

STUDENT NOMINATOR COMMENTS

MICHAEL BERNDT

PRESIDENT

INVER HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DAKOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Michael values developing deeper relationships with the student leaders of Phi Theta Kappa. He invites them to community and scholarship events when there are opportunities, and seeks out new ways to work with students. When Michael is attending community events, he will ask Phi Theta Kappa advisors to recommend student leaders who can sit at his table, and has sought input from our student leaders for all planning and projects on campus.

Michael seeks out student input in all areas of campus and ensures that the campus values student involvement in decision-making at all levels. We continue to have financial and administrative support for our chapter. His support has allowed us to expand access to membership fee scholarships, first full scholarships for eligible students who are currently incarcerated and then sliding scale up to and including a full membership fee waiver for all eligible students in need.

Michael has created an atmosphere on campus that values Phi Theta Kappans and all of their achievements. He attends and helps present at all inductions both in person, when we have had them, and our last two virtual events. His example is critical for creating campus-wide support for Phi Theta Kappa students and our chapter programs and initiatives.

Michael consistently encourages students to participate in Phi Theta Kappa and accept membership. In our virtual College Project meeting this past fall, President Berndt welcomed us with a warm smile. It was clear that he wasn't just meeting with us because he had to. He was genuinely interested in learning more about the PTK members in the meeting and discussing ideas for the College Project with us.

He took the time to get to know us, asking us what we were studying and planning to do in the future. When we discussed the College Project, he gave us some great ideas and was encouraging when we shared a few ideas with him. He was very accepting of all of the members and their ideas, providing a comfortable meeting environment.

One of the things he stressed in the meeting was the importance of student success. He also expressed the importance of diversity and inclusivity on campus. Our meeting with President Berndt helped us generate ideas and create goals for our College Project.

The president is very supportive of PTK members. He enthusiastically attended the last two PTK induction ceremonies even though they have been held online during the COVID pandemic. His support of PTK has been unwavering. We have been very thankful for Michael's continued support and involvement.

President Berndt makes a point to attend events and build relationships with student leaders and worked with students this year to create student forums to collect information and concerns related to online learning

challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He seeks out opportunities for campus student leaders to take on new roles and responsibilities such as attending campus wide events, working with him to create letters to the editor, or working with student leaders to create issue forums to address concerns on campus or in the system.

Michael seeks feedback from all stakeholders and has the ability to communicate with those stakeholders regardless of their experience or knowledge of our campus. This helps students to provide impactful feedback during campus planning processes.

Michael is a friendly and student-focused administrator who works diligently to address the concerns, hopes, and fears of each student who he meets with. He directs them back to the resources, staff and faculty who will help them. It is his ability to work with each student individually, while never losing track of the bigger picture that makes him so impactful on student success.