

State Budget Impacts And Bronco Advocacy

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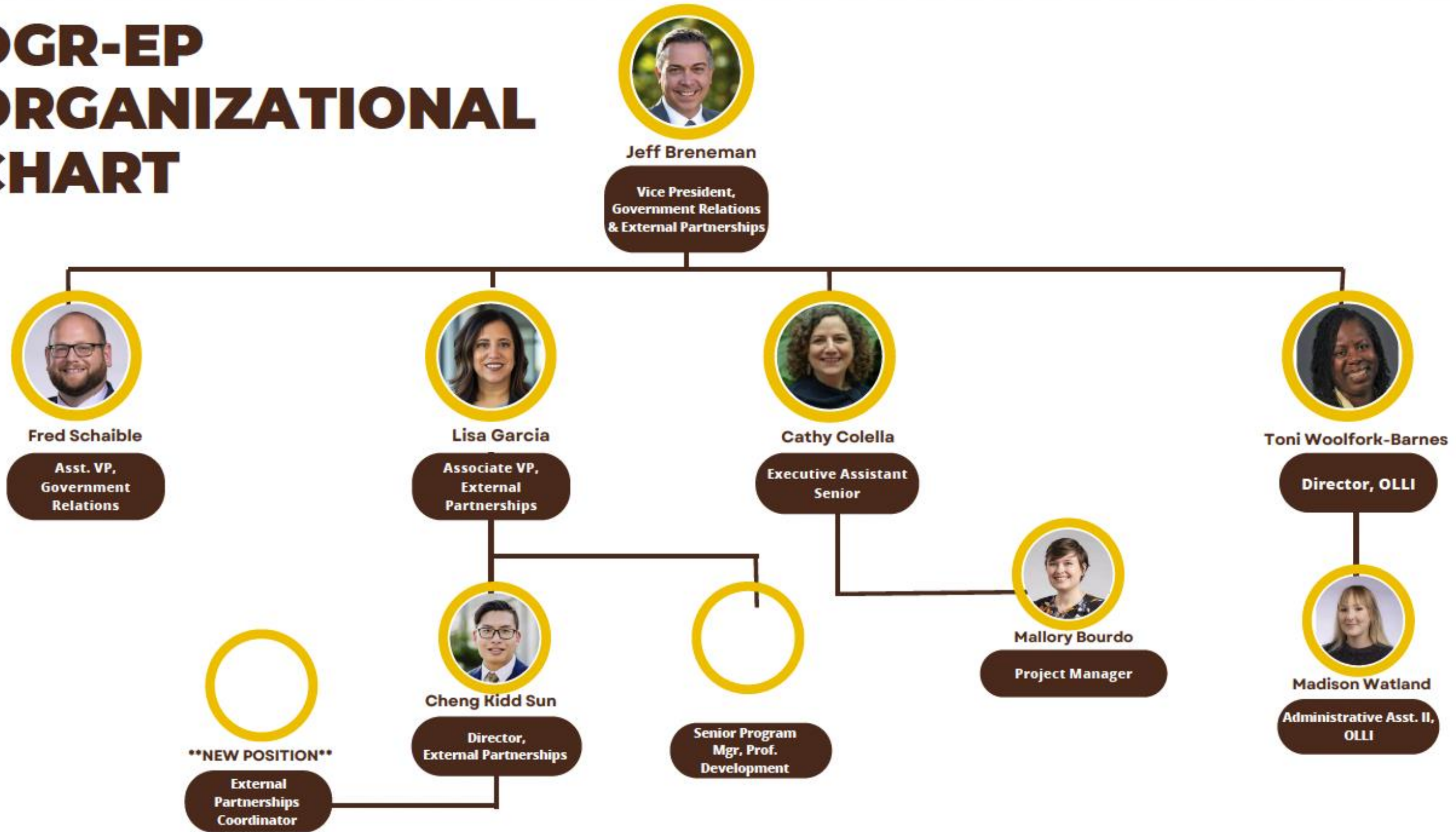
WMU Faculty Senate

April 30, 2026



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Government Relations and
External Partnerships

