

# Spartan

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI MAGAZINE

SPRING 2023

## Making Our Place in the Future

*With the groundbreaking of the new Multicultural Center, MSU is creating a space for Spartans to find themselves and each other*

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**CAMPUS PLANS  
& UPGRADES**

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**BIG STEPS IN  
NANOMEDICINE**

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# A Letter to Our Readers

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“Many are hurting and struggling to express the heartbreak and despair in knowing this violence took the lives of three young Spartans and other Spartans sustained serious injuries.

This past February, the violence on our campus came as a shock to Spartans everywhere. Here in East Lansing, the collective trauma and grief is palpable to this day. Many are hurting and struggling to express the heartbreak and despair in knowing this violence took the lives of three young Spartans and other Spartans sustained serious injuries. The incident will have a lasting impact on the hearts and minds of so many MSU community members. The long, difficult journey to healing has hardly begun.

In our sadness, please remember that none of us are alone. We are a community. We will grieve together—and we will heal together. I hope we can all find comfort and support in each other, share our sorrow and pain, hold our loved ones close, stay strong and show love and kindness in all that we do.

The ways we have come together, from near and far, in person and in spirit are a testament to Spartan resilience. In the coming issues of this magazine, you may see further coverage on the healing process and community response. Until then, please take care of yourselves, your family and your friends, and keep a place in your heart for those affected.



Nick McLaren, '99

ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF ALUMNI



# GO GREEN, WHEREVER YOU ARE

No matter how far you venture from East Lansing, the Spartan community is always around the corner. Reconnect with campus and fellow Spartans by joining your local MSU Alumni Club.

→ Find a club at  
[go.msu.edu/alumni-club](https://go.msu.edu/alumni-club)



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# Spartan

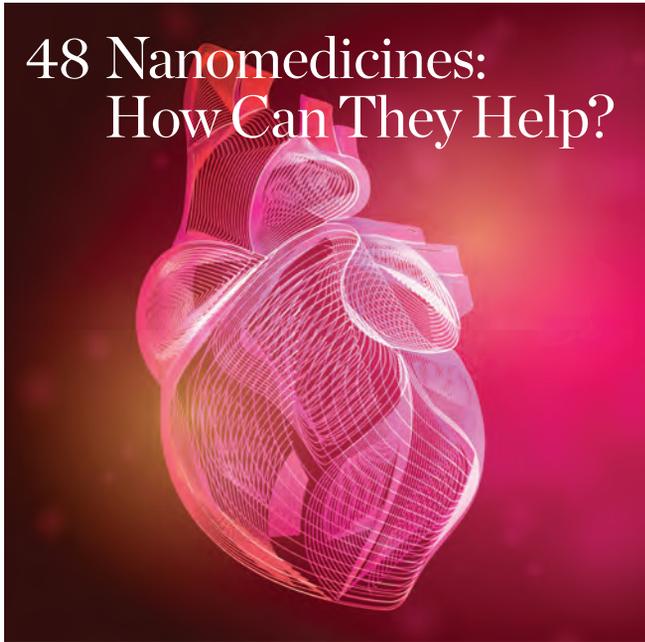
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Established in 1873 by William J. Beal, the Beal Botanical Garden is the longest continuously operated university botanical garden in the country.

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[go.msu.edu/Spartan-mag](https://go.msu.edu/Spartan-mag)

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Email address changes to: **UADV.Records@msu.edu** Or mail: **UADV Records, 535 Chestnut Rd., #300, East Lansing, MI 48824**

**ABOUT THE COVER:** Neely Bardwell (right), a fourth-year student at James Madison College and North American Indigenous Student Organization co-chair, and Drue Bender, also a fourth-year James Madison student, celebrate the groundbreaking of MSU's long-awaited Multicultural Center.

**Photographer:** Chase Stanton, University Advancement

# Find something new to love about MSU!



New and archived stories, videos and audio  
that'll jump off the screen and into your heart.



MSU Alumni Office  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

[go.msu.edu/stories](https://go.msu.edu/stories)



“Our campus is a pride point for its beauty and longevity, enabling transformation for future generations.”

# For Love of Place

I love cranes in the air. Yes, cranes in the air! Both the avian kind that made their way northward over our E. Lansing skies this month and the terrestrial kind that are enabling the transformation of our physical landscape. As envisioned in our 2030 strategic plan, MSU is engaged in an inspiring example of placemaking on our East Lansing campus and university sites across Michigan.

During graduation weekend, I had the opportunity to ask seniors about their favorite places on campus, and their answers included a wide range of built and natural environments. This feedback reinforces the importance of our University Facilities and Land Use Plan, which centers on enhancing our quality of life and work while nurturing a sense of community and belonging. This is something many felt strongly about as we reclaimed the physical campus after the tragedy of Feb. 13.

The plan’s four overlapping strategies include enhancing and expanding academic and research facilities, providing efficient access to resources and collaborative amenities, prioritizing pedestrian safety, and embracing the natural environment’s ability to teach and heal. These strategies all combine to support student, faculty, and staff success while nurturing individual well-being.

We’ve already made great progress with the STEM Teaching and Learning Facility, which is our first academic facility built with state support in nearly 50 years. It’s a brilliant showcase of inviting spaces

for collaboration and creativity. We’re also constructing a multicultural center, exemplifying our commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming community.

There are several new facilities in the planning stages, including an engineering and digital innovation center, a health education building, a plant and environmental sciences building, and a student recreation and wellness center. We’re also working with our partners in Detroit and Flint to further embed our research and educational programs within these communities, a cornerstone of our land-grant mission. And, we’re planning upgrades to the dairy facility and greenhouses to continue our partnerships with agricultural communities around Michigan.

This summer there will be detours on campus due to work around the Farm Lane bridge and on Service Road. But I promise, it will be worth the wait!

Overall, I’m thrilled about the cranes above and on campus and the expectant future of MSU’s placemaking initiatives. I invite you to join me in celebrating, visiting and enjoying the spaces that create a sense of belonging on the banks of the Red Cedar and beyond.

Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D.

INTERIM PRESIDENT  
MSU FOUNDATION PROFESSOR

# ONE DAY. ONE GOAL.



# ONE BIG THANK YOU!

**O**n Tuesday, March 14, Spartans near and far came together to make a better tomorrow.

MSU's 2023 #GiveGreenDay campaign raised more than \$1,287,700 million to support students and community initiatives.

MSU's 24-hour day of giving might be over, but your opportunity to give doesn't have to be!

[go.msu.edu/give-23](https://go.msu.edu/give-23)

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Next year's Give Green Day is

**March 12, 2024**

Learn more about #GiveGreenDay and see a full breakdown of the results at [givingday.msu.edu](https://givingday.msu.edu)



Winter 2023 magazine content is available online at: [go.msu.edu/spartan-winter-23](http://go.msu.edu/spartan-winter-23)

## THE JUNE ISSUE

It was a long winter. In some ways, it's still following a lot of us around.

It's understandable. We've been carrying heavy hearts, so let's continue to lift each other up in appreciation of all the things we hold dear.

As our spring issue creeps into the summer season, I'd like to thank you for your patience, your support and, most importantly, your resilience.

Be well, Spartans.

*Tim Cerullo, '08*  
EDITOR, SPARTAN MAGAZINE

## COSMIC RESEARCH

I was pleased to note in your Winter 2023 issue that MSU is actively involved with the U.S. space program. I graduated in 1963 with B.S. and M.S. degrees in the sciences. After completing my Ph.D. at UC Berkeley, I qualified for NASA's first group of Scientist-Astronauts in 1967. I remained active in my research with space travel and the primordial origin of life.

*Gary Steinman, M.D., Ph.D.*  
*B.S., M.S., '63*  
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

## WILLIE THROWER'S ACHIEVEMENTS

What an incredible football fact across collegiate and NFL levels (Making History Under Center, Winter '23).

MSC/MSU's pioneering efforts in integrating the game of football cannot be overstated!

*Dan Rodriguez, '05*  
ATLANTA, GA / VIA FACEBOOK

## 1956 ROSE BOWL

May I add another Clash Correction letter (Letters, Winter '23)? Michigan State did play UCLA in Pasadena, but it was in the 1956 Rose Bowl. MSU 17, UCLA 14. Boy they were mad!

It was then heralded as the largest non-military mass migration in U.S. history. Six complete passenger trains of students and fans set up by the MSU Student Government.

I know, I was there!

*Alan K. Stonex, '58*  
BOWLING GREEN, KY

# Spartan

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TO SUBMIT LETTERS Email [SpartanMagazine@msu.edu](mailto:SpartanMagazine@msu.edu). Or send mail to: Editor, 535 Chestnut Rd., #300, East Lansing, MI. 48824. We reserve the right to select and edit letters for length and clarity.

# HELPING AGRICULTURE ADAPT TO A CHANGING PLANET

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Through cutting-edge research, Spartan scientists are confronting global challenges like food insecurity and climate change by creating stronger, more resilient plants. With roots as the nation's first institution of higher education to teach scientific agriculture, today MSU is a top university for agriculture and forestry worldwide. **Spartans Will.**

Learn more at [msutoday.msu.edu/AgInnovation](https://msutoday.msu.edu/AgInnovation)

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

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# Beneath *the* Pines

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*News & Views from MSU*

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## The Future of Agriculture

MSU's renowned plant researchers are collaborating on solutions to grow more abundant, nutritious and resilient plants that will feed a growing population and adapt to a changing world.

*(Read more, page 10)*



# Spartan Scientists Collaborate to Help Agriculture Adapt

## COLLABORATIVE BY NATURE

MSU's 5,200-acre campus is outfitted with research laboratories, greenhouses and trial farms, and there are 14 outlying agricultural research centers strategically located throughout Michigan. Home to one of the highest concentrations of plant scientists in the world, the university fosters an interdisciplinary environment where collaboration and innovation are second nature.



With the latest research and technological innovations, scientists at MSU are working together to help meet pressing future challenges, including a projected 50% increase to the global population in the next century, and extreme weather anomalies that are expected to continue and worsen.

Teams led by Spartan scientists Bruno Basso, Seung Yon “Sue” Rhee, Federica Brandizzi, Felicia Wu and Phil Robertson focus their research on areas such as using high-tech solutions to increase crop yields, improving plant nutrition and

resilience, reducing threats to our food supply and uncovering hidden ways to improve farming.

Agriculture looks nothing like it did when Michigan State was founded as the nation's first institution to teach scientific agriculture 168 years ago. Thankfully, MSU scientists have the next 168 years in mind.

MORE ON **WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/ag-research](https://go.msu.edu/ag-research)

#11

MSU's global rank for plant and animal science.

-U.S. News & World Report

## STAY WELL AND INFORMED



“It is important to take mental health holidays from news and social media, especially if you find yourself having strong negative physical or emotional responses to it. For some, this may require stepping away, for others, it might be changing how they get their news.

- Nicole Buchanan, professor of ecological-community psychology and the clinical director and founder of Alliance Psychological Associates, PLLC in East Lansing, MI.

# Butterfly Garden Promotes Hope and Healing

On March 13, members of the MSU community gathered at the International Center on campus for the installation of the butterfly garden exhibit, “Together We Heal, Grow and Soar,” featuring folded-paper butterflies.

Organized by AgeAlive, a program in the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and the Asian Studies Center’s Japan Council, the exhibition includes thousands of paper butterflies made by MSU students, faculty and staff, as well as local residents. Participants wrote messages of hope on each butterfly.

The exhibits are designed, created and installed by Zahrah Resh, AgeAlive’s artist-in-residence. Resh’s first garden was installed at the Spectrum Health Cancer Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, inspired by her own cancer survival story.

“The project brings people together,” said Resh, who’s based in Lansing. “It gives people a sense of belonging and a sense of pride and accomplishment because they contributed to a community project for everyone to see and enjoy.”



Zahrah Resh  
AgeAlive's artist-in-residence.

# Cultural Vogue Strikes Again

MSU's Asian Pacific American Student Organization (APASO) held its 20th Cultural Vogue, the university's largest event celebrating and exploring the cultures and experiences of the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) community on campus. Each year, this event brings together faculty, staff and students to watch performances by members of the APIDA community and host a special guest speaker. This year's event marked APASO's 40th anniversary.

