

HConnections

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

HIGHLY
MOTIVATED^{ED}^x

2015 Year in Review



LETTER FROM **THE DEAN**



Dear HConnections readers,
It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as dean of the Michigan State University Honors College for the past eight years. I continue to be amazed, each year, by the opportunities on which students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends capitalize. The energy that surrounds the college is more than anyone could

hope for and I consider it an honor to serve with, amongst and for a wonderful segment of the MSU family. Since our founding in 1956, the Honors College has been a pioneer in honors education, and in 2015 we continued to set the pace for the nation, to stretch ourselves and to encourage our students to reach toward even greater levels of excellence.

We welcomed our largest class in the college's nearly 60-year history this fall. We also expanded opportunities for Honors College students to pioneer, innovate and engage in the classroom, in their community and abroad. I hope you enjoy reading some of the stories about our students, alumni, friends, faculty and staff detailed in this magazine.

International engagement and research continue to be two areas in which we devote resources to provide students with enriched curricular and co-curricular experiences. As part of that effort, we began our third international engagement and research initiative for Honors College students – South Africa Scholars: Research and Community Engagement Program. Students also have Honors College-specific international research experiences in Cuba and six European countries.

The college asks that Honors College members use their intellect and talents toward the common good, which is why service is also an area where we focus our resources. The college formalized an agreement with the Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement to help students propose service projects with a faculty member as a way to earn Honors credit. This year, the Honors College Service Club participated in the MSU Global Day of Service (as did some of our alumni), and a service week at Auburn University called K(no)w Poverty, among other activities. Additionally, with donor support, we were able to expand an existing grant program that supports community projects proposed by our students that will serve dire human needs in countries other than the United States.

The college continues to draw collective attention to the importance of transdisciplinary discussions through our faculty speaker series, Sharper Focus/Wider Lens. In response to a suggestion from the Honors College Alumni Association Executive Board, we utilized several social media platforms in connection with Sharper Focus/Wider Lens. Specifically, to assist us with reaching as large of an audience as possible, and recognizing differential preferences for information consumption, the Honors College has created podcasts of the Sharper Focus/Wider Lens forums, in addition to the existing YouTube videos of our events.

We have completed the first year of Empower Extraordinary: The Campaign for Michigan State University. You will note that while we have made good progress, there is still more work to be done and funds to raise in support of our students' educational experiences. I want to thank our donors and let you know we were successful in fully funding the Honors College Spartan Scholarship Challenge Endowment. It was my hope five years ago that this fund would provide additional opportunities for our high-achieving students. My husband and I, along with Honors College alumna Molly Brennan (a 1982 Rhodes Scholar) and her family, made the initial gifts for the endowment because we truly believe in supporting our students. Scholarships like this can be life-changing for a student with financial need and I'm happy to see those efforts continuing through the Empower Extraordinary campaign.

As we transition into 2016, I hope you will take a moment to acknowledge the 60th anniversary of the Honors College at Michigan State University. Plans are already taking shape for this reflection and celebration beginning in August 2016. We hope you will engage with us as we re-imagine what honors education will mean at Michigan State University another 60 years from now. Stay tuned to our alumni e-newsletter and social media for more announcements on the Honors College 60th anniversary events and opportunities.

Again, thank you for taking the time to learn about the past year of experiences for our students, alumni, friends, faculty and staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore
Dean and Professor
Honors College

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HConnections Magazine 2015 Year in Review

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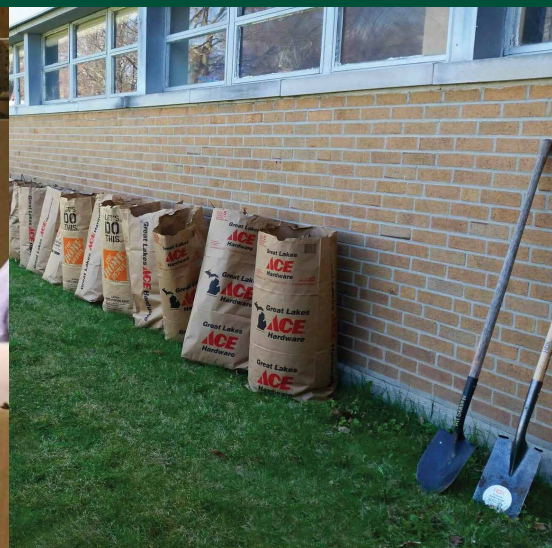
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SERVICE





A SAMPLING OF PHOTOS FROM HONORS COLLEGE MEMBERS, ALUMNI, AND STAFF WHO PARTICIPATED IN SERVICE ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR





Students awarded grants for service projects abroad

Michigan State University students received grants to pursue projects in Mali and El Salvador intended to improve the quality of life for people in those countries.

The Schoenl Family Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas is awarded to Honors College students who propose the most outstanding projects that serve dire human needs in countries outside of the United States.

This year, a second set of grants, the Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas, was extended to students in the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities and the College of Communication Arts and Sciences irrespective of Honors College membership. For 2016, the Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas will be available to all undergraduate students studying any discipline at MSU regardless of Honors College membership.

Joseph Smith is an Honors College freshman majoring in computer science. His project was selected for a Schoenl Family Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas Level I award of \$1,200 to put toward construction of composting latrines for the community of El Balsamar, El Salvador. The project is coordinated by the MSU Engineers Without Borders Club.

“Too often, many residents do not have access to proper waste facilities, resulting in contamination of drinking water,” Smith wrote in his proposal. “The Michigan State Engineers Without Borders Club has been working for the past several years to design and construct composting latrines as a solution to this problem, in order to improve the lives of many El Balsamar citizens.”

Sean Fitzpatrick and Andrew Jason, spring 2015 graduates of the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, were

awarded an Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas Level I award of \$1,200 for their project in Kati, Mali which focused on the creation of children’s storybooks that discuss peace building. Fitzpatrick was also a member of the Honors College.

“*Building Peace, One Story at a Time*”, utilized the power of storytelling to prompt dialogue and critical thinking to give youth the capacity to be part of the process of peace,” Fitzpatrick and Jason wrote in their proposal. “These books, together with the curriculum designed for them, will allow students to explore and confront the everyday and extraordinary challenges they and their families face because of the conflicts that continue to shape the Malian landscape and the difficult process of peace since the 2012-13 crisis.”

INVESTIGATING HOW EVERYDAY ACTIONS IMPACT THE ENVIRONMENT

Maxx Marano, Megan Bergeson, Erin Oldani are juniors and Emily Aron is a sophomore. All four are members of the MSU Honors College majoring in education.

We are four aspiring elementary school teachers with the goal to communicate with others the power of coming together to create change. The issue of global climate change was one focus of our Integrated Science Education (ISE) course.

Over a three week period, each of us became more aware of our everyday actions affecting our environment. Once we had more knowledge about climate change and an individual's impact, we decided there was a way to be more environmentally conscious and to take action to educate others.

For our Honors Option project, we collectively created a wall display in the hallway of North Kedzie Hall to help others visualize the pressing issue and how small changes can create huge impacts on our environment.

We compiled data from 100 ISE students, all of whom were non-science majors and future elementary teachers. The students tracked their energy usage for a month, keeping track of how much they used transportation, heat and electricity. At the end of the month, they compiled their data and calculated their carbon footprint.

A carbon footprint is a representation of how much carbon dioxide (CO₂) a person emits into the air due to daily activities, such as heating a house, turning on lights and driving a car. Any of these activities cause a fuel to burn, either in a car, bus or power plant. When a fuel burns, more carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere. As a result, the excess CO₂ in the atmosphere traps even more heat on the Earth, which causes global climate change.



The display helps others visualize the pressing issue and how small changes can create huge impacts on our environment.

By tracking their daily activities, ISE students were able to determine exactly how many pounds of carbon dioxide they were adding to the atmosphere. Next, we asked students to come up with different strategies they could use in the future to decrease their carbon footprint. Some of the most popular methods included carpooling, turning off the lights and conserving heat.

After incorporating these new changes, students calculated how many fewer pounds of carbon dioxide would enter the atmosphere. It was determined that ISE students put 32,000 fewer pounds of CO₂ into the atmosphere in just one month.

If all Michigan State University students made similar changes, we would put an estimated 17 million fewer pounds of CO₂ in the air each month, and if all Michigan teachers did this, CO₂ emissions would decrease by 37 million pounds. These numbers show how just a few simple changes in our daily lives can have a huge impact on the world around us.

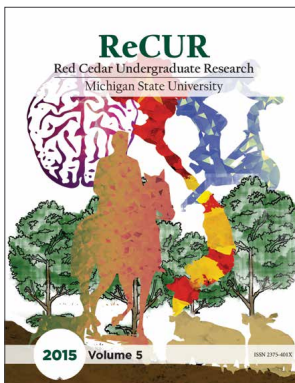
Choosing to walk, bike, ride the bus or carpool to classes can help to decrease the carbon dioxide emission from transportation methods. Furthermore, being conscious of ways to reduce electrical and heat energy use both saves on finances and the amount of carbon dioxide emission.

It is important to know which electrical devices use more energy, such as a phone charger versus a washing machine, as well as maintaining regulations on heating use. While there may not be immediate short-term impacts to modifying activities in your daily life, the long-term benefits to reducing your carbon footprint will benefit generations to come.

“Students at Michigan State University are asking tough questions while working collaboratively to find solutions to a range of issues facing our world today,” said Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, ReCUR editor-in-chief and dean of the Honors College. “It’s an honor to publish the interdisciplinary work of these students as they explore how research and creative works can affect change.”

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDENT RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN 5TH VOLUME OF JOURNAL

Undergraduate student research engaging several areas of study – biofuels, music, emotional stress, Vietnam, exercise, and religion – was published in the 5th volume of the *Red Cedar Undergraduate Research* journal (*RECUR*).



Members of the Michigan State University Honors College and participants of the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF) can submit research and creative works for consideration.

Publication of the 5th volume was a collaborative effort between the student contributors, the ReCUR Student Editorial Board, and the ReCUR Editorial Staff.

Works highlighted in this volume include:

- From Technical Assistant to Total Antagonist: Stanley Sheinbaum and Vietnam (by J. Andrew Stables)
- Corticotropin-Releasing Hormone: Stress, the Brain, and the Gut (by Andrew Mecca, Nadine El-Ayache, and James Galligan, PhD)
- The Effects of Prolonged Intense Exercise on Blood Glucose Metabolism in Healthy Individuals (by Brad Riedinger, Roy Small, and Erica Wehrwein)
- Beef, Cowboys, and Republicans: The Rugged Aaron Copland? (by Sarah Tomlinson)
- Novel Alkaline Hydrogen Peroxide Pretreatment Enhances the Enzymatic Digestibility of Woody Biomass Substrates under Ambient Condition (by Charles H. Chen, Zhenglun Li, Eric L. Hegg, and David B. Hodge, PhD)
- Animism, Animals, and Agriculture: Animal Husbandry in Nineteenth Century Shaker Religious Practice (by Julia Johnson)



Honors professor discovers stuttering linked to rhythm perception deficiency

Research led by Honors College Professor J. Devin McAuley found that children who stutter have difficulty perceiving a beat in music-like rhythms, which could account for their halting speech patterns.



McAuley, managing editor for the *Red Cedar Undergraduate Research* journal (ReCUR) co-authored the study, which has implications for the treatment of stuttering. Approximately 70 million people worldwide stutter. The study appeared online in the journal *Brain & Language*.

“Stuttering has primarily been interpreted as a speech motor difficulty, but this is the first study that shows it’s related to a rhythm perception deficit – in other words, the ability to perceive and keep a beat,” said McAuley, a professor of psychology. “That’s important because it identifies potential interventions which might focus on improving beat perception in children who stutter, which then might translate to improved fluency in speech.”

About 70-80 percent of children ages three to five who stutter will eventually stop, McAuley said. Yet, despite decades of research, the underlying mechanisms behind speech disruptions in people who stutter remain unclear.

Being able to perceive and maintain a beat is believed to be critical for normal speech because it serves as a

spacing signal. This finding is bolstered by past research showing that speech fluency improves dramatically for adults who stutter when speaking in time with a metronome.

McAuley and colleagues tested a group of children who stuttered and a group who didn’t by having them listen to and then identify rhythmic drumbeats in the context of a computer game. Even after taking into account the kids’ IQs and language abilities, the study found that children who stuttered did much worse at judging whether two rhythms were the same or different.

McAuley is working with Soo-Eun Chang, assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Michigan, who is a stuttering expert and has been conducting neuroimaging studies in children who stutter on the MSU campus since 2009. McAuley and Chang co-authored the study along with MSU researchers Elizabeth Wieland and Laura Dilley.

The study in *Brain & Language* was supported by the GRAMMY Foundation, which, along with the Grammy Awards, is run by the California-based Recording Academy; MSU’s Institute for Research in Autism, Intellectual and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, or RAIND; and the National Institutes of Health.

UURAF2015



More than 300 Honors College students participated in the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF), held at the MSU Union in April.

To recognize exemplary scholarly achievements, one first-place award was given in each poster and oral presentation category. Fifty-four Honors College students were awarded first place.

Grand Prize awards were earned by two students involved in research that can improve how biosensors are used to detect dangerous pathogens and how science courses are taught.

Matthew Vasher, an Honors College senior majoring in biosystems engineering, won the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Grand Prize for the research he conducted alongside Professor Evangelyn Alocilja titled, "Detecting Pathogens Using a DNA-Based Biosensor."

Sonny Ly, a physics junior, won the Social Science, Humanities and Arts Grand Prize for the research he conducted alongside Assistant Professor Becky Matz and Research Associate James Laverty in the CREATE for STEM Institute as well as Assistant Professor Sarah Jardeleza with the Center for Integrative Studies in General Science. The research was titled "Questions in the classroom: How often do students respond?"

