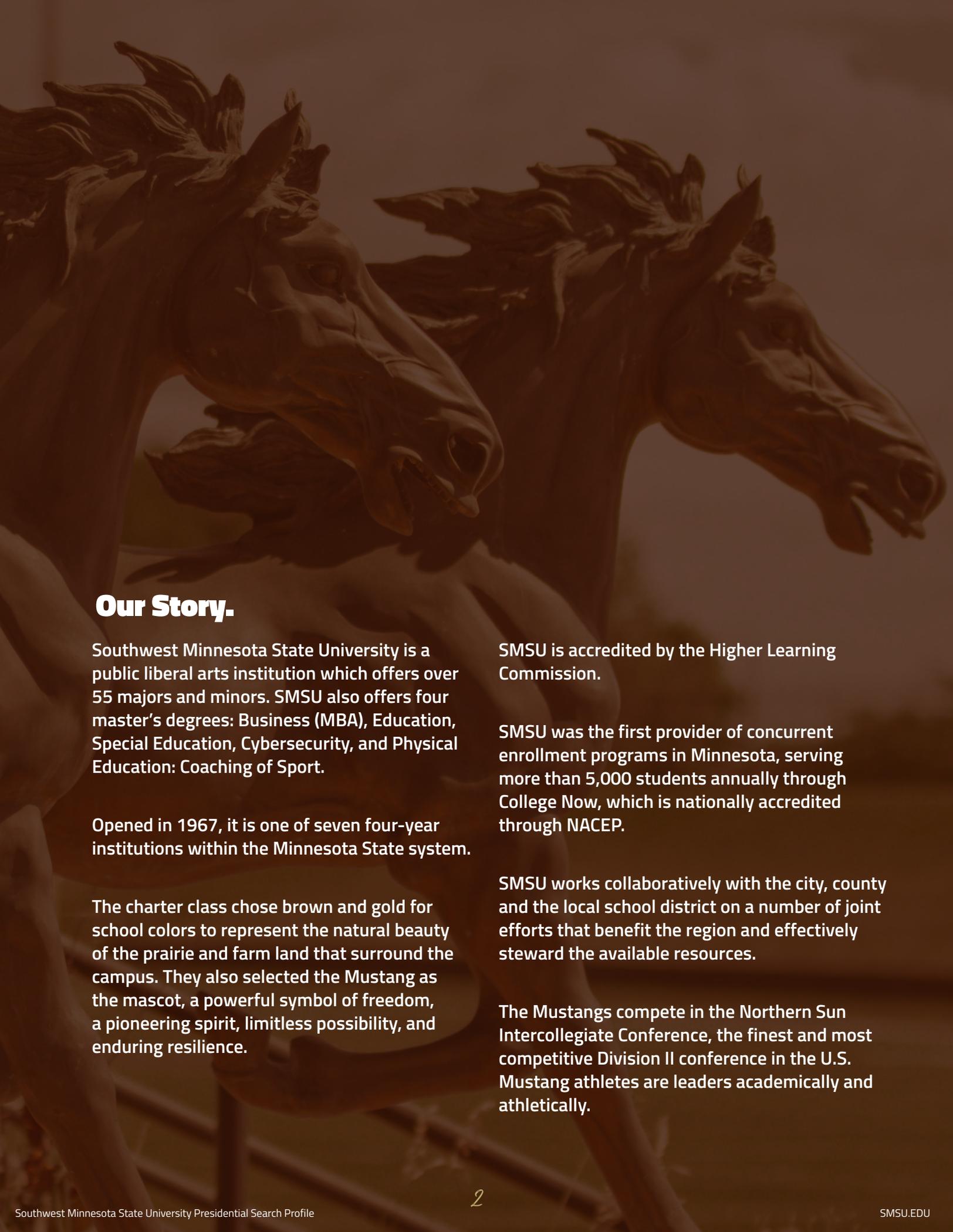


**DISCOVER.  
ENGAGE.  
LEAD.**



MINNESOTA STATE

Southwest Minnesota State University,  
A member of Minnesota State



## Our Story.

Southwest Minnesota State University is a public liberal arts institution which offers over 55 majors and minors. SMSU also offers four master's degrees: Business (MBA), Education, Special Education, Cybersecurity, and Physical Education: Coaching of Sport.

