

# Waking up with

By MIRIAM MOELLER '00 BA, '02 MA

Photography by Kim Marsh '80 BS

Five years ago NMU English professor Daryl Davis and his wife Ginny decided to share one of their passions with the NMU and Marquette communities. With their own single rowing boats tied to the rack of their car, they started a rowing club at NMU with about a dozen members. After borrowing boats, oars, and even coxswains for its first two years, crew is now an official NMU club sport with more than 40 members, five boats, and a boat trailer. Club sports belong to the Club Sports Association and, unlike varsity hockey or volleyball at NMU, are not extensively funded by the university. Even with its financial limitations, each season the NMU crew team travels more than four thousand miles and participates in six major fall regattas. Daryl is now retired from teaching English, and he and Ginny have taken on coaching full time. In early September I joined the squad during one of their practices to experience one morning in the life of an NMU crew member.

## 7:00 a.m.—*Puppy Chow*

Gray light welcomes me as I step out of my car. It is a beautiful morning. To my right, the Lower Harbor and the city of Marquette are dimly lit; to my left, the breakwall and U.S. Coast Guard Station are drenched in silver-violet light. Near the Coast Guard Station is a trailer with three boats on it. A long, narrow white fiberglass boat named *Puppy Chow* sits next to the trailer. *Puppy Chow?* Not exactly a name to strike fear in the hearts of competitors. Women's captain, Amber Ambrosius, agrees and tells me the name came with the boat when the Davis' bought it. This is the boat I will be rowing in this morning.

## 7:20 a.m.—*Silent Power*

There are at least 30 men and women out here, and I am amazed that they all woke up this early to row. Some of them are varsity rowers, but most are novices. I admire their energy and try to remember the last time I was motivated to get up at this time of day. Amber says she is motivated by the competitiveness of the sport as well as the grace and awe she feels when rowing on glassy Lake Superior. "It's focused, very driven, and very physical," she says. "I would describe it as a silent power."