More information about UURAF is available online at: <http://urca.msu.edu/uuraf/>.

The next University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum will take place on April 8, 2016.

Below is the list of Honors College first place winners, their discipline and their section:

- **Allison Apland**, Anthropology Poster
- **Laura Azouz**, Communication Arts & Sciences, Poster
- **Hannah Batchelor**, Neuroscience, Poster
- **Rebecca Benjamin**, Integrative and Organismal Biology, Poster
- **Benjamin Brophy**, Physical Sciences, Poster
- **Savannah Chandler**, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Poster
- **Alexander Chemey**, Physical Sciences, Poster
- **Runzhi Chen, Graham Dowling, Scott Haeck, Hannah McDowell, and Chris Safroniy**, Business, Poster
- **Sahithi Chinnam and Kaitlin Morain**, Social Science: General, Poster
- **Kayla Cotter and Laura Mularski**, Education, Poster
- **McKenzie Farthing**, Neuroscience, Poster
- **Allison Fedewa**, Epidemiology & Public Health, Poster
- **Jacob Gibson**, Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Disease, Poster
- **Anna Goodson**, Humanities and Performing Arts, Oral
- **Marisa Hamel and Jordan Jennings**, Digital Media, Oral
- **Mina Hirzel**, Linguistics, Languages and Speech, Poster
- **Jennifer Hollen**, Agriculture & Animal Science, Poster
- **Sara Hughes**, Social Science: General, Oral
- **Melissa Hunter**, Humanities & Performing Arts, Poster
- **Diana Jasser and Alana Page**, Psychology, Poster
- **Aiya Jweihan**, Psychology, Poster

Video explores students' Honors Research Seminar experiences

- **Meg Kargul**, Plant Sciences, Poster
- **Megan Kechner**, Neuroscience, Poster
- **Brittany Ladson**, Kinesiology, Poster
- **Bryan Lakey**, Cell Biology, Genetics, & Genomics, Poster
- **Clare Laut**, Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Disease, Poster
- **Clara Lepard**, Environmental Sci & Natural Resources, Poster
- **Peyton Longlet**, Engineering, Computer Science, and Math, Poster
- **Kelly Mackie**, Graphic Design, Poster
- **Sarah MacLachlan**, Integrative and Organismal Biology, Poster
- **Madeline MacLean**, Social Science: General, Poster
- **Spencer Mather**, Engineering, Computer Science, and Math, Poster
- **Emily Matthews**, Kinesiology, Poster
- **Elena Michel**, Plant Sciences, Poster
- **Nathan Murray, Kasey Pryg and John Shinnery**, Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Disease, Poster
- **Emily Potter**, Neuroscience, Poster
- **Irina Pushel**, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Oral
- **Zach Richardson**, Engineering, Computer Science, and Math, Poster
- **Cassidy Schultz**, Communication Arts & Sciences, Poster
- **Tara Schulz**, Social Science: General, Oral
- **Hananiel Setiawan**, Physical Sciences, Poster
- **Joseph Shemanski**, Integrative and Organismal Biology, Oral
- **Matthew Vasher**, Engineering, Computer Science, and Math, Poster
- **Nicholas Waterbury**, History, Political Science and Economics, Oral
- **Diana Xu**, Epidemiology & Public Health, Poster
- **Jacob Young**, Toxicology, Poster
- **Alyssa Zokoe**, Communication Arts & Sciences, Poster



Honors Research Seminars offer opportunities for hands-on work, often on cutting-edge research projects, under the supervision of MSU faculty members. Students who gain this experience are well situated to find other research opportunities in future. Every seminar offers the opportunity to present at the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum.

honorscollege.msu.edu/honors-research-seminars

Students reflect on EuroScholars Research Abroad Program

Sarah Tresedder and Claire Kopenhafer were the first Honors College members to participate in the EuroScholars Research Abroad Program, studying at Utrecht University in the Netherlands during the 2015 spring semester. Sarah is majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology in the College of Natural Science and Claire is majoring in physics in the Lyman Briggs College.

Sarah chose to work on research optimizing conditions for quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR), which counted toward her senior capstone course and thesis. Claire chose to work on the High School Project on Astrophysics Research with Cosmics (HiSPARC) project because it had a hands on component-building detectors.

Sarah and Claire created a set of questions to ask one another about the experience.

Claire: How did your research affect/change your professional goals?

Sarah: My research was part of a large scale project called EFFORT (Ecology from Farm to Fork of microbial drug Resistance and Transmission). The main goal of this project is to educate and inform the public about the risks and consequences of antibiotic resistance in farming animals and its impact on human health. Taking part in this research has made me realize how interested I am in public health. I now know I want to do something in my future related to public health.

Sarah: What surprised you the most about living abroad?

Claire: For some reason I expected Dutch people to have normal English names...maybe because so many of them speak English. I was sometimes taken aback when someone's name was, like, Job (pronounced Yob). Maybe because my Dutch friends had English-like names, like Monique, Laurens (sounds like Lawrence) and Niels (like Neil but with an s). It's really silly, but it just didn't occur to me that it would be different.

Claire: What was your favorite part about Utrecht?

Sarah: I really enjoyed how the city was built. There were beautiful canals with restaurants on the edges, bike paths everywhere, and so many beautiful parks.

Sarah: What was your favorite trip?

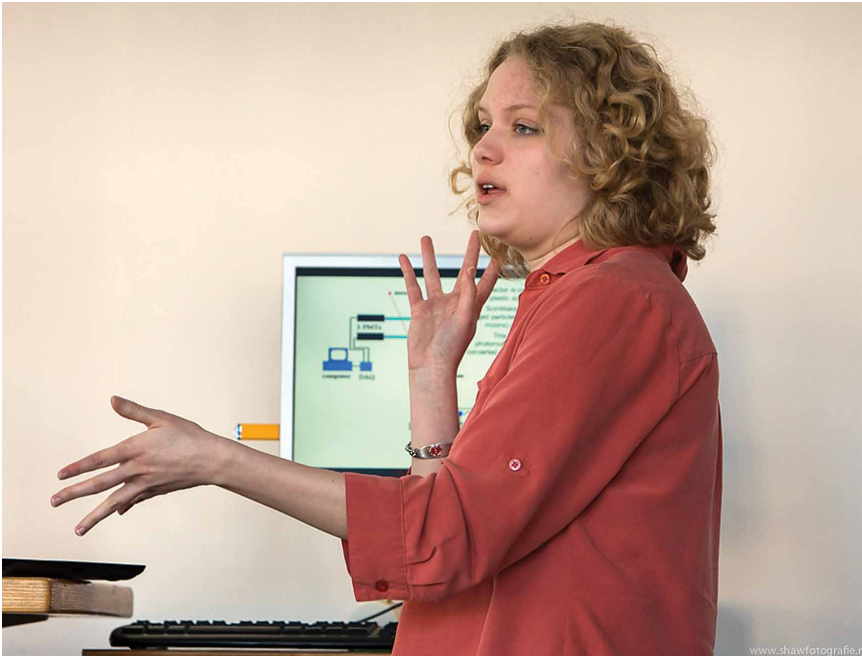
Claire: Going to the north of the Netherlands with my Dutch friends. At low tide we walked to an island! It was a three-hour walk through the occasional shoe-eating mud and waist-high water and was an absolute blast. Our trip to Spain was definitely a close second. Trying to remember three years of high school Spanish in order to communicate was a fun challenge for me, and I was reminded why I liked Spanish culture and wanted to learn the language in high school.

Claire: What do you wish you could have done?

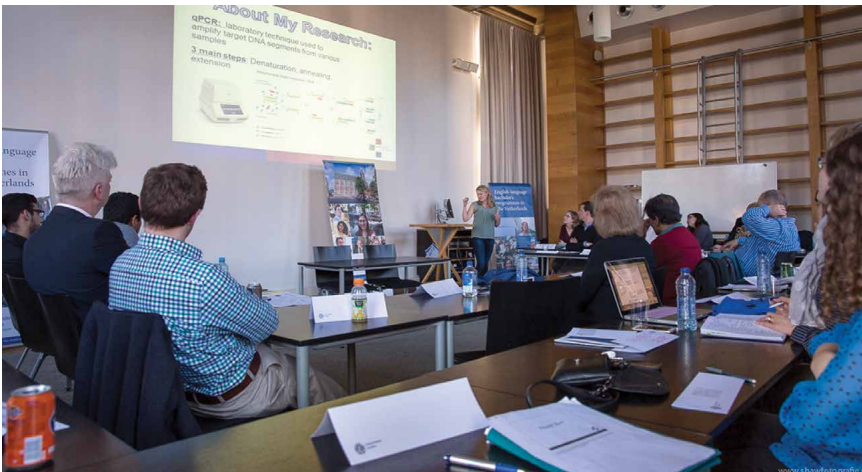
Sarah: I wish I had been able to visit a few more countries like Turkey and Italy...but it's hard to fit everything in (especially on a budget). Overall, I think I made the most of my experience and I was able to see and do so many things I never thought I'd be able to.

Sarah: Did participating in research abroad change or alter your future goals?

Claire: I'm now 80%-ish sure I don't want to go into particle/high-energy physics. I had a good research experience in it, but I don't see myself doing full-time research in it. I still want to be a professor, though.



South Africa Scholars: Research and Community Engagement Program unveiled



The South Africa Scholars: Research and Community Engagement Program is a new research-intensive study abroad initiative for Honors College students. This program offers students the opportunity to develop a research project in collaboration with a local community group in Durban, South Africa in partnership with the Center for Civil Society at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The South Africa Scholars program is available to Honors College students with junior or senior standing (all majors) for the fall or spring semesters. The first students are scheduled to go abroad for the 2016 spring semester.



Students, faculty collaborate to math professor for award

There's a light knock on Jeanne Wald's office door. She opens it to be greeted by a smiling postdoc stopping by to thank her for her help before he departs for a new faculty position in Texas.

It's that kind of moment Wald loves most about her job.

"The biggest reward you get from (teaching) is seeing students learn and having students really understand how much they have accomplished through your help," says Wald, a professor and associate chair of the Department of Mathematics.

It was not just one, or two, or three people who nominated Wald for the Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students in 2015. Former and current Honors College students, and a team of her department colleagues, were behind the nomination. When asked what it means to receive the award, Wald says, "It's very nice to be appreciated. I am deeply touched by the efforts my students and colleagues made on my behalf."

Wald has been a leader in three major department initiatives that have involved Honors College students and enriched their experience during her more than 30 years at Michigan State University.

More than 20 years ago, she created the Math Learning Center and more recently helped expand it to the neighborhoods across campus. Many Honors College students have worked at these centers over the years.

Six years ago, Wald headed a leadership team that created the Advanced, mathematics majors for students, which was intentionally geared to challenge Honors College students and prepare them either for graduate school or a professional field. Advanced mathematics majors can also participate in a Chinese exchange program Wald championed.

"The curriculum examines, in a substantial way, high-level undergraduate mathematics," Wald says of the major, which is most often referred to as the Advanced Track Program.

IT ALL ADDS UP

Honors faculty adviser, professor of practice Charles Bokemeier retires

Charles Bokemeier, who taught the introductory accounting class (ACC 201), including the Honors section, and served as the faculty adviser for Honors College members majoring in accounting, retired at the end of the summer.

After 15 years as a professor of practice in the Eli Broad College of Business, Bokemeier and his wife are moving to Colorado to be closer to their grandchildren.

Bokemeier's son and daughter were Honors College students and that gave him an "appreciation" prior to getting involved in teaching the introductory accounting course.

More Honors College students were taking the course, and becoming accounting majors, and Bokemeier came in to lend a hand.

nominate

"So you gotta do a little extra work in some of classes. Do the extra work. It's worth it."

Advice to Honors College students from Charles Bokemeier, retired Honors faculty adviser and professor of practice in the Eli Broad College of Business.



Prior to that he had been a certified public accountant. When asked why he made the career move, having less travel and more time for the family came up, but he also offered, "When I worked with clients, so many of the smaller clients I had, and individuals within bigger entities, really didn't understand accounting. So I always wanted to get back to the roots of helping people try to understand what accounting was and what the information meant."

Bokemeier taught nearly 2,000 accounting students each year, including another hundred or so as part of the Executive MBA program.

"So, I think I've had the opportunity to try and help," he said.

Bokemeier was the recipient of the Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students in 2012. He taught the Honors section of ACC 201, which held 48 students each.

In the accounting class, students were assigned to teams of four and asked to research a company that has inventory, requiring them to pour over annual reports and other information. Each student picked their own company and didn't share the information until the end of the semester – when the group heard about each company and then decided which one of the four to invest in.

"To me, that's a real-world application," Bokemeier said. "Over the years, I've really enjoyed working with the students. I mean, why not work with the best and brightest?"

While it is fast-paced, the focus is on mastering undergraduate mathematics in depth, Wald explains.

"I don't think I've ever gotten the comment that my class is too easy," she said. "(Most students) really appreciate in the end being stretched."

Two classes of students have graduated with the advanced, mathematic major. Wald said she expects to hear that many of them are making breakthroughs in their fields in the years to come.

"It's always really fun to work with students who are curious and bright and like to have a challenge," she said.

Cole Excellence Award recipient has a passion for public health

In her last semester at Michigan State University, Honors College member Karalyn Kiessling will be working on a project evaluating how hospitals respond to health issues within their communities.

The project, with the Institute of Health Policy in the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine, is the latest in Kiessling's journey at MSU that is intended to prepare her for graduate school and a future career as a public health administrator.

Majoring in microbiology in the Lyman Briggs College with a minor in global public health and epidemiology through the College of Human Medicine was Kiessling's first major step in her journey. What unfolded next included an internship with the now-Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, opening connections in the field of public health.

