

## News Release

# New University of Minnesota 'Driven to Discover' campaign aims to increase private support

*By Itoltefs on Monday, September 24, 2012* Ads focus on U's value to Minnesota and how investing in the university 'illuminates' the state and world

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL (9/24/2012) - The University of Minnesota is taking a unique approach to higher education marketing when it launches its new "Driven to Discover" campaign today.

For the first time, the university's branding and marketing will directly tie the value the university provides to the state with the importance of public and private investment in higher education.

This year's ads focus on the university's mission of teaching, research and discovery and public outreach and engagement, and illustrate how that mission prepares future generations and illuminates the state and world. They are an evolution of previous years' Driven to Discover campaigns and were created around the theme of "Illumination." This year's iteration of the campaign, "Keeping our lights on illuminates everyone," emphasizes how the impact of the University of Minnesota benefits everyone.

"As Minnesota's only comprehensive research and land-grant university, the University of Minnesota works to solve the toughest challenges across the state and world," said President Eric Kaler. "But we can't continue to tackle those critical problems without continued investment in our young people and the U. The new campaign truly illustrates how our mission comes to life in Minnesota and how continued investment in the University of Minnesota will fuel the economy and keep our state shining bright."

The first television spots begin airing Sept. 24 and continue for two months. They will reach most of the state, focused on news and prime-time programming in the Minneapolis-St. Paul and Rochester television markets. The campaign's second flight will air from mid-January to mid-March.

"This is unlike anything most people have seen from higher education," said Ann Aronson, the university's assistant vice president for marketing. "It has a dramatic look and feel, but we're interested in much more than grabbing attention. We want to change the conversation about higher education in Minnesota and inspire people. This is about communicating the U's value to the state and how investments in the university benefit everyone."

The university's homepage, [www.umn.edu](http://www.umn.edu), will provide multiple ways for others to "Be a light" and get involved with the campaign. Visitors can learn about university discoveries, advocate for the U and support students through scholarships. They will find an interactive illumination map that highlights discoveries and contributions made by U of M faculty, students and alumni by geographical area. Those inspired to tell their own stories about how the University of Minnesota has affected their lives, their families or their communities can submit them at [www.umn.edu](http://www.umn.edu). Submitted stories may also be added to the interactive map.

A social media component encourages others to join the conversation about how discovery has illuminated them by using the hashtag #LightUMN in platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram and Google+. For example, a competition on the photo-sharing social network Instagram will invite users to depict how the University of Minnesota illuminates their lives.

The TV ads feature the song, "There's So Much Energy in Us," by the critically acclaimed Minneapolis-based indie-rock band Cloud Cult. Lead singer Craig Minowa is a U alumnus. Many other university students and alumni star in the ads:

- Lucia Randle, a student in the College of Education and Human Development.
- Danielle Berg, a PhD candidate in astrophysics with the College of Science and Engineering.
- Larea Carter, an alumna of the College of Liberal Arts.
- Danice Cabanela, an actress and student in the College of Liberal Arts.
- Branden Hickey, a student in the College of Biological Sciences.
- Eamonn McLain, an alumnus of the College of Liberal Arts and Guthrie Bachelor of Fine Arts Program and cellist for the local band Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapels.

The campaign also will feature digital outdoor billboards along major commuter routes in the Twin Cities and downtown Minneapolis, and bus shelters wrapped with messaging in key locations throughout Minneapolis and St. Paul. Other tactics include online ads in key markets across Minnesota and scoreboard displays at the university's TCF Bank Stadium and Williams and Mariucci arenas.

Minneapolis-based OLSON, an independent agency, created the campaign for the U. OLSON has been the university's agency partner since the campaign was first launched in 2006. The two-year campaign will cost \$2.5 million, with a majority of the funding from the University of Minnesota Foundation.

For more information about the Driven to Discover campaign, visit <http://discover.umn.edu>.

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