The organization was founded in the fall of 1982 following the murder of Chinese

American Vincent Chin in Highland Park, Michigan. The event sparked a movement in Asian American civil rights activism throughout the nation.

"Cultural Vogue speaks volumes to the community," said Anna Lin, APASO adviser in the Office of Cultural and Academic Transitions. "For us to be able to showcase all the different cultures, histories, arts from the Asian Diaspora in this space is empowering."

MORE ON  
**WEB** | Learn more online:  
[go.msu.edu/vogue](https://go.msu.edu/vogue)

## MSU DEBATE QUALIFIES FOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT FOR 27<sup>TH</sup> YEAR IN A ROW

MSU Debate qualified three teams to the 77th annual National Debate Tournament. The event was hosted by Wake Forest University in Chantilly, Virginia, where the Spartans made a run to the Sweet 16.

MSU has a history of success at the event — the team has qualified 27 consecutive years and has won the national tournament three times.



DANE ROBISON



**Beal**  
Botanical Garden  
**150**  
YEARS

**Share your  
memories of  
Beal Garden!**

*Send stories  
and photos to  
[wjbeal@msu.edu](mailto:wjbeal@msu.edu)*

## **BEAL GARDEN CELEBRATES 150 YEARS OF PEOPLE, PLANTS AND PLACE**

Established in 1873 by William J. Beal (pictured below), the Beal Botanical Garden is the longest continuously operated university botanical garden in the country and is listed on the Michigan State Register of Historic Places. This living laboratory, located along the Red Cedar River in the heart of MSU's campus, encourages learning and exploration of the natural world through collaborative programming, research, teaching and public engagement. In 2023, Beal Botanical Garden celebrates 150 years of learning and making memories. Join us in commemorating decades of plants and people coming together to make this place such a meaningful part of our campus. Share your Beal Garden memories with us online or plan a visit throughout the year as each blooming season unfolds.



**2000+**

Number  
of plants  
represented  
in the Beal  
Botanical  
Garden  
collection

## WHAT IS KBS?

Established in 1989, the Kellogg Biological Station is one of 28 NSF Long-Term Ecological Research sites nationally and is the only one dedicated to understanding the ecology of agricultural systems. With a focus on row crops, the 34-year-old program studies how agriculture can be environmentally friendly without harming yields. The station is located about 60 miles southwest of the main MSU campus.

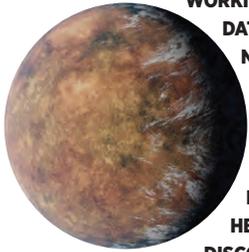
# Grant Helps MSU Answer New Questions About Environment

The W.K. Kellogg Biological Station Long-Term Ecological Research program at Michigan State University recently received a renewal of its foundational grant from the National Science Foundation, reaffirming its future and status as one of the country's premier research sites. "This grant provides the opportunity to answer new questions about how ecological systems are responding to global environmental changes and how we will work to understand the resilience of our ecosystems," said Nick Haddad, a professor in the Department of Integrative Biology in the MSU College of Natural Science, and a KBS faculty member.



COURTESY KELLOGG BIOLOGICAL STATION

## A WORLD AWAY



WORKING WITH DATA FROM NASA'S TRANSITING EXOPLANET SURVEY SATELLITE, MSU HAS HELPED DISCOVER AN EARTH-SIZED PLANET OUTSIDE OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM.

NAMED TOI-700 E, THE PLANET FALLS WITHIN ITS STAR'S HABITABLE ZONE, MEANING THE NEWFOUND PLANET COULD BE CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING LIFE AS WE KNOW IT.

# New Potential for Ancient Mint Plant

Spartan researchers have found that the mint family of herbs has diversified their specialized natural characteristics through the evolution of their chemistry.

“Over millions of years, plants have adapted and evolved for their particular niches where they thrive, and that means that these chemistries are diverse and have clearly adjusted to their environment,” said Björn Hamberger, an associate professor and the James K. Billman Jr., M.D., Endowed Professor in the College of Natural Science. “We try to identify pathways to these specialized metabolites that plants make.”

Those mint enzymes offer the potential to create plant-natural products in the lab. “Including,” said Hamberger, “natural, good-smelling mosquito repellants.”



MORE ON  
**WEB**

Learn more:  
[go.msu.edu/mint](http://go.msu.edu/mint)



## SURGEON RECOGNIZED FOR WORK ON OPIOID-FREE PAIN MANAGEMENT

MSU Health Care orthopedic surgeon and MSU Athletic Team physician, Toufic Jildeh, '11, recently received two top awards for his research on opioid-free pain control after rotator cuff surgery by the Arthroscopy Association of North America. Jildeh earned top honors in the categories of Excellence in Clinical Research and Excellence in Resident/Fellow Research.

## COMING IN HOT



David Ferguson, associate professor in the College of Education, is the first ever to receive an exercise physiology-related grant from NASCAR. The grant is expected to address the growing concerns of heat exhaustion a race car driver may experience during competition. “We’re going to learn a lot about how drivers respond to heat,” said Ferguson. “NASCAR is involved, which means our data can influence safety of all the cars.”

MORE ON **WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/hot-cars](https://go.msu.edu/hot-cars)

# DNA REPAIR DISCOVERY COULD IMPROVE BIOTECHNOLOGY

**K**athy Meek, a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine, and collaborators at Cambridge University and the National Institutes of Health have uncovered a previously unknown aspect of how DNA double-stranded breaks are repaired.

In their new report, two distinct DNA-PK protein complexes are characterized, each of which has a specific role in DNA repair that cannot be assumed by the other.

“It still gives me chills,” says Meek. “I don’t think anyone would have predicted this.”

Meek’s team and their collaborators previously published studies that revealed two different protein complexes, called dimers. Many have wondered why two dimers would exist, instead of just one. Now we know: one complex recruits enzymes that fill in lost information, while the other activates cutting enzymes that remove damaged, or “dirty,” ends.

The discovery could have implications for cancer diagnostics and therapies, as well as other advancements in biotechnology.



## ABOUT USAID

Established in 1961, USAID is the world's premier international development agency and a catalytic actor driving development results. USAID's work advances U.S. national security and economic prosperity, demonstrates American generosity, and promotes a path to recipient self-reliance and resilience.

# Partnering to Transform STEM Education in Malawi

MSU is partnering with Malawi's higher education system to increase access to and completion of STEM courses and programs.

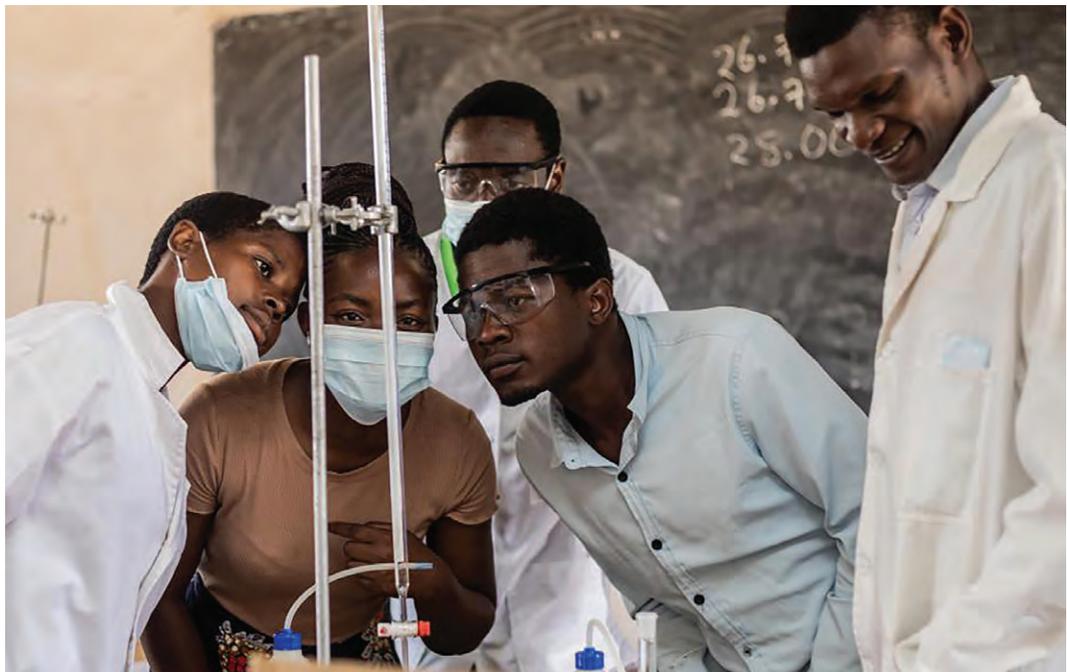
"The project will support Malawi's evolution and growth by increasing the number of youth able to thrive in STEM-related and entrepreneurial jobs that improve the national knowledge economy," said Christopher Reimann, project co-lead and senior academic specialist in the College of Education's Office of International Studies in Education.

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Transforming Higher Education Systems project, MSU will help build capacity within Malawi's higher education ecosystem to promote sustainable economic prosperity and self-reliance for Malawians. For this work, MSU received a \$17 million grant from USAID.

**“** *This program extends MSU's long history of partnership with African universities and reflects our focus on supporting the success of all students by addressing disparities in access and closing achievement gaps.*

**– Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D.**  
MSU Interim President

MORE ON **WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/USAID](https://go.msu.edu/USAID)



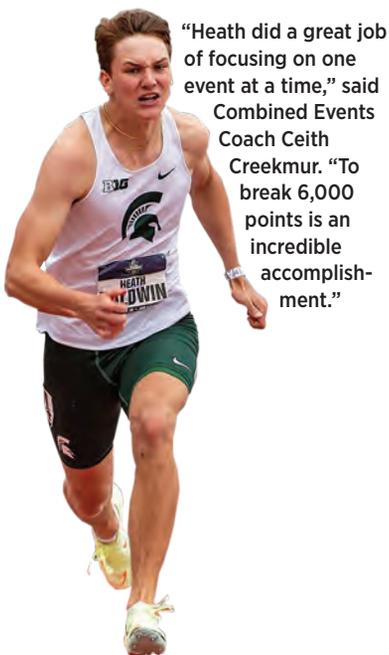
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Number of Spartan athletes recognized with Academic All-Big Ten Honors in fall 2022.

## BALDWIN EARNS ALL-AMERICAN HONORS

Behind a record-breaking performance, Michigan State track & field senior Heath Baldwin finished seventh in the heptathlon with 6,000 points at the NCAA Indoor Championships in March.

For the third time this season he broke the school record, most recently after scoring 5,959 points to capture the Big Ten title on Feb. 25.



“Heath did a great job of focusing on one event at a time,” said Combined Events Coach Ceith Creekmur. “To break 6,000 points is an incredible accomplishment.”



## Gymnastics Finishes Strong

No. 9 Michigan State scored a 197.550, the sixth-best score in program history, to finish second at the Big Ten Championships in Coralville, Iowa. MSU collected two individual titles, a first since 2017, while four Spartans were named to the All-Championship Team.

For the second straight year, the Spartans qualified for the NCAA Regionals, this time as a No. 3 seed.

### Individual Titles:

- Freshman Sage Kellerman won the vault title with a career-high 9.925
- Junior Delanie Harkness collected the bars title with a 9.950
- Nikki Smith was named Big Ten Freshman of the Year
- Head Coach Mike Rowe earned his second-straight and second overall Big Ten Coach of the Year award



# Coach Suzy Merchant Steps Down

After 16 seasons, Suzy Merchant made the decision to step down as head basketball coach in March to focus on her health.

“It is with a heavy heart that I announce I am stepping down from Michigan State University due to health reasons,” Merchant said in a statement. “After much consideration and consultation with my health care providers, I have come to the difficult decision that it is in my best interest. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the entire Michigan State community.”

Since joining MSU as head coach in 2007, the Traverse City, Michigan, native raked in 327 wins, two Big Ten titles and Big Ten Coach of the Year honors in 2011. She coached some of MSU’s most prolific scorers, including two-time All-American Aerial Powers, ’16;

Spartans’ all-time leading scorer Tori Jankoska, ’16; and two-time All-Big Ten guard and Honorable Mention All-American Nia Clouden, ’21—all of whom went on to become WNBA first-round draft picks.

