I am pleased to present the summarized financial material from fiscal year 2009 (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009) and offer my sincere thanks for your philanthropic generosity.

During fiscal year 2009 more than $530,000 was generated in commitments and over $780,000 in gifts from you, our generous benefactors and constituents. Yes, these are unprecedented economic times, and I ask for your assistance in working with us to solve these challenges.

Your financial support shapes the future of this institution and provides enhanced educational experiences. Please consider your giving opportunities and thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Corby Kemmer, director
Development & Alumni Relations

“Old School” Online

The University of Minnesota is definitely “old school.” Founded in 1851, the University was in existence seven years before the territory of Minnesota became a state. Dedicated to the advancement of learning, the University of Minnesota is attentive to the changing needs of its students. Online learning is one of the ways the University is meeting those needs.

The University’s Crookston campus was the first to offer a University of Minnesota degree online. That was 14 years ago. Today, online learning comprises 10 percent of the overall credit hours delivered.

When Senior Jill Lucas, Dodge Center, Minn., began her online degree, she already had a two-year degree in radiology from Riverland Community College in Austin, Minn. Following her graduation from Riverland, she went to work for Immanuel St. Joseph’s Hospital in Mankato, Minn., and a year later moved to a new position in the radiology department at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., where she has worked for the past 13 years.

A mother of 8-year-old twins, Lucas had planned for some time to earn a bachelor’s degree. She even worked on classes two nights a week offered locally through Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn. But, she found that physically being away from her young children, who were only toddlers at the time, was just too difficult.

“Any upward movement in my field requires a bachelor’s degree,”
Lucas explains, “I began searching the Internet for a program that might work for me, and that’s when I came across the bachelor of applied health from the University of Minnesota. I contacted Michelle Christopherson, and the staff in the Center for Adult Learning answered my questions and helped me with transferring the credits I had already earned.”

In 2005, Lucas took her first online class through the University of Minnesota, Crookston Online. Working toward a bachelor of applied health (BAH), Lucas has taken one or maybe two classes a semester. “I took a class if it worked, if I felt I couldn’t handle it, I would take a break, but then, I would get right back at it,” Lucas says.

For Lucas, a University of Minnesota degree was very appealing. “When I found out I could get my online degree from the University of Minnesota, I knew it was the route I wanted to go,” Lucas smiles. “I grew up in Minnesota, and I already loved the University.”

What Lucas enjoys most about learning online is the opportunity to work at a pace right for her and around her schedule. “I can put my children to bed and then sit down and work on my assignments,” she reflects. “If I feel like it, I wear my pajamas, and I make it work with my life and around my husband and children too.”

If there are challenges with online learning, Lucas says the fact that you are not face to face with the instructor and your classmates might be one, but she readily adds, “I interact with classmates from all over the world. I have the opportunity for such diversity and learn from my peers who have such a variety of professional experiences. I would recommend online learning to anyone. In fact, I have a couple of friends who are taking classes because my experience has been so positive.”

Lucas says the course work has been pertinent to what she wants to do. The BAH degree was designed to meet the needs of working professionals in the health industry like Lucas.

Michelle Christopherson describes online learning as “Flexible and personal; two themes that connect our great University to an ever growing audience of adult learners. Students like Jill, value the U of M brand and have come to expect the quality services and academics in a non-traditional learning environment.”

“I have taken something from every class I have had online and made use of it in my career and in my personal life,” Lucas remarks. “I have a richer foundation for living and working through my online experience, and in December 2010, I will achieve my goal of earning a bachelor’s degree.”

Learning online is one example of the way education is changing to help students of all kinds achieve their goals. Offering the best in education is something the state, region, and world have come to expect from the University of Minnesota system.

**Abbreviations and Definitions Used in the Torch**

A.A.S. – associate of applied science; a degree which focuses more on course work within the major
A.S. – associate in science; a degree that focuses on course work in the liberal arts and is geared for transferring. In 2008, the associate in science degree programs were discontinued.
Adv – advanced designates the additional or fourth year of instruction at the NWSA
Alumna – refers to female, singular
Alumnus – refers to male, singular
Alumni – refers to unisex, plural (originally, male plural)
Applied studies – degree option designed to meet individual needs and educational objectives that cannot be met through traditional degree programs
Campus kid – the child of an NWSA faculty or staff member who lived on the campus
C.S.A. – Crookston Student Association, the governing organization of the student body
D.A. – doctor of arts
D.V.M. – designates a doctor of veterinary medicine, i.e., Chancellor Charles H. Casey, D.V.M.
Ed.D. – a doctorate focused on academic and administrative positions in education
Emeritus – a title honoring the role of a retired professional, i.e. Professor Emeritus, Chancellor Emeritus
Ex. (exited) – designates the last year registered at the U of M, Crookston by an alumna/alumnus who has not completed a degree.
B.A. – bachelor of arts
B.S. – bachelor of science; the U of M, Crookston confers bachelor of science degrees.
M.A. – master of arts
M.S. – master of science
NWSA – Northwest School of Agriculture, the agricultural high school located on what is now the U of M, Crookston campus
Ph.D. – designates Philosophiae Doctor (Doctor of Philosophy)
U of M – University of Minnesota