Opened in 1967, it is one of seven four-year institutions within the Minnesota State system.

The charter class chose brown and gold for school colors to represent the natural beauty of the prairie and farm land that surround the campus. They also selected the Mustang as the mascot, a powerful symbol of freedom, a pioneering spirit, limitless possibility, and enduring resilience.

SMSU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

SMSU was the first provider of concurrent enrollment programs in Minnesota, serving more than 5,000 students annually through College Now, which is nationally accredited through NACEP.

SMSU works collaboratively with the city, county and the local school district on a number of joint efforts that benefit the region and effectively steward the available resources.

The Mustangs compete in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference, the finest and most competitive Division II conference in the U.S. Mustang athletes are leaders academically and athletically.

# Our Mission. Our Vision. Our Values.



## SMSU Mission Statement.

“Southwest Minnesota State University prepares students to meet the complex challenges of this century as engaged citizens in their local and global communities. Our comprehensive degree programs, taught in the liberal arts tradition, are dedicated to connecting students’ academic and practical professional development experiences in southwestern Minnesota to the wider world.”

## SMSU Vision Statement.

SMSU aspires to be recognized throughout Minnesota and beyond for being an inclusive and student-centered university.

## SMSU Value Statement.

*We value...*

- Discovery through innovative teaching, research and other high-impact experiences.
- Civic engagement and strategic partnerships.
- Developing broadly educated and well-rounded leaders.

## SMSU Land Acknowledgement

Southwest Minnesota State University sits on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota people, collectively known as the Oceti Sakowin, Seven Council Fires. We acknowledge and recognize our sovereign neighbors from the Pezihutazizi Otunwe (Yellow Medicine Village) and Cansayapi Otunwe (Village Where They Mark The Trees Red), and all indigenous people who continue to call this area home. SMSU resides on land ceded by the Dakota Nation to the United States in the disputed 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux. This land acknowledgement affirms these nations’ sovereignty and history, while seeking to hold SMSU accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous people.

# Our Students. Our Campus.



## BY THE NUMBERS

**8,507** **2,533** **532** **5,442**

As of Fall 2025, SMSU proudly supports **8,507** enrolled students, comprised of **2,533** undergraduate students, **532** graduate students, and **5,442** College Now concurrent enrolled students.

**100+**

OVER 100 CLUBS, ORGS, AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**5555**

55+ MAJORS, 5 ASSOCIATE, AND 5 GRADUATE DEGREES

**99%**

99% EMPLOYED OR IN GRAD SCHOOL 6 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION



## HISTORIC ENROLLMENT GROWTH

This fall, SMSU proudly hits a new milestone: our highest enrollment EVER!



# Our Students. Our Campus.



# TOP FIVE MAJORS

- BUSINESS
- EDUCATION
- EXERCISE SCIENCE

- PSYCHOLOGY
- SOCIAL WORK

\*Majors with largest enrollment growth



## NCAA Division II Athletics

The Southwest Minnesota State University athletics department strives to provide leadership, resources and support to ensure all student-athletes receive the finest personal, academic and athletic experience as possible. Along with SMSU's institutional mission of providing a high quality liberal arts education, the SMSU Athletics department is committed to learning, service, passion, sportsmanship, resourcefulness and

### Men's Sports

- Baseball
- Cross Country
- Track & Field
- Basketball
- Football
- Wrestling

### Co-ed Sports

- Esports
- Wheelchair Basketball

### Women's Sports

- Basketball
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Cross Country
- Softball
- Track & Field
- Golf
- Swimming & Diving
- Volleyball



# Diversity and Inclusion.

## Equity 2030

Minnesota State's Equity 2030 is a systemwide imperative focused on closing educational equity gaps across race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status and first-generation status by the year 2030. Equity 2030 aims to establish priorities and assist institutions in developing strategies to address student success, retention, and campus climate. Key highlights of this work include:

- Enhancing access and student success
- Providing Minnesota with the talent it needs
- Anchoring the communities and regions we serve

## Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Priorities

SMSU has several programs designed to support institutional priorities that foster diversity and inclusion on campus. As a result of the responsiveness of programming, advising practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, institutional diversity and inclusion initiatives, and student-centered practices, we have seen a positive change in our ability to retain students of color. Furthermore, student-centered approaches have had a positive net effect on student success across all student populations.