While it’s easy to tout her on-court achievements, Merchant’s legacy reaches far beyond the gym. In 2016, Merchant founded the empowHER leadership retreat. The retreat helps inspire young girls and give them skills to take on personal and professional challenges in life.

“I have had the privilege of coaching some of the most talented and dedicated young women in the country,” Merchant continued in the statement. “The opportunity to mentor, lead and empower young women has been the honor of a lifetime.”

MORE ON **WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/suzy](http://go.msu.edu/suzy)

## FIVE FACTS & FIGURES FROM SUZY MERCHANT’S CAREER

- 1 | 327-186 Record at MSU
- 2 | Two Big Ten titles (2011, 2014)
- 3 | Big Ten Coach of the Year (2011)
- 4 | Secured 10 NCAA Tournament Berths for MSU
- 5 | Recruited and Coached 52 All-Big Ten Players

# Thanks to You, Give Green Day 2023 Yields \$1.28 Million in Support for Students

*On Tuesday, March 14, 2023, MSU's annual #GiveGreenDay campaign raised \$1,287,700 in support for students and programs at the university.*

The results mark the fourth year in a row that the annual 24-hour, social media-driven campaign has surpassed \$1 million.

Notably, this year's campaign netted more than \$145,000 for the Spartan Strong fund, a fund created to provide support for the evolving needs of the individuals most critically impacted by the violence the MSU community experienced on February 13. The initiative was highlighted locally by WILX with stories and a phone bank during the station's news broadcasts on Give Green Day.

The MSU Federal Credit Union was the official Give Green Day sponsor, providing matching funds that encouraged new donors to participate.

Throughout the day and night, alumni clubs worldwide as well as university faculty, staff and students connected with Spartans to spread the word about dozens of crowdfunding projects, and each of MSU's colleges encouraged support for important initiatives and needs.



## GIVE GREEN DAY BY THE NUMBERS:

65%

PERCENTAGE OF GIFTS COMING FROM MSU ALUMS

5,664

TOTAL GIFTS GIVEN ON MARCH 14TH, 2023

18%

PERCENTAGE OF GIFTS MADE BY FIRST-TIME DONORS

145K

DOLLARS RAISED FOR SPARTAN STRONG FUND



# Newly Renovated School of Packaging Building Opens

MSU celebrated the opening of the newly renovated MSU School of Packaging building on April 20, following a fundraising campaign that raised more than \$10 million.

“This significant expansion of our facilities, enabled by the generosity of donors and stakeholders, will reinforce MSU’s long-standing leadership in packaging education,” said MSU Interim President Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D.

Established in 1952, the MSU School of Packaging was the first of its kind in the U.S. and is now the largest packaging program in the country. The School of Packaging consistently earns top rankings in its field across a wide range of rating platforms.

The renovations help to modernize teaching and learning by adding flexible class-

rooms that seamlessly integrate technology. Collaboration-friendly spaces invite industry partners to engage with students, and the modernized facilities will attract faculty by providing the proper space and tools to conduct world-class research.

The project was supported by commitments totaling over \$10 million from alumni and donors, including lead gifts from Amcor, Charles and Jackie Frasier, and Ring Container Technologies.

MORE ON  
**WEB**

Learn more:  
[go.msu.edu/new-school](http://go.msu.edu/new-school)

# #1

Best College  
for Packaging  
Science in  
the U.S.

- College Factual

## DEASE NAMED EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Michael Dease, professor of jazz trombone at MSU, was awarded the 2023 Ellis Marsalis, Jr. Educator of the Year Award at the Jazz Education Network Conference in Dallas. “It is humbling to be selected. There are many, many jazz educators I would pick over myself,” Dease said. “My hope is that this honor will help encourage the mentors in jazz to keep investing in the youth.”

Dease began teaching music as an eighth grader and is now considered one of the world’s eminent trombonists, both as an educator and a performer.



PROFESSOR OF JAZZ TROMBONE MICHAEL DEASE WITH THE JAZZ EDUCATION NETWORK (JEN) PRESIDENT LONNIE DAVIS (LEFT) AND JEN PRESIDENT-ELECT JOSÉ DIAZ.

**MORE ON WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/dease](https://go.msu.edu/dease)



**MSU Theatre Professors**  
Tina M. Newhauser (left)  
and Alexis Black

## Staged Intimacy, By the Book

**M**SU theatre professors advocate for safety, boundaries and better storytelling through intimacy direction education, an emerging stage and screen discipline that aims to respect the boundaries of the individuals performing moments of intense physical contact.

“Intimacy direction is so important because it empowers actors to have agency, to have body autonomy in every part of the show,” said Alexis Black, assistant professor of acting movement in the Department of Theatre. Black, a former Broadway fight director and certified intimacy director, educates theatre students and professionals about the importance of boundaries and consent.

Black has been teaching intimacy direction workshops since 2020 alongside Tina M. Newhauser, head of MSU’s BFA Stage Management Program. The pair published “Supporting Staged Intimacy: A Practical Guide for Theatre Creatives, Managers and Crew” in late 2022, and held a book signing in February at the Drama Book Shop, a famous hangout for theatre professionals in New York City.

Newhauser believes intimacy directors will become a regular part of productions. “We didn’t always have fight directors, and they eventually became the norm,” she said. “I think having intimacy directors will just be the norm, which is what we want. Considered and cared for should be the norm.”

**MORE ON WEB** | Learn more: [go.msu.edu/staged](https://go.msu.edu/staged)

**Content warning:** This story contains content that may be triggering to members of our community.

**Note:** Survivor identities will remain anonymous throughout this article. Their testimonials will be shared under the pseudonym "Survivor."

## A Commitment to Supporting Survivors

MSU's Center for Survivors and Sexual Assault Healthcare Program are recognized as national models for responding to sexual violence. Tana Fedewa, the center's executive director, is developing this program to be a comprehensive resource for survivors to receive healing and begin taking steps to seek justice.

Fedewa was no stranger to this work when she took the lead of this team more than eight years ago. She joined the program after receiving her Master of Social Work from MSU and later completing internships in domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

"When I began leading this unit in 2015, there were four full-time staff," says Fedewa. "We have continued to add passionate, creative and highly skilled therapists and advocates to our team."

The center now employs 28 full-time staff members as well as 100 crisis intervention volunteers, providing a range of free therapy, advocacy and crisis services to anyone who has experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. It serves faculty, staff, students and community members, though therapy services are only available to MSU students.

Fedewa says one of her hopes is to continue expanding and adapting to meet the needs of survivors across the campus community.

"I cannot even begin to describe it; it's changed my life," says Survivor 1.



"I could barely get out of bed after my assault, and now my therapist has helped me want to live again and live fully."

The center currently is funded through a federal Victims of Crime Act, or VOCA, grant administered by the state of Michigan as well as through donations and some university funding. Since 2015, this grant funding has increased from less than \$300,000 per year to more than \$1.7 million per year as the program has grown to meet the demand for additional therapy and advocacy services.

This funding has also been used to create a campus Sexual Assault Response Team and the Sexual Assault Healthcare Program. In addition, the Center for Survivors utilized these funds to create a trauma-informed space on campus where survivors can have their healing and justice needs met in a single location instead of having to navigate multiple offices.

"I have an advocate who is supporting me through a current court case," says Survivor 2. "From understanding what is being said to processing through my feelings to attending court with me, she is my first-touch person I reach out to whenever I have any questions or concerns."

"The center's services are unique in our ability to provide wraparound, holistic care," says Kathleen Miller, associate director of the Center for Survivors.

The Center for Survivors provided nearly 4,500 therapy sessions and almost 2,700 advocacy services in 2022.

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[go.msu.edu/center](https://go.msu.edu/center)

# Dr. Jay Gottschalk Wants You to Think About You

*In the wake of the global pandemic, Dr. Jay Gottschalk, '04, '17, is dedicated to helping the Spartan community come together.* BY SARAH CARPENTER, '00

I wish I could tell my brain to stop, but it's motivated to understand humanity," said third-generation Spartan Jay Gottschalk, Ph.D., M.S., APRN, AGCNS-BC, CHPN, PMHNP-BC. Gottschalk boasts three degrees from Michigan State, plus another three from other schools. Not bad for a boy from the woods of Mio, Michigan.

"I get my deep love of nature from my dad and my passion for learning from my mom," said Gottschalk. His dad graduated from MSU's Fisheries and Wildlife program, and his mom was a teacher. "When I started kindergarten, I read every book on that year's list in one day. I wanted to make my mom proud."

Gottschalk got his B.A. and M.S. degrees in accounting from the Eli Broad College of Business because he loved how numbers influenced decision-making. He moved to Chicago to work in the corporate world, but nurtured his passion for helping others as a hospital volunteer.

"I've always been curious about people's spiritual paths and how to be more mindful of others. So, I started looking for new ways to connect, to make a difference," he said.

He went back to school and got his BSN from the University of Illinois

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“The Commitment to Compassion is about meeting our human needs and being kind to ourselves. When we do that, we become kinder to everyone else.”

at Chicago, followed by his MSN from MSU. Next, he earned his post-master's certificate in psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner studies from Alverno College and a Ph.D. from Marquette University's College of Nursing.

While completing his Ph.D., the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Like many of us, Gottschalk experienced burnout and mental fatigue—but he also found a source of inspiration.

"People were generally defaulting to compassion for each other," he said. "I thought, 'why can't we do this all the time?'" That's when I wrote the Commitment to Compassion."

As an assistant professor of health professions at MSU's College of Nursing, Gottschalk

starts each class he teaches by reading the commitment—a statement about kindness toward yourself and others—aloud. It didn't take long for his words to catch wind, their influence growing from his classroom throughout the university and beyond.

"We're good at giving grace to others in times of struggle, but we're not good at giving it to ourselves. The Commitment to Compassion is about meeting our human needs and being kind to ourselves," he said. "When we do that, we become kinder to everyone else. I call it a practice because nobody does it perfectly."

He believes the Commitment to Compassion can help us foster consideration for ourselves and others. Gottschalk, who starts every day by reciting it himself, welcomes the opportunity to share the practice with anyone and everyone.

"I love planting the seeds of compassion and watching people nurture and grow it in their own spaces," he said. "We shouldn't need a reason to be kind to each other. We should default to it."

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Jay Gottschalk, Ph.D., M.S., APRN,  
AGCNS-BC, CHPN, PMHNP-BC  
Eli Broad College of Business,  
B.A. and M.S. '04  
College of Nursing, M.S. '17



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## Dr. Gottschalk's Commitment to Compassion

I, *[name]*, dedicate myself to keeping an open heart and open mind in my interactions with others. I will assume that others have positive intentions behind their actions, and I will avoid telling myself stories that assume the worst about why someone behaved in a particular way. I recognize that by being a source of compassion for others, I am helping to reduce not only the physical suffering of the people around me, but their emotional suffering as well. By being this source of compassion, it is my sincere wish that I am helping others to spread compassion to the people they interact with throughout the day. Most of all, I promise to be compassionate with myself and recognize that I am a human being who will make mistakes. I will make mistakes, and that is OK. I will do my best to learn from those mistakes and use them as opportunities for growth in both my personal and professional life.

# The Kids Are Going To Be Alright

*Detroit native and Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree Dr. Sirrita Darby, '14, '21, is helping her students and her city find a positive way forward.* BY KELLEY FREUND



As a high school English teacher in Detroit, Dr. Sirrita Darby witnessed her students experiencing trauma stemming from issues like racism and the threat of community violence. But her pleas to administrators for more counselors were answered with, “There’s not enough money.” Or, “Students need to learn to be tough.”

“That wasn’t good enough for me as an educator,” Darby says. “So, I turned my classroom into a space that would provide students with the healing they needed in school.”

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“ We believe in combating justice issues and healing the systems that perpetuate harm for young people first.

Every Friday, Darby led “healing circles,” where students could talk about their trauma, listen to others and begin to heal together. As word of these circles spread, the group was invited to other schools. When Darby’s students told her they wanted to turn the project into an after-school program, she took the challenge one step further: Why not launch a nonprofit?

