



## Report on the Franklin St. John Endowed Chair Position

Walter Milligan, Department Chair, Materials Science and Engineering

June 26, 2024

The St. John Chair is awarded to the current recipient of the Department Chair position in MSE, with the goal of giving the Department Chair financial resources to advance the Department. I have certainly appreciated the support, and have valued getting to know Frank over the years. We had lunch together with Eric Halonen in late summer 2023, and that was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time that I have met with Frank in these three years.

This year, the Department brought 3 new assistant professors on board. A large amount of the St. John annual \$40k funding, \$37,000, was used to cost-share a Gleeble metalworking and mechanical testing machine for new professors Allie Glover and Joshua Mueller. This instrument, which costs \$650k, positions Michigan Tech to do important work in advanced manufacturing and in hypersonics research for Defense, since it can test refractory metals at extremely high temperatures and strain rates in a vacuum.

Additional funding was charged to the Tech Fund on the St. John accounts to help with startup equipment costs for all three new professors. We are extremely grateful for this funding, as startup costs are a major cost for the Department. Each of these three professors received \$650k in startup funding, and we anticipate hiring 3-4 more new professors in the next 3-5 years. This is the biggest need for future funding in the Department.

As in past years, the St. John funding has supported staff and students in 3-D metal printing and metal casting projects that benefit the Department but were unfunded, and it supported Department Chair travel to the TMS meeting in February.