

servingstate

DELIVERING OUTSTANDING SPARTAN EXPERIENCES



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

FALL 2022

A publication of the Division of Student Life
& Engagement at Michigan State University

DELIVERING OUTSTANDING HOSPITALITY



MEET



STAY



DINE

Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

219 S. Harrison Rd., East Lansing, MI 48824
517-432-4000 | kelloggcenter.com

WHAT WE VALUE

A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT



"... I FIND THAT I AM CONTINUOUSLY HUMBLLED BY THIS TEAM. EVERYTHING STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT DOES IS IN SERVICE OF THE STUDENTS AND GUESTS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY."

As I sit here reflecting on how far we've come — and how far we have yet to go — I find that I am continuously humbled by this team. Everything Student Life & Engagement (SLE) does is in service of the students and guests at Michigan State University.

This team housed, and continues to house, 97% of this year's first-year class. The team reached a record number of students using their recreational membership, with over 19,000 active members this fall. It celebrated the opening of MSU's 7-acre Spartan Greens artificial turf fields, which are expected to support more than 8,500 students each semester.

Throughout the year, dozens of student events are hosted by this team to celebrate and embrace our rich diversity and community. It welcomed nearly 2,690 students at voting locations across campus to fill out their ballots in person. It launched a pilot program for a reusable container option for mobile ordering at Holden and Holmes dining halls. The Culinary Services team began celebrating our diverse students' heritages through a variety of specialty menus. I could

go on and on about the team's achievements, but frankly it would be too long to read. Career Services Network hosted over 200 career fairs and other events that help our students find internships and post-graduation employment. There is so much to be celebrated; so much to be grateful for.

As interim President Dr. Teresa Woodruff noted in her short video on gratitude and grace, "We have all learned to lean on each other and ask for advice from advisers to faculty, coaches to grad students, mentors to RAs ... and we are excelling as a community."

This amazing community — which I am so thankful to be a part of — is hard at work wrapping up the fall semester for our students and guests. As we enter the colder months, many students are celebrating religious and cultural holidays, preparing for finals, and in some cases, gathering their excitement about graduation.

This issue of *Serving State* focuses on who we are as a new division and what we hold dear. We share our new values, built upon the foundation of former Student Affairs'

and Services and former Residential and Hospitality Services' values. There are also stories covering the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, our new residential student care coordinator position, sustainably renovated flooring in The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips, department updates from Culinary Services, and an introduction for the Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions' inaugural director.

Fall 2022, with its twists and turns, has still been something to celebrate — I look forward to what 2023 has in store.

With warmest regards this holiday season,

Vennie Gore
Senior Vice President for the Division of Student Life & Engagement



FARMWORKERS AND MSU

During the holidays, as family and friends connect to enjoy time together around tables of delicious food, MSU asks you to join us in acknowledging and giving thanks to the many farmworkers and laborers for which, without their contributions, the food on our tables would not be possible — on this day and every day.

In some cases, many farmworkers are not granted holidays off. However, without them we would not be able to access the foods we consume daily. We celebrate their immense contributions to our food supply, which are frequently taken for granted. We honor and spotlight Michigan’s agricultural laborers, who are often migrant workers.

With such strong roots in agriculture since the founding of the university, farmworker programs at MSU have existed for more than 20 years and provide educational services to farmworkers and their children. The Office of Migrant Student Services at MSU is home to six initiatives that provide direct services to farmworkers, including the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) and National Migrant Scholars Internship. Additionally CAMP recruits 65 students each year and averages an enrollment of about 280 Spartans each semester. Under Migrant Student Services, La Cosecha is a three-year project offering training for first- and next-generation socially disadvantaged Latinx farmers so they can become successful farmers.

These programs directly impact the recruitment and retention of students from migrant backgrounds, for instance, of Mexican, Haitian, and Filipino heritages, among many others.

This season, please remember to give thanks to Michigan’s farmworkers and food laborers. One way is to donate and help raise funds for farmworker students at MSU. For more information, please visit mss.msu.edu.