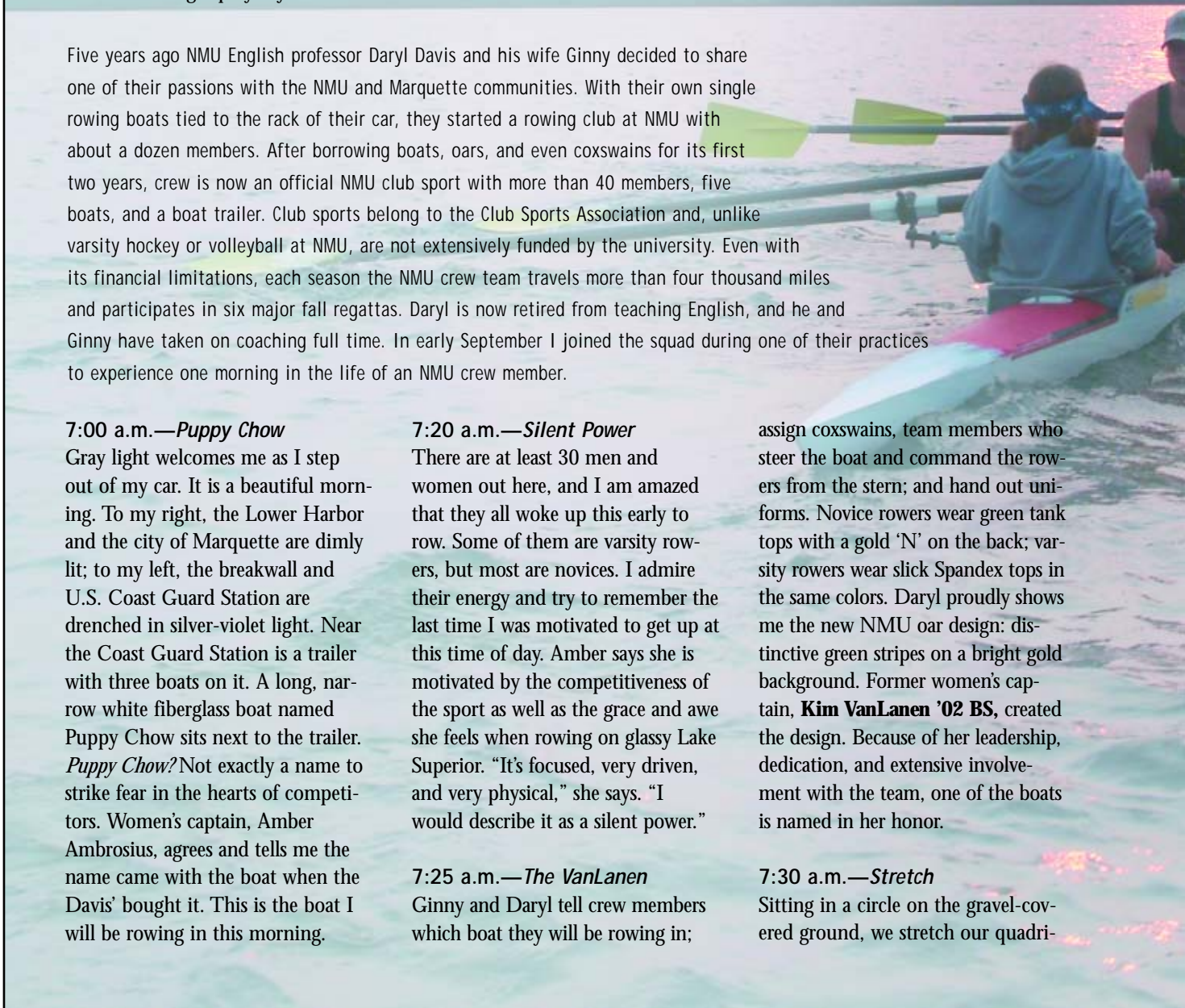
## 7:25 a.m.—*The VanLanen*

Ginny and Daryl tell crew members which boat they will be rowing in;

assign coxswains, team members who steer the boat and command the rowers from the stern; and hand out uniforms. Novice rowers wear green tank tops with a gold 'N' on the back; varsity rowers wear slick Spandex tops in the same colors. Daryl proudly shows me the new NMU oar design: distinctive green stripes on a bright gold background. Former women's captain, **Kim VanLanen '02 BS**, created the design. Because of her leadership, dedication, and extensive involvement with the team, one of the boats is named in her honor.

## 7:30 a.m.—*Stretch*

Sitting in a circle on the gravel-covered ground, we stretch our quadri-



# th NEMU Crew



iceps,  
ham-  
strings,  
hip flexors,  
Achilles tendons,  
arms, wrists, and shoulders.

All crew members go through an extensive training program before they are allowed on the water. Amber explains that in addition to completing a 10-minute swim test and a session on the rowing machines, all team members must also watch a safety video put out by USRowing as well as a technique video put out by Concept II.

## 7:40 a.m.— *Hands On!*

We're ready to take the boat down to the water. The sun has appeared over the breakwall, making everything look soft. "Hands on!" she commands, and we get ready to lift the boat overhead, rest it on our shoulders, and carry it down to the water. We place the oars in the oar-

locks and learn how to step into the boat without damaging the shell. I leave my shoes on shore and take my position in the boat.

## 7:50 a.m.— *All as One*

Ginny and several crew members push our oars away from the shore. The waves are small this morning—nothing to worry about. The air is fresh and cool. I'm shivering a little from the cold and a little from the excitement of being on the water again. I was involved with a rowing club in Germany when I was 12 years old called Hellas Giessen. I rowed many regattas, mostly in a single-person sculling boat without a coxswain, won some medals, and lost a lot of races, but the nicest part about it was being part of a team.

Amber says bonds grow quickly on a rowing team because in a boat everyone is dependent on one another. "All must row as one, and in this way, I think our team becomes closer than many others. In the beginning everyone is eyeing each other up to see who's stronger, but by the end, they've learned that every person is needed to make the team work. It's amazing to see it fall into place."

## 8:15 a.m.— *Weigh-enough!*

"Ready all, row!" the coxswain commands, and four of the eight of us practice a sweeping half slide, a movement that uses only half of the length of the sliding seat, resulting in shorter strokes. "Weigh-enough!" she shouts, and the four of us stop rowing. We switch back and forth and then try rowing together. It's not easy to balance these narrow boats and it's even harder to row simultaneously. For these reasons beginners often practice in twos and fours, while the other rowers hold water with their oars.