Data driven decision making positively impacts diversity and inclusion practices at SMSU. Equity 2030 campus climate survey data allow for us to prioritize and enhance diversity and inclusion best practices.

## SMSU is committed to:

- Enhancing student and employee sense of belonging through representation, support and cultural understanding.
- Accessibility that fosters a welcoming environment for populations historically underserved by higher education.
- Creating a campus culture that values and celebrates diversity of ideas, perspectives and people.
- Creating a campus community that is just and equitable.



**6**

Identity Centers



**24.5%**

Students of Color



**16**

Affinity/Social Justice Organizations



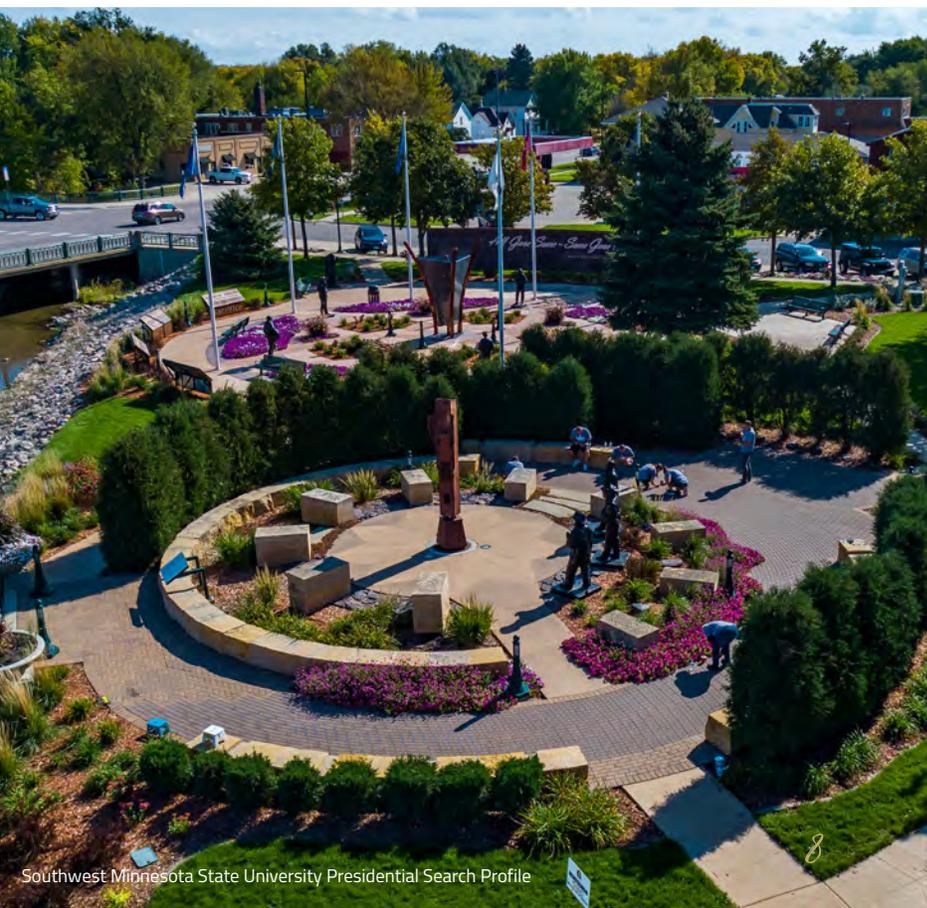
**10.4%**

Employees of Color



## Accreditation.

- **Accrediting Body:** Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- **Purpose:** Ensure institutions meet accreditation criteria, pursue improvement, and comply with U.S. Department of Education standards
- **Evaluation Method:** Conducted by peer reviewers who recommend actions to the HLC Institutional Actions Council
- **2024–2025:** SMSU completed its 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation
- **Accredited Through 2034–2035**
- **Next Review:** Mid-cycle review scheduled for 2028–2029
  - Developed over 15 months with campus-wide collaboration
  - Led by Dr. Ross Wastvedt and Dr. Kristin Kovar (Assessment/HLC Coordinator)