THE DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT

- Auxiliary Sports Group
- Culinary Services
- Student Development & External Relations
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
- Residence Education and Housing Services
- Student Involvement and Leadership
- SVP Student Life & Engagement

sle.msu.edu

Serving State is an online publication for guests and partners of the Division of Student Life & Engagement at Michigan State University. Our goal is to share divisional news and initiatives with Team MSU. *Serving State* is produced by Division of Student Life & Engagement Creative Services, 550 S. Harrison Road, Michigan State University, 517-353-1694.

Editors

Casey Bye, Ilene Davis

Design & Layout

Elizabeth Ayres, Linda Beach, Libby Singh

Contributing Writers

Leah Ball, Subah Bhatia, Casey Bye, Ilene Davis, Taylor Lumley, Chelsey Eimer Mason, Adria Mestre, Francisco Velazquez

We collectively acknowledge that Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg — Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the university resides on land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize, support and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan’s twelve federally-recognized Indian nations, for historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, for Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and for those who were forcibly removed from their homelands. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

Photos courtesy of University Communications, SLE Creative Services, OCAT, Moody Nolan Architecture, Matt Winowiecki, Meaghan Kozar, Edith Saavedra

CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 WHAT WE VALUE
A MESSAGE FROM SVP VENNIE GORE
- 7 OUR DIVISIONAL VALUES
- 8 STUDENT RECREATION AND WELLNESS CENTER:
A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE
- 10 NEW RESIDENTIAL STUDENT CARE COORDINATOR
- 12 NEW FLOORING INSTALLED AT THE GALLERY
- 14 CULINARY SERVICES: SERVING THE SPARTAN COMMUNITY
- 16 ICI CAMPUS COMMUNITY MONTHLY LUNCHES
- 18 OCAT DIRECTOR BRINGS LEADERSHIP, EXPERIENCE TO UNIT





Our DIVISIONAL Values

The Student Life & Engagement (SLE) Leadership Team is excited to share the division's new values. Throughout the past year, SLE has worked to create a new mission statement and values that align with the work it does every day. To honor the effort and work already accomplished by Residential and Hospitality Services (RHS) and Student Affairs and Services (SAS), which combined to form SLE in September 2021, the values and definitions below were built upon previous values from both divisions.

Thanks go out to the Values Writing Committee: co-facilitators Kim Steed-Page and Robin Miner-Swartz, and committee members Mackenzie Fritz, Charlie Thompson-Orsua, Eddie Nguyen-Koelzer, Brian Hercliff-Proffer, Yu-Chien Chang, Patrick Riley, Amanda Jones and Angela Michael for the hard work in this process of taking two sets of divisional values and merging them into six values that are as unique to SLE's work as the division is to the university. The committee took several steps to make sure the voices of team members were heard.

PEOPLE

CARE

We strive to support the well-being of all team members and guests, recognizing we are responsible for the impact of our words and behaviors on our diverse communities.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Innovation, flexibility and access to learning and development provide team members at all levels opportunities for career growth. We strive to ensure all team members feel valued and proud to work in our division and serve as leaders.

PURPOSE

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT AND GUEST EXPERIENCE

Through listening, engaging and effectively communicating, we provide student and guest experiences that exceed expectations and enhance and uphold a sense of inclusion and belonging.

SAFETY

A culture of regulatory safety is embedded in our operational and business practices, allowing us to set boundaries when necessary to protect people. We endeavor to create an environment in which people feel safe socially, physically, psychologically and spiritually and repair harm when harm occurs.

PRACTICE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

A sense of belonging is achieved when we celebrate diversity, ensure equity and promote inclusion. We address instances of harm and injustice through accountability and education to guarantee an environment in which healing and growth are deeply valued and supported.

PARTNERSHIP

With an emphasis on creating and strengthening value, we approach all internal and external partnerships with transparency and clear communication. Together, we focus on goals and outcomes, ready to learn from each other.