Today, that nonprofit, Detroit Heals Detroit, helps local youth develop coping strategies and obtain resources necessary to transform their pain into power. Over the past two years, the organization has hosted community cleanups and a film festival, launched a “healing hub,” helped paint a mural in downtown Detroit and delivered self-care kits to students with items to support

their mental health through art and writing.

As the group’s co-founder and executive director, Darby is one of just two “adults” within the nonprofit; everyone else ranges in age from 12 to 21. Darby says it was her MSU experience that laid the foundation for her career guiding a youth-led organization. As an undergraduate, she was the type of young adult she now works with, serving as an intercultural aide, a Black Caucus member, and on the executive board of the university’s Black Student Alliance. As a junior, a policy class opened her eyes to the challenges the U.S. education system faces and inspired her to be a teacher.

“Michigan State not only helped me discover more about our world,



**Sirrita Darby**  
James Madison College, '14  
College of Communication Arts  
and Sciences, '14  
College of Education, Ed.D. '21

but it prepared me to go out into that world and make the change I wanted to see,” Darby says.

Those changes include adjustments to political systems that force trauma on marginalized students and make it difficult for them to find healing support. This is why Detroit Heals Detroit considers themselves a social justice organization that does mental health work.

“We believe in combating justice issues and healing the systems that perpetuate harm for young people first,” Darby says. “Many organizations don’t focus

on that part. But we need to ensure this trauma doesn’t continue for the next generation, and that’s what makes Detroit Heals Detroit stand out.”

Darby recently made Forbes’ 30 Under 30 list for her work with the nonprofit. She hopes to continue to scale Detroit Heals Detroit, which is already partnering with local schools through professional development workshops, demonstrating their methods to teachers and administrators. In the future, Darby and her team want to develop a social and emotional learning curriculum that can be used in

schools, programs and other organizations nationwide.

“Our ultimate goal is to put ourselves out of business,” Darby says. “We want a society where an organization like ours doesn’t have to exist because there is a framework that shows how to handle trauma and healing.”

**MORE ON  
WEB**

Learn more  
[go.msu.edu/detroit-heals-detroit](http://go.msu.edu/detroit-heals-detroit)

# The Fast Track

*At 29 years old, Jason Murray, '14, recently ascended to vice president of utility services at RailPros, a nationwide provider of railroad services. But he doesn't mind being the youngest person in the field.* BY DREW MENTOCK

**I**n 2014, Jason Murray graduated from MSU with a B.A. in human resource management and an additional major in communications—and it only took him three and a half years. But his short time on campus brimmed with possibilities.

It started at the Career Services Network, where Murray worked as a student supervisor. He then went to work in the Center for Spartan Engineering under the guidance of Garth Motschenbacher and Jennifer Jennings.

“Career Services is the reason I’ve had the success I’ve had,” Murray said. “I truly attribute it to Garth and Jennifer and the opportunities and the introductions they gave me when I was an undergraduate. That’s why I’m so, so passionate about the university.”

The southeast Michigan native chose Michigan State after earning acceptance into the Broad Freshman Program, which helps students prepare for junior-level admissions into the school.

Murray immediately took on several on-campus responsibilities. In addition to his work with Career Services, he became a resident assistant for the Broad Freshman

“Michigan State was a huge cornerstone of my success. It’s an incredible school, and I had some huge role models and huge supporters. I feel blessed for that.”

Program and a teaching assistant for a public speaking communications class.

Amid a demanding course load and multiple jobs, he found time to cheer on MSU athletic teams, attending every event he could, from football games to cycling events. He was selected for Homecoming Court as a senior, and frequently volunteered in the community.

“I worked with Camp Kesem at Michigan State, which is a summer camp for kids whose parents have or had cancer,” Murray said. His time at the camp allowed him to hone his leadership skills while building a community. “I met a ton of great friends.”

Initially, he planned to pursue real estate but discovered a divergent career path while helping engineering students explore their own.



**Jason Murray**  
Eli Broad College of Business, '14  
Honors College, '14

Murray led a corporate tour for the Center for Spartan Engineering during his sophomore year spring break, planning a trip to Omaha, Nebraska. There, he met members of Union Pacific Railroad, which led to an interview and a job. Upon graduation, he started as a logistics associate and earned multiple promotions over four years before accepting a job in the utility services division of RailPros, a Texas-based



nationwide provider of rail and transit engineering and safety services.

“It’s a combination of everything I’ve enjoyed in my career,” Murray said. “I’m a liaison between business and engineering, which goes back to working in the College of Engineering. And I get to translate technical information into non-technical terms.”

Today, as vice president of utility services, he spends most of the year in a hard hat and steel-toed boots, visiting

work sites nationwide. He oversees engineers and field professionals—often with decades of experience—so Murray exceeds expectations and cultivates relationships to earn their respect and trust.

“It’s like I have 65 to 75 grandparents that are all looking out for me,” he said. “By being willing to learn, they were so willing to teach and give me a little bit of trust to help build the company.”

His story is still in its early chapters, but Murray is forever grateful for the opportunities his Spartan education afforded him.

“Michigan State was a huge cornerstone of my success,” he said. “It’s an incredible school, and I had some huge role models and huge supporters. I feel blessed for that.”



**Rear Admiral Sandy Adams**  
Communication Arts and Sciences, '78

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# Love, Leadership and Judo

*For Navy veteran Sandy Adams, '78, martial arts laid the foundation for her leadership skills. But her wife, Pat, is the foundation for her success.* BY SARAH CARPENTER, '00

Service is in Sandy Adams's blood—she was born on an Air Force base. Her dad, Thomas, served eight years before becoming an esteemed professor of physiology at MSU. Both of her grandfathers served—in the British army during World War I and the Marine Corps and Navy. But it wasn't until she became a Spartan that Sandy learned to lead.

"I was on the MSU judo team, and my coach, Jay Kim, planted leadership seeds by selecting me to teach judo to children one summer," says Adams. "That sparked my calling to be a leader. It changed my life."

When Adams graduated in 1978, the economy was weak and unemployment was rising. The MSU career office told her she was one of two journalism students offered a salaried position at the time.

"I was fortunate because I'd started by majoring in biology," she said. "The science and communications combination helped me stand out."

Adams packed her bags for her new position as a technical editor at a nuclear research laboratory in South Carolina. She soon started a judo club at the YMCA nearby.

"Judo just kept fueling my call to leadership," she says. "Within a few years, I knew if I wanted to be in leadership as a young woman in the late '70s, my best opportunity was the military."

Adams set her sights on the Navy and succeeded. In 1981, she got her

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“I was on the MSU judo team, and my coach, Jay Kim, planted leadership seeds by selecting me to teach judo.”

commission from officer candidate school in Newport, R.I., as a surface warfare officer—a new career field for women. Four years prior, women were not even allowed to serve at sea. Yet, within a year, Sandy led 80 men and women on a Navy ship based out of Italy. A year later, she was selected for an engineering position that required her to take a two-month course in San Francisco, Calif.

"One night after class, I took the bus to a gay and lesbian café in the city," recalls Adams. "I met my future wife there, Pat. It was love at first sight."

For the next 18 months, the pair bonded through letters and audio tapes. In late 1984, Adams transferred back to the U.S. and they moved in together.

"At the time, U.S. laws, culture and military policies led to LGBTQ people having to be very private and cautious," says Adams. "I realized I probably couldn't have a successful active-duty-at-sea career while in a relationship with Pat. We were always looking over our shoulders."

Adams left active duty in 1985. The couple moved to Southern California, and Sandy landed a leadership role at a civilian company. But it wasn't long before she returned to the Navy as a reservist.

She served in the Pacific, Desert Storm and the Pentagon. She was in Afghanistan in 2011 when the discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was repealed. Adams no longer feared court-martialing for being gay, but didn't feel it was the right time to come out. She was promoted to Rear Admiral (Lower Half)—one of the Navy's highest-ranking officers.

Two years later, Sandy was ready. She and Pat got married—making Adams the first openly gay admiral to marry in the Navy.

"We've been together 40 years, and I led in the military for 34. Pat is the foundation for my success," says Adams. "She sacrificed just like all military families do when their loved one deploys. I couldn't have done it without her."



Artistic rendering.  
Credit: SmithGroup.



# MAKING OUR PLACE IN THE FUTURE

After decades of advocacy, the construction of a freestanding multicultural center is now underway at MSU, giving all Spartans a place to connect, grow and truly be themselves.

**BY DANIEL P. SMITH**

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**L**ike generations of MSU students before her, Shiksha Sneha, '21, remained skeptical but resolute, guarded yet hopeful. While Sneha hoped MSU leadership would respond to students' intensifying push for a free-standing multicultural center on the East Lansing campus—and vigorously lobbied for such as a member of the aptly named Students for a Multicultural Building organization—decades of previous student advocacy for such a facility had fallen short of that victory.

“Honestly, it felt like an impossible task,” Sneha said of her group’s advocacy, which started in earnest in 2019.

On April 21, 2023, however, Sneha stood before an energized crowd assembled at the corner of North Shaw and Farm Lanes on the MSU campus. The “impossible task” had become reality. More than 250 MSU students, alumni, faculty, staff and leaders gathered for a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the campus’s newest building: the 34,000-square-foot Multicultural Center.

“This day is unreal,” Sneha began the program while standing before a green sign that fittingly read “Spartans Will.”

The Multicultural Center’s groundbreaking event offered a bricks-and-mortar example of MSU’s commitment to inclusion and acceptance. It created a promise of belonging on the MSU campus. And it honored the power of collective action.



NICK SCHRADER AND DERRICK L. TURNER, UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS



**TERESA K. WOODRUFF, PH.D.**  
MSU Interim President

The superlatives poured in from a flood of dignitaries in attendance. MSU Interim President Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D., called the groundbreaking ceremony “a milestone in the physical and cultural journey of campus and community.

“The Multicultural Center will afford us the physical spaces to have critical conversations, the cultural spaces to be ourselves and the affirming educational spaces, giving everyone a place to grow,” she said.

MSU Board of Trustees Chair Rema Vassar championed the Multicultural Center—a \$38 million facility slated to open in fall 2024—as a safe and welcoming gathering place embodying MSU’s values.

“It will be a place of light and of inspiration, of air, of peace,” Vassar said.

Thoughtfully and intentionally designed to drive student success and contribute to campus life through lively intellectual collaboration and cultural exchange, MSU Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D., touted the Multicultural Center as a place that would help facilitate connections and elevate the MSU experience.

“[It] will help deepen relations and strengthen the sense and feeling of community for Spartans to come many generations ahead of us,” Bennett said.



**SHIKSHA SNEHA, '21**  
Chief Diversity, Equity,  
& Inclusion Officer of  
the Associated Students  
of MSU.

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## A LONG, WINDING ROAD

While construction of the Multicultural Center is now underway, the seeds of the project were planted decades ago. On the heels of rising student activism in the 1960s and growing racial and ethnic diversity at college campuses in the 1970s, MSU students began pressing university administration for a campus multicultural center.

“As Michigan State students visited peer institutions and saw what they had, they returned here and began pushing more and more to make the MSU campus more conducive to their welfare,” said Lee June, a longtime MSU professor and administrator who first heard students’ pleas for a multicultural center not long after his arrival at MSU in 1973.

Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, calls for such a space sharpened.

In 1989, more than 100 students flooded the Hannah Administration Building for a 10-day study-in. That movement sparked then-MSU President John DiBiaggio to sign off on the development of the first MSU Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action (MSU IDEA) plan—an endeavor to advance “excellence through diversity within the Michigan State University community.” Three years later, MSU IDEA II featured 50 initiatives designed to prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion at MSU and spurred calls for a stand-alone, on-campus multicultural center.

Early on, June said MSU administration held various concerns about a freestanding multicultural center, from the ever-present challenge of funding to fears that such a center might drive self-segregation among students. Those concerns, coupled with students’ eventual departure from campus, frequently stalled momentum toward a freestanding building. That is, until another wave of students took up the charge.

In the early 1990s, a number of diverse student groups united to form the Council of Racial and Ethnic Students (CORES), a pivotal turning point in the accelerating advocacy for a freestanding multicultural center.

“Early in the game, it was largely Black students advocating for this, but when other racial and ethnic groups joined the movement and started pressing the university, things picked up,” said June, who was then





serving as MSU's vice president for student affairs and services.