The research she conducted through state government not only matched up as an independent study course, but also led to a presentation at the 2014 CityMatCH Leadership and MCH Epidemiology Conference.

Cole Excellence Award recipients are students who have proven their commitment to academic excellence and may have also demonstrated involvement in the MSU community. The following students were awarded a Cole Excellence Award in 2015:

- **Laura Azouz** is a junior majoring in chemical engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Sydney Barosko** is a junior majoring in microbiology in the Lyman Briggs College
- **Zachary Bezemek** is a junior majoring in computer engineering in the College of Engineering and mathematics, advanced in the College of Natural Science
- **Kaitlyn Bourque** is a senior majoring in chemical engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Elizabeth Brajevich** is a senior majoring in environmental economics and policy in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- **Zachary Favreau** is a senior majoring in psychology in the College of Social Science
- **Lana Grasser** is a sophomore majoring in neuroscience in the Lyman Briggs College
- **Christina Igl** is a junior majoring in arts and humanities in the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities and Spanish in the College of Arts & Letters
- **Megan Kechner** is a senior majoring in neuroscience and psychology in the College of Natural Science
- **Kayla Koch** is a senior majoring in human biology in the College of Natural Science and kinesiology in the College of Education
- **Jeremy Kozler** is a senior majoring in finance in the Eli Broad College of Business and economics in the College of Social Science
- **Abigail Maynard** is a senior majoring in neuroscience in the Lyman Briggs College
- **Rebecca Mickow** is a junior majoring in food science in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources



- **Matthew Morrow** is a junior majoring in chemical engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Ashley Rall** is a senior majoring in anthropology in the College of Social Science and Chinese and women's and gender studies in the College Arts & Letters
- **Abigail Rawling** is a senior majoring in accounting in the Eli Broad College of Business
- **Joshua Schnell** is a senior majoring in anthropology in the College of Social Science and religious studies in the College of Arts & Letters
- **Karah Smith** is a junior majoring in social relations and policy in the James Madison College.
- **Kellie Stilson** earned her bachelor's degree in mathematics from the College of Natural Science and is in her 5th year teaching certificate internship with the College of Education
- **Jessica Stuart** earned her bachelor's degree in advanced, mathematics from the College of Natural Science and is in her 5th year teaching certificate internship with the College of Education
- **Alayna Smith** is a senior majoring in art education in the College of Arts & Letters
- **Bowen Tan** is a senior majoring in electrical engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Jacqueline Thelen** is a senior majoring in biosystems engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Kelly Valentini** is a junior majoring in nutritional sciences in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- **Patrick Vaughan** is a senior majoring in mechanical engineering in the College of Engineering
- **Audrey Wilson** is a senior majoring in packaging in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and chemistry in the College of Natural Science

Debate Team caps season with run to Elite 8 of national tournament



Tyler Thur, an Honors College junior majoring in international relations in the James Madison College, and his teammate, Margaret Strong, a math major in the College of Natural Science, led MSU to the top eight finish. Thur and Strong defeated teams from Georgetown University, the University of California-Berkeley, the University of Michigan, the University of West Georgia, the University of Georgia, the University of Wyoming, and the University of Minnesota during the preliminary and elimination rounds. Thur and Strong were defeated in the quarterfinals by a team from the University of Michigan. Northwestern University won the National Debate Team Tournament.

Seventy-eight teams from 47 colleges debated the resolution “The United States should legalize all or nearly all of one or more of the following in the United States: marijuana, online gambling, physician-assisted suicide, prostitution, the sale of human organs.”

International relations senior Jack Caporal and international relations senior Quinn Zemel also competed for MSU and finished in the top 32. They defeated teams from Georgetown University, Vanderbilt University, Rutgers University-Newark, the University of Georgia, and Towson University in the preliminary rounds.

Thur and Strong finished 6th overall in the national season-long rankings.

The 2014-15 season was also punctuated by a first place win for Thur and Strong at the Texas Open held in February; a first place win for Caporal and Zemel at the University of Miami tournament held in January; and participation in the Dartmouth Round Robin in January. It was the first time in four years that MSU was represented at this prestigious tournament.

Public debate focuses on Project 60/50

The MSU Debate Team argued whether or not Congress should pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act as part of a public debate in March tied to the ongoing Project 60/50. Project 60/50 acknowledged the 60th anniversary of the Supreme Court Decision in *Brown v. the Topeka Board of Education* and the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The first hour covered the topic through a formal debate and the second hour consisted of a panel discussion with Kaylee Moreno from Michigan United, Oscar Castenada from Action of Greater Lansing, Ruben Martinez from the MSU Julian Samora Research Institute, Lucinda Briones from the MSU Office of Admissions, and Tyler Thur from the MSU Debate Team. The event was co-sponsored by the MSU Debate team and Office for Inclusion & Intercultural Initiatives.

In April, the MSU Debate Team gathered 30 middle and elementary school students from five schools in West and Mid-Michigan to debate the DREAM Act.

Spartan Debate Institute

For the 24th year, the Debate program held the Spartan Debate Institute during the summer, with more than 200 high school students in attendance.

The institute helps train the students before the start of the school year and the new debate season. This year, the high school topic was about domestic surveillance.

The Hoya-Spartan Scholars Program offers students the opportunity to work with some of the best coaches

in high school and college debate, while experiencing the campuses of two distinct college campuses – Georgetown University and Michigan State University.

As part of the program, the Hoya-Spartan Scholar students visited the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. The court released its decision on the legality of same-sex marriage and the students were able to sit next to the lead plaintiff as the decision was read.

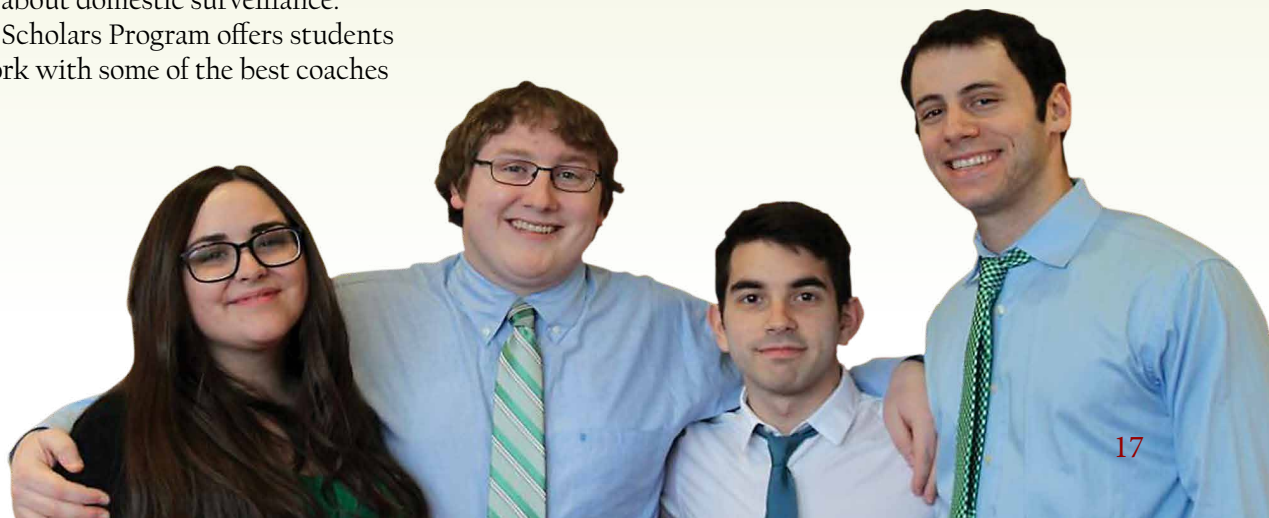
The MSU Debate Team 2015-16 Debate Season Gets Started

The college topic for the 2015-16 debate season, which began in September, is whether or not the U.S. should substantially alter its military presence abroad.

The MSU Debate Team schedule for the season is as follows:

Georgia State University 9/18-9/22/15	Cal-Berkeley, 1/1-1/10/16
University of Kentucky 10/2-10/5/15	University of Miami 1/3-1/8/16
Vanderbilt University 10/16-10/18/15	Indiana University 1/30-2/1/16
Harvard University 10/30-11/3/15	University of Texas 2/5-2/8/16
Wake Forest University 11/14-11/17/15	D5 Districts, 2/20-2/22/16
Spartan Classic (High School Tournament) 12/4-12/6/15	National Debate Tournament, 3/30-4/5/16

Marge Strong, Tyler Thur, Jack Caporal and Quinn Zemel (below, left to right) were recognized for their season-long competitive success with First Round At-Large Bids to the NDT.





Wrestler's faith drives academic pursuits

"Lord, we take this moment to thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this great Spartan community."

This is how Joe Johnson, a fifth-year wrestler from South Lyon, Michigan, began his invocation at this year's Spartan Academic Excellence Gala, where he was also recognized with the Scholar-Athlete Award – given to athletes with the highest grade-point average on their team.

"It is a lot of work to keep a 4.0 GPA while being an athlete," Johnson said. "So, it meant a lot to me to be recognized with such a high honor in front of my peers and the Michigan State community."

After beginning to wrestle at the age of four, Johnson decided in his sophomore year of high school that he wanted to wrestle in the Big Ten. Originally committed to wrestle for another school, Michigan State University Coach Tom Minkel convinced Johnson to take a tour, where he fell in love with the campus, the team, and the school.

Last season was challenging for Johnson after he suffered two concussions along with other injuries, but his focus is unwavering.

"This year is actually our head coach's last year. (So), it's going to be an emotional year for a lot of people. It's going to be a fun season to take (on) a lot of leadership," Johnson said.

Outside of being a leader on the wrestling team, Johnson has found academic motivation in being a member of the Honors College, and has benefitted from the "attention I get as far as picking my classes," as it was easier for him to schedule classes during the busy wrestling season.

Johnson is majoring in finance and held an internship with Plante Moran, helping with the accounting firm's wealth management division.

Beyond school and sports, Johnson is an active member of the MSU athletic ministry. He said faith can help student athletes who find themselves in a bad environment – something to which he can relate.

Exposure to the ministry has Johnson thinking of different career paths after he graduates, although he's not sure in which direction he'll go. For now, he is looking forward to his last season wrestling.

Joe Johnson was recognized with the Scholar-Athlete Award – given to athletes with the highest grade-point average on their team. Beyond school and sports, Johnson is an active member of the MSU athletic ministry.

12 HC STUDENTS, ALUMNI NAMED IN MSU'S LARGEST CLASS OF NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWS

Nineteen National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellows from Michigan State University have been selected for 2015 – the largest class of fellows for MSU since the program began in 1952. Twelve of those named are current or former Honors College students.

An additional 18 students were named honorable mention for MSU.

“We at the Graduate School are proud of all our fellowships recipients,” said Karen Klomparens, dean of the MSU Graduate School and associate provost for graduate education. “Thank you to all the faculty who assisted these students. It is wonderful to see our numbers of NSF Graduate Research Fellows continue to grow.”

The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program is the country’s oldest graduate fellowship program that directly supports graduate students in various science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Fellows benefit from a three-year annual stipend of \$32,000 along with a \$12,000 cost of education allowance for tuition and fees (paid to the institution), opportunities for international research and professional development, and the freedom to conduct their own research at any accredited U.S. institution of graduate education they choose.

“Michigan State University is a top 100 research institution and the Honors College is proud to play a part in crafting a passion for research in our undergraduate students,” said Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, dean of the MSU Honors College. “Congratulations to each of the 19 fellows named this year, and to those who have and will continue to serve as their research mentors.”



Below are the names of the 19 NSF Graduate Research Fellows from MSU:

- **Sarah Balgooyen**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying environmental engineering at the University of Wisconsin.
- **Victoria Breeze**, a graduate student at MSU studying geography.
- **Kileigh Browning**, a graduate student at MSU studying ecology.
- **Laura Carroll**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying microbial biology at Cornell University.
- **Yvonne DePorre**, a recent graduate of MSU now studying chemistry at the University of Michigan.
- **Clarice Esch**, a graduate student at MSU studying ecology.
- **Nomar Gonzalez-Santini**, a graduate student at MSU studying electrical engineering.
- **Thomas Heuser**, a 2015 MSU Honors College graduate studying materials science and engineering.
- **Jessica Holberg**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying civil engineering at Purdue University.
- **Adam Ingraio**, a graduate student at MSU studying ecology.
- **Mariyam Isa**, a graduate student at MSU studying biological anthropology. Isa earned her bachelor's degree from MSU in 2014 and was a member of the Honors College.
- **Jacob Ludwig**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying chemistry at the University of Michigan.
- **Michaelyn Lux**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying chemistry at Cornell University.
- **Julia Miller**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying environmental biology at Cornell University.
- **Ryan Reynolds**, a recent graduate of the MSU Honors College now studying chemistry at Northwestern University.
- **Jeffrey Schachterle**, a graduate student at MSU studying microbial biology.
- **Derrick Stobaugh**, a graduate student at MSU studying psychology.
- **John Suddard-Bangsund**, a 2015 MSU Honors College graduate studying materials science and engineering.
- **David Zoltowski**, a 2015 MSU Honors College graduate studying electrical engineering.

Engineer, swim captain receives prestigious Churchill Scholarship

David Zoltowski, plans to study the brain from an engineering perspective.

It's a path he embarked on as an undergraduate research assistant to Professor Selin Aviyente in the Communications and Signal Processing Lab.

"A long-term goal of mine is to apply my analysis techniques to the study, diagnosis, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder," he said. "I draw motivation for this goal from my triplet, autistic brother."