Student Recreation and Wellness Center: A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By Adria Mestre



I heard the Experience Architecture (XA) Club was an excellent community to talk about classes and to get portfolio critiques. So, naturally, I chose to join. Via the XA Club's main form of communication platform, Discord, I read about and replied to a call for a student who enjoyed using the campus IM facilities who would be interested in helping in the design of a new facility at MSU.

Shortly after, I received a call from Associate Director of IM Circle and Club Sports Angela Michael, who was thrilled I had design experience and used the IM facilities frequently. She shared that MSU was planning to create a new recreational center to replace both the IM facilities. I would be a student representative acting as the voice for the student community.

I was ecstatic at the prospect of a new recreational building that could help students have a place to be active without having to deal with outdated equipment or distance from campus. Brian Mullen from Infrastructure and Planning Facilities (IPF) emailed me the background information about the project and asked me to complete a scoring matrix to rate the architectural firms that applied to work on the project. Of course, I was excited to see the beginning stages of creating the new facility!

Initially, I was a little puzzled how my experience in XA would be beneficial to a physical space such as the recreational center. Then I remembered that last fall semester, I took a course that involved thinking about how digital experiences can be applied to organizations that involve physical spaces. With the recreational building, the space and areas for various types of exercise is especially important for students and requires the same kind of attention to detail as something like a website or piece of software. With that in mind, I felt confident my knowledge of accessibility, design and user experience would be helpful to designing the new facility.

I'm also a really active person and have used some gyms in the area in addition to the IM facilities. I play ice hockey and enjoy weightlifting, so I was thrilled to be able to combine my passion for designing with my hobbies. With my familiarity with other fitness and wellness facilities, it was helpful to see what I felt did and did not

add to the ideational stage of the project.

The next stage was to review all the submitted requests for proposal (RFP). The scoring matrix scored the firms based on the requirements for the project, such as their dedication to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, timelines, prior applicable experience, and more. There were nine potential firms I graded with RFPs ranging from 8-15 pages each. It was a bit of a challenge to get through the readings at times because there was a lot of technical terminology with which I was not previously familiar. I reminded myself that physical architecture is not my field of study, so it was OK to not understand some jargon. My job was to see, design-wise, if the firm was able to reflect what was needed for this large project (and its dedication to student wellness). I graded all the firms and found my top three to submit to the larger team.

In the following weeks, we met to discuss our decisions, and I found my top choices aligned closely with those of other members of the team. I was the primary student representative, but later, additional students with different areas of study joined to offer their perspectives. Eventually, we compiled the top five firms to interview. I was able to participate in most of the interviews conducted in the IPF building with other members of the planning committee.

Each interviewee provided a sheet with an overview of their presentation and a refresh on their RFP. Over the course of the interviews, I took notes and highlighted each firm's dedication to student engagement. I was asked questions based on what I believe is important to include in the new center to help the interviewees focus on how their vision of the facility would be student-centered.

Most of the brainstorming sessions involved using the platform Miro to design mood and visualization boards for the look and feel of the new building. I particularly liked some of the previous projects from some of the firms, so I made sure to include my favorites and why they were appealing. I also included the Munn Ice Arena and similar buildings on MSU's campus, so the style of the buildings could ideally stay consistent and have a signature MSU feel. The following brainstorming sessions focused heavily on what should be prioritized in the center and how the

