

The background features two young women smiling. The woman on the left has curly hair and is wearing a light green top. The woman on the right has braided hair and is wearing a dark top. A large, bright yellow arrow points upwards from the bottom left towards the top right, partially overlapping the women's faces and the text.

2023

**Progress Report: Representation,
Climate, and Partnership**

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*Joan T.A. Gabel,
President*



*Mercedes Ramírez Fernández,
Vice President for Equity and Diversity*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Dear University Community,

At the University of Minnesota, and as articulated through MPact 2025, the System's first comprehensive strategic plan, the University is committed to taking steps to amplify and elevate representation, climate, and partnership. In this third-annual report, which represents a work in progress, the University's momentum in these three focus areas is highlighted, as well as broader work to advance a community and culture where a sense of belonging is strong, accessibility is valued, and equity and diversity are actively promoted. From further strengthening our partnership with Tribal Nations, to welcoming the most diverse student body in University history, to increasing a sense of belonging on the Twin Cities campus to eighty-eight percent, up ten percentage points from last year, amongst others, the University of Minnesota has taken meaningful and impactful steps together over the past year. And while not exhaustive, this report recognizes these important markers and the sustained efforts to become a community of belonging the U aspires to be.

Warm regards,

Joan T.A. Gabel and
Mercedes Ramírez Fernández



Representation



Most Diverse Freshman Class

Systemwide, the fall 2022 incoming class had the highest percentage of BIPOC students in the University's recorded history, representing nearly one third of all freshmen. At 31%, this is nearly a **10% increase** over the past five years.

Design Justice Cluster Hire

The College of Design embarked on a cluster hire in the past few years, creating several openings in various programs across two years, centered in Design Justice. Since then, the Design Justice initiative has created a mission centered on anti-racist design approaches through cross-collaboration. Led by new faculty member **Terresa Moses** (who launched the University's Twin Cities campus Juneteenth celebration in 2022), the vision for design justice centers on intentional community relationships that support anti-racist culture shifts, decolonized pedagogy, and the liberation of historically underinvested communities within design academia and industry.





Honorary Namings

Launched a comprehensive review of honorary namings, starting with the four oldest named University buildings: Folwell Hall and Sanford Hall on the Twin Cities campus, and Kiehle Hall and Spooner Hall on the Crookston and Morris campuses, respectively. Each of these namings meet the 75-year sunset provision required of honorary namings, and this grouping of four was decided in consultation with the All-University Honors Committee.



Special Olympics

University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus has been named the host venue of the **2026 Special Olympics USA Games** through an open, competitive bid. During the 22-23 year, the University hosted or participated in a number of events in the lead up to the 2026 games, from a polar plunge at Huntington Bank Stadium, to a logo unveiling at the Mall of America, amongst others.



Mercedes Ramírez Fernández, Vice President for Equity and Diversity

joined Budget 6 at the suggestion of shared governance colleagues from the University's Senate Finance and Planning Committee (SCFP).



Climate

Campus Climate Survey

Launched the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [systemwide campus climate survey](#), a key initiative in [MPact 2025, the U of M Systemwide Strategic Plan](#) and an important way for the University to better understand our community. The survey was a recommendation of the Cambridge Hill Partners Systemwide DEI report to gather robust and actionable campus climate data to inform current and future decisions and actions to support a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming campus community. In addition, the survey responds to one of the key recommendations from the AAU Advisory Board on Racial Equity in Higher Education co-chaired by University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel, Rutgers University President Jonathan Holloway, and University of Rochester President Sarah Mangelsdorf.