When I get a break, I turn around and admire the Marquette "skyline," with its new bell tower in the foreground and the arches of St. Peter Cathedral in the background. The sun is in a cloud of haze above the breakwall. It feels good to be on the water this early in the day.

## 8:45 a.m.— *One Foot Up and Out!*

Too fast, I find myself close to shore again. "One foot up and out!" and we step out of the boat. I put my oar back in place and take a deep breath. I feel revived and ready to take on the rest of the day. ■

# A Day in the Life at NMU

By STEVE GUZOWSKI '79 BS

Introduction by KAREN WALLINGFORD '02 MA

Photography by Bill Sampson

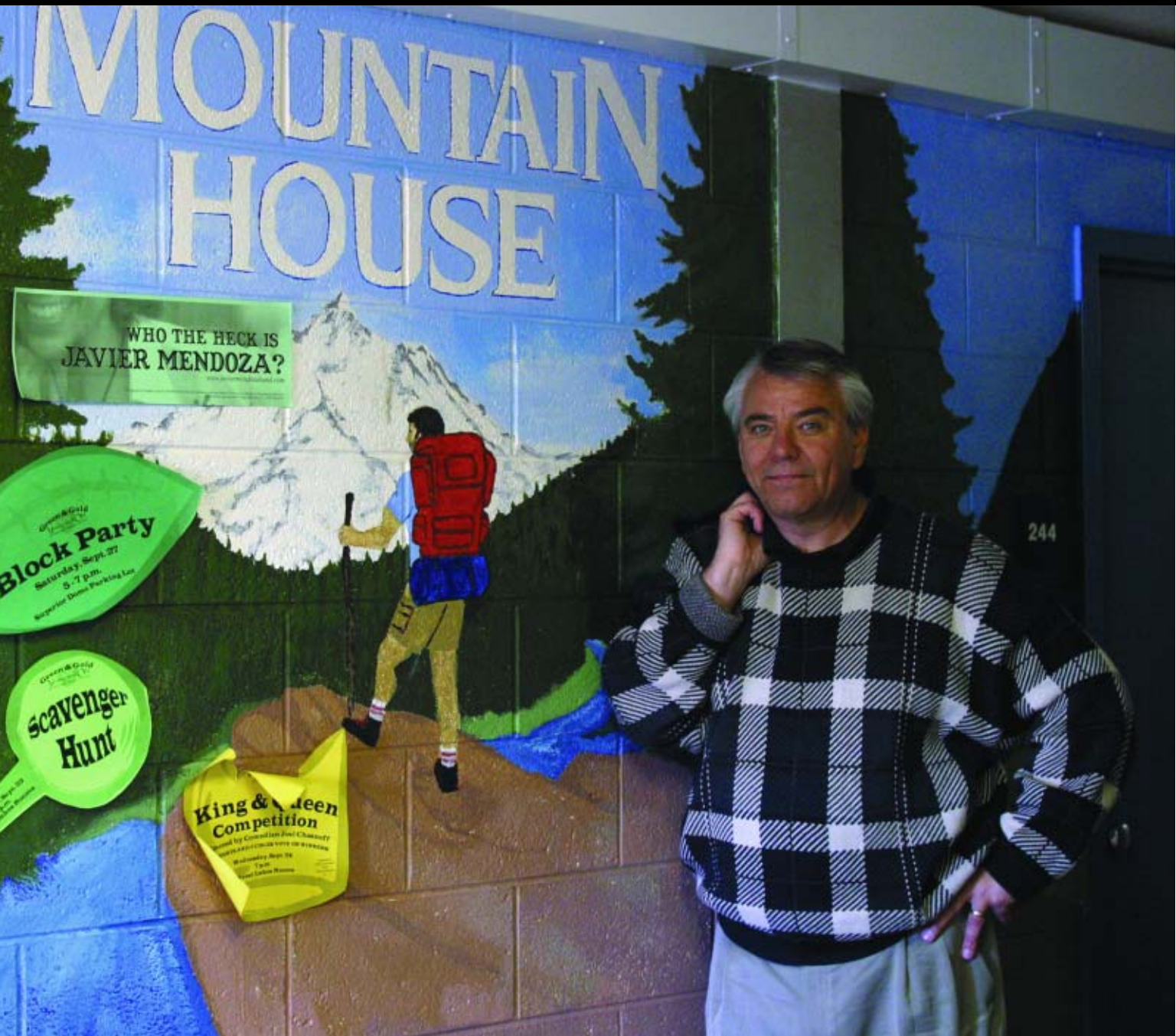
# W

When Steve Guzowski '79 BS brought his son to Northern to take the Presidential scholarship test and tour the campus in the fall of 2002, the last thing on his mind was the prospect of becoming a student again himself. But that's exactly what *Horizons* had in mind for Steve. We wanted to send an NMU alum back to school for a day and tell us how life as a student at Northern has changed. Martha Van Der Kamp, director of Alumni and Development at NMU, said Steve would be perfect for the task, so we approached him with the idea. He was quick to tell us that his academic career was "checkered," and he was more than a little surprised that Martha had recommended him as the ideal candidate for this assignment. But the idea intrigued him. He tentatively agreed, saying he'd have to check his schedule and making us promise that there would be no tests involved. One year later, the stars had aligned and Steve was ready to go back to school.

We paired him with NMU senior Gary Roehm from Ontonagon, a political science and philosophy double major. Gary had completed the majority of the classes

for his political science major and was finishing the requirements for his philosophy major, so needless to say, the day's course load would involve some heavy subject matter. Steve graduated with a criminal justice major, and the classes were unlike any he had taken at NMU. The day would start at 9 a.m. with EC 401 Microeconomics with Professor David Prychitko; then on to PL 210 History of Modern Philosophy with adjunct Instructor Virginia Peacock; and to cap off the day, PL 330 Existentialism with Professor Donald Dreisbach. Steve came prepared with pen and paper in hand. We provided him with the modern student's note taking device—an IBM ThinkPad computer—as well as all of the books required for his classes.