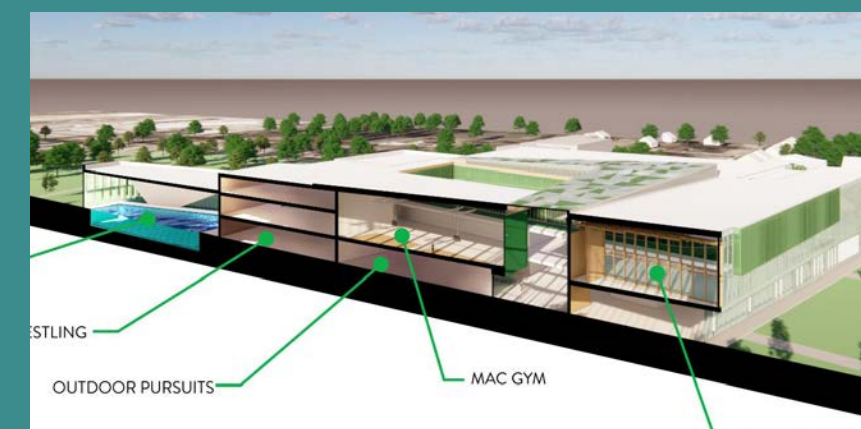
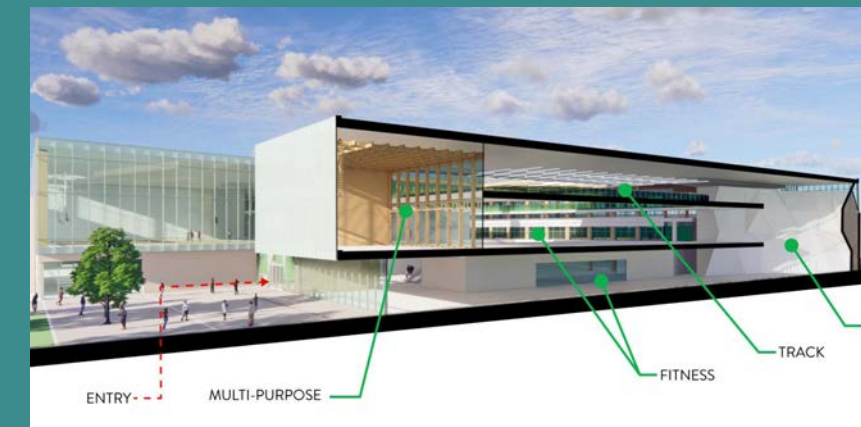
Photos, right: Renderings of the proposed Recreation and Wellness Center; below, Adria Mestre



initial layout should be structured. In a follow-up, in-person session we discussed how the center's layout should be in accordance with the variation in sports and activities the center will be housing. We also discussed maintaining a natural space and staying green, which is something MSU highly values. In this session, I emphasized the importance of making the center accessible to all students, whether they live on or off campus. It can be difficult to get started with exercise and wellness if you're new to it, so I wanted to highlight the importance of making it as easy as possible for students to try the new center out without any difficulties or worrying about parking distance or lack of bus service to the building.

My experience helped me see the applications of my XA coursework in physical environments while incorporating my interests in sports and activities. The people I met during this experience really care about MSU's student base and want to create a welcoming space for everyone to participate in and promote healthy lifestyles on and off campus. There were many people who listened and cared about my feedback from a student's perspective, and I was able to advocate for change based on my own experience with the current recreational centers (IM West and East). I learned that the individual's experience is one of the most important considerations in building a successful environment for students.

You can learn more about the new Student Recreation and Wellness Center as work on the site continues at recsports.msu.edu/events/Rebuilding.html. ©



Residential Student Care Coordinator



As conversations progress to being more open around the subject of mental health, more resources are being developed to help those who may be struggling. College students are at an elevated risk for developing mental health issues due to the stress of transitioning into adulthood. Student Life & Engagement (SLE) has developed a new employee position designed to aid students even further in the realm of mental health at Michigan State University.

Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) had seen an exponential increase in reports of concern regarding students' mental health, especially in areas of trauma or difficult life situations, that were directly impacting a student's ability to be successful. Knowing these details, SLE felt it was time to update the current model for student support in this area. Therefore, the residential student care coordinator (RSCC) position was developed to serve as direct support for students experiencing severe mental health crises while also communicating with campus partners to find support for students however possible.

When considering the establishment of this new role, a team was assembled that analyzed the potential staffing needs within REHS. After deliberation on what exact duties needed to be fulfilled, the team also looked at job descriptions from other Michigan and Big Ten institutions as well as others across the country for inspiration.

