



*Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026*



## Interim NDSU president selected

The State Board of Higher Education selected Rick Berg as interim president of NDSU on Jan. 22. Berg, a Hettinger native and NDSU alum with a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics, began the role Monday. He brings leadership experience across public service and the private sector, including service in the North Dakota

House of Representatives and the U.S. House of Representatives, plus work in real estate and development.

Berg said his priorities are to continue the university's forward momentum, work collaboratively with legislators actively reviewing the funding formula and support a smooth transition for the permanent president.

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## NDSU to host AgTech Hackathon

NDSU will host its AgTech Hackathon Feb. 20–22 at the NDSU Peltier Complex, partnering with Bayer Crop Science and the National Science Foundation AgTech Engine to bring graduate students, postdoctoral researchers and research staff together to work in teams on real-world agricultural and biological data challenges. Participants will analyze complex datasets, develop solutions and present to a panel of judges from academia and industry in this competition designed to strengthen analytical and problem-solving skills across agronomy, data science, engineering and related fields.



[Learn more](#)



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## Engineering students create smart pickleball machine

Four mechanical engineering students designed and built a smart pickleball machine as their senior capstone project, creating a remote-controlled training aid that uses a four-wheel ejector system to launch balls with

programmable speed, direction and spin to help players practice without a partner. The hands-on experience integrated design, electronics and manufacturing while preparing students for real-world engineering challenges and showcasing the College of Engineering's commitment to applied learning.

[Learn more](#)

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## NDSU joining Mountain West Conference

NDSU has accepted an invitation for its football program to join the Mountain West Conference as a football-only affiliate member and compete at the Football Bowl Subdivision level beginning July 1, a move that reflects years of planning and aligns with long-term institutional goals around academic reputation, research engagement and national visibility. University officials have emphasized that no public funds will be used at this time to support the transition, with costs to join and reclassify being met through philanthropy and athletics generated revenue sources.

[Learn more](#)



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## NDSU names new Honors College



## executive director

James Brown has been named the founding executive director of the new Honors College at NDSU, bringing more than two decades of leadership experience at the intersection of science, technology and education to the role. His appointment underscores NDSU's commitment to expanding educational opportunities and mentorship for high-achieving students across disciplines.

[Learn more](#)

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## Microbiology professor earns national teaching award

Associate professor of practice Danielle Condry has been named a regional recipient of the 2025 U.S. Department of Agriculture Excellence in College and University Teaching in Food and Agricultural Sciences Award, recognizing innovative teaching, exceptional student engagement and commitment to advancing education in food and agricultural sciences; Condry is one of six honorees nationwide and her selection highlights NDSU's strength in preparing graduates for careers in agriculture and science fields while enhancing the university's land-grant mission.



[Learn more](#)

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*Elena George, above, is a supply chain management student from Ashland, Wis.*

## Student Success

*Learn more about how NDSU is preparing students to lead and succeed in their discipline. You'll also find in-depth stories about alumni, industry, community and more.*

Learn more

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