CORES's coordinated push for a multicultural center resulted in MSU administration offering up two potential spaces: the basement of the MSU Union and Wills House, the historic home located in the campus's West Circle neighborhood. Lee recalls long, passionate and thoughtful discussion among student leaders about whether to accept one of the administration's proposed locations or to reject the proposal and continue the crusade for a freestanding building.

Eventually, June said, the students reluctantly agreed to an "imperfect solution" and reasoned "something would be better than nothing." They accepted space in the basement of the MSU Union, and the Multicultural Center opened there in 1999.

"I don't think central administration over the years saw how such a center would enhance the sense of belonging on campus," Lee said. "Students weren't being adversarial, but were rather saying, 'I love the university and want to see it become a better place.' They were advocating out of love."

## STEPS ALONG THE WAY

### 1. MARCH ON CAMPUS, 1960S

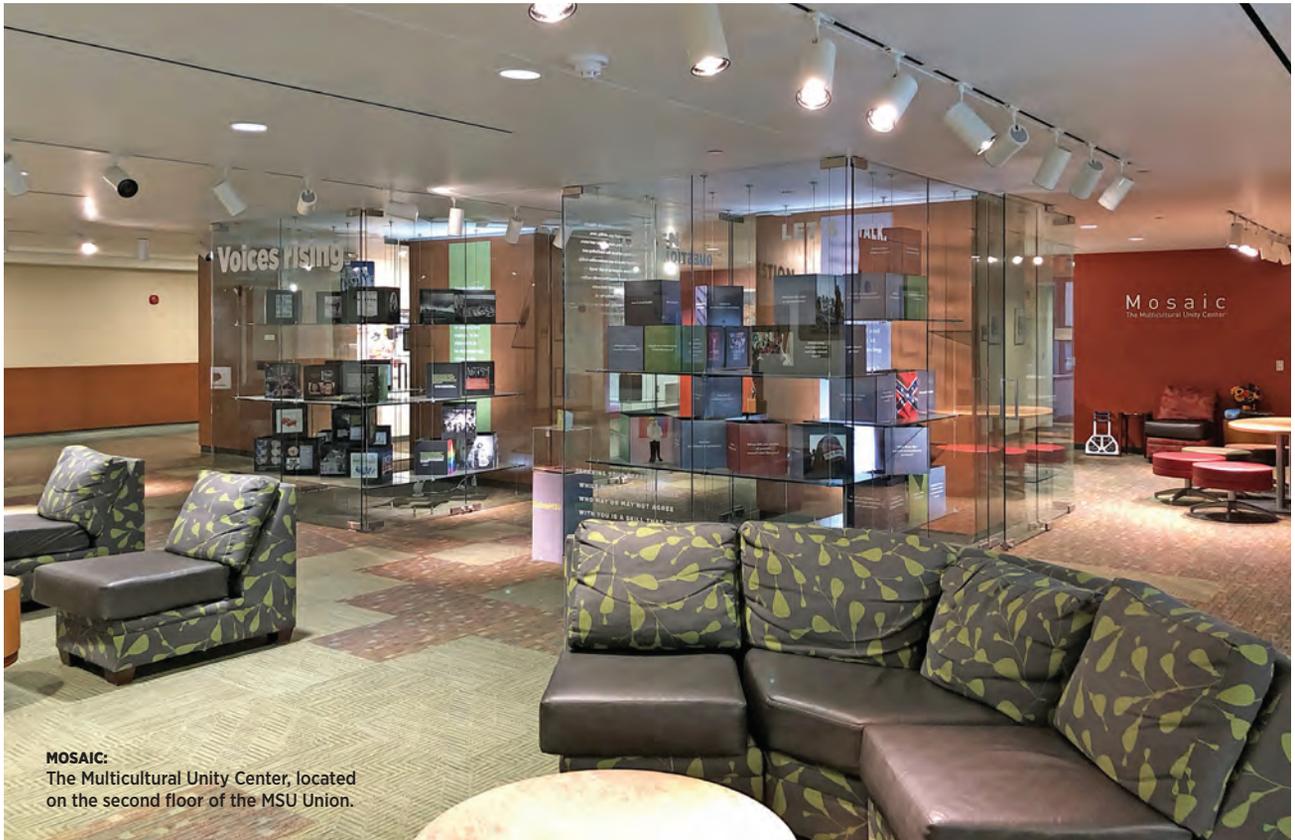
On the heels of rising student activism and growing racial and ethnic diversity at college campuses, MSU students began their push for a campus multicultural center.

### 2. STUDENT ACTIVISTS

A student who participated in a march on campus is interviewed by reporters.

### 3. LEE JUNE

Longtime professor and administrator has been supporting students and advocating for their success since the 1970s.



**MOSAIC:**  
The Multicultural Unity Center, located on the second floor of the MSU Union.

*“ We had a shared vision and mission led by the call for a freestanding multicultural building.”*

- MIRACLE CHATMAN, '20

## A DECADES-OLD VISION BECOMES REALITY

Though the century flipped and an on-campus multicultural center existed, student leaders did not abandon their vision for a bigger and more well-resourced space. In 2013, MSU administration moved the Multicultural Center to the MSU Union's second floor and rebranded it as MOSAIC: The Multicultural Unity Center.

But still, student advocacy for a stand-alone building remained.

In 2019, Sarah McConville, a James Madison College student and the chief diversity and inclusion officer for the MSU Residence Halls

Association, launched a petition to bring a freestanding multicultural building to the MSU campus. The petition, coupled with a number of well-reported racially charged incidents in and around MSU, generated a new and enterprising wave of activism around the appeal for a stand-alone multicultural center.

Leaders from CORES, the Council of Progressive Students (COPS), the Black Student Alliance and other student organizations formed Students for a Multicultural Building. The united group organized a three-day sit-in at the Hannah Administra-

tion Building and crafted a 10-point plan to present to then-President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.

“We had a shared vision and mission led by the call for a freestanding multicultural building,” said Miracle Chatman, ’20, who co-chaired the nascent organization.

Students posited that a more robust multicultural center would foster greater belonging university-wide. This, they contended, would improve retention rates for students from historically marginalized groups and stimulate a more inclusive, connected Michigan State community since the building would welcome all students.

“The students made a strong case that such a center would help students of color while also being a

positive factor for everyone at the institution,” June said.

Stanley embraced the idea of a freestanding multicultural center, which Lee called crucial to the project’s rapidly accelerating momentum after decades of slow progress. The formation of a steering committee and a feasibility study soon followed before the Board of Trustees approved the planning phase of the Multicultural Center project in September 2021. Decades of advocacy and lobbying, rallies and meetings, plans and proposals, had finally delivered action.

“There’s been a lot of time and energy sacrificed over the years, but that’s important because this center will impact student life on campus in a positive way,” Chatman said.

For June, whose mind is flooded with the names and faces of MSU students who pushed for a freestanding multicultural center over the last 50 years, the announcement served as a reminder that nothing worthwhile comes easy.

“When you deal with systems and try to improve environments, it can take a long time for things to come to fruition,” June said. “I’m elated Michigan State University came to the conclusion that such a center was needed to make the university one where everyone can feel they have a place.”

#### STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Students line the halls of the Hannah Administration Building.



#### OPEN DISCOURSE

Then-President Stanley talks with students.



## A PLACE TO WELCOME AND CONNECT

The moment the Multicultural Center project received the green light from the Board of Trustees, Vennie Gore, MSU's senior vice president for student life and engagement, championed process over product. Specifically, he wanted student, alumni and community voices to drive the building's design.

"This was an effort driven by students over the years, and the center needed to reflect that," Gore said, adding that the Multicultural Center's inclusive planning and creative processes resulted in a design that promises to stir intercultural learning, sharing and interaction. "The goal is a place all students can call home."

Designed by SmithGroup and punctuated by expansive windows facing the Red Cedar River, the Multicultural Center will feature multipurpose rooms, including a large, 300-person gathering space that can be divided into three equal classrooms, as well as an outdoor amphitheater created to host performances of music, dance, theater and other forms of cultural expression. Additional design elements have been included to drive interaction, such as a grand central staircase that doubles as seating, a living room and a community kitchen.

"It's a building for students wanting to build community and culture with one another," Sneha said.

Cultural celebration is also baked into the design, including an art gallery wall and a ceremonial fire pit honoring Indigenous communities, while offices for student groups and the Dreamer Center, a hub of resources for students of mixed-immigration status, will further drive a sense of belonging and connection.

"It's about having a stronger Michigan State University and making it easier for students to navigate the university and find their place on campus," Chatman said.

While the Multicultural Center is one of a number of recent and upcoming campus projects planned to facilitate student success and energize campus life—others include the Cherry Lane Fields Recreation Center, Campbell Hall Renewal and the STEM Building—it's a venue that holds special impact to many, given the decades-long advocacy behind its creation.

"I'm proud we were able to continue that legacy of advocacy for all those who came before us and bring this project forward," a smiling Sneha said. "Now, I cannot wait for the positive impact it will have on future Michigan State students."

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Learn more  
[go.msu.edu/multi-center](http://go.msu.edu/multi-center)



### THE HEART OF CAMPUS

#### 1. SOUTH SIDE ELEVATION

The southern side of the building faces Abrams Planetarium.

#### 2. TOP ELEVATION MAP

Map from above showing the different areas and room uses within the center.



## A HOME FOR ALL

**3. MULTIPURPOSE ROOM**  
North-facing windows of the center, overlooking the Red Cedar.

**4. MULTIPURPOSE ROOM FROM ABOVE**  
The room is intended to be able to convert into a cinema.

**5. AERIAL VIEW FROM THE WEST**  
The west side of the center, with Shaw Hall in the distance.

**6. SECOND FLOOR LIVING AREA**  
One of several areas in the center which are designed to enable people to comfortably congregate.

# Recent & Upcoming Campus Additions

From research and innovation to campus life and amenities, the academic landscape is ever evolving. To maintain its position as one of the world's top 100 universities (currently ranked in the top 6%) and a leading research institution, MSU's plans to nurture

innovative research centers, host top-ranked graduate programs and cultivate an international cohort of scientists and scholars are already underway. Take a look at just a few of the projects that are pointing our entire campus community toward a successful tomorrow.

## 1 The STEM Building (2021)

This award-winning 150,000-square-foot building opened in 2021 and provides classrooms, labs and collaborative gathering spaces to increase experiential learning and encourage interdisciplinary connections.



## 2 Student Recreation and Wellness Center

To meet the needs of an ever-growing body of active-minded enthusiasts on campus, this state-of-the-art fitness complex will replace IM West. Planning is underway for an early 2026 opening.



## 3 School of Packaging (2023)

With modern, flexible classrooms and collaboration-friendly spaces that invite industry partners to engage with students, this renewal, which was completed in April 2023, helps the school's academic spaces reflect its status as the nation's best in packaging science.



## 4 Spartan Greens Turf Complex (2022)

The complex, which opened in 2022, includes two artificial turf fields and a support services building, and hosts a variety of intramural and club sports, including flag football, ultimate Frisbee, softball and baseball.



## 5 | New Farm Lane Bridges

This 1936 construction is scheduled for a complete replacement. The new crossing will include a new, dedicated pedestrian bridge in addition to reimagined crossings for safe, barrier-free pedestrian, bicyclist and vehicular travel.