The planning team met with representatives from these other universities as well to learn about their respective support staff roles and operations to consider how best to integrate the RSCC role into campus life.

As part of the role, the RSCC serves on the behavioral intervention team — a multidisciplinary task force that strives to provide support to “students of concern,” which is defined as students who are “in distress emotionally and/or whose behavior has been significantly disruptive, problematic or concerning.” The RSCC also coaches and support other residence hall team members on how to best support their residents. The RSCC also aids in training student resident assistants (RAs), graduate students and full-time staff with primary focal points centering on mental health and trauma-informed response.

MSU recognizes mental health impacts nearly every aspect of students' daily lives, and the RSCC is a supportive addition to the mental health resources on campus. The RSCC's duty is to do what they can to connect students who may be struggling with the proper external resources that may be needed. Although MSU can be seen as a primarily student-centered institution, the RSCC also extends services to staff who engage with students. Faculty and staff are vital pieces of the MSU community, and their mental health needs can be supported as well.

The RSCC position is not exclusive to REHS, but coordinates with many other offices and partners on MSU's

campus. The RSCC coordinates with the Office of Student Support and Accountability (OSSA), MSU Police and Public Safety, Community Support Bureau, Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS), Student Health and Wellness, Academic Units, the Office for International Students and Scholars (IOSS), Office of Civil Rights, and the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD). These are just a few of the departments and offices the RSCC partners with to ensure the position sees student needs through a variety of lenses and takes diversity into account when furthering and developing the role and its responsibilities. The direct connection to a variety of MSU departments creates a bridge of communication that provides a better understanding of the current MSU climate, therefore allowing the RSCC to be better informed and prepared for challenges that may arise.

Gabrielle Barnett has served as the RSCC for several months now. Barnett felt one of her biggest passions was striving toward educational equity among young adults and feels that, alongside academic resources, students need to build a sense of connection, community and overall wellness. Barnett finds the most engaging aspect of her job is being in a position within an institution to promote social change and to work with students on an individual level to connect them to the resources and support that they need. Additionally, she says she loves working with her incredibly supportive team, who are all dedicated to ensuring student well-being. The team plans to continue to review mental health resource demands, Barnett's reach and additional

resource needs in the future.

Although being the RSCC can be extremely rewarding, there are challenges to be faced. Barnett takes on a great deal of emotional responsibility when dealing with intense mental health issues and crisis intervention among students. With coping skills that Barnett learned in her practice, she makes sure to engage in self-care to keep her own mental health in check. She finds exercise, reading and spending time with her loved ones to be her most therapeutic forms of self-care.

Barnett says one of the biggest highlights of working in her position is the excitement and support she receives from others. She finds her work environment to be supportive and that her peers truly recognize how impactful and important the new position is as a resource across campus. 🍷



Gabrielle Barnett

EATING WELL GET ENOUGH SLEEP ACTIVITY AND EXERCISE BE SOCIABLE

MANAGE STRESS AVOID ALCOHOL, SMOKING AND DRUGS HELPING OTHERS ASK FOR HELP



NEW FLOORING INSTALLED AT THE GALLERY

Sustainability is rooted in the foundations of both Michigan State University and the Division of Student Life & Engagement (SLE). As a division, careful planning goes into each project and event — large and small — to be as sustainable as possible. When it was determined The Gallery dining hall at Snyder/Phillips was in need of new flooring, the Planning and Projects Office (PPO) within SLE sought a sustainable approach to the renovation.

In the past, PPO has worked with Forbo Flooring to install high-quality flooring during the construction of The Gallery in Snyder/Phillips. One of the main qualities PPO looks for when considering flooring renovations is material that is built to last. When The Gallery was built 14 years ago, Forbo Flooring was installed in the main dining room. Commercial flooring in a dining room has a typical life expectancy of 7 years. With the amount of foot traffic in The Gallery, even a 7-year life would have been longer than would have been expected. Forbo flooring doubled the life span.