Juneteenth

In March, the Board of Regents approved the addition of Juneteenth as an official University holiday after consultation through shared governance across the system. Planning is underway for the second annual University of Minnesota Juneteenth Celebration block party and commemorative march in North Minneapolis. The June 17 event centers around the theme of **The Art of Freedom: Joy. Resistance. Rest.** and will feature vendors, speakers, workshops, poster showcases, storytellers, musicians, performers, DJs, roller skating, books, free food, free haircuts, art-making, and children’s activities.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention

Hiring of a new **Sexual Misconduct Prevention Program Coordinator** to institutionalize the work of the President's Initiative to Prevent Sexual Misconduct (PIPSM). PIPSM was launched in 2017 in an effort to ground and expand the University's sexual misconduct prevention efforts with a public health approach. In 2023, PIPSM transitioned into the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Program within the Office for Equity and Diversity in order to further grow the impact and effectiveness of the U's sexual misconduct prevention activities and ensure that they are sustainable over time. Future efforts will build upon the nationally recognized sexual misconduct prevention work of PIPSM and continue to provide the highest level of strategic coordination of evidence-based prevention initiatives and activities across the University's five campuses.



Public Safety

As recommended by Dr. Cedric Alexander in his 2020-2021 **review of public safety** on the Twin Cities campus, the University is developing **NXT GEN BADGE** for launch in Spring 2024. The program is part of the University's NXT GEN platform, which includes **NXT GEN AG** and **NXT GEN MED**, and aims at meeting the State of Minnesota's heightened need for public safety and law enforcement talent. In addition, the University launched a **Strategic Safety Advisory Committee**, leading to an over twenty percent reduction in violent crime in the neighborhoods adjoining the Twin Cities campus.



Voice, Art, and Community

Burial Rituals of the Habitual Tomorrow, three Minnesota poets, **Heid E. Erdrich**, **Sun Yung Shin**, and **Douglas Kearney** joined in conversation as they engaged poetry as a process of presence, absence, and coming into being.

88%

of Twin Cities undergraduate students agree they have a sense of belonging, up 10 percentage points from last year.



Partnership

Tribal Partners

Language Nest Program

In a partnership with Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) and the department of American Indian Studies, the UMN Child Development Lab School launched a Dakota language immersion preschool program in fall 2022. The staff support learners as young as three to UMN as part of our efforts with MIAC to increase the number of Dakota native language speakers.

Announcement of Intent to Repatriate the Cloquet Forestry Center

In spring 2023, the University announced its intention to repatriate the Cloquet Forestry Center (CFC) to the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, which wholly surrounds the CFC. Since that time, the University has continued regular meetings with Fond du Lac, as well as officials from the state of Minnesota to determine the best path forward to return the land. Ongoing meetings and discussions have been fruitful in this process, and we are moving forward in a positive direction.

Mimbres Collection

In February 2022, the Board of Regents approved repatriating items in the Mimbres Collection. Since that time, Senior Advisor to the President Karen Diver and staff of the Weisman Art Museum have met with Tribes to review the collection held both at the University and elsewhere as efforts move forward to return the collection. This is an ongoing effort, and significant steps have been taken, while also recognizing that more work needs to be done and may take some time as we work with Tribes from around the country to repatriate according to their wishes.

Investments & Endowments

During the past year Office of Investments and Banking (OIB) committed **43%** of the University's new private partnerships to investment managers classified as emerging, minority- or woman-owned.

Local Business Partnerships

The University contracted with 300 Minnesota-based suppliers owned by women, BIPOC, or disabled persons last year, an increase of more than 20% from the previous year.

Minnesota Urban Debate League

The MNUDL residency at the College of Liberal Arts Engagement Hub in 2022-23 expands its relationship (a program of Augsburg University and the University of Minnesota), to allow more Twin Cities middle and high school students the opportunity to engage in dialogue about critical current issues. Through this residency, MNUDL has worked to recruit more fluent Spanish speakers to serve as Spanish Debate League judges, members of the East African community to serve as judges for East African Debate, as well as engage more deeply with student groups, language departments, and Greek Life.



International Engagement

Lifted the University's voice and presence through events internationally as part of a University of Minnesota Delegation to Vietnam that included representatives from the Medical School and School of Nursing, as well as the two Memorandum of Understanding signings with institutions in South Korea, between the University of Minnesota and Hanyang University and the Korea Institute of Science and Technology respectively, as part of the University of Minnesota Foundation Presidential International Travel in March.