Of course, Steve's day wouldn't be complete unless he could sample residence-hall fare and then relax after class in a residence-hall room, so we arranged for him to have lunch at the Marketplace and then visit the very residence hall room he had lived in as a student. What follows are Steve's reflections as he made his way through a(nother) day in the life at NMU.



Steve Guzowski stands by a mural in Van Antwerp Hall, where he lived as a student in the 1970s. Steve is an outside sales representative for Graybar Electric Company, a distributor of electrical, telecommunications, and networking products to contractors for large building and renovation projects.

# Getting acquainted

## Some things never change

When I was a student here, Jamrich Hall was named Instructional Facility or IF. Not much has changed as far as the décor. The inside cinder block walls are painted the same colors and many rooms had the pull down maps of the world on the walls. The most noticeable change was the Cat 5 jacks for all of the laptop computers.

As I went to classes and opened up my laptop I couldn't help but think of my first exposure to computers at Northern. It was in a political science class with Dr. Robert Kulisheck. He gave us an assignment to analyze voting data of an election. We were supposed to break the data down by party, age group, and a variety of other parameters. Then we had to go down to the computer lab and start by punching the data onto punch cards using FORTRAN. After the data was entered, we sent the cards through a machine called a counter sorter. All I remember was hitting a button, and four or five hundred cards went flying in the lab.



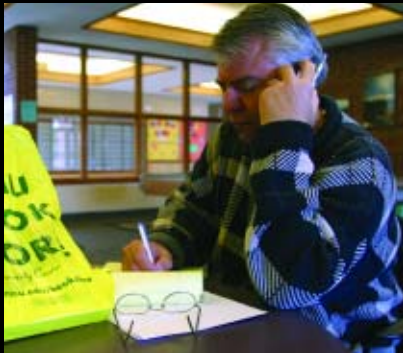
## Classroom redux

Gary and I had about a half an hour to get acquainted at the Starbucks in the LRC (Learning Resources Center) and go over the day's schedule (pictured top right). One of the first things that struck me in talking with Gary was how focused he is. He is a senior with law school in mind after graduation and an eye on politics for his future.