The old flooring was not simply tossed into a landfill. Forbo Flooring is dedicated to sustainability, so when the time came to remove the old flooring, it was recycled. The recycling process is not a free-of-cost process, yet Forbo Flooring was determined to keep the material out of a landfill and therefore absorbed the cost of recycling the material. To recycle this material, Lake Flooring, the flooring contractor, removed the flooring, rolled it up, secured the rolls with tape and then took the material to Columbus, Ohio for recycling. The cooperation of Lake Flooring with Forbo Flooring was critical for this project to be successful. This effort kept more than 1,000 pounds of material out of a landfill to be recycled into something new.

Although the new flooring is the same material as the previous flooring, it was not reselected hastily. The material was previously chosen with great care and attention. PPO considered how durable the original flooring was, given its seven-year lifecycle, so there was no need to change to a completely different flooring material, due to its high quality and longevity. Not only is the flooring built to last, but the flooring is also incredibly easy to clean, which creates an even longer lifecycle. This material is also the same flooring used in Brody Hall Dining Room, in the Wonders Kiva and in several locations in the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center.

The timeline of the project in Snyder/Phillips also exceeded expectations when it came to installation. When Culinary Services reached out to PPO with a request to change the flooring, it was expected that the flooring would arrive during the fall of last year and would be installed this past spring. This would have made the renovation process inconvenient due to students being back for the academic year. However, the flooring arrived in the summer while most students were not on campus. The students and staff then returned for the fall semester with new flooring. The process was incredibly quick and efficient due to the concerted effort provided by Forbo Flooring.

When next on campus, stop by the The Gallery and enjoy a meal. 



Culinary Services: Serving the

SPARTAN COMMUNITY

Culinary Services (CS) and Eat at State are perpetually busy keeping Spartans fed with healthy and delicious options across campus all while maintaining a focus on sustainable practices. Here are a few highlights of what the team has been up to.

PICNIC PIZZA STATIONS COMING TO AKERS AND CASE

The Edge at Akers and South Pointe at Case will soon have Picnic Pizza Stations installed. These automated machines are designed to build pizza orders according to recipe amounts. After placing stretched dough onto the station, the modular assembly line builds each pizza order using the specified amounts of sauce, cheese and toppings. The pizza can feed directly into an oven, or staff can retrieve it for refrigeration or immediate baking. The equipment can make up to 100 pizzas per hour, helping increase efficiency and reduce the number of employees needed to produce pizzas.



BRODY SQUARE BECOMES THE FINAL DINING HALL AT MSU TO GO TRAYLESS

Student Life & Engagement (SLE) and CS strive to lessen food waste and support the university's goal of reducing the number of materials diverted to landfills. SLE Sustainability has put forth several programs and established many partnerships, both on and off campus, to minimize the university's environmental footprint. One such effort is the transition of residential dining halls to trayless operations.

Removing trays cut down on food waste and conserves water and energy used in cleaning trays. Additionally, studies at other universities have shown a 50% reduction in food waste by removing trays. In early September 2022, Brody Square became the final residential dining hall to go trayless. All other residential dining halls on MSU's campus have been trayless since 2018. Learn more about CS sustainability efforts at eatatstate.com/sustainability.



DIVISIONAL PARTNERS CONNECT TO REUSE NEARLY 100 PIECES OF KELLOGG CENTER FURNITURE

Several teams across SLE recently partnered to repurpose furniture in residence hall spaces. The Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center received new chairs and sleeper sofas for guest rooms. Items previously in the hotel were gently used, which warranted reuse within the facilities.

The Kellogg Center team and Project Manager/Designer Tanya Zhuravlev worked with Mike Gardner, Brody/West Circle facilities manager, to identify opportunities to use some items in the West Circle halls. Tanya was able to locate spaces for the furniture and designed new lounge layouts to coordinate with the room architecture. Items were placed in Campbell, Yakeley and Gilchrist halls. In total, 65 padded chairs and 32 sofas were reused as part of the project.

Thank you to Tanya, Matt Winowiecki, Dan Cline, Ed Kluge, Michelle Rivera, Deborah Underwood, and the Kellogg Center Engineering team for the creativity and planning efforts.