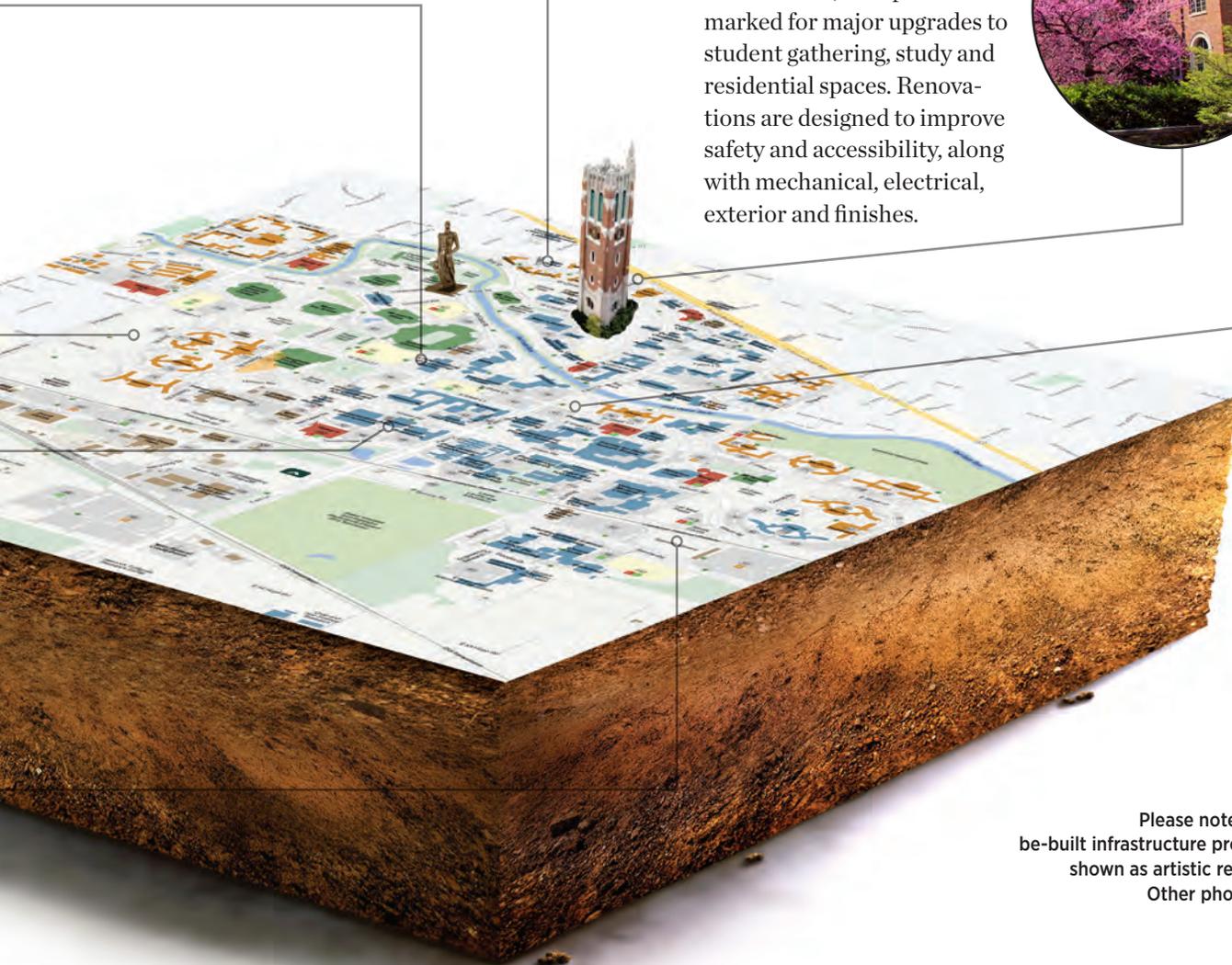
## 6 | Multicultural Center

The Multicultural Center broke ground in April 2023. Featuring spaces for meetings, activities, study, student organizations, reflection and personal health, the center will create an inclusive community that meets our diverse student population's social, emotional and intellectual needs.



## 7 | Campbell Hall Renewal

Built in 1939, Campbell Hall is marked for major upgrades to student gathering, study and residential spaces. Renovations are designed to improve safety and accessibility, along with mechanical, electrical, exterior and finishes.



Please note: Still-to-be-built infrastructure projects are shown as artistic renderings. Other photos: MSU.

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## THE STEM BUILDING

**Calling it “the most significant construction project of 2021,” the Associated General Contractors of America awarded the MSU STEM building for being the best construction management renovation project under \$99 million. The building also has received other awards recognizing its groundbreaking use of sustainable mass timber products in its construction.**

The project renovated the old Shaw Lane Power Plant, which had sat dormant next to Spartan Stadium and Wells Hall since being decommissioned in 1975, as the new structure’s

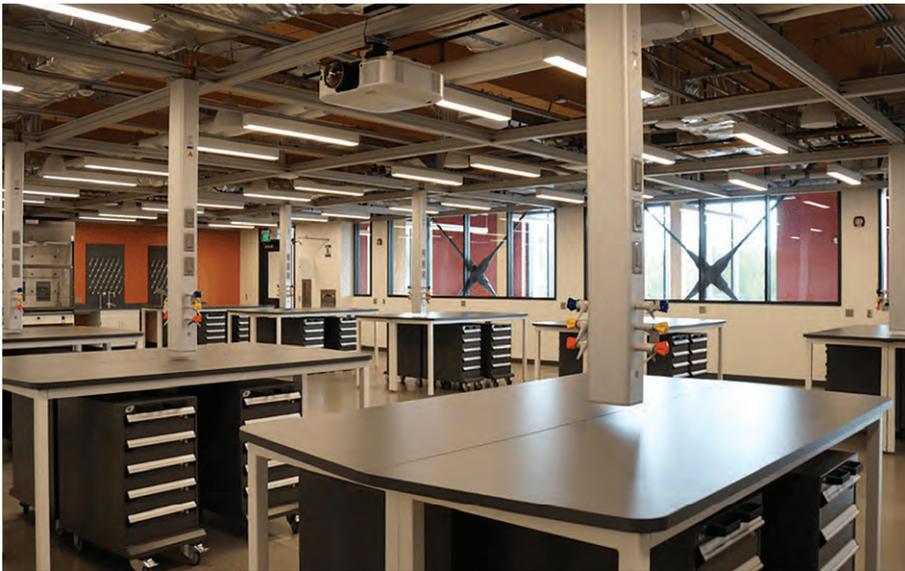
center with two additions built with carbon-sequestering mass timber instead of concrete or steel. It embodies the university’s goal of providing world-class education with classrooms and laboratory spaces designed specifically for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses.

Construction of the new building employed cross-laminated timber for floors and ceilings, and glue-laminated wooden columns, a first in Michigan. The project involved renovating 40,000 square feet in the old power plant and adding 120,000 square feet in the additions.

To feature the structure’s history as a power plant, designers made use of original building materials and machinery to create art pieces and seating, as well as saving a four-story boiler that serves as an anchor for student spaces.



NICK SCHRADER



“ The STEM Building project renovated the old Shaw Lane Power Plant with two additions built with carbon-sequestering mass timber instead of concrete or steel.

THE CONTINUAL  
PROCESS OF  
*Planning  
the Future*

“ Like our residential neighborhoods have engagement centers, nurse practitioners, tutoring, mentoring and study places—we want to break down the academic campus to do the same thing.

- STEVE TROOST, '82  
MSU Campus Planner

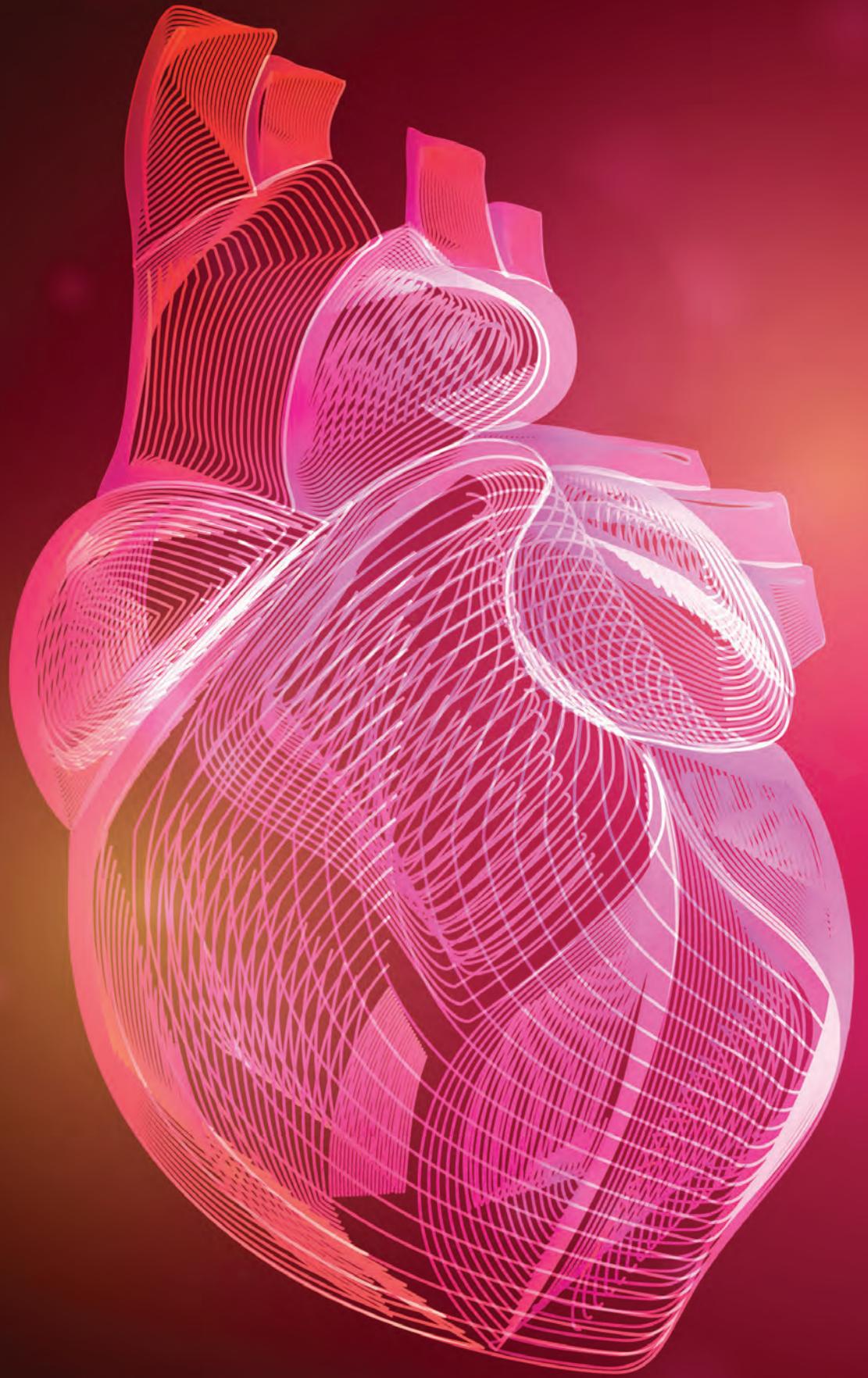
## Imagining the future of MSU together

Michigan State University has embarked on a comprehensive University Facilities and Land Use Plan, which will provide a flexible framework for the future of the East Lansing campus and statewide facilities. Guided by the University Strategic Plan, this planning process provides an opportunity to advance equity, bolster community health and enhance support systems for students, faculty, staff, alums and visitors through the physical environment of MSU's land and facilities.

Michigan State University has engaged the globally recognized architecture and planning firm Sasaki to create an updated campus plan that advances this vision. The resulting framework plan will provide us with a road map to guide MSU's future campus composition for the next generation. The success of this process relies on input from the MSU community, so we want to hear your vision!

In-person input sessions took place on campus (at the STEM building) during mid-April (pictured opposite). But additional input is still being solicited and gathered online until the fall of 2023. If you want to see the current status of plans and share your ideas, visit: [projects.sasaki.com/msu/](https://projects.sasaki.com/msu/)





**A S K T H E E X P E R T :**

# HOW CAN NANOMEDICINES HELP TO FIGHT CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE?

*Researchers at MSU are designing tiny, versatile particles—or nanomedicines—to help doctors better detect and treat cardiovascular disease.*

**BY MATT DAVENPORT**

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**“Came for the basketball, stayed for the science,” jokes researcher Bryan Smith about coming to East Lansing from Northern California in 2018. “Really, a former Stanford colleague offered me the tremendous opportunity to help jump-start the new Institute for Quantitative Health Science and Engineering (IQ) and a new department, Biomedical Engineering.” The Ohio native is glad to be back in the Midwest.**

Smith is an associate professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and director of the MSU T-NIE Lab—the Translational NanoImmunoEngineering Lab—in IQ. He and his team are developing new, innovative diagnostics and therapeutics to help patients affected by cardiovascular disease, the world’s leading cause of death.