Our first class was Microeconomics with Professor David Prychitko. His discussion of price elasticity of demand was very interesting. I had never taken an economics class but by the end of the hour, David made me feel like I wanted to pursue an MBA.

Our next class was Modern Philosophy. Our discussion was on Immanuel Kant. And then on to the finale—Existentialism—where we discussed “nothing” Heidegger. The discussion was robust and fun. These classes reminded me of my Ancient History professor, Ken Schellhase. Ken looked like someone from ancient Rome. His hair and beard looked like a Roman senator's. He was one of my most memorable professors. He introduced me to Petronius, a satirist of the time. Ken was the kind of professor who engaged you with subject matter that on the surface seemed about as interesting as paint drying. Virginia Peacock did it with Immanuel Kant and Professor Dreisbach did it with Martin Heidegger and existentialism. This has not changed at Northern.

# Hitting the books



## In retrospect

So has the university changed from the 1970s? Absolutely. So many physical things have changed. Some buildings have been demolished, while others have been renovated, added onto, or are brand new. Trees that had just been planted 30 years ago are older and taller, giving the campus a mature look. But other things remain the same. The professors are still interested in what students think, and they still make sure students get all the support they need to understand complex problems.

Have the students changed? This is harder to determine. I saw many students so focused and intense. I think the cost of education has a lot to do with that. A credit hour in 1973 was \$12.50, so if you didn't get a good grade in a class, it wasn't unheard of to take it over and sometimes over again. All of the students were very friendly. I'm not sure if this is a trademark of the U.P., Marquette, or Northern, but I recall the same thing 30 years ago.

As I went through the day and compared what it was like then to how it is now, I realized the friendships I formed have lasted much longer than some of the classroom knowledge. This is what I have taken from Northern. ■

## A dorm room story

One of the things first-year students do is decorate their rooms. My roommate and I were no different. We built bookshelves out of cinder blocks and wood planks and added some posters. It was pretty boring.

Our second year, we decided to invest a little more time and effort. About this time barn wood was "in," so one Saturday morning we borrowed a friend's van and set off on a barn wood liberation safari. We came upon the town of Rock and found a barn that looked like it was about to fall apart, so we just helped it along. After taking a few nice looking planks, we needed some more so we moved down the road to McFarland. There was this old wooden barrel and we grabbed it, too.

We put up the planks as paneling over the block walls. You're not allowed to drill or pound nails into the walls, so we wedged the planks into position. That evening we stepped back and looked at our handiwork. It was very cool. But as the weather got colder, the dorm heat started up. The dorms were heated by hot-water registers—a very drying heat. Let me tell you what it does to barn wood. It started to contract the wood to the point where the walls started to collapse. One night nine or ten boards came crashing down, and that really cool wooden barrel fell apart the next night. It was some mess.



# Talking Points

By PATTI SAMAR '85 BS, '89 MA

Photography by David Trumpie

## A Conversation with Mary Dettloff

**M**ICHIGAN GOVERNOR JENNIFER GRANHOLM'S DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY, **Mary Dettloff '86 BS**, is on the phone with **Matt Johnson '94 BS**, the governor's special assistant to the Upper Peninsula. The state Christmas tree is the topic of conversation.

"How's the tree?" he wants to know of the evergreen from the western U.P. that he helped select to serve as the "official" 2003 state Christmas tree. As she speaks to him, Mary looks out of her office window at the tree, guy-wired into place following a spectacular trek from its home in the cold north.



Mary Dettloff (right) talks with Governor Jennifer Granholm on the way to a media event.

“They’re still laughing about the tree, here, Matt,” she said with mock seriousness. “We’ll send you a picture, Matt. It’s not pretty.” Further inspection of the evergreen, sure enough, showed large holes in the bottom of the tree where branches had snapped off when it toppled to the ground due to the bitter U.P. cold. Additional branches were ripped off when the tree crossed the Mackinac Bridge during a wind-storm. Some have been wired to the tree in an attempt to fill the holes.

“You’d better do better next year, Matt,” she teased. “This is a lesson learned for next year.”