DINING AND SUSTAINABILITY TEAMS PARTNER TO LAUNCH REUSABLE CONTAINER PILOT PROGRAM

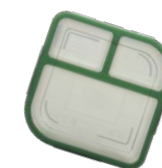
In September 2022, CS launched the pilot program for reusable containers to coincide with the mobile ordering option at Holden and Holmes dining halls.

A select group of students participated in a soft launch to test the program and provide feedback. Then the option to choose either single-use or the reusable container option was added to the Transact Mobile Ordering app for all users. In addition, dining managers and the divisional sustainability team worked with students in these locations to help them download and use the Fill it Forward app that coincides with the program.

After selecting the reusable container option for their mobile order, students can work with a CS team member to connect to the MSU group in the Fill it Forward app. Once they are connected, they use the app to scan the bar code on the container when they pick it up and drop it off. The app tracks the container on each student's account, and it must be scanned back into the dining hall before the student can select the option for a future mobile order.

Through early October, there have been more than 600 reuses and more than 300 Spartans have signed up for the program. 🍷

MSU REUSABLES



JOIN THE
**REUSABLE
CONTAINER
PROGRAM**

AVAILABLE WITH MSU MOBILE ORDERING
AT HOLDEN AND HOLMES DINING HALLS

One-time sign-up
for free with the
Fill it Forward App



SCAN HERE
TO SEE HOW
IT WORKS

fillitforward.com/rentals

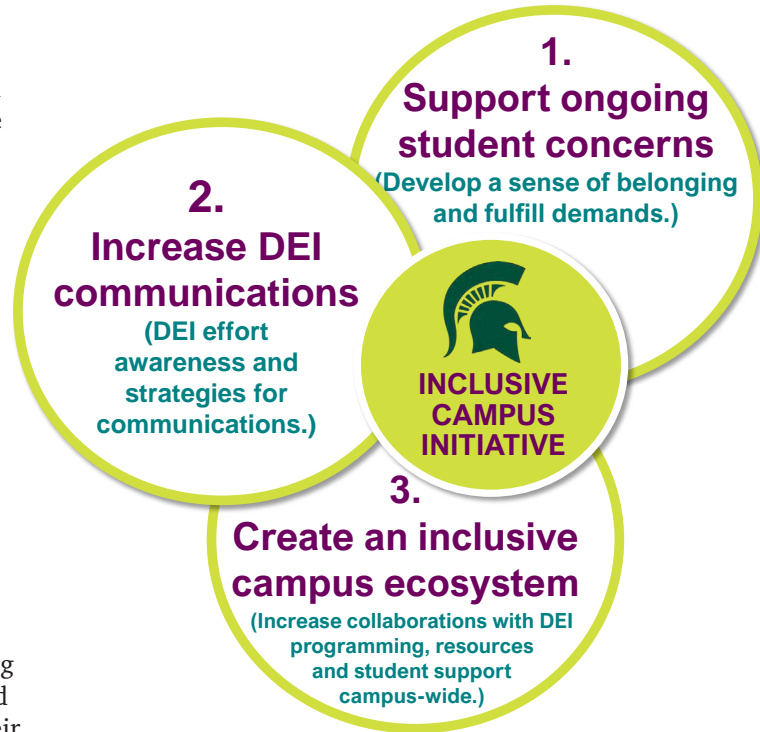
Latest ICI Initiative by MSU: **CAMPUS COMMUNITY MONTHLY LUNCHESES**

The Inclusive Campus Initiative (ICI) recently launched the ICI Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Campus Community monthly lunches for professional MSU staff, faculty, administrators and academic specialists. The lunches are held once a month in the large Brody private dining room and can accommodate 50 people on a first come, first served basis while also providing a virtual option via Zoom.