## Our Community

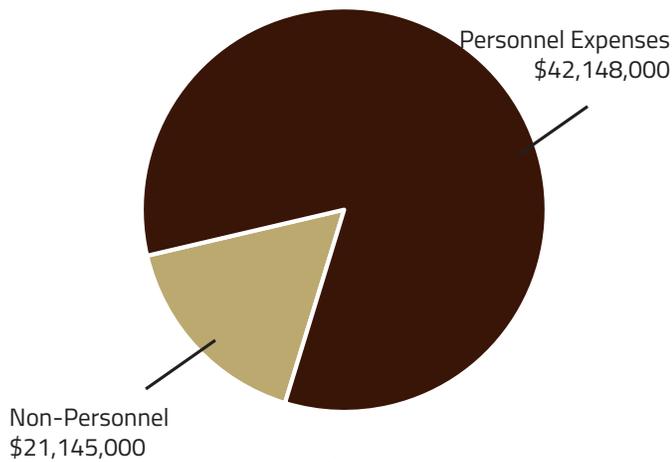
SMSU is located in Marshall, Minnesota, a friendly, growing community of 14,000. Marshall, named one of America's Best Small Cities, is an easy drive from the Twin Cities, St. Cloud, Sioux Falls, SD and Fargo, ND. Marshall is also the proud home of Schwan's Company, Ralco, Runnings, Action TrackChair, along with major employers USBank, Archer Daniels Midland, Access Health, Marshall Public Schools, and Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center. Marshall is also home to the Red Baron Arena & Expo.

[visitmarshallmn.com](http://visitmarshallmn.com)

# University Financials July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024

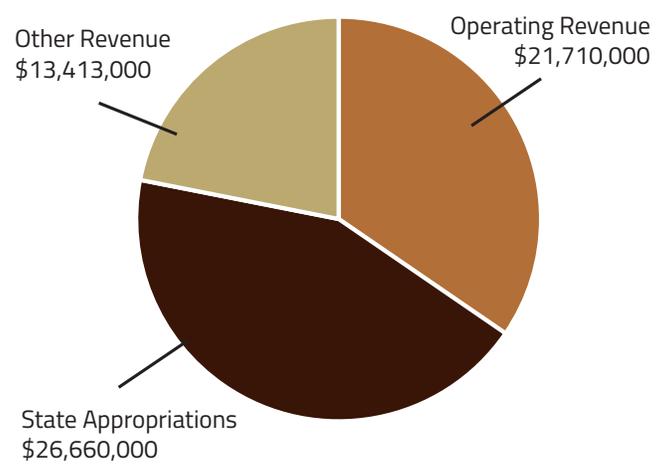
## Expenditures

Total Expenditures \$63,293,000



## Revenue

Total Revenue \$61,783,000



## SMSU Foundation

Since being founded in 1965, the Southwest Minnesota State University Foundation has remained committed to its mission: to engage alumni and friends in supporting scholarships, academic programs, and the strategic priorities of SMSU. As a private, nonprofit corporation, the Foundation plays a vital role in enhancing the University's academic and cultural offerings beyond what state funding allows.

Guided by a dedicated board of up to 24 alumni and friends, the Foundation manages over \$36 million in assets to ensure maximum impact for SMSU students. In just the past five years, the Foundation has helped fund transformative projects, including:

- Renovations to campus residence halls
- Upgrades to classrooms and laboratories
- Investments in academic equipment
- Expanded scholarship support
- Enhanced resources for Mustang Athletics

The Foundation also fosters strategic partnerships, such as the landmark \$3 million investment from North Star Mutual Insurance in 2023 to support the SMSU School of Business.