Dettloff has learned many lessons herself over the past year. The 39-year-old Lansing resident has lived and breathed Michigan politics for the past 14 years, having moved to Lansing in 1990 to accept a position as a communications representative for the Michigan House Democratic Press Office after receiving a job tip from a friend she met at NMU.

Her ascent to Gov. Granholm’s staff was no accident. She first encountered Granholm at a Detroit Chamber of Commerce annual meeting on Mackinac Island on the day Granholm announced her bid for state attorney general. “I was on the ferry and heard people talking about how incredible she was,” Dettloff said. Later, after Granholm had captured the attorney general’s office, Dettloff saw her address the House of Representatives when she offered her support for a health care issue.

“She’s just such a great communicator,” said Dettloff. “I leaned over to a friend and said, ‘She’s going to be governor someday, and I’m going to work for her.’”

Several years later when Granholm announced her bid for the governor’s office, Dettloff made a point of hounding Granholm’s communications staff for a position on the campaign, and she eventually won a spot.

“We were a small little team of people holed up in a small little office in Livonia, and it ended up being a whole lot of people holed up in an office in Detroit,” she said.

Dettloff’s desire to work with public servants is no surprise to her family and close friends.

“In some ways, too, it is a natural fit for me because my family has a history of public service,” she said. Her great-grandfather was a county magistrate in Presque Isle County, and her grandfather was a Presque Isle County commissioner and served on the school board in Rogers City. Her father was a city councilman in Rogers City for 25 years.

Her journey into politics came after spending time on the other side of the coin when she worked as a print journalist for several years immediately following college. She last worked as a reporter at the Houghton *Daily Mining Gazette*.

Dettloff directly attributes her success as a writer, reporter, and communicator to her days at NMU. “There were just a lot of good instructors,” she said. “I’d put them up against anyone at an Ivy League school.”

And Dettloff cannot speak of her time at Northern without men-



tioning Dr. Gerald Waite, professor emeritus of the English Department, who taught journalism and served as advisor to the student newspaper, *The NorthWind*. “Every time I think of Doc Waite, well, he was really the mentor figure in my life.”

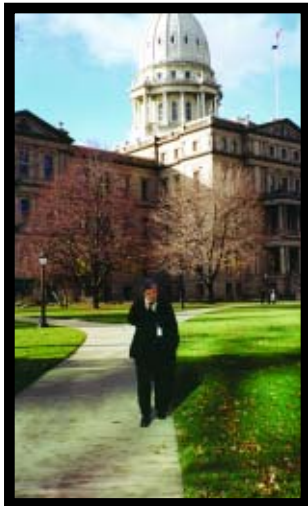


Photo by Patti Samar

Her studies extended beyond the classroom when she served as a staff member at *The NorthWind*. “I learned the ability to write quickly and write well and to never miss a deadline,” she said of her experiences there. “You learn the importance of teamwork and how to create something from scratch every week.”

Throughout her career working with public servants, Dettloff said she has felt fortunate to work with many honorable and notable Michigan politicians, many of whom turn to long-time staffers like her for advice and input.

“In the House of Representatives, you’re kind of on the ground floor where things happen,” she said of her time working there. “You get an opportunity to influence things from the ‘inside.’ You get to voice your opinion to legislators who will

listen to you. And you’d have these cool little moments.”

Dettloff’s “cool moments” in politics have included meeting Jesse Jackson, Hillary Clinton, and an assortment of Olympic athletes sent to Lansing via NMU. Additionally, she was on the House floor in 1997 when then-President Bill Clinton gave a speech on education to Michigan legislators.

“That’s kind of the little bonus or perk of working in this environment,” she said.

Working for Granholm, however, has definitely been the icing on the cake of a solid career. “I get to work for someone I respect, and that’s not something you can always say in this business,” she said. “She asks her staff for input, and what we say matters to her. You don’t always find that in this business.”

## A Day in the Life of Mary Dettloff

Though each day brings about new challenges and obstacles for Mary Dettloff, a typical day in November 2003 went something like this:

**8 a.m.** — Staff meeting with the governor. “We meet with her every morning at 8 a.m.,” said Dettloff of the governor’s 12 to 15 key staff members. “She goes around the table, asks what they’ve got going on and what she needs to know.”