Zoltowski is a spring 2015 graduate of the Honors College, earning his degree in electrical engineering from the College of Engineering. One of 14 students nationwide to be awarded a Churchill Scholarship, he will pursue his passion through a master of philosophy in information

engineering at the University of Cambridge.

While at MSU, Zoltowski was captain of the men's swimming and diving team and

held a 4.0 grade-point average. He is MSU's 18th Churchill Scholar.

Established in 1959, the Winston Churchill Foundation's Scholarship Program offers 14 American students of exceptional ability and outstanding achievement the opportunity to pursue graduate degrees in engineering, mathematics, or the sciences in Churchill College at the University of Cambridge in England.

One of the 2014 Goldwater Scholars, Zoltowski hails from West Lafayette, Indiana, and is a graduate of West Lafayette High School. He was a Big Ten Distinguished Scholar and named Academic All-Big Ten. Additionally, Zoltowski was named Outstanding Student Engineer of the Year by the Engineering Society of Detroit.

He was a member of MSU's Student-Athlete Advisory Council, Tau Beta Pi, Eta Kappa Nu and an Honors Times Two mentor.

"I am honored to be named a Churchill Scholar and look forward to making the most of my experience at Cambridge in all areas of life," Zoltowski said. "I want to thank all members of the MSU community who have supported me in my endeavors."

Zoltowski was a recipient of the MSU Honors College National Scholarship, Walter R. Yates Memorial Scholarship and Arthur J. Harris Memorial Scholarship.







HC DOUBLE-MAJOR EARNS NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE GRADUATE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Joshua Schnell, an Honors College senior majoring in anthropology in the College of Social Science and religious studies in the College of Arts & Letters, was awarded the nationally competitive Beinecke Scholarship, which pays for graduate studies in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

Schnell is MSU's 2nd Beinecke Scholar since 2011, which is when the university was invited to be a nominating institution.

"Being awarded a Beinecke Scholarship means more to me than I could hope to put into words," Schnell said. "This award not only allows me to continue my education and to help make changes in the world, but the funding security that accompanies it will allow me greater freedom in applying to and selecting a graduate program.

"This scholarship will ensure that I find the perfect fit in a program that will provide opportunities, challenge me, and foster academic, professional, and personal growth. I am proud to be named a 2015 Beinecke Scholar."

The Beinecke Scholarship Program was established in 1971 by the Board of Directors of The Sperry and Hutchinson Company to honor Edwin, Frederick, and Walter Beinecke. The Board created an endowment to provide substantial scholarships for the graduate education of young men and women of exceptional promise. The program seeks to encourage and enable highly motivated students to pursue opportunities available to them and to be courageous in the selection of a graduate course of study in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Schnell will receive \$4,000 immediately prior to entering graduate school and an additional \$30,000 while attending graduate school.

He plans to earn a doctoral degree in bioarcheology or Mesoamerican archaeology.

Schnell hails from Howell, Michigan, having graduated from Howell High School. While at MSU,



Schnell has served as a research assistant to multiple professors. He currently works for Associate Professor Gabriel Wrobel completing three-dimensional (3D) cranial skeleton comparisons, and for Professor Lynne Goldstein performing ritual landscape analysis of Mississippian villages. Additionally, he's worked with Associate Professor Amy DeRogatis on her Religious Soundmap Project.

He has participated in the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF) and produced 20 original maps and figures for Professor Kenneth Lewis' upcoming book.

In addition to his classroom and research activities, Schnell is involved in the Campus Archaeology Program, Meta-Religious Inquirer's Club of MSU, the MSU Undergraduate Anthropology Club and the MSU Paranormal Society.

At MSU, Schnell has been the recipient of the Cole Excellence Award from the Honors College, the Honors College Alumni Association Scholarship, the Charles Hayden Kelly Scholarship from the College of Social Science, and the Samuel Jay Hartt Award from the College of Arts & Letters.

Interest in international affairs leads student to research fellowship

A Michigan State University student interested in international affairs was awarded a nationally competitive research assistant fellowship through the Carnegie Junior Fellows Program in the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C.

Varsha Koduvayur is a spring 2015 Honors College graduate with degrees in international relations and comparative cultures and politics from the James Madison College and Arabic from the College of Arts & Letters.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States. Each year, the endowment offers 10-12 fellowships from a pool of nominees from nearly 400 participating colleges. Carnegie junior fellows work as research assistants to the endowment's senior associates.

"I am thrilled to be working at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) as a junior fellow for the Middle East program. My work at the CEIP will provide a strong foundation for the future of my career in international relations, which I hope to further by entering government service after graduate studies in international relations and Arabic," Koduvayur said. "I am so grateful for my incredible family, the MSU Honors College, James Madison College, and the National/International Fellowships

and Scholarships Office who guided and supported me through this endeavor."

Koduvayur is MSU's 2nd Carnegie Jr. Fellow. During the 2014-15 academic year, Koduvayur studied in Morocco as part of MSU's Arabic Flagship Program.

She is from Auburn Hills, Michigan, having graduated from Avondale Senior High School.

Koduvayur has interned for The Prajnaya Trust in India and the Center for Gender in Global Context at MSU, worked as a paralegal for the McGinty Law Firm in East Lansing, Michigan and participated in the G20 Youth Summit in Germany. Koduvayur was also the recipient of a Cole International Study Award through the Honors College.



Varsha overlooking Chefchaouen in Morocco

HC UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS AWARDED NATIONAL GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP FOR STEM

Two Michigan State University undergraduate researchers studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) have been awarded the nationally competitive Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship.

MSU's 2015 Goldwater Scholars are Rebecca Carlson, an Honors College junior majoring in chemical engineering in the College of Engineering and Chinese in the College of Arts & Letters, and Megan Kechner, an Honors College senior majoring in neuroscience in the College of Natural Science and psychology in the College of Social Science.

Two MSU students also received honorable mentions: Christine Isaguirre, an Honors College junior majoring in biosystems engineering in the College of Engineering, and Aaron Oom, an Honors College senior majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology in Lyman Briggs College.

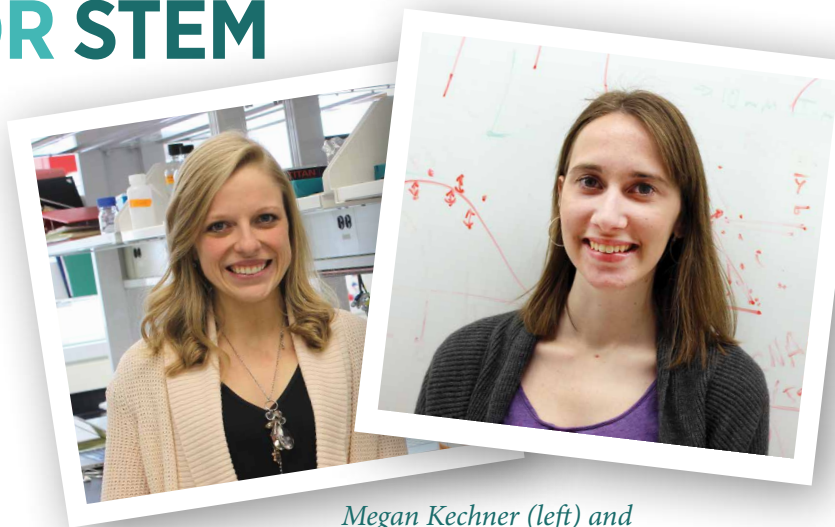
The Goldwater Foundation seeks scholars committed to a career in science, mathematics, or engineering (also known as STEM disciplines) who display intellectual intensity and who have the potential for significant future contribution in their chosen field. The Goldwater Scholarship provides funding for undergraduate tuition and living expenses for students who are planning careers in research.

With the addition of Carlson and Kechner, MSU has produced 42 Goldwater Scholars since the scholarship program was established by Congress in 1986.

Carlson hails from Rockford, Michigan, where she graduated as valedictorian of Rockford High School. Prior to that, she lived in Italy for 14 years.

"I am very humbled to receive this award, which is a testament to the wonderful support and encouragement that I have received from students and faculty alike at Michigan State," Carlson said. "I am grateful for the chance to participate in research and learn from outstanding mentors."

She is a research assistant in Professor S. Patrick Walton's Applied Biomolecular Engineering Laboratory, researching how RNA molecules interact



*Megan Kechner (left) and
Rebecca Carlson (right)*

in the design of treatments for diabetes mellitus. She earned a first place award at the 2014 University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF).

Carlson is a member of the student editorial board for the *Red Cedar Undergraduate Research* journal (ReCUR), tutors in the College of Engineering Residential Experience (CoRe) and is a member of Women in Engineering and Bridges International.

She was a recipient of an MSU Alumni Distinguished Scholarship.

Kechner is from Davison, Michigan and a graduate of Davison High School.

"To be recognized as a Goldwater Scholar means a great deal to me," Kechner said. "I have found so much enthusiasm for research and it has been one of the most influential aspects of my academic career. I am overjoyed to be surrounded by such exceptional opportunity and mentorship here at Michigan State."

She is a research assistant in Professor Michelle Mazei-Robison's lab determining the specific signaling changes in the human brain that contribute to addiction and mood disorders. Kechner also interned at the Silvio O. Conte Neuroscience Research Center at Vanderbilt University.

She is a member of the Society for Neuroscience, the MSU Neuroscience Club and presented research in November 2014 to the Society for Neuroscience. Kechner was a recipient of the Lyman Briggs College Undergraduate Research Award.

Nutritional sciences student nets Udall Scholarship



Shelby Shelder, an Honors College senior majoring in nutritional sciences in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, was awarded one of 80 nationally competitive Udall scholarships.

“My ultimate career goal is to pursue my Ph.D. in nutritional epidemiology researching better ways to educate Native people on how to eat healthy on reservations and reduce the risk of type-two diabetes in Native American people,” Shelder said.

Shelder is specializing in epidemiology and global public health and has a 3.9 grade-point average. The Udall Foundation awards scholarships to college sophomores and juniors for leadership, public service, and commitment to issues related to American Indian nations or to the environment. Each year, the foundation awards up to \$5,000 for educational expenses to students in the United States. Shelder is MSU’s 11th Udall Scholar.

“Words cannot describe how thankful I am for all the support and encouragement from my research

mentors, professors and advisors that I have received throughout the application process,” she said. “It is an honor to be awarded the Udall Scholarship. The Udall Foundation and I share the same passion for improving and addressing the overall well-being of American Indian people in the United States. Thank you Udall Foundation for enabling this opportunity.”

Shelder hails from Muskegon, Michigan and is a graduate of Reeths Puffer High School. She interned at the Michigan Department of Community Health, and previously served as an undergraduate research assistant for the Bio-Computational Evolution of Action (BEACON) Center.

A Charles Drew Science Scholar, Shelder is president of MSU chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and a student representative for the American Public Health Association’s American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian Caucus. She is a recipient of the Future Leaders Mentoring Scholarship through the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition.



ENGINEERING GRADUATE AWARDED NATIONAL COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE FELLOWSHIP

Zane Crawford, a spring 2015 Honors College graduate with a degree in electrical engineering, has earned a Computational Science Graduate Fellowship from the U.S. Department of Energy.

The fellowship is administered by the Krell Institute and supports approximately 70 students who are pursuing doctoral degrees in fields that use high-performance computing to solve complex science and engineering problems.

The program includes an annual stipend of \$36,000, full tuition and fees, an academic allowance, and a 12-week practicum at a DOE site with access to DOE supercomputers.

Crawford is continuing his studies at Michigan State University in pursuit of his doctorate with a research focus on computational electromagnetics.

“I am overjoyed at the opportunity to focus on research topics that truly interest me thanks to the support of a fellowship,” Crawford said. “Furthermore, I see these awards as not just recognition of my accomplishments and my potential for future success, but recognition and a reflection of the people and communities that have inspired me and molded me into the person I am today.”

Crawford was also awarded a National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship and a Department of Defense Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) Graduate Fellowship, but declined both in favor of the Computational Science Graduate Fellowship.

Crawford is originally from West Bloomfield, Michigan, and is a graduate of Walled Lake Central High School. He was a leader in the Honors College Dean’s Advisory Council, Honors College Programming Board, Honors Students Actively Recruiting (H-STAR), the electrical honors society Tau Beta Pi, and the electrical engineering society IEEE - Eta Kappa Nu.

He presented at the Acoustics Society of America and IEEE Antennas and Propagation Society, and participated in the Mid-Michigan Symposium for Undergraduate Research Experience and Graduate Research Symposium. Crawford’s research has focused on surface representations for electromagnetic scattering surfaces and on integration methods for an electromagnetic equation solver acceleration method.