OGR-EP ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





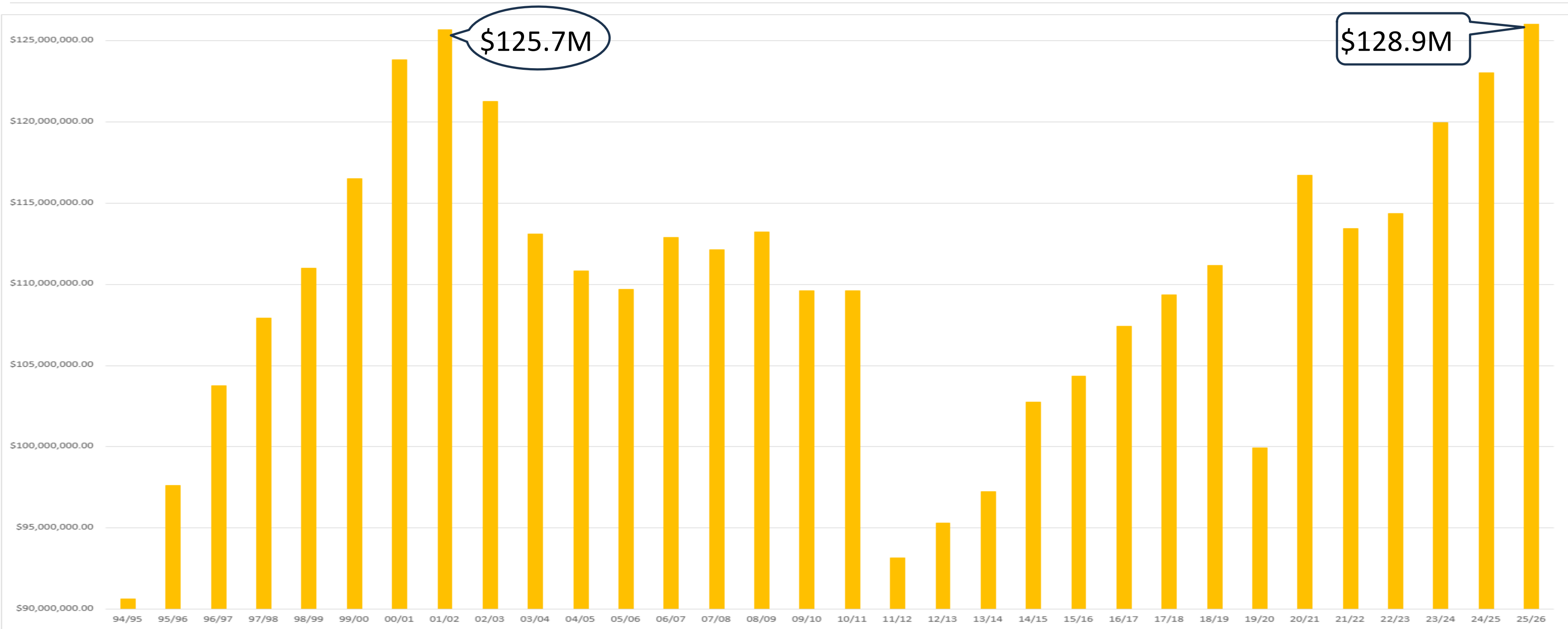
"May you live in interesting times"

- Last year, I referred to this ancient "curse" as we reached the 100-day point of the new federal administration.
- We still live in interesting times in 2026
- Federal grants are improving
- State investments in public universities remains challenging
- ***Your voice is more important than ever***





History of State Funding



Had the State provided inflationary increases since 2001, WMU would be receiving about \$5,000 more per student



Why this matters

- Over the last 25 years:
 - State funding stagnation
 - Tuition restraint penalties
 - More financial burden on students
 - University budget cuts
- Michigan Achievement Scholarship has provided MI students with new aid
- Lack of increases in operating support indicates a policy preference toward scholarships.





WMU Advocacy Results

Over the last decade, WMU secured significant “one-time” investments

- WMU led a coalition that erased **\$130 million** in WMU's state pension liabilities, helping to reduce fringe benefit rates across campus
- **\$45 million** secured for building renovations
- **Over \$36 million** in community-focused, experience-driven learning research and programmatic initiatives





Why this matters

- We identify projects that benefit:
 - **Students** (upgraded academic buildings & innovative coursework/research)
 - **Faculty** (coursework & research opportunities, improved teaching environments)
 - **Campus Operations** (lower costs with building efficiencies and MPSEERS payoff)
 - **Community** (Autism Center, Asylum Lake, Cold Case)





Current Priorities

Federal

- Overarching advocacy on threats to our institutional mission
- Multiple projects submitted to Senators Peters and Slotkin
 - Hydrogen Resource and Field Lab Program
 - Critical Minerals & Materials Independence
 - Health Workforce Training Initiative
 - Energy Grid Workforce Development Center
 - Metalcasting Research & Education
- Agency relationships and advocacy with Office of Research and Innovation





Current Priorities

State

- Make permanent the current FY 26 3% increase. **WMU impact: \$3.7M**
- **\$39M** for renovation/repurposing of Knauss Hall
- Restoration of ongoing **\$3M** funding for MI Geological Survey.
- Continuation of MI State Police competitive grant: Cold Case Program.
- Continuation of MI Dept. of Corrections competitive grant for HEJI Program.
- Continuation of current year **\$6.5M** for MIDOCS.





Where Things Stand Today

Governor's Budget Rec.	Senate Budget Rec.	House of Representatives Budget Rec.
0% Ongoing Increase, 3% One-time	0% Ongoing Increase, 4% One-time	0% Ongoing Increase, 3.1% ITEMS (ongoing)
Tuition restraint: 4% or \$651 whichever is greater.	Tuition restraint: 4% or \$651 whichever is greater.	Tuition restraint: 4% or \$651 whichever is greater.
MI Geological Survey-defunded (only \$400,000 proposed down from \$3M)	MGS funding not restored	Restores MGS ongoing funding
Cold Case Program Grant funding removed	No Cold Case Funding	\$1M to fund Cold Case Grant Program with Universities
	\$1.25M for Higher in in Prisons- Supports WMU's HEJI program "Best Practices" Boilerplate	Removes funding and boilerplate related to King Chavez Parks "Best Practices" Boilerplate





Next Steps

- Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference: May 16
 - Monthly revenues are up from January consensus
 - Overall, the economy is stable, however, policy changes (OBBB, MI Road Funding agreement, tax law changes, etc.) have reduced available revenues for the state to invest in its priorities.
 - This will drive final targets for budgets
- House, Senate and Governor's office finalize negotiations
 - Growing opinion is that there is a better chance this year for a budget to be done before the end of the summer due to it being an election year.
 - As of today, expect little or no new operational investment funding for public universities.
- **CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS NOW!**



Grassroots advocacy is important

THE URGENT NEED FOR ADVOCACY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Higher education continues to fight for adequate funding to reverse decades of disinvestment
- Contrast with significant state investments in roads, K-12 schools and healthcare
- Attend our events at the Capitol. Share the great work being done at WMU.

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