“Both of my grandfathers passed due to heart attacks,” Smith said. “That was really my inspiration to pursue cardiovascular medicine.” That, coupled with “a growing internal agitation toward diseases that I naively thought should’ve been mostly solved by then” tells you everything you

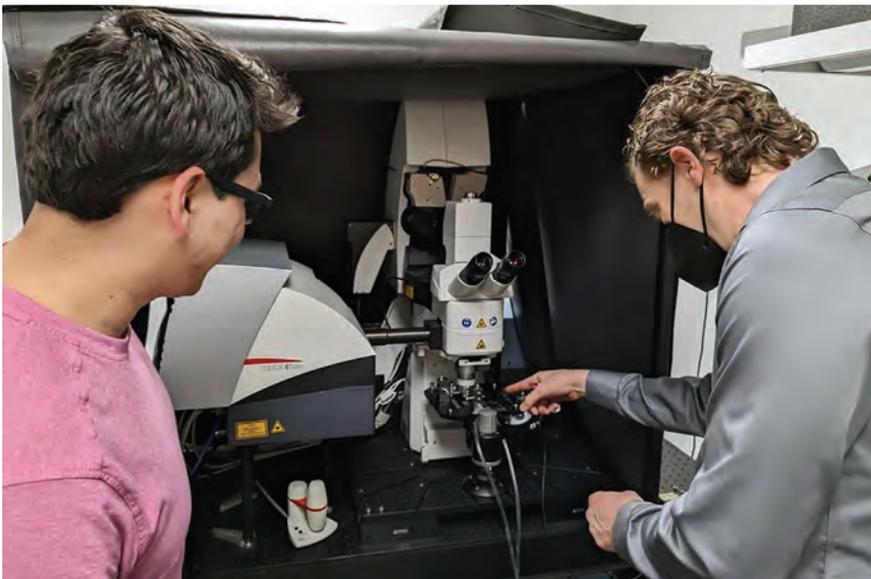
need to know about Smith’s commitment to his work.

In particular, Smith’s focus is nanomedicines: tiny, versatile particles that researchers are engineering to zero in on problem sites in the body to maximize a treatment’s power and minimize its side effects.

Smith was recently invited by the journal *Nature Cardiovascular Research* to provide an overview of nanomedicines in the realm of heart health for the research and clinical communities. We caught up with him to ask a few questions about what his work could mean for the world.



MATT DAVENPORT



**DR. SMITH IN HIS MSU LABORATORY**  
Bryan R. Smith is an associate professor of biomedical engineering within the College of Engineering and a member of the Institute for Quantitative Health Science and Engineering. His lab blends engineering, chemistry, biology, physics and medicine to develop new imaging and therapeutic approaches. He is developing novel nanotechnology-based strategies to harness the power of the immune system, creating novel diagnostic imaging and therapeutic agents for diseases including cancer, atherosclerosis and neurodegeneration.

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# Q&A

WITH DR. BRYAN SMITH

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“Nanomedicines can be engineered to be extremely, exquisitely selective for particular cells or particular organs, which would then lead to reduced or, ideally, no side effects.

## What is cardiovascular disease?

When we talk about cardiovascular disease, it isn't just one thing. It's all the issues that can affect the heart and blood vessels as well as the blood. It could be a disorder of the myocardial tissue that's pumping the blood, or a pacemaker issue, or ischemia, which is a lack of blood supply to a region. There are lots of different blood vessel disorders that all fall under cardiovascular diseases as well.

I recently had a relative with a cardiovascular disease who needed open-heart surgery. That was scary, but it didn't scare me as much as when I learned another relative had cancer. I feel like I didn't fully appreciate its severity. Why do you think that is?

Part of that fear is that cancer is us: Our own cells have gone “bad,” and now they're attacking us. There's something intrinsically frightening about that.

When it comes to cardiovascular disease, on the other hand, I believe people think that it's basically your plumbing has gone bad. It's something that just is supposed to happen over time. For most cardiovascular diseases, that's simply not true. The pathogenic mechanisms of a number of cardiovascular diseases actually parallel those of cancer.

We now know that cardio-

vascular disease is not just a disease of old age but something that can happen at any time in our adult lives.

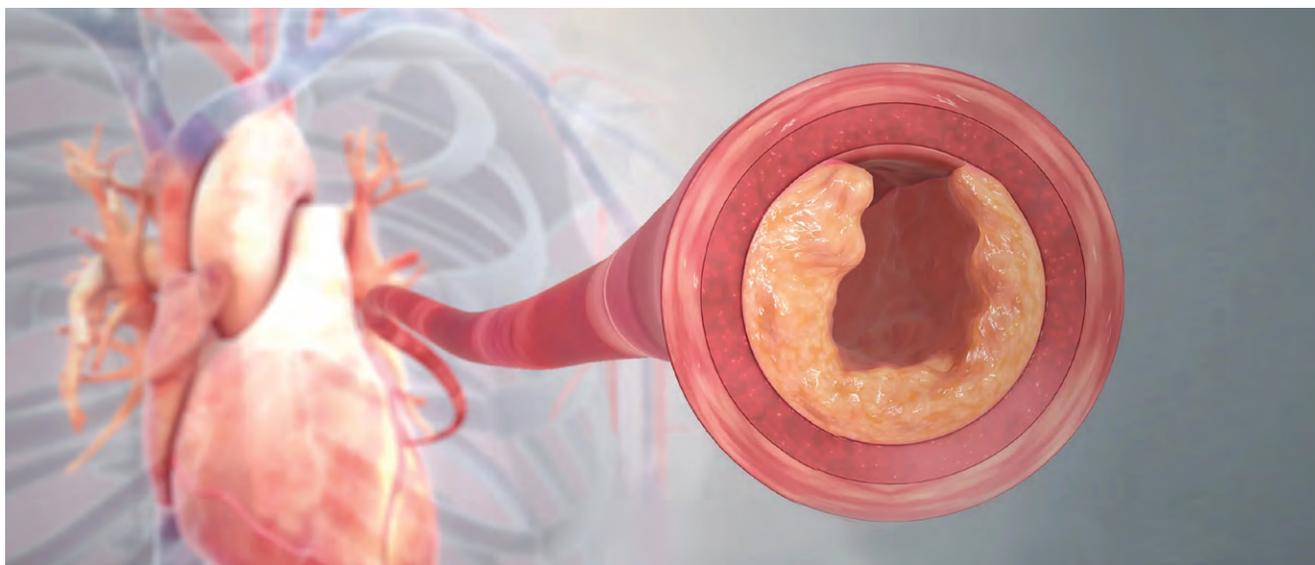
## What makes it so lethal?

The reason that cardiovascular diseases are so deadly is because every cell, every cubic millimeter of our body, depends on our heart to pump and perfuse blood and nutrients that we need to live. Thinking in that way, then, it becomes kind of obvious that if something goes wrong, it could be lethal.

## What are the opportunities for nanomedicine in the fight against cardiovascular disease?

One of the key limitations in current diagnostics and therapeutics is their propensity to cause unintended consequences or adverse side effects.

What if you could avoid most side effects by getting the medication exactly where you want it to go and nowhere else? Nanomedicines can be engineered to be extremely, exquisitely selective for particular cells or particular organs, which would then lead to reduced or, ideally, no side effects. This is where nanomedicine started. The first nanomedicines didn't actually treat the disease any better than the regular medicine, but they reduced side effects.



AN ILLUSTRATION OF ATHEROSCLEROTIC PLAQUE

Nanomedicines can also be multifunctional. A nanomaterial can contain a drug, or even lots of drug molecules, but it also can have certain mechanical, immunological and even electrical properties. That's really attractive, especially in cardiovascular tissues where those properties are all critical to proper function.

**Can you share an example of what you're working on in cardiovascular nanomedicine?**

One of the things we're doing is stimulating immune cells essentially to clean up the mess within atherosclerotic plaques.

When most people think about cardiovascular disease, they're thinking about heart attacks. Atherosclerosis—the buildup of plaque in the arteries—is what causes

the vast majority of heart attacks.

That makes it one of the key areas to treat if you want to reverse this statistic of cardiovascular disease being the No.1 killer of humans worldwide. We colloquially refer to it as “taking out the garbage.”

We've shown in preclinical trials that this nanotherapy decreases plaque size, stabilizes plaques and lowers inflammation in the disease site. That's likely to be critical in the continuing treatment and care of plaques.

**Where are nanomedicine therapies for cardiovascular disease in the pipeline now? How long before they might be ready to treat patients?**

We're still early in this field, especially compared with cancer

nanomedicine. But cardiovascular trials do exist. I think we'll see quite a few more clinical trials within the next five to 10 years, and I hope individuals will be on the lookout for those and consider enrolling if it's something that they and their physicians agree could help.

MORE ON **WEB** | Read the full Q&A online: [go.msu.edu/nanomedicine](http://go.msu.edu/nanomedicine)

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# Green & White

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*Spartans Connect and Inspire*

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## MSU UNION: FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

While the MSU Union didn't break ground until 1923, the student destination and gathering place had been part of campus plans since 1905. The growing student population spent the next two decades rallying for the Union's creation. In an early showing of Spartans Will, each member of the class of 1915 contributed \$5 (about \$145 today) toward the future project. Construction finally began a century ago when students, faculty and community members volunteered to pick up shovels and dig the building's foundation by hand, pictured above. Dubbed Excavation Week, the event demonstrated the strength of a united student body and remains a celebration of those who made the beloved campus landmark a reality.

6149

Tres Cruces Summit, Chile



# WHEREVER YOU ARE GO GREEN.

## SPARTANS ARE A GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

The desire to come together as a community is stronger than ever among Spartans.

No matter how far you venture from East Lansing, the Spartan community is strong and remains a force for good.

Whether attending events, serving local communities or engaging with a regional alumni club, there are many ways to connect with fellow Spartans near and far.

Spartans — by degree and at heart — are welcome to join in the activities, actions, and communities of 80+ alumni clubs and groups as we gather, support, serve, create, and reflect.

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→ View or register a service project  
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Georgia



Mid-Michigan



New York City



MSU Alumni Band

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# Class Notes

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*News from Spartans Around the World*

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## 1950s

**RUSSELL DORE, '59, M.S. '60** (Both in Social Science), recently published his first two historical fiction novels. The first, "Motor City Drama: Behind the Scenes Building the Big Three with Ford, Durant and Chrysler," features imagined conversations between the three automotive pioneers who put Detroit on the map. The second novel, "They Put America in the Air: Behind the Scenes Building the Commercial Aircraft Industry with The Wright Brothers, Bill Boeing and Donald Douglas," takes a similar

approach, providing the reader with an insider's perspective to conversations between American aviation pioneers.

## 1960s

**JIM SARGENT, M.A. '68, Ph.D. '72** (Both in Social Science), has published the sixth iteration of his Mickey Matthews Mystery series, "California Redwoods," through Doce Blant Publishing. The novel takes place in 1945 and follows detective Mickey Matthews as he attempts to solve a cold case in Northern California.

## 1970s

**CHRISTOPHER MYRON CLAXTON, '72** (Business), has independently published a novel entitled "Demons of Federal Misconduct: A Chicago Memoir!." Based on a true story, this book takes readers through two federal investigations, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, demons, angels and spiritual warfare.

**FAY L. LOOMIS, '73** (Arts and Letters, Honors College), **M.A. '75** (Arts and Letters), was featured in Kaleidoscope: Exploring

the Experience of Disability through Literature and the Fine Arts magazine, Issue 86. Loomis's creative nonfiction essay "At Sea" chronicles the author's response to health issues and the pandemic. Loomis's work was selected from more than 400 submissions considered for the award-winning publication from United Disability Services.

**MARY M. AUSTIN, '74** (Lyman Briggs), was recently honored with the 2022 Medallion Award by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

**STEPHEN SCHRAM, '75 (Communication Arts and Sciences)**, has retired after nearly 17 years of service as Michigan Radio executive director and general manager. Schram was recruited by then University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman in 2006. Under Schram's leadership, Michigan Radio expanded its reach and influence with consistently exceptional journalism on the most important topics of the day.

**SANDRA SWANTEK, '76 (Communication Arts and Sciences)**, was recently named president-elect of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry. Dr. Swantek is section chief of Geriatric Psychiatry and an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, Illinois.