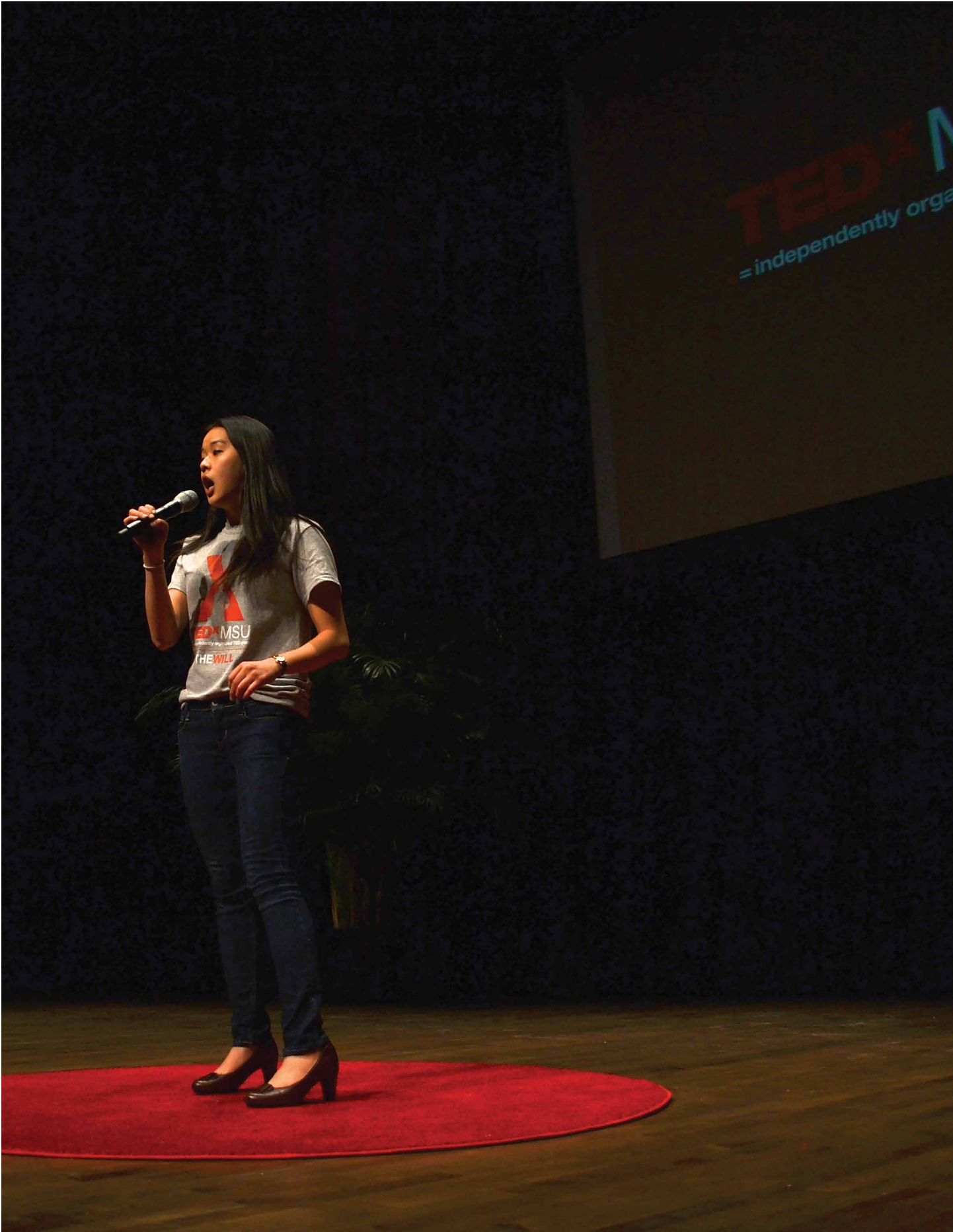
Student one of three awarded Boren Scholarships to study critical languages abroad

Brady Ryan, an Honors College junior majoring in Arabic in the College of Arts & Letters, was one of three Michigan State University students who received a Boren Scholarship to study languages abroad.

Ryan has been studying Arabic in Morocco for the summer and will continue to do so throughout the 2015-16 academic year. Originally from St. Paul, Minnesota, Ryan wants to work for the Department of State as a Foreign Service officer.

Boren Scholarships provide up to \$20,000 to U.S. undergraduate students studying in areas of the world that are critical to U.S. national security interests. MSU has produced 34 Boren award winners since 1991.

There were 170 awards nationwide from a pool of 750 applicants in 2015. Additional 2015 Boren recipients from MSU include Austin Martin, a junior majoring in human biology in the College of Natural Science; and Chaitanya Peddeti, a freshman majoring in mathematics, advanced in the College of Natural Science.



“The Will”

When she isn't on her laptop in the green room, Honors College third-year student Irene Li is running between the rows of red cushioned seats of Wharton Center's Great Hall.

She's racing between the stage – where a dozen MSU students, alumni and faculty are rehearsing their TED talks – and the back of the auditorium to the video and sound booth. Li is greeting fellow student organizers and volunteers backstage and snapping a few photos on her phone to remember some of these hectic moments.

In a couple of hours, she's standing in front of an audience of nearly 2,000 seated in those red cushioned chairs. The show is about to begin. For Li, a double-major in genomics and molecular genetics in the College of Natural Science and health and society interdisciplinary studies in the College of Social Science, this was a moment three years in the making.

“I didn't even know if it was plausible to get something like this off the ground,” Li said. “The more people I talked to, the more people were like, ‘This is really cool. This is something that should happen.’”

The International Student Association hosted the first TEDxMSU in 2012 on a license from TED that allowed for a maximum of 100 participants. When Li came to MSU, she asked the group about putting on another event. They supported her effort, but suggested forming another student organization to handle such a major event.

Li and her team decided to go big. They wanted to apply for a broader TED license, one that would allow for an unlimited number of

people to join in on the conversation.

After winning the Best and Brightest grant – a competition hosted by the Honors College with funding from the Michigan State University Federal Credit Union – Li had the footing to pursue the broader license.

But she needed something else. The broader license also came with the requirement that someone in the TEDxMSU organization had previously attended an official TED talk.

After months of searching, Li met that person while presenting her research at the Mid-Michigan Symposium for Undergraduate Research Experiences (MID-SURE). It was a serendipitous moment for Li.

She was grading another student presenter's work and asked him about speaking at TEDxMSU. The student in turn mentioned that his boss, Greg Gage, was involved with TED. Gage is an MSU alumnus, TED senior fellow and founder of Backyard Brains, a maker of neuroscience experiment kits for students of all ages to learn about electrophysiology.

By this time, Li also had a team of her fellow students leading up key efforts in the planning: fundraising, design, public relations and marketing, logistics and, of course, speakers.

“The most important thing is the team,” she said.

Brian Batayeh, an Honors College junior majoring in biomedical laboratory science in the Lyman Briggs College, and Lizzie DePentu, a

Picture on facing page: Third-year Honors College student Irene Li speaks before a crowd of nearly 2,000 students during TEDxMSU.

TEDxMSU talks

sophomore majoring in social relations in the James Madison College and co-directors in charge of finding and organizing the speakers.

“The word just got out and we ended up getting over 100 applications,” DePentu said.

The process of sifting through the applications, reviewing them and then deciding who to bring in for interviews was time consuming. Batayeh said they wished they could talk to every applicant in person, but logistically they had to narrow it down. They still ended up interviewing about half of the applicants during a marathon session at the MSU Union.

“The most rewarding process was seeing these applications and the passion in these applications, reading them and then seeing them come to life as people as we interviewed them,” Batayeh said.

All 12 speakers focused their talks on the theme of “The Will” in one way or another.

While some onlookers might believe Li and her peers chose “The Will” because of MSU’s tagline “Spartans Will,” Batayeh explains, “Really, we thought about ‘The Will’ as...this impetus for when your ideas go from here (points to head) into the open. We really wanted this conference to be that impetus for ideas to get out of the headspace and into the forefront.”

Li adds, “‘The Will’ is not just within those who we see all the time, but also those people who might have a story to tell but haven’t been given a venue before.”

The line-up included novelist Rebecca Brunk; urban educator Dorinda Carter Andrews; storyteller Shannon Cason; neuro-ophthalmologist David Kaufman; criminal justice advocate

Austin Martin; poet Sariah Metcalfe; musician John Nowak; neuroscientist Apryl Pooley; astrophysicist Hendrik Schatz; international investigator Can (Aiden) Wang; sexual selection expert Emily Weigel; and leukemia survivor Young Yi. Videos of their talks are available on the MSU Alumni Association channel:

<http://livestream.com/msualumni>.

“I think one of the great things with TED talks is that they are interdisciplinary and you can learn so much from someone that’s in a completely different field or has different interests and connecting different ideas to solve issues around the world,” said Sho Nakashima, an Honors College junior majoring in social relations and policy in the James Madison College.

Nakashima designed the TEDxMSU logo that adorned t-shirts, flyers, and lanyard badges worn by everyone at the event. He drew inspiration from other TEDx talks that had an iconic image sprouting out of the “x”. MSU’s iconic image: the Spartan statue.

Honors College junior Pete Howes handled fundraising, including successful efforts to secure funds from the Residence Halls Association and the College of Natural Science Alumni Association. A mechanical engineering student in the College of Engineering, Howes said the members, “are half science, half arts and humanities, but then the things we actually worked on in the organization were not necessarily related to what our majors are, which I think is kind of cool. People are getting involved in what they are interested in outside of academia.”

Rounding out the core team were Jesse Sun, an Honors College junior majoring in supply chain management

in the Eli Broad College of Business; and Diana Xu, an Honors College junior majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology in the College of Natural Science.

As the doors to the Cobb Great Hall opened the night of March 4, scores of people entered a large hallway featuring a handful of demonstrations or “labs” as they’re called at TED. Honors College senior Steve Price was one of the lab participants, arranging hundreds of red and white dominos spelling out “TEDx.” He set off the domino tumbling show during intermission.

The speakers stole the show, building on the theme of ‘The Will’ throughout. The energy in the auditorium, and backstage, was palpable.

“We never imagined it would get as big as it ended up being,” Li later reflected.

The work of the team not only netted them a fun and successful event as well as new skills for their resumes, but also a few Student Life Leadership Awards; Li won Leader of the Year, while TEDxMSU won in the Emerging Student Organization and Innovate Program categories.

With an audience of nearly 2,000, as well as those watching the livestream from places across the globe, Li and her peers have now turned their sights on planning for 2016.

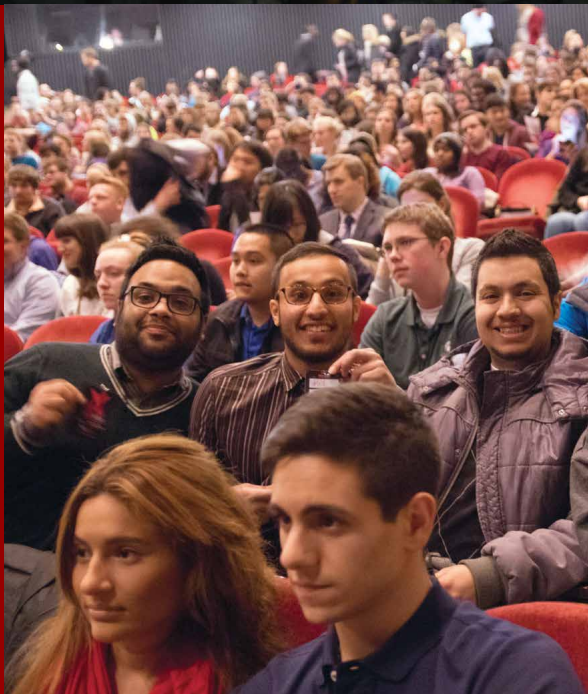
“We want to just increase our reach,” DePentu said. “There is so much stuff going on on campus that’s really important to highlight.”

For more information about TEDxMSU, check out tedxmsu.org.



“ We really wanted this conference to be that impetus for ideas to get out of the headspace and into the forefront.”

– Brian Bataveh, Honors College junior majoring in biomedical laboratory science in the Lyman Briggs College



The research and creative works of seven Michigan State University students has earned them the Martin Luther King, Jr. Advancing Inclusion through Research Award



The award builds on the body of work authored by students supporting the ideals of inclusive excellence through topics of inclusion, diversity, and marginalized populations.

This year's competition encompassed the themes from the university's Project 60/50. Project 60/50 acknowledged the 60th anniversary of the Supreme Court Decision in *Brown v. the Topeka Board of Education* and the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Student research papers and creative projects completed in 2014 and submitted by MSU members of the Honors College, James Madison College, Lyman Briggs College, or the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities were considered.

First prize was awarded to Cameron Allie, Rachel Barton, Erin Gumpfer, Ali Haque, Savana Swanson for their website, *What "Rape Culture" Means*. All five students are members of Lyman Briggs College.

Second prize was awarded to Jolisa Brooks for her website, *Cultural Appropriation in the Age of Colorblindness*. Brooks is a member of the Honors College and James Madison College.

Third prize was awarded to Sona Movsisyan for her research paper titled "There is such a thing

as bad publicity: Misconceptions about Human Trafficking." Movsisyan is a member of James Madison College.

The students received their awards during the All-University Excellence in Diversity Awards program in February 2015.

Also receiving honorable mention was Hannah Jenuwine, for her research on early college high school programs that support low-income and minority students, along with Leon Hister's research on homonormativity in the Netherlands, and Ryan Tarr's work on inclusive practices in MSU's women's studies theory courses.

Jenuwine is a member of the James Madison College, Hister is a member of the Honors College and James Madison College and Tarr is a member of the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities.

"The collaborating colleges want to thank all of the students who put forward their scholarship for consideration in this competition," said Bess German, assistant dean for the Honors College. "Their efforts help build on the university's ideals of inclusive excellence and the ongoing conversations surrounding Project 60/50."

The MLK Jr. Advancing Inclusion through Research Award was created in 2010 to highlight the ways in which MSU students follow Dr. King's legacy, using their critical and creative skills to understand and re-envision the world.



STUDENTS OF NOTE



Above: Mario Gutierrez and Kwasi Adu-Berchie

Richard Lee Featherstone Endowed Prize Winners

Kwasi Adu-Berchie and Mario Gutierrez were selected as the 2015 recipients of the Richard Lee Featherstone Endowed Prize. Both graduated in spring 2015 with degrees in chemical engineering from the College of Engineering. This \$3,000 prize seeks to identify the most outstanding graduating senior and to grant an award used for future growth and development, travel, graduate study, or meditation.

Art@Work

Claire Babala, Sarah Fagerman, Sean Fitzpatrick, Christine Igl, Alexa McCarthy, John Nowak, Carolyn Pason, Jessica Polus, Katherine Rock and Stephanie Vettese were part of Art@Work, a mosaic of individual pieces created collaboratively by the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, Peckham client artists, community artists, and MSU students over the past five years.