NORTH STAR MUTUAL  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



Scholarship Support  
in 2024-2025:

**\$1,428,878**



Academic and Program  
Support in 2024-2025:

**\$1,537,870**



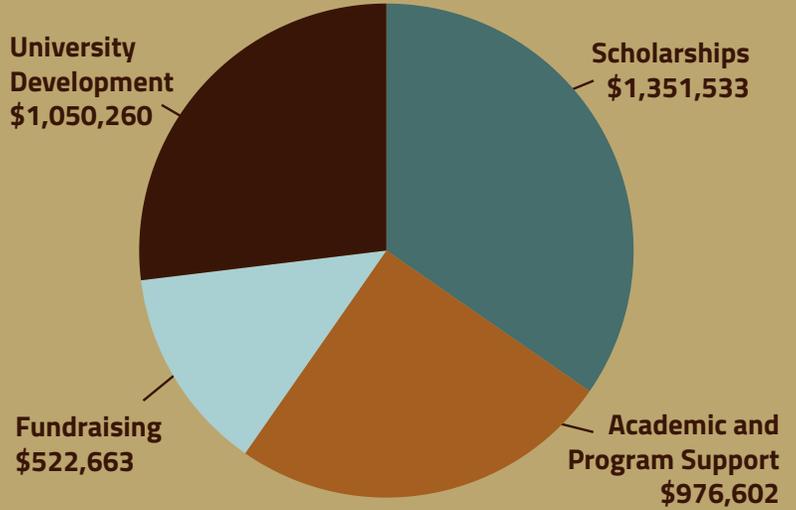
SUPPORT OF STUDENT  
**SCHOLARSHIPS**



**FOUNDATION SUPPORT TO SMSU**

July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 (Fiscal Year 2024)

**\$3,901,058**



**\$5,036,039**

Donations and Revenue



**89**

First-Time Alumni Donors

**1975**

Alumni Class with Highest Giving Participation



CLASS OF  
**2022**

Most First-Time Donors



**\$1,351,533**

Total Student Scholarships



**RUN TOGETHER.  
IMAGINE THE IMPACT.**

The campaign for Southwest has raised over \$25 million, to date, thanks to the support from our generous partners, friends, alumni, and the Marshall community.



**\$25+ MILLION**

Endowment Market Value  
**\$29,311,376**



Total Net Assets

**\$36,673,653**



# MINNESOTA STATE

Extraordinary Education. Exceptional Value.

## ABOUT MINNESOTA STATE

**At Minnesota State we provide the opportunity for all Minnesotans to create a better future for themselves, for their families, and for their communities.**

With 26 community and technical colleges and seven state universities on 54 campuses, Minnesota State serves nearly two-thirds of the entire state's undergraduate student population, and we serve more Black, Indigenous, and students of color than all higher education providers in the state, combined.

We are committed to equitable outcomes for all our students, and in 2019 committed to eliminating educational equity gaps at every Minnesota State college and university by the year 2030. Achieving this goal, called Equity 2030, is a moral imperative, and an economic imperative for our state as our population continues to grow more diverse, and will ensure Minnesota has the workforce it needs for generations to come. We are working toward meeting our Equity 2030 goal through hard work, robust data analysis, targeted programs to improve outcomes, and partnerships with community organizations, employers, and the state legislature.

Minnesota State employs more than 14,560 people, most of whom are represented by one of several bargaining units and personnel plans. The bargaining units include:

- » Inter Faculty Organization (IFO)
- » Minnesota State College Faculty
- » Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF)
- » American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
- » Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE)
- » Minnesota Government Engineers Council
- » Middle Management Association (MMA)
- » Minnesota Nurses Association



### Governance

The 15-member Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is appointed by the Governor and has policy responsibility for system planning, academic programs, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations. Learn more on the Board of Trustees page at [MinnState.edu/board](https://MinnState.edu/board).

### Chancellor

Under the direction of the Board of Trustees, the chancellor is the executive officer of Minnesota State and is responsible for providing educational leadership to the 33 colleges and universities of Minnesota State, ensuring effective and efficient management and operation so that Minnesota State can meet the current and long-term educational and workforce development needs of all Minnesotans. Learn more on the Chancellor's Office page at [MinnState.edu/system/chancellor](https://MinnState.edu/system/chancellor).



