**Q1: Why do you want to serve on the NMC Board of Trustees?**

**K. Ross Childs**: I want to seek one more term on the NMC Board of Trustees to finish work on 2 main items, securing legislative support for changing the MPSERS retirement program from a Defined Benefit program to a Defined contribution Program. My experience with Grand Traverse County with this same type of conversion would beneficial in presentations to our legislators. It would also assist the NMC Board with more local control and the ability to project future retirement cost more effectively.

**Christopher Dailey**: I am a recent alumni of Northwestern Michigan College (NMC). When I step on to the campus, I can't help but smile. NMC opens doors to people's futures, changing their lives forever. I want to ensure NMC keeps growing in this direction. I am a large supporter of service based learning which NMC is starting to explore. I believe service based learning provides valuable experience to students while giving back to the community. This also encourages students to be more active in their community as a whole. I am also a large supporter of internships which is growing in popularity at NMC. I also believe in the importance of competency based learning. It isn't enough for students to learn about the theory of a subject, but they should actually acquire a skill set to help them in their future employment. I believe having a focus on students being able to actually learn skills that make them more employable is not only good for the students, but good for the community as a whole. I want to help encourages these programs at NMC. The second main reason I want to serve on the NMC Board of Trustees is to help veterans. I am a combat veteran of 6 years with the US Army. Many pro-veteran policies have gone through NMC and many other colleges in the state. I would strive to keep these policies moving forward. As a veteran student, I know the struggles that combat veterans face re-entering society. Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars often suffer with depression, PTSD, and other struggles with their families. They often sacrifice the years of their life that students traditionally go to college in. I feel it is important to honor our veterans and want to ensure that these benefits do not start disappearing. These benefits on a federal level are already receiving funding cuts and I don't expect tuition assistance to be around forever. I would strive to ensure that the college remains pro-veteran in the future. I feel it is important to help give veterans every edge they can get to move back into a normal life.

**Steve Rawlings**: The success of any organization such as NMC is directly correlated to the effort and passion of the people who make it possible. That includes the students, staff, faculty, administration, board of trustees, volunteers, donors, alumni and of course the community and its tax payers. NMC has been a tremendous and steadfast resource to me and countless members of my family. As a result, I feel a responsibility to offer my skills and service to the NMC board so others may also have the opportunity to benefit from NMC's programming. If elected, I will work to build upon the long and storied success of NMC.

**Jeremy Hawke**: Keeping education accessible and affordable is a critical factor in our region's economic success. I believe NMC is one of the top assets of the county and region. It plays a significant role in both the economy, vitality, and culture of our region. I feel very strongly that students and employers are going to begin to demand changes from our educational systems. Students need to justify the expense of obtaining secondary education. This will in large part be driven by their ability to gain employment in their desired fields. In my interaction with business owners throughout the area I consistently hear of the challenges in finding people that have the skill sets required. Part of that will continue to be delivered through the "product" the community college system has historically provided, by giving students a lower cost alternative to complete some of their degree. However, as we have seen the funding mix for schools continues to change with more and more of the cost shifted to the student. This is a trend that I feel is going to continue for the foreseeable future. I think the community college is in a unique position to take advantage of providing an educational experience that delivers skill sets that students and employers both find value in. NMC has already begun to do that with Culinary School, the Maritime Academy, and other programs. I think there will be huge opportunities for the school driven out of these needs allowing it to become an even bigger part of the community. I also think the school fills a vital role in bringing the arts into the area as well as providing life-long learning opportunities which add to our quality of life in the region. I want to be a part of helping the college evolve and continue to be a thriving organization and a vital partner in our proud community.

**Q2: What value or skill sets do you feel you will bring to the NMC Board of Trustees?**

**K. Ross Childs**: I have over 23 years of combined service on the NMC Foundation and the NMC Board of Trustees which provides a very valuable historical perspective of the College's ability to maintain high quality educational initiatives and control costs, which means more bang for the buck for our students. My other involvement in County Government and Munson Health Care also is valuable the cooperative programming in many areas.

**Christopher Dailey**: I am a 32 year old husband and father of two. I served in the US Army as I stated above. I graduated with Highest Honors in Business Administration from NMC with various other awards. While both the military and my education qualifies me to sit on the Board of Trustees, I don't think that would be my greatest strength on the board. I would offer something that some suggest that current board lacks, a connection to the students. Since I am a recent alumni I have invaluable experience in what it takes to be a student at NMC. Observing the board meetings in person and via the web broadcasts, I realized how my actually first hand experience with the programs at NMC could provide a perspective that would be very beneficial to the board. Having someone like me on the board would make the board stronger through diversity, providing insight on programs from a perspective they don't currently possess.

Continued ›
Steve Rawlings: I hope to bring a uniquely qualified perspective to the board of trustees. The skills and experience I've acquired since graduating from NMC in 1991, including an MBA from Michigan State University and previous board experience, combined with the perspective gained as a son of a 1951 NMC student and a father of a 2014 NMC student, will allow me to serve, if elected, with a uniquely qualified perspective.

Jeremy Hawke: With over 20-years of work experience in business, finance, and banking, I feel that this provides a broad base of life experience, and education to draw from. I have been in a leadership role with my present employer, The Bank of Northern Michigan, for over 5-years, and I am currently responsible for the Traverse City office of the bank. The bank has a program called the Professional Development Program that was created to allow us to develop and mentor the future leaders of our organization. The candidates for this program are primarily recent college graduates of many Michigan colleges. This has given me great insight by providing me the opportunity to interview, as well as employ, these graduates and learn of their challenges, strengths and goals. I believe I can make a difference for our students. I have served in various capacities for non-profits. I am currently on the board for Child & Family Services, and served on the board for Third Level Crisis & Intervention center. In that capacity I was part of a group that explored solutions and ultimately facilitated a merger between the two organizations. This merger allowed the two organizations to become a stronger single entity in the face of continued reductions in program funding at the State and Federal level. I have been a student in the Community College system. I am a proud lifelong learner and have taken advantage of several of NMC’s classes. I grew up out of the Grand Traverse area, but attended a community college my first year out of high school before transferring to Western Michigan University where I completed my undergraduate degree in art. After graduating I took advantage of the community college in Kalamazoo to fulfill as many of the pre-requisite classes I could for my enrollment into the MBA program at Western. I also have three children, two currently in college and a third that is a senior at TC West. This has provided me a lot of insight into the view students are taking as they evaluate their options as well as the cost students are incurring with continued education.