Above: Art@Work presentation
Photo credit: Ian Siporin

Student Employee of the Year

Becky Barann was selected as the MSU Student Employee of the Year for her work at the James Madison College. Barann was also president of the Spartan Marching Band.

American Chemical Society Division of Organic Chemistry Undergraduate Award

Claire Baniel earned the American Chemical Society Division of Organic Chemistry Undergraduate Award. The award recognizes senior students who display a significant aptitude for organic chemistry and encourages interest in the field.

A Glamour Magazine Top Ten College Woman Award

Elizabeth Brajevich was selected as one of *Glamour* magazine's Top Ten College Women. She's the founder of Worms Eat My Garbage, a campus-wide composting initiative. Students can compost coffee grounds and apple cores in their rooms, and the soil helps grow produce for MSU's cafeterias.

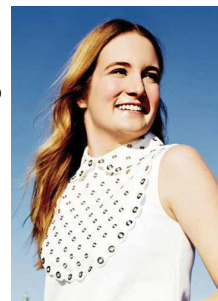


Photo: © Glamour Magazine

First Place in Media Sandbox Creative Challenge and Second Place in AAF Advertising Competition

Amanda Cowherd, along with her team, won first place in the Media Sandbox Creative Challenge. She also was creative director of MSU's American Advertising Federation (AAF). MSUAAF won second place in the National Student Advertising Campaign district competition for their Pizza Hut campaign.

Performed National Anthem at NCAA Final Four in Men's Basketball

Michelle Dear, a member of the MSU women's soccer team, was chosen by the NCAA to perform the national anthem at the men's basketball Final Four in Indianapolis. She performed along with a student athlete from each of the colleges with teams in the men's basketball tournament.

Accepted into EXROP Program and Worked at MGH, MIT & Harvard Lab Over the Summer

Chiadika Nwanze was accepted into the Howard Hughes Medical Institute EXROP program and worked over the summer in a research lab focusing on HIV/AIDS at The Ragon Institute of MGH, MIT and Harvard.

Beckham Scholars

Kiera Fisher and Sanna Fraleigh were named 2015-16 Beckman Scholars. The goal of the MSU BSP is to provide scholars with one-on-one mentored interactions combined with an intensive interdisciplinary research experience. Fraleigh's research will focus on investigating the mechanisms of bone loss and marrow stem cell maturation in type 1 diabetic mouse models, while Fisher will pursue a specialization in bioethics, humanities and society, with her research revolving around dyslipidemia and diabetic retinopathy.

First Place in the Multicultural Heroes Hall of Fame Case Competition

Samuel Floyd, Ariel Jordan and Ashley Oommen presented Eleanor Roosevelt's human rights activism and work as First Lady and earned first place in the 14th Annual Black History Month Multicultural Heroes Hall of Fame Case Competition.

Two-time Study Away Participant

Jessica Hernandez participated in a study away to Disney and a study abroad to Belize, both during winter break. Hernandez is also the recipient of many awards including the AJ Harris Scholarship, Michigan State University Federal Credit Union internship award, Community Leadership Award, and the Latino Achievement Award.

Baggett Fellowship

Mina Hirzel has been awarded a prestigious Baggett Fellowship. The objective of the Baggett Fellowships program is to provide intensive research training for post-baccalaureate students who wish to pursue a research career in the scientific study of language.

Presented Research Project at the Annual National Collegiate Research Conference at Harvard

Clare Laut presented her research project at the annual National Collegiate Research Conference (NCRC) at Harvard University. Laut, who has been conducting research on Group B Streptococcus, will present "Acidic Exposure and Enhanced Colonization in Group B Streptococcus."



Above: Alexa Jones

Member of one of MSU's Latest Business Start-ups

Alexa Jones was recognized for her work in improving the way infants with jaundice are treated by working with her peers on the development of the SnugLit Portable Phototherapy Blanket. The project was one of 150 innovative projects showcased at the MSU College of Engineering Design Day and is one of MSU's latest start-up businesses – TheraB Medical Products Inc.

Winner of the VSA 2015 International Young Soloists Competition

Jordan Lulloff, a saxophonist majoring in music performance, was selected as one of four winners of the VSA 2015 International Young Soloists Competition. He performed on the Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C., as part of the 2015 25th Americans with Disabilities Act & the 40th VSA Anniversary Celebration.

STUDENTS OF NOTE

Director of SpartaHack

Katelyn Dunaski was the director for the inaugural SpartaHack hackathon. This event aims to have students write software or programs that serve the public good or inspire entrepreneurship.

Book Award Winner

Aaron Oom received a book award from the Department of Romance and Classical Studies.

Victoria Finnerty Award

Irina Pushel was awarded a Victoria Finnerty Award. Irina was also featured in the year's Michigan State University President's Report for her work with examining mutations in fruit flies that are similar to the human cancer gene.

NCAA Elite 89 Award



Colby Wollenman is a member of the MSU basketball team who won an Elite 89 award. The Elite 89, an award founded by the NCAA, honors the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in his or her sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among his or her peers.



Honors College members earn the Board of Trustees' Awards for having the highest grade point average at the close their last semesters in attendance at Michigan State University. From left to right: Henrik Blix, Justin Fila, and Levi Storks. Additional Honors College members earning the Board of Trustees' Awards in the spring 2015 semester were: Ryan Austin, Rachel Brock, Kaitlyn Bunyak, Deanna Christy, Victoria Clausen, Brian Crackel, Hassan Fadel, Stacey Forton, Patrick Furlo, Thomas Heuser, Mallory Hoffman, Andrew Johnson, Lynne Krutty, Lauren Link, Megan Maas, Rebecca Monticello, Minh Pham, Zachary Reilly, Madeline Ross, Katherine Sadler, Christine Scales, Stephanie Schmidt, Kyle Sherman, Paul Stanos, John Suddard-Bangsund, Tyler Vuillemot, David Wegscheid, Emma Winn, and David Zoltowski.

Two of Only 60 National "Posters on the Hill" Participants in Annual Washington, D.C. Event

Lana Ruvolo Grasser and Jesse Whitfield were two of only 60 students to present their research work at the 19th annual "Posters on the Hill" event in Washington, D.C. Whitfield's presentation was titled "How Can Doctors Do a Good Job of Informing Patients Without Falling Behind Their Schedules?" Grasser's presentation was titled "The Neuroscience of Reading: Integrating Humanities and Sciences in an fMRI Study on Jane Austen."

United Nations Intern

Sam Mather spent the summer interning for the United Nations.



National Award for App

Angela Sun won a national award for her work on a mobile app known as You++. Sun was honored by the National Center

for Women & Information Technology and HP as an inaugural winner of the Collegiate Award. The mobile application allows Android users to discover patterns that affect their battery life.

Recipient of Environmental Science and Policy Program Outstanding Service Award

Allison Stuby is the recipient of an Environmental Science and Policy Program Outstanding Service Award. In her two years at ESPP, Allison has written newsletters and publications as well as helped organize and run many events.

Staff notes

Bess German, assistant dean, co-presented, “Inclusive Excellence: Utilizing Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships to Enhance and Support Diversity in Honors” with Stacie Williams from the University of Illinois-Chicago Honors College at the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) Conference in Corvallis, Oregon in May.

German also led an MSU Freshman Seminar Abroad to South Africa for the second year with 15 students, a third of whom are already in the Honors College.

Ashley Green, scholarships director and coordinator for the National/International Fellowships & Scholarships Office, completed her doctoral degree in education administration.

Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, dean, was appointed as one of two MSU institutional representatives for the Michigan American Council on Education (ACE) Women’s Network.

At the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) Conference in Corvallis, Oregon in May, Jackson-Elmoore, Bette Bottoms from the University of Illinois-Chicago, Serge Rudaz from the University of Minnesota, and Anne Krabacher from the Ohio State University presented, “Proving the Value of an Honors Education: New Models of Assessment Using Multivariate Techniques.” Jackson-Elmoore is a member of the site selection committee for the 2017 HERU conference. In addition, the MSU Honors College is providing administrative support for the 2017 HERU conference site selection committee.

Jackson-Elmoore was invited to participate in the 2015 Udall Scholars Orientation in support of MSU’s Udall Scholar Shelbie Shelder. She was one of seven Udall Scholarship Faculty Representatives from universities across the United States who served as a roundtable panelist for the Scholars’ professional development fair. Jackson-Elmoore provided advice to Scholars on applying to graduate schools as well as tips on personal statements and resumes for graduate school applications. It was a particularly rewarding experience since many of the scholars have an interest in pursuing advanced public policy and/or public administration degrees, both of which are Jackson-Elmoore’s areas of specialty and the focus of her own master’s and doctoral degrees.

Kristin Janka Millar, director international engagement, was elected to serve on MSU’s Association of Academic Specialist Advisory Committee for a three-year term beginning in August.

She served as a reviewer for the National Science Foundation’s Graduate Research and Fellowship Program, the Boren Scholarship program, and the U.S. Department of Education’s Group Projects Abroad program.

In July, Janka Millar and Green presented “Tools for Tracking Data: Strategies, Methods and Purposes for Tracking and Managing Data for Scholarship Offices” and “Thinking Past the Norm through Collaboration on Campus” at the National Fellowship Advisers Association (NAFA) 8th Biennial Conference in Oakland, California.

Justin Micomonaco, research and assessment director; **Alex Lishinski**, graduate research assistant; and **Jackson-Elmoore** presented, “Comparing the College Performance of Honors Students Admitted Via Two Different Mechanisms,” at the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) Conference in Corvallis, Oregon in May.

Andrew Murray, adviser, wrote a review of the book *Basketball Junkie: A Memoir* for the National Academic Advising Association’s NACADA *Journal*.



Honors College Picnic 2016

Students and HC staff meet and mingle during the annual college picnic, typically held in the courtyard behind the Student Services Building. The next HC picnic will be held on September 9, 2016.

PUBLICATION BREAKS BOUNDARIES

Exceptions Hosts “Accessible Art” at Broad Art Museum

Exceptions journal is the product of an alumnus’ research as a student at MSU and his passion for bringing a more humanistic element to scientific breakthroughs on blindness.

Launched in 2013 by then MSU Honors College senior Craig Pearson, *Exceptions* has expanded to become a creative arts journal, web community, and on-campus organization, all in one. Editorial staff members work together at MSU—and remotely from Cambridge, England, in Pearson’s case—to produce this uniquely inclusive publication.

What sets *Exceptions* apart is its mission to showcase the perspectives of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The journal solicits submissions from across the country in order to highlight a diverse spectrum of experiences from people with vision loss. Content featured on the journal’s website includes poetry, short story fiction, nonfiction narratives, music, and tactile art. The first print edition of *Exceptions* was published in spring 2015, shortly followed by an audio book available on the journal’s website.

The editorial staff was eager to create something new and undertook the audio book production with zeal.

“Our editors did the voiceover for the audio book and we recorded it at the Library of Michigan in Lansing, through the Braille and Talking Book Library,” said managing editor Katie Grimes. “They were wonderful, they let us use their recording studio for free and helped us whenever we had questions along the way.”

On April 24, 2015, *Exceptions* hosted an event titled “Accessible Art” at the Eli Broad Art Museum on MSU’s campus. Members of the *ReCUR* Editorial Staff had the opportunity to attend the event and interviewed two members of its editorial staff.

The event was the product of university-wide interdisciplinary cooperation.

Students enrolled in Professor Robin Silbergleid’s poetry course with wrote original poems for the exhibit, which were used as inspiration for students enrolled in Professor Alisa Henriquez’s studio art course. The art students created paintings with tactile elements that guests could experience both visually and through touch.

The exhibit featured paintings mounted adjacent to the poems, displaying a wide range of interpretations by students



By Lauren Link and
Casey McDougall



and appealing to visitors both sighted and blind. At the event, Michael Hudson, the director of MSU's Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD), gave a talk on museum accessibility. A behind-the-scenes documentary highlighting the creation of the exhibition was also featured.

Jordyn Castor, a computer science major at MSU who is also blind, enjoyed her time as a visitor at the exhibit. She appreciated the different interpretations of the poems that the art students depicted.

She said, "There was Braille on a couple of them. That was really cool and they did a really good job."

The staff of *Exceptions* hopes to reach more individuals like Jordyn, and to encourage them to submit their work.

"I think it's important to recognize that blindness is not a 'problem to be fixed,' but an authentic part of people's human experience—and what better way to access that human experience than through stories and art?" said Pearson.

He and the *Exceptions* staff convey this in every aspect of the journal, from the print and audio publications to the blog available on their website.

The "Accessible Art" event was an opportunity for the entire MSU and East Lansing community to gain insight into others' different experiences of the world. Sighted visitors were able to appreciate the exhibit as a means of reaching out to people who may not traditionally get to experience art.

Cale Felker, a junior human biology major, said, "it was cool to see other people interacting."

He and another student spoke to *ReCUR* about the social stigma held toward people with disabilities, which often lead to their exclusion from activities that haven't been adapted for their disability. Events hosted by *Exceptions* and other disability-inclusive organizations strive to erase that stigma.

When asked what has been most rewarding about his work with *Exceptions*, Pearson answered, "getting to meet our incredible contributors—people across the visual ability spectrum who have phenomenally diverse experiences and points of view—has been deeply rewarding. I've spoken with an Afghan war veteran, a MasterChef winner, and an award-winning scientist, just to name a few. The fact that they are blind is just part of a much bigger story."

For more information about *Exceptions* and to experience the journal firsthand, visit exceptionsjournal.com.