## EXTRAORDINARY FACTS

Minnesota State is the third largest system of state colleges and universities in the United States and the largest in the state with 26 colleges, 7 universities, and 54 campuses.

We serve 270,000 students each year, with more Black and Indigenous students, as well as students of color, attending our colleges and universities than all other higher education providers in Minnesota combined.

We offer the lowest tuition in Minnesota, with 55% of our college students and 59% of our university students receiving financial aid.

We employ more than 14,560 dedicated faculty and staff focused on student success.

We provide 3,968 academic programs, including 893 fully online programs.

We have more than 12,000 customized and specialized training, occupational, and professional classes.

We award more than 34,650 degrees, certificates, and diplomas annually.

64% of Minnesota resident students who are pursuing an undergraduate credential are doing so at a Minnesota State college or university.

86% of Minnesota State students take jobs in a related field of study.

We have 7,000+ employer partnerships across Minnesota State colleges and universities.

Minnesota State contributes over \$8.4 billion to the state's economy.

*Minnesota State is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer and educator.*



# Leadership Opportunity

*Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) seeks a visionary and collaborative president with the experience and passion to lead a strong institution into its next phase of growth and success. Reporting to the Chancellor of Minnesota State, the president serves as the chief executive officer of the university, authentically serving the students, faculty and staff of the institution while connecting the university to Southwest Minnesota and surrounding communities.*

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & REGIONAL IMPACT**

Southwest Minnesota State University stands as a cornerstone of the Marshall community and the broader region, serving as an educational hub, a cultural center, and an engine for economic vitality. SMSU's partnerships extend deep into the fabric of Southwest Minnesota - collaborating with local businesses, industries, school districts, and civic organizations to meet workforce needs and promote regional development. Programs such as College in the Schools (CIS), Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), and apprenticeships reflect the university's dedication to preparing students for meaningful careers while strengthening the local talent pipeline. The Marshall community, in turn, has embraced SMSU as a valued partner, proudly supporting Mustang athletics, the performing arts, and academic initiatives. Together, SMSU and its regional collaborators exemplify the powerful intersection of education, community, and opportunity.

## **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

At SMSU, students are known by name, supported by caring faculty and staff, and encouraged to reach their full potential. The university's student-centered approach creates a close-knit, inclusive environment where learners from all backgrounds — first-generation, international, and non-traditional — feel seen and supported. With small class sizes, personalized advising, and robust academic and wellness services, SMSU offers the kind of individualized attention often found at private institutions, all at a public university price. Beyond the classroom, students benefit from a vibrant campus life, hands-on learning, and strong connections to community and industry. This holistic approach ensures that graduates leave SMSU not only career-ready, but also confident, compassionate citizens equipped to make a difference in their communities.

## **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION**

Academic excellence at SMSU is rooted in relevance, innovation, and access. The university offers nationally recognized programs in education, social work, and accounting, alongside distinctive fields such as culinology and agronomy that connect learning directly to regional industry needs. SMSU's growing online and graduate programs expand access and flexibility for today's learners, while its strong liberal arts foundation ensures

students develop critical thinking and communication skills essential for lifelong success. The university's leadership in accessibility, exemplified by its nationally renowned wheelchair basketball program and ADA-forward campus design, reflects its broader commitment to inclusion and equity in education. As workforce demands evolve, SMSU continues to adapt its academic offerings to meet the future, investing in emerging areas such as nursing, engineering, artificial intelligence, and rural health.

## **FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY & STRATEGIC GROWTH**

SMSU faces the fiscal realities shared by many regional universities - limited resources, aging infrastructure, and changing enrollment patterns - yet the institution remains poised for strategic growth. The next president will be a prudent and forward-thinking steward, balancing fiscal responsibility with bold investment in programs and initiatives that drive enrollment and strengthen SMSU's impact. This includes modernizing facilities, advancing fundraising efforts, and cultivating new partnerships that enhance both financial health and academic innovation. By aligning programs with workforce needs and expanding donor and corporate engagement, SMSU can continue to advance while building long-term financial resilience. With careful planning and visionary leadership, SMSU is ready to translate its strong community support and recent momentum into a sustainable foundation for the future.