The purpose of these lunches is to “increase communications, promote collaboration, share updates on the progress of DEI projects, resources, concerns and questions, and spotlight campus DEIB.” The lunches are an opportunity for the campus community to convene in a supportive space and build relationships. The lunches include a formal presentation centered around updates from the ICI, the DEIB Strategic Plan, followed by campus partner highlights featuring guest(s) who share their DEIB project or program.

The most recent ICI lunch before publication was held Nov. 18 and featured a presentation on how MSU Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) considers DEI within their services as well as sharing some challenges they are navigating. Another series is planned for the spring 2023 semester. A fruitful discussion on the challenges faced and the resources needed by community partners to do their jobs related to DEIB more effectively took place.

Learn more about the Inclusive Campus Initiative at ocat.msu.edu/inclusive-campus-initiative. 🌱



WORK ON YOUR GOLF GAME ALL WINTER LONG

At Forest Akers Golf Courses All-Weather Practice Facility

Featuring 18 covered and heated hitting stations, including two stations equipped for video instruction **by request only**.

Hours: Dec. 23-Jan. 2 — CLOSED

Jan. 3-31 — Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

For more information, visit golf.msu.edu or call 517-355-1635.



FOREST AKERS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

WE ARE OCAT

OCAT DIRECTOR BRINGS LEADERSHIP, EXPERIENCE TO UNIT

The Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions (OCAT) is a vital resource of connection for so many students and faculty at MSU. OCAT serves the MSU community with a variety of resources that aid students from diverse backgrounds and create a sense of community amongst marginalized groups on campus as well as provides resources to ease the transition from high school to university life. Life on campus can be lonely at times, and OCAT has always served as a bridge to create community — no matter what an individual’s story may be. Although OCAT has long been a pillar of support at MSU, the department operated without a director for more than a decade. Other levels of faculty and staff supported OCAT of their own accord, but this year it was decided a leadership position was needed to assist with the many duties and responsibilities provided by the office.

This summer, OCAT announced a new director had been chosen: Dr. Samuel Saldívar.

The selection process for the new director was vigorous and intentional. During the beginning of the interview process, there were 15 candidates who went through multiple rounds of interviews. As time passed, that number increased to 30, and then 50 candidates who were interviewed, but OCAT found that none of them were quite the right fit. OCAT took this selection process seriously, and though the selection process was strenuous, the group carried on and continued their search for the perfect candidate.

Candidates were subject to interviews with administration during the selection process and were asked to create presentations on their qualifications, attend luncheon events to interact with students, and were observed on their interactions with specific identity groups. The selection process was seeking to stay away from the traditional singular interview selection process, due to the fact that the OCAT director would be taking on a great amount of responsibility not only with administration, but with the students who rely on OCAT for a sense of community. The interview process was focused on the candidate’s

interaction with the community and their self-presentation.

OCAT was looking for a candidate with great research experience and experience in administration spaces. It was important the new director be open-minded, equipped with great leadership skills and able to communicate effectively to a diverse student body. After what seemed like an endless stream of candidates who didn’t fit the bill, OCAT came to find their perfect candidate. Dr. Samuel Saldívar has been working as the multicultural education coordinator within the department of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (IDI) since July 2020. Given that he began in this position amid COVID-19, it is safe to say that Dr. Saldívar was up for the challenge.

“It is very exciting to finally have a director after 15 to 17 years, someone with the mentality of a servant leader — that’s been the most fulfilling aspect so far,” says Murray Edwards, assistant director of OCAT.

He met the requirements OCAT was looking for and had been known for his gift of connecting with students and faculty on a level that went beyond the formality typically associated with administration. It was apparent Dr. Samuel Saldívar



Dr. Samuel Saldívar

was open-minded to all viewpoints and perspectives and highly valued teamwork over arbitrary levels of administrative hierarchy — he views himself as part of a team, rather than working above others.

“I am really excited to see the work and the initiatives that Sam will bring into conversation with us, as staff members, and with our students that we work with directly and indirectly,” says Anna Lin, coordinator and adviser of the Asian Pacific American Student Organization (APASO). “I also look forward to the larger conversations happening at this university.”