Real-life crimes turn prosecutor into crime thriller novelist

Alumna Allison Leotta visited mid-Michigan for her 4th book tour in May, promoting her latest book, *A Good Killing*. Leotta spoke with *HConnections* Managing Editor Stephanie Cepak about her time at MSU, what happened after law school and how she went from being a federal prosecutor to a successful crime thriller writer. Leotta has been dubbed “the female John Grisham.” Her goal is for John Grisham to be dubbed “the male Allison Leotta.”

Cepak: What do you remember about your time in the Honors College?

Leotta: What I remember at the time (is that) I was really intimidated. I didn't come in (after high school) through the Honors College, but I wanted to get in. And so it was my big goal my first semester to do well enough so I could get into the Honors College. I was really intimidated whenever I took an honors class with the other kids.

Cepak: Really?

Leotta: It was fine. It all turned out fine. But I remember that it was very supportive. There was great counseling and it was a little home that you could go to. I remember it was great that whenever you had an honors class, you were surrounded by super bright people and the conversation was always interesting. You'd never have a boring conversation in one of the honors classes.

Cepak: Did you go right to law school after you graduated from Michigan State then?

Leotta: I did. I went straight through.

Cepak: And then you graduated from Harvard Law School?

Leotta: In '98 and then I clerked for a year with a federal judge in Ohio. Then I went to the justice department, (through) their honors program, which is kind of the only way that a first-year lawyer can get into the justice department. And then I went to the U.S. attorney's office in D.C. and that's where I worked for eight years. And that's when I did most of my work in sex crimes, domestic violence, crimes against children.

Cepak: Did you ever do any creative writing before then, at MSU or Harvard?

Leotta: I hadn't. I did a lot of writing being in James Madison (College). That was a huge writing program, not so much in fiction, but you just had to be able to write a good essay in order to get through there. So, I think that was helpful. But writing fiction is using a totally different part of your brain than what I was learning at James Madison. I think I was just a big reader; I loved to read a good story. So, I think that's where it came from.

Cepak: I was reading on your blog, or maybe it was the website, that you started writing when you had your first child.

Leotta: Yeah, when I was pregnant with my first child. I knew I had this really strict nine month deadline. I knew after nine months, that's it, there's going to be no more free time anymore. So, I had to get it done. And I actually didn't get it done. I started it, I started the book and I was probably halfway done with the first draft when my little baby came. But luckily I had enough momentum going to then keep going. I kept writing even after the little guy arrived.

Cepak: Was that like a bucket list kind of thing you had decided that 'I'm going to write a novel'?

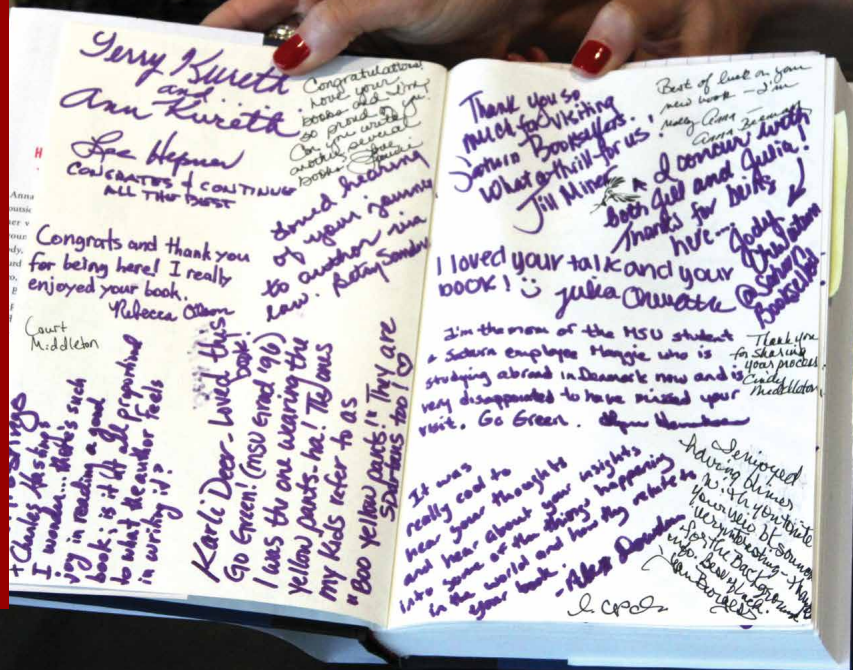
Leotta: I think at the time I started I was too young for a bucket list! No, it was more like I kept coming home from the courthouse saying “I can't believe what just happened”...mostly to my husband, “sweety you'll never believe what happened. Somebody should put this in a book.” And I think finally you say that enough times and you have to put your money where your mouth is or stop saying it.

“

They're all standalones, so anyone could pick up any of the books and enjoy the book if they haven't read anything else. But, you can also read them as a series.

”

During her book tours, Allison asks readers to sign a copy of her book as a memento



Cepak: How do you make those connections? Did you know people in the publishing world living where you live, or no?

Leotta: Not at all. I had never met anyone before that who had written a book. So this was a very novel thing when I first met a writer. And now of course I've been doing this for a while and I know a lot of writers and it doesn't seem nearly as interesting as at the time. When I wrote the first draft, it took a year. And I re-wrote it for a year. They say all writing is re-writing. So, (I) re-wrote, re-wrote for a year. And then I got the *How to Get Your Book Published for Dummies* book.

Cepak: Really?

Leotta: And it was helpful, but what it boiled down to was get yourself an agent. And so it suggested there was going to be 1,000 queries, and 99 (percent) rejections. I was very organized. I had an Excel spreadsheet of all the rejections I was going to get and how organized I was going to be about it. And then right out of the box, the first agent that I queried said, "Great, let me represent you." So, I was super lucky. I felt like I had won the lottery.

Cepak: This is your fourth book and this is all based around the same

character, her journey. This one is coming back to Michigan?

Leotta: Exactly. They're all standalones, so anyone could pick up any of the books and enjoy the book if they haven't read anything else. But, you can also read them as a series and see her development too. Anna Curtis the whole time, which was surprising because I thought I had written one book. But Simon and Schuster thought "this is a series now."

Cepak: Are there any more slated to come out after this?

Leotta: Yes, I just turned in my fifth (book) on Monday. So it's been a big week.

Cepak: How long does it take you to write (an entire book)?

Leotta: It takes about a year. I spend about six months researching, then three months writing the first draft, three months kind of tweaking it, re-writing and re-writing. So, about a year. And it takes a year to go through the publishing process to come out the other side. So, I turned this in (pointing to book) about a year ago. I started it two years ago.

It's so satisfying when you finally see it. There, I can touch it! It's real; it's in your hands. So, it's very exciting.

Cepak: Do you normally come

through Michigan when you do your book tours?

Leotta: I have every time. Because I have family here still. My mom is here; my sister was here, she just moved. But I still have family and friends here, so it's nice to come home and see Michigan. One of my favorite parts is I get to come home and do a little victory lap with my family.

Cepak: Did you go by campus today?

Leotta: I didn't today, unfortunately.

The last time I was on campus was two years ago and I was blown away by the cafeteria at James Madison (Case Hall). Oh my gosh! I was like 'I came here at the wrong decade!' I've (been) coming to that stadium (Spartan Stadium) since I was two years old. My dad was a Spartan and he would take us every year. We would go to a bunch of Spartan football games. We'd park, we'd go along the river and we'd go to the football game, we'd tailgate. For a long time I thought that MSU was just a tailgating spot, a river and a stadium. I pretty much had to go here because I came from a big Spartan family.

Cepak: How much of what you experience in the courtroom influences your writing now?

Leotta: I had enough stories from

working in D.C. Superior Court to last a whole lifetime. So, I do try to take the bits and pieces that were the most interesting from all of those stories and put them into the book and give them a book that will ring with authenticity... also that kind of urgency that we're dealing with real issues here.

Cepak: Do you miss being a lawyer and in the courtroom?

Leotta: I do. I love being a prosecutor. Especially a sex crimes prosecutor. I think it's the most rewarding job there is. There's nothing like putting a predator in jail and knowing your job is keeping your community safe. But this is a dream come true. Being asked to write books is really a dream come true. So when push came to shove and I had to make a choice it wasn't even really a choice. I just had to take the leap and see what I could do on the page.

Cepak: And you've obviously branched out too. You've become a commentator. In terms of analyzing the crime shows, how did you get into that?

Leotta: Two things. Well, every author needs a platform, so that was a pretty obvious platform. But I've always loved the TV crime shows. But they drive me crazy; they get so much wrong. In the past there was no outlet except throwing popcorn at the TV. And here this is much more productive; the blogging is much more productive than throwing popcorn at the TV. So I was covering SVU for a while. People were really into that. They wanted to know what's real and not real, so that was fun.

Leotta is a contributor to the Huffington Post, where she reality-checks TV crime dramas like Law & Order: SVU. Her blog, The Prime-Time Crime Review, was named one of the best legal blogs in America by the American Bar Association. Leotta has provided legal commentary for outlets such as CNN, MSNBC, PBS, and Reuters TV. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Mystery Writers of America.



Rietz spoke with HConnections Editor Stephanie Cepak during his visit to campus for Grandparents University. This year marked the 10th anniversary for the program, which is an opportunity for grandparents and grandchildren (ages 8-12) to come together for a three-day educational experience while spending time on the MSU campus. Rietz has nine grandchildren and noted this was his third time participating in the program.

LASTING IMPRESSION LEADS ALUMNUS TO HELP IN DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MSU MAJOR

Ask Robert (Bob) Rietz about Michigan State University and he replies, "Michigan State literally changed my life."

In recent years the Honors College alumnus has helped in the development of the curriculum for the actuarial science major – likely changing the lives of students for years to come.

It all started when Rietz was a student himself. Rietz knew he wanted to go into the field of actuarial science, but MSU didn't offer it. Instead, MSU offered, and continues to offer, a strong mathematics program.

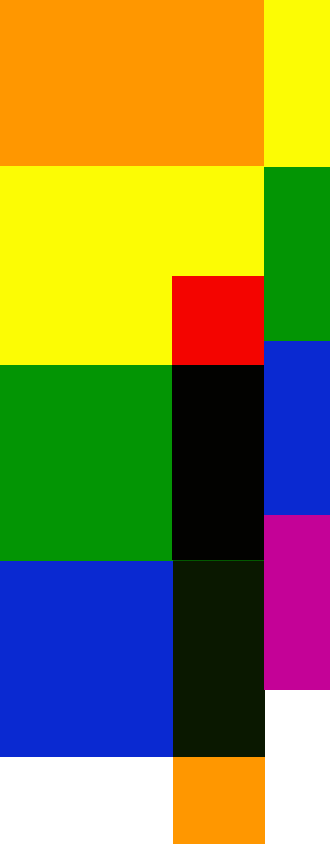
It was during that time that two professors took interest in Rietz – Gerry Ludden and James Stapleton. At that time, there were 10 actuarial science exams a student had to pass to go into the field.

"There were two professors who took time out of their schedule to help me prepare," Rietz said during a visit to campus for Grandparents University this summer.

Rietz completed three of the 10 exams during his time at MSU. After he graduated in 1970 with a degree in mathematics, he started work for Lincoln National Life Insurance Agency in Fort Wayne, Indiana. His career led him back to Michigan to work for Watson Wyatt Worldwide (now Towers Watson), the oldest actuarial firm in the country.

Eventually, Rietz helped with recruiting, and turned back to MSU's strong math program to look for employees. It was when he was working for Deloitte that Rietz met Yang Wang, chair of MSU's Department of Mathematics at the time.

Yang was interested in starting an actuarial science program, and Rietz worked with him and others, including Albert Cohen, in its development. In 2012, students began having the option to major in actuarial science through the College of Natural Science.



HENRY NG

Alumnus opens Ohio's only clinic specifically for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) patients

Henry Ng was in the middle of medical school when he decided to take a year off to work for the American Medical Student Association.

The Honors College alumnus graduated in 1996 with his biochemistry degree from the College of Natural Science and was in good standing in the College of Human Medicine. In fact, he had been accepted into the college without having to take the MCAT as one of only 10 students in the early admission-based Medical Scholars Program.

“I had this plan and desire to go into medical school,” he said.

Ng’s decision then to pause his medical school education raised the eyebrows of a lot of his classmates and professors – but it ultimately connected him with his health care mission.

“That was one of the first times I got a view into the many diverse views in health care, looking at people of color, women, LGBT...that left a very lasting impression on me,” he said. “I began to see the bigger picture.”

As director of member initiatives for the association, Ng worked with medical students on their interests and connected them with various advocacy groups. Ng then moved back to Michigan to finish his clinical rounds in Saginaw, working with underserved populations.

He was then matched with the internal medicine/pediatrics program at MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Every resident is required to give a “grand rounds” talk before graduation and Ng was contemplating what his topic would be.

“It was during my residency I was able to reconnect some of the interests I had in medical school with issues of diversity and underserved people,” he said. “I gave a talk on LGBT health through the lifecycle. It was important to me as a gay man in medicine.”

Mentors at the hospital told him, “no one (has) really talked about that topic...basically ever,” but once Ng was done, the talk was well received.

Ng became chief resident in 2005, and every year has given a version of that talk. As others heard about it, he’s been asked to visit more hospitals to speak.

By 2007 it’s wasn’t just talk anymore.

Ng was working full-time and going to school for his master’s degree in public health part-time. The hospital paid for his schooling by assigning him wherever there was a need. He worked with many adults and children with special needs and it was during this time that he realized there should be clinical care for LGBT patients.

He assembled some data and put together a business plan for the hospital to create the Clinical Service for Pride (now PRIDE Clinic) – Ohio’s only clinic for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) patients.

“There’s not a lot of us doing this work in Ohio, unfortunately,” Ng. said. “(We’re) drawing people from other places.”

Ng is now president of the board for GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality and director of internal medicine/pediatrics for MetroHealth.