## **VISIONARY & COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP**

SMSU seeks a president who will embrace and embody the university's spirit of collaboration, innovation, and care. The next leader must be visionary - capable of articulating a bold and inclusive direction for the university while ensuring decisions are grounded in data, transparency, and shared governance. The ideal president will be visible and approachable, engaging students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members in meaningful dialogue and collective problem-solving. As a skilled communicator and advocate, this leader will tell SMSU's story with authenticity and conviction, building partnerships across the Minnesota State system and beyond. Above all, the next president will lead with integrity, humility, and a deep commitment to student success and regional vitality.

# QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will demonstrate most, if not all, of these qualifications:

## **Visionary and Strategic Leadership**

- Proven ability to provide clear vision and direction for the university's future.
- Progressive leadership experience in higher education administration or comparable complex organizations.
- Capacity to lead with integrity, authenticity, and transparency while inspiring innovation and collaboration.
- Demonstrated success in data-informed decision-making and strategic planning.

## **Commitment to Shared Governance and Collaboration**

- Experience working effectively within shared governance and collective bargaining environments.
- Collegial and consultative management style that values broad input and fosters trust and respect.
- Skilled at building consensus and empowering faculty, staff, and students to contribute to institutional success.

## **Student-Centered Focus**

- Demonstrated record of prioritizing student success, well-being, and equitable access for all learners, including first-generation, adult, international, and historically marginalized students.
- Understanding of holistic student development, including the integration of academics, student affairs, and campus life.
- A visible, approachable, and engaged presence with students, both in formal and informal settings.

## **External Engagement and Partnerships**

- Strong record of building and sustaining partnerships with business, industry, educational institutions, government, and civic organizations.
- Experience working with K–12 systems and two-year colleges to strengthen pathways and regional workforce alignment.
- Proven ability to engage alumni and alumnae, donors, and community stakeholders to advance the university's mission and reputation.
- Success in fostering public–private partnerships and serving as an effective advocate for the university at local, state, and national levels.

## **Fiscal Stewardship and Institutional Advancement**

- Demonstrated expertise in fiscal management, strategic budgeting, and aligning resources with institutional priorities.
- Ability to diversify revenue streams and lead fundraising and grant development efforts.
- Experience balancing financial responsibility with strategic investment in innovation and growth.

## **Communication and Personal Qualities**

- Exceptional oral and written communication skills, with the ability to inspire and connect with diverse audiences.
- Demonstrated commitment advancing diversity and inclusion.
- A reputation for integrity, humility, authenticity, and respect.
- Ability to lead with empathy, humor, and optimism while fostering a positive campus culture.
- An earned doctorate (preferred but not required).

*Embrace and embody what it means to be a Mustang!*

# PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH



**DISCOVER.**  
**ENGAGE.**  
**LEAD.**



## APPLICATION & NOMINATION PROCESS

Greenwood Asher & Associates® is assisting Southwest Minnesota State University in this search. Applications and nominations are now being accepted. Confidential inquiries, nominations and application materials should be directed to Greenwood Asher & Associates at [SMSUPresident@greenwoodsearch.com](mailto:SMSUPresident@greenwoodsearch.com).

Application materials should include:

