

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19th, 2023

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**Minnesota North College's Itasca Campus Launches Women's Wrestling Program with Generous Sport Opportunity Grant from the NJCAA Foundation**

**Grand Rapids, MN-** Minnesota North College's Itasca campus is proud to announce the establishment of a new women's wrestling program, made possible through a generous \$2,000 grant from the NJCAA Foundation. Through the NJCAA Sport Opportunity Grant, the college will be able to offer female student-athletes an exciting opportunity to compete in the rapidly growing sport of wrestling while promoting gender equality in athletics.

"Two-year collegiate sports provide student-athletes with the opportunity to further both their athletic and academic careers," said Brian Lockett, NJCAA Foundation Executive Director. "The NJCAA Sport Opportunity Grant affords the NJCAA Foundation a pathway to continue supporting student-athletes and the member colleges who provide them with these incredible opportunities while also promoting continued growth and development throughout the organization."

The NJCAA Sport Opportunity Grant, which provides financial support to institutions looking to expand athletic opportunities, has enabled Minnesota North College's Itasca campus to create a comprehensive women's wrestling program. The grant funds will go towards equipment, coaching staff, facility upgrades, and recruitment efforts, ensuring that the program can successfully launch and provide a top-tier experience for the student-athletes.

The decision to establish a women's wrestling program aligns with Minnesota North College's commitment to diversity and inclusivity in athletics. By offering female athletes a platform to excel in wrestling, the college aims to empower them, promote gender equality, and create more opportunities for women in traditionally male-dominated sports.

"We are incredibly excited to introduce our women's wrestling program at Minnesota North College's Itasca campus," said Dr. Michael Raich, President of Minnesota North College. "This program not only enhances our commitment to providing equal opportunities for all student-athletes but also strengthens our dedication to fostering diversity and empowering women. We are grateful to the NJCAA Foundation for their generous support, which has helped make this program a reality."

The women's wrestling program at Minnesota North College's Itasca campus will join the ranks of other successful athletic on campus and throughout our six Minnesota North College campuses. The college's experienced coaching staff will provide guidance and mentorship to the student-athletes, helping them develop their skills, compete at a high level, and achieve their athletic goals.

Minnesota North College's Itasca campus is actively seeking talented female wrestlers to join the program which will begin in Fall Semester, 2024. Prospective student-athletes can expect a supportive and nurturing environment, access to state-of-the-art facilities, and the opportunity to compete against other collegiate teams in regional and national competitions.

"We invite all passionate and driven female wrestlers to consider joining our program," said Athletic Director Justin Lamma, "We are committed to helping our athletes reach their full potential both on and off the mat. By joining our team, they will become part of a close-knit community that will support and encourage their personal and athletic growth."

Minnesota North College's Itasca campus looks forward to the inaugural season of its women's wrestling program in Fall of 2024 and anticipates witnessing the accomplishments of its talented student-athletes. The college aims to build a legacy of success, promote women's wrestling in the region, and produce future leaders in the sport.

For more information about the women's wrestling program at Minnesota North College's Itasca campus, interested individuals can contact the Minnesota North College-Itasca's Women's Athletic Director, Leslie Reed at 218-322-2399, or via email at [leslie.reed@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:leslie.reed@minnesotanorth.edu).

***About Minnesota North College***

Minnesota North College prepares lifelong learners and engaged citizens through inclusive, transformative experiences reflecting the character and natural environment of the region. Through our six campuses, we strive to be the premier provider of life-changing education and the catalyst for regional prosperity.

***About NJCAA Foundation***

*The mission of the NJCAA Foundation is to enhance the NJCAA national organization, student-athletes, member colleges and local communities through financial support, scholarships, program initiatives and community service.*