He’s closely following the impact to health care following this year’s U.S. Supreme Court ruling granting marriage protection to same-sex couples.

“It’s going to change to some degree who is uninsured in this country (or underinsured) because they weren’t able to get domestic partner benefits (or spousal benefits),” Ng said.

But cultural competency training and education for health care providers is “still lagging,” he added.

Ng credits MSU for encouraging him and other students to focus on health and humanities coursework. Most of the classes he took in this specialization were Honors courses, he added.

“Those courses were important for me to understand there was a broad influence in health care,” he said. “It’s about taking care of people in all of their dimensions, with their family, where they live, work and play.”

Ng also got involved with the hospital’s mobile care program, which drives a van to area high schools so doctors can conduct sports physicals; talk about issues like depression, sexuality and sexually-transmitted diseases; and test patients who think they may be pregnant.

Ng says most of his time is spent in clinical care, but about a third of his time is also spent researching and teaching.

“This is the kind of practice I wanted to have,” he said.



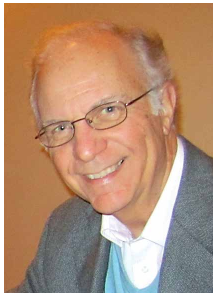
ALUMNI UPDATES

1950s

Edward Williams Jr. (1959) is the owner of Professional Practice Sales, which is engaged in the brokerage of veterinary practices in the northeastern portion of the United States. He's a licensed veterinarian in Connecticut and a real estate broker in five northeastern states.

1960s

Jack Armistead (1965) retired as provost at Tennessee Technological University in 2011 after a faculty career at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and deanships at James Madison University and Tennessee Technological University. Since his retirement, Armistead and his wife live in Athens, Georgia. They have three children and three grandchildren.



Douglas Durasoff (1966) is blissfully retired and still actively singing. He competed the entire Messiah with Orchestra Seattle/Seattle Chamber Singers.

Diann (Fox) Geronemus (1969) is the author of medically related professional articles and the recipient of numerous awards in social work and home health. She's involved in advocacy on behalf of disabled adults and the elderly at the community, state and federal levels. Geronemus is a member/officer of the Board of Trustees for the South Florida Chapter National Multiple Sclerosis Society. She's also a member/officer of Broward Meals on Wheels.

1970s

Steven Arnett (1973) recently published the comic novel, "Winners and Losers."



Michelle (Collet) Kriz (1972) retired and is now working as a volunteer, certified Guardian ad Litem for the 13th Circuit Court in Hillsborough County, Florida. She represents children who've been removed from their homes for abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Lynn (Herrington) McCurdy (1978) retired from United States Air Force in 2008 and moved back to Michigan. McCurdy is now working for Virtual Radiologic Corporation.



Robert Rietz (1970) was named to the Investment Committee of the Detroit General Employees Retirement System by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder. Rietz retired as director in the Detroit office of Deloitte Consulting LLP and now lives in North Carolina.

1980s

Laura Calkins (1983) is tenured at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. In the History Department she teaches the history of China, international radical movements, modern revolutions and historical methods. Calkins was director of the Women's Studies Program at Texas Tech from 2007-10, and is now director of graduate studies for the History Department. She published a research monograph with Routledge Press in 2013, "China and the First Vietnam War, 1947-1954."

Roger Reini (1985) received the James M. Crawford Technical Standards Board Outstanding Achievement Award from the Society of Automotive Engineers. Reini is currently a senior engineer at Ford Motor Company in the electrical and electronic systems engineering organization.

Juddith Stoddart (1984) was named interim associate provost for graduate education and dean of the Graduate School at Michigan State University. Stoddart has served as an associate dean of the Graduate School since 2011 and as an assistant dean from 2007-2010. She also has served as coordinator of University Fellowship Programs, associate chair and director of graduate programs for the Department of English, and is an associate professor of English.

Cheryl Walsh (1985) was awarded a writing residency at Brush Creek Foundation for the Arts, near Saratoga, Wyoming.

1990s

Wesley Borucki's (1992) second book, "Ronald Reagan: Heroic Dreamer," was released by Nova Science Publishers. It is a biography of the 40th president of the United States for Nova



Science's "First Men, America's Presidents" Series, for which he also wrote "George H.W. Bush: In Defense of Principle" that was published in 2011. More information about the book can be found at the publisher's website, www.novapublishers.com.

2000s



Grace (Myers) Casteel (2012) graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law magna cum laude.

Steven Holben (2007) received his master of business administration with distinction from DePaul University with a concentration in Business Strategy and Decision Making. He also became a finance manager at Eng Commercial Finance.

Autumn (Thomas) Marton (2004) and her husband moved to Seattle and celebrated the birth of their second daughter. She also co-founded a company, Skyship Industries, which provides document management software for lawyers and accountants.

Judith Murphy (2006) received her Ph.D. in immunology and microbial pathogenesis from Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences.

Sean Murphy (2003) moved from the private sector into public service as an attorney doing primarily civil appeals and civil rights litigation.

Seth Murray (2001) was promoted to associate professor with tenure at Texas A&M University. Murray runs



a quantitative genetics and corn breeding program. He was awarded the 2014 Crop Science Society of America's Young Crop Scientist Award (for researchers under 40 who have made significant contributions to the field of Crop Science). He was also awarded the 2013 National Association of Plant Breeders Early Career Award.



Vinay Prasad (2005) wrote a book with his colleagues at the University of Chicago

titled, "Ending Medical Reversal: Improving Outcomes, Saving Lives."

ALUMNI **UPDATES** CONTINUED

Kristen Pratt (2008) was named one of “10 Chicagoans Making a Difference” by *Newscastic.com*. Pratt is the Chicago Conservation Corps (C3) program coordinator for The Chicago Academy of Sciences and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. Pratt was a 2007 Udall Scholar.



Austin Scott (2005) is a fiscal analyst with the House Fiscal Agency within the Michigan House of Representatives.

Jessica Suisman (2007) was featured in the “Grad Factor” series for MSUToday. The series showcased some of the Spartan trailblazers who help keep MSU at the forefront of discovery.

Keith Tenbusch (2008) summited Mt. Kilimanjaro with other engineers from all over the world in support of the charity organization RedR.

Matthew Thesier (2008) has worked with Ford Motor Company for more than four years and graduated in 2015 from the Executive MBA Program at Michigan State University.

Megan Thoma (2009) is in year three of practice as a chiropractic physician in Chicago, Illinois. After graduating from Michigan State, she moved to San Jose, California to attend Palmer College of Chiropractic West. Since graduating from Palmer in 2012, she began practice at the Universal Health Institute, a multi-disciplinary natural health care clinic in downtown Chicago.



Petra (Canan) Trudell (2009) has been writing blogs for the Wall Street Journal about her life living abroad in Japan.

Alyssa Meyer (2011) is pursuing two master’s degrees in energy and Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University.



She was awarded a 2015-16 Boren Fellowship to return to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Her fellowship year will include continued study of Uzbek and Russian language at the advanced level (both of which she began studying at MSU), as well as data collection for her master’s thesis. Her research seeks to quantify the effects of Kyrgyzstan’s energy insecurity on everyday life through household surveys on energy access. She began this research as a 2012-13 Fulbright scholar to Kyrgyzstan.

Sarah Smaga (2013) is a PhD candidate in molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale University.



2010s

Joseph DeLeon (2011) is a Ph.D. student in the University of Michigan’s Department of Screen Arts and Cultures.

Olivia Jamrog (2015) qualified for the Under-23 World Championships as a part of the women’s quadruple sculls.

Andrew Jessmore (2012) completed his master’s degree in public health from the University of Michigan.



Jessmore was awarded the 2013-2014 Active Minds National Distinguished Young Alumni Award for outstanding achievements in the field of mental health advocacy.

Alisha Johnson (2012) spent the last three years since graduation teaching English abroad, first in Northern France and then in Mallorca, Spain.

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Patricia (Pat) Bergeson (1973, Arts and Letters)
Robert (Bob) Rietz (1970, Natural Science)
Gail Rogers (1988, Agriculture and Natural Resources)
Clifton (Cliff) Wells (2009, Broad College of Business)

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Secretary Elizabeth (Liz) Kidd (2005, James Madison)
Treasurer Devin Schindler (1983, James Madison)
Jack Armistead (1965, Arts and Letters)
Alyssa Harvey Dawson (1991, Communication Arts and Sciences)
David Snyder (1971, Arts and Letters)
Patricia (Pat) Bergeson (1973, Arts and Letters)
Robert (Bob) Rietz (1970, Natural Science)
Gail Rogers (1988, Agriculture and Natural Resources)
Clifton (Cliff) Wells (2009, Broad College of Business)

**Additional members will be added during the 2015-16 academic year*



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Planned and current gifts offer the benefits of membership in Michigan State University's major donor recognition societies

PRESIDENTIAL SOCIETIES

WILLIAM J. BEAL SOCIETY

\$10,000,000 and above cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$15,000,000

Named in honor of the famed botanist, William J. Beal, at Michigan Agriculture College from 1870 - 1910. Just as Professor Beal sowed seeds and created experiments that would take generations to complete and left MSU a better and more beautiful place for generations to come, donors in this society create a better Michigan State that will last and continue to improve.

JOSEPH R. WILLIAMS SOCIETY

\$5,000,000-\$9,999,999 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$7,500,000

Named in honor of Joseph R. Williams, the first president of the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan, now known as Michigan State University. Williams is best remembered as a key advocate of the distinctly innovative educational philosophy that took root in East Lansing. He understood the importance of the land-grant system to education and displayed a dedication to the college's success. He made MSU the pioneer land grant university.

CLIFTON R. WHARTON SOCIETY

\$2,500,000-\$4,999,999 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$3,750,000

After a distinguished career in international affairs, Clifton R. Wharton became Michigan State University's 14th president in 1970. This society honors his leadership and ability to remain calm in spite of the tumultuous time on U.S. campuses rising from antiwar sentiments as well as fiscal problems resulting from budget cuts. Notably, his tenure was marked by successful efforts to maintain the quality of MSU's academic programs and his commitment to the education of the economically and educationally disadvantaged.

FRANK S. KEDZIE SOCIETY

\$1,000,000-\$2,499,999 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$1,500,000

Named for the eighth president of Michigan State University, the Frank S. Kedzie Society is one of the university's most prestigious donor recognition groups. Kedzie served as president from 1915 - 1922 and is considered a pioneer for bringing private support to the university. In addition, Kedzie is recognized as the driving force behind early alumni involvement.

SOCIETIES

ROBERT S. SHAW SOCIETY

\$500,000-\$999,999 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$1,000,000

Honors the memory of President Robert S. Shaw, who served as acting president on three separate occasions before officially being named president in 1928 - 1941. He introduced new courses including hotel administration, public administration, geology, geography, and physical education for women. Contributions at the Shaw Society level allow significant expansion of existing quality programs as well as the initiation of new programs, endowments and scholarships in much the way Shaw did during his time at MSU.

THEOPHILUS C. ABBOT SOCIETY

\$250,000-\$499,999 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$500,000

Honors the memory of MSU's president from 1862 - 1885, Theophilus C. Abbot. When he assumed the presidency, the future of the college was anything but certain. Abbot, however, was able to maintain the prestige of the nation's first agricultural college by firmly establishing a curriculum of "scientific agriculture." Abbot Society donors reflect the steadfast loyalty and versatility exhibited by President Abbot.

JONATHAN L. SNYDER SOCIETY

\$100,000-\$249,000 cumulative giving or, documented planned gift of at least \$200,000

Honors the memory of Jonathan L. Snyder, who served as president of MSU from 1886 - 1915. He was the first MSU president to actively market the university to prospective students through promotional literature, correspondence, and invitations to visit campus. He also advocated training women at MSU. Snyder Society donors help Michigan State achieve the level of innovation and ingenuity that President Snyder embraced.

Honors College
campaign
goal of
\$13 million



GIVING CLUBS

JOHN HANNAH SOCIETY

\$50,000-\$99,999 or, documented planned gift of at least \$100,000

Honoring the memory of President John A. Hannah, who served the university for 46 years, 28 of them as MSU's 12th president. President Hannah was noted for expanding MSU from a respected regional undergraduate-oriented university to a nationally recognized research university.

BEAUMONT TOWER SOCIETY

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Chartered during the university's first capital campaign and named for the one landmark that so thoroughly symbolizes Michigan State University, its history and traditions. Beaumont Tower was made possible by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Wesley Beaumont and embodies both the spirit of our university and the spirit of private philanthropy.

PRESIDENT'S CLUB

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Established in 1963, named to honor the presidents who have guided Michigan State to its present eminence.

ESTATE GIVING

Linda E. Landon was an MSU librarian, a beloved resource for students and faculty from 1891 - 1932. She also was the first female instructor on campus. The Landon Society honors individuals and families who have remembered Michigan State University through charitable estate and gift planning. To qualify for membership in the Landon Society, donors may select any of the following gift plans:

- Charitable bequest through a will/revocable living trust
- Charitable gift annuity
- Charitable remainder trust
- Charitable lead trust Donors also qualify for membership in the Landon Society when they name MSU as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement plan, or deed of a personal residence or vacation home with retained life estate to Michigan State University.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS HONORS COLLEGE DONORS

The Honors College is indebted to its many supporters. We are grateful for alumni, friends, and organizations who have committed through financial contributions, to fostering our mission as a leader in promoting academic excellence and enrichment. The generous individuals on these pages are listed by donor society, reflective of their cumulative giving to MSU. The 2014-2015 gifts to the Honors College are invaluable in supporting the efforts of our exceptional students.

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ADS 60th anniversary

Over two weekends in the winter, top high school students and their families attended the Alumni Distinguished Scholarship competition – an annual Michigan State University (MSU) tradition that celebrated its 60th year in 2015.

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