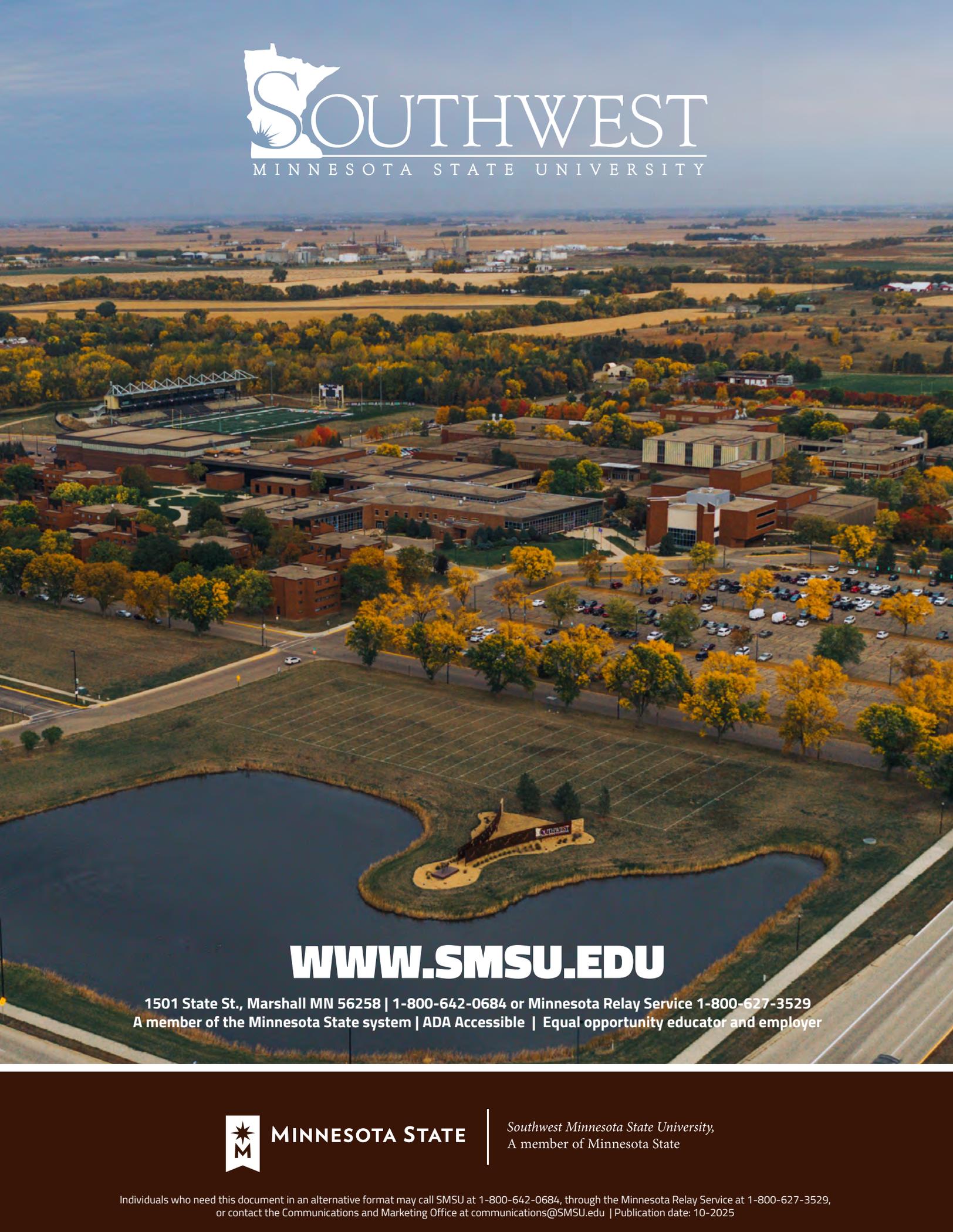
- A letter of interest that clearly states the applicant's qualifications for the position
- A current CV
- A list of five references

We strongly encourage submitting application materials as PDF attachments. The search will be conducted with a commitment of confidentiality of candidates until finalists are selected. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

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Lauren McCaghren, Search Advisor and Consultant  
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Kyle Pybus-Jerome, Senior Executive Search Consultant  
email: [kylepybusjerome@greenwoodsearch.com](mailto:kylepybusjerome@greenwoodsearch.com)



# SOUTHWEST

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

**WWW.SMSU.EDU**

1501 State St., Marshall MN 56258 | 1-800-642-0684 or Minnesota Relay Service 1-800-627-3529  
A member of the Minnesota State system | ADA Accessible | Equal opportunity educator and employer



**MINNESOTA STATE**

*Southwest Minnesota State University,  
A member of Minnesota State*