These lists reflect board memberships as of September 30, 2020. For current lists, please visit z.umn.edu/umfia and z.umn.edu/umf-bot.

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University of Minnesota Foundation
endowment update
for the periods ended
September 30, 2020

The University of Minnesota Foundation designation by the University of Minnesota’s Board of Regents as the central development office for the University, the U of M Foundation (UMF) plays a key role in supporting greatness across all five U of M campuses. UMF accomplishes this by raising gifts from individuals and organizations, investing funds for maximum impact, and stewarding gifts to ensure they are used as donors intended.

Managing and investing the endowment
The UMF endowment portfolio is invested by UMF Investment Advisors (UMFIA), a nonprofit subsidiary formed by UMF’s Board of Trustees in 1998 to provide dedicated, professional active portfolio management. UMFIA has a board of directors that includes representation from the UMF Board of Trustees as well as from UMF leadership (see back cover).

Investment strategy
The UMF endowment portfolio is uniquely structured and managed to meet two goals: preserve the real purchasing power of endowed gifts for the long term while simultaneously supporting a meaningful and dependable rate of spending, currently 4.5% of a fund’s average market value over the previous 20 quarters. The portfolio is highly diversified and actively managed and has less reliance on traditional common stock exposure than what is found in a standard 65/35 equity/bond mix. It is positioned to perform comparatively well during times of market volatility, such as we have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, while capturing equity-like returns over the long term (see page 2). This means that, while on average, UMF’s returns will not experience the highest highs, they will also avoid the lowest lows.

This strategy is designed to create predictable and stable funding over the long term; however, year-to-year short-term results will often look different from those of our peers and the standardized 65/35 market benchmark.

Asset category allocation

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact us:
University of Minnesota Foundation
McNamara Alumni Center
612-624-3333 / 800-775-2187
driven.umn.edu

Additional financial information also is available online at driven.umn.edu/about-umf/financial.
UMF performance compared to our peer group

The chart at right illustrates UMF’s performance relative to our peer group: college and university endowments with assets greater than $1 billion. UMF’s long-term investment strategy will frequently generate one-year returns that will be in the outer quartiles—either high or low—of the distribution of peer returns. More meaningful comparisons are found over the three- to five-year periods, when this variation declines.

Spending the endowment

What is the endowment spending policy?

The UMF Board of Trustees establishes the endowment spending policy. The current spending rate is 4.5% of a fund’s trailing average market value over the previous 20 quarters (5 years). These dollars, called the fund’s “payout,” are transferred to a spending account and made available each year to support the fund’s designated program. Funds designated as quasi-endowments allow additional spending of up to 20% of fund value annually.

Honoring donor intent

One of UMF’s most critical responsibilities is to ensure that gifts are used in accordance with donor intent. Stringent controls are in place, and UMF staff work in partnership with the U of M units to monitor funds and optimize the utilization and impact of gifts for their designated purposes.

Endowment funds and cash gifts provided

$202 million in funding to fuel greatness at the U of M in fiscal year 2020