**MICHAEL HECK, '79, MLIR '80 (Both in Social Science)**, has been reappointed as magistrate for the Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates by Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

## 1980s

**CYNTHIA WILKENING, M.S. '80 (Natural Science)**, recently published a book of thought-provoking and inspirational haiku poems "Water is Faithful: Haiku for Mind, Body, and Soul." Through her poems, Wilkening prays others will find that hope is not lost and that a relationship with the divine is not only possible but compelling.

**LOIS J. AREND, '81, Ph.D. '87 (Both in Natural Science), M.D. '92 (Human Medicine)**, was elected president

of the Renal Pathology Society (RPS). The RPS is an international medical society dedicated to improvement and dissemination of knowledge regarding the pathology and pathophysiology of renal disease. Dr. Arend is associate professor of Pathology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

**KRISTIN CLARK-TAYLOR, '82 (Arts and Letters)**, recently joined the website UExpress with a new advice column titled "Take My Hand." The weekly column offers old-school wisdom viewed through a modern-day sensibility and a gentle spiritual grounding. It will answer specific reader questions, and provide solution-driven exploration of the issues and challenges readers face in today's world.

**JAMES LENTINI, M.M. '84 (Music)**, has been featured in the album "Dimensions, Vol. 4: Works for Orchestra." Lentini's composition "A Distant Place" employs eight instruments including harp and guitar to portray the driving spirit that compels us to chase our dreams.

**SUSAN I. STEWART, '84 (Social Science), M.S. '90, Ph.D. '94 (Both in Agriculture and Natural Resources)**, was appointed to the Michigan State Waterways Commission by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Stewart is the chair of the board of directors at Irish Boat Shop.

**MARVIN D. BAISEL, '85 (James Madison)**, has been reappointed to the Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Baisel has served as a magistrate for the Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates since 2021.

**ERIC J. FRAHM, '86 (Agriculture and Natural Resources)**, has been reappointed to the Michigan Dairy Market Program Committee by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Frahm represents the Michigan Milk Producers Association and owns and operates Golden Elm Dairy.

**JAMES BACARELLA, '88 (Social Science)**, was recently elected Iosco County prosecutor and has been appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court Justice for All Commission.

**ROCH GAUSSOIN, Ph.D. '88 (Agriculture and Natural Resources)**, received the USGA 2023 Green Section Award from the United States Golf Association in recognition of Gaussoin's innovation in the putting green construction and management. A professor and extension specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Gaussoin has dedicated nearly 20 years to researching critical aspects of putting green construction and management.

**JEFFREY E. HORNING, '89 (Agriculture and Natural Resources)**, has been reappointed to the Michigan Dairy Market Program Committee by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Horning represents the Michigan Milk Producers Association and operates Horning Farms.

## 1990s

**RICHARD CLARKE, '90, M.S. '93 (Both in Natural Science)**, recently launched TreeWilder,

a subscription-based carbon offset program. TreeWilder supports robust tropical forest protection and exceptional renewable energy projects with subscription fees.

**STEPHANIE E. HIRCHERT-WALTON, M.S.W. '95 (Social Science)**, has been appointed to the Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Developmental Disabilities by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Hirschert-Walton is a school social worker for Eaton Regional Education Service Agency.

**ANNE N. SLEPER, '98, M.A. '00 (Both in Communication Arts and Sciences)**, was appointed to the Michigan Board of Speech Language Pathology by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Sleper currently serves as the lead speech and language pathologist at Ascension Borgess.

**KEVIN J. STACHOWIAK, '98, D.V.M. '00 (Both in Veterinary Medicine)**, has been reappointed to the Michigan Board of Veterinary Medicine by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Stachowiak currently serves as owner and veterinarian at Caseville Small Animal clinic.

**SCOTT VENTLINE, '98 (Business)**, was named a managing director by UHY Advisors in the Great Lakes region. Ventline is a leader and resource in the tax practice. UHY Advisors, Inc. is one of the nation's leading professional services firms and fifth largest in Southeast Michigan.

### 2000s

**CHRIS MILLER, '00 (Natural Science)**, was named one of OneAmerica's ASPIRE Awards winners. Miller, senior director of data governance and quality, was honored by the company for outstanding leadership.

**AARON L. DAVIS, '03 (Social Science)**, recently joined Michigan law firm Butzel in their Lansing office. He joins the firm as a shareholder.

**JEREMY MANSON, '03 (James Madison), J.D. '06 (Law)**, was recently named shareholder at Williams, Williams, Rattner & Plunkett, P.C. in Birmingham, Michigan.

**KELLEN KALSO, '04 (Communication Arts and Sciences)**, was named chief operating officer of Store Space Self Storage. Kalso is a former member of the MSU Men's Soccer team. He previously served as vice president of Operations for The William Warren Group, which owns the StorQuest Self Storage brand. In his new role, Kalso will focus on supporting Store Space's growth.

**CINDY MATULIS, '06 (Education)**, recently made the 160-kilometer trek through the Himalayas to reach Everest base camp with her family, including her husband and four young children.

**MEGAN M. EBERHARD, '07, D.V.M. '09 (Both in Veterinary Medicine)**, has been appointed to the Michigan Board of Veterinary Medicine by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Eberhard currently serves as area chief of staff and veterinarian for Banfield

Pet Hospital in Lake Leelanau, Michigan.

**CHRISTOPHER BARNES, Ph.D. '09 (Business)**, was recently featured on New Belgium Brewing's Green Flags podcast where he educated listeners on the ways adequate sleep and rest contribute to a successful work environment.

**ASHLEY BARRETT, J.D. '09 (Law)**, recently joined Michigan law firm Butzel in their Lansing office. He joins the firm as a counsel.

**BRAD LOVE, Ph.D. '09 (Communication Arts and Sciences)**, was recently named University of Texas System Distinguished Teaching Professor, one of 36 faculty to earn the title from among the 10,000 instructors working at the 13 University of Texas campuses.

**FRANK L. TRAMBLE, '09 (Communication Arts and Sciences)**, was recently appointed vice president for communications, marketing and public affairs at Duke University. An award-winning higher education leader with a background in strategic executive communications, integrated marketing communications and operations, brand management and fundraising, Tramble will be the university's chief communications strategist.

### 2010s

**ANDREW GAUTHIER, '11 (Business, Honors College)**, is founder and co-owner of Groovy Donuts, which has been recognized as one of the 2023 awardees for the Best Small Business Award, presented by

Michigan Celebrates Small Business. Groovy Donuts was acknowledged onstage at the awards ceremony and was a featured dessert offering during the 19th annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business Gala in May.

**DEEMA TARAZI, '12 (James Madison), M.J., J.D. '16 (Both in Law)**, recently joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck as senior policy advisor and counsel in the firm's Washington, D.C., office. Brownstein is a law and lobbying firm that has been making moves for more than 50 years to stay at the vanguard of its industry.

**ASHLEE T. BUSCH, M.M. '14 (Music)**, has been featured in the album "Dimensions, Vol. 4: Works for Orchestra." Busch's composition "Shallow Streams" features quick-moving wind, string and percussion lines dancing over a calm riverbed of the piano.

**GARETT KOGER, M.J., J.D. '17 (Both in Law)**, recently joined Michigan law firm Butzel in their Lansing office. He joins the firm as a senior attorney.

### 2020s

**BRADY TERECHENOK, '22 (Agriculture and Natural Resources)**, recently joined The Christman Company as a virtual construction specialist in the construction management and real estate development firm's office in Knoxville, Tennessee.

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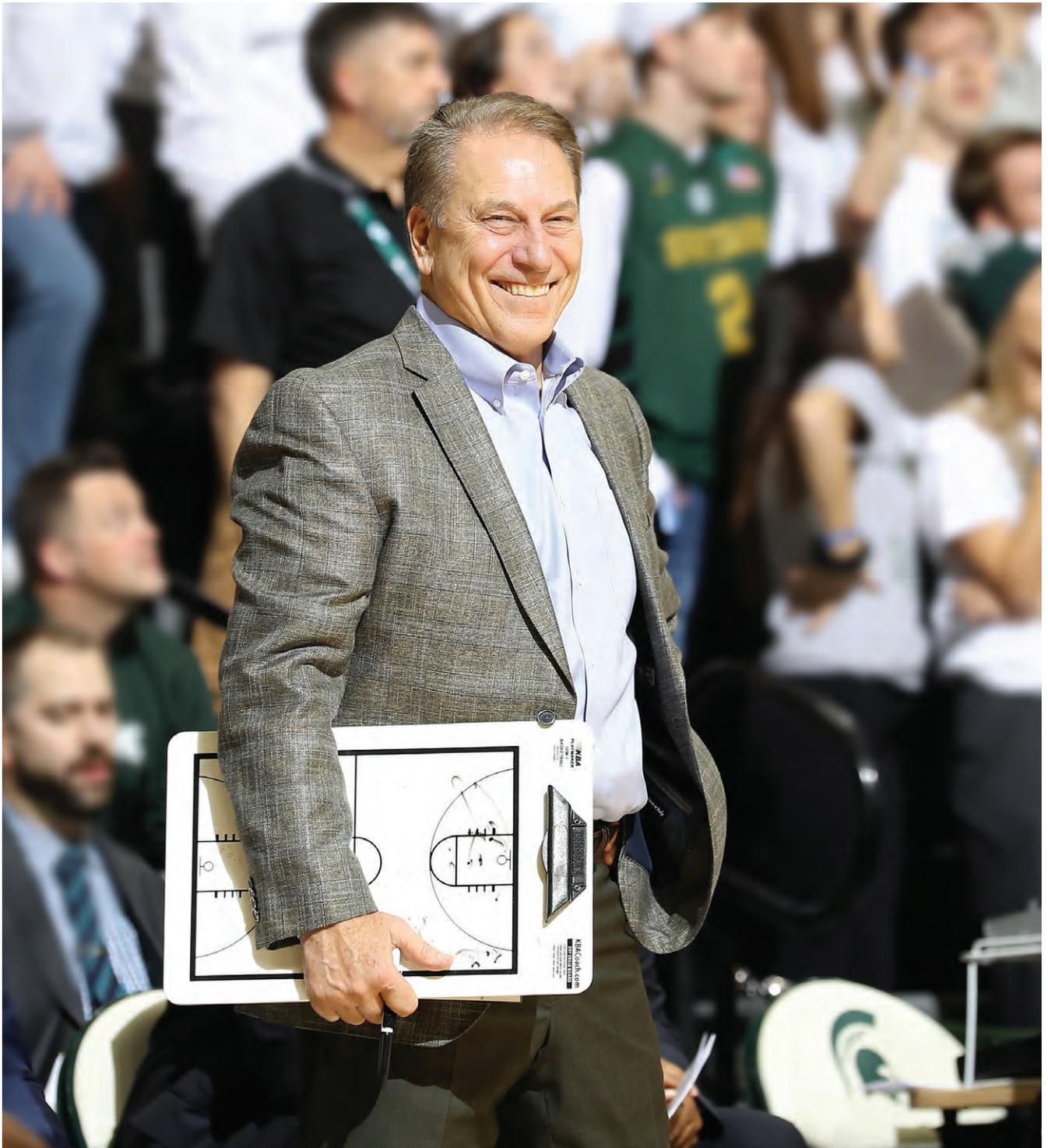
**Paris Ross, '91**  
*Advisory Council  
Member*

**ALUMNI CLUB SUMMIT**

Alumni clubs are a valuable extension of MSU, offering important and inclusive programs to communities across the country and around the world. This past April, club leaders gathered to plan for future opportunities and celebrate their achievements at the annual Alumni Club Summit.



**For more information:**  
[alumni.msu.edu/connect/alumni-clubs/](http://alumni.msu.edu/connect/alumni-clubs/)



GETTY IMAGES

## Still Dancing After All These Years

The 2023 basketball season marked yet another milestone for Hall of Fame Head Coach Tom Izzo. This March was the Spartans' 25th straight trip to the NCAA Tournament under Coach Izzo—the longest streak of consecutive bids by any coach in tournament history. Of the achievement, Izzo said, “It means I had a lot of good players. It means I had a lot of good staff. It means I had a lot of good fans. You don’t win games over a period of time because of what you do, you win games because of a collection of people doing their job.”



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