**Between 9 and 10 a.m.** — Dettloff and other communications staff members “huddle up” and review issues of importance to their team, including press releases that need to be distributed and details for upcoming events.

**10 a.m. to noon** — Dettloff works on responding to media inquiries, planning media events, and crafting talking points and key messages for press conferences and presentations.

**Noon** — Dettloff has a lunch meeting with a reporter who observes the sad appearance of the official state Christmas tree on the capitol lawn. Dettloff mutters something about snapping branches and a windstorm on the Mackinac Bridge.

**2 p.m.** — Dettloff begins preparing for a 7 p.m. live television program featuring the governor as moderator. It is the sixth such live television program conducted statewide in the past two weeks as Granholm traveled across the state to share her message concerning a \$900 million budget deficit she inherited when she took office in January 2003.

Each event has included a live audience of approximately 50 people from the different communities where the broadcasts have taken place. “It gives us a gauge on what people want to see us spend money on,” said Dettloff.

Each program also involves a press briefing immediately following the broadcast.

Dettloff made a point to compliment the crew at WNMU-TV where the only broadcast from the Upper Peninsula took place. “WNMU did a stupendous job,” said Dettloff. “We had all of these TV stations downstate that were so nervous and the WNMU-TV crew just whipped it off like they do it every day.”

Dettloff's duties as deputy press secretary include handling media relations and serving as spokesperson for Lieutenant Governor John Cherry and Granholm's husband, First Gentleman Daniel Mulhern. She works under Granholm's Director of Communications Genna Gent and Press Secretary Liz Boyd.

When Gent and Boyd are unavailable or off, Dettloff serves as Granholm's spokesperson. Additionally, she handles a variety of public and media relations projects that include organizing press conferences and traveling with the governor when the media will be involved.

"I'm always the one who goes to the U.P. with her," she said. "The governor really likes the people in the U.P. because she says they are very down to earth and very real. She always feels it's one of those places where she can go and sit in a



diner and have a cup of coffee and talk to people without someone asking her for a favor.

"She's a very down-to-earth person and I think she appreciates that about other people, too."

Though her hours are long and there's not much time for pursuing personal hobbies such as bird watching, baseball, and hockey, Dettloff

can't imagine doing anything else at this point in her career.

"It's such an honor and a privilege to work here, and it's something that not everyone gets to do," she said. ■

***Patti Samar '85 BS, '89 MA owns The Write Company, which offers writing, editing, and graphic design services.***

**5 p.m.** — Dettloff heads off for a quick dinner with fellow staff members, all of whom are preparing for a late night at the office due to the television broadcast. As they drive past the state Christmas tree, someone says, "That poor tree...it looks so sad..." Another one quips mournfully, "Yeah, just like the economy this year. It's just representative of our state..."

**5:45 p.m.** — Staff members begin greeting various members of the media who are arriving at the governor's suite of offices, which includes a medium-sized auditorium where the broadcast will take place. The Associated Press, the Detroit newspapers and various broadcast mediums from Detroit and Lansing are all represented. Dettloff knows them all and amicably jokes around with them as they quiz her regarding the contents of the night's program.

**7 p.m.** — Dettloff and her colleagues gather around a monitor in a conference room across the hall from the auditorium and watch the governor move through a program she is now conducting for the sixth time.

**8 p.m.** — With the live broadcast over, Dettloff takes her position in the throng of reporters who swarm around the governor, making sure she remains close enough to hear the questions being asked and the way her boss responds.

**9 p.m.** — The day's work complete 13 hours after it began, Dettloff leaves the office contemplating whether or not it is too late to visit her domestic partner in the hospital.

Two blocks away from the capitol, a car backs out of a parking space and hits her SUV. No one is injured and she speaks reassuringly to the rattled law school student who is apologetic. As they wait for the police, Dettloff introduces herself. "Where do I know you from?" the student asks.

After going back and forth a few times, Dettloff finally says, "I work for the governor...my name is in the newspaper..." The law student waives that off. "That's not it," she says.

Several minutes of conversation reveals both had lived in Houghton during their lives. Dettloff explains she worked at the *Daily Mining Gazette*. "That's it!" exclaims the student. "That's where I've seen your name before!"