

servingstate



DELIVERING OUTSTANDING SPARTAN EXPERIENCES



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY SPRING 2023

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

SERVICE AMIDST CHAOS

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



“WHEN WE TALK ABOUT OUR PURPOSE BEING TO ‘DELIVER OUTSTANDING SPARTAN EXPERIENCES,’ IT GOES SO MUCH FURTHER THAN PROVIDING A WARM MEAL OR A QUIET SPACE TO STUDY.”

As the Division of Student Life & Engagement came together and we began to blend the values and cultures of two very different groups, one thing became abundantly clear: we care about our Spartans.

As our values note, “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.”

I continuously see it in the work this team does, particularly this semester as we attempted to guide our communities through the violence our campus endured Feb. 13. The road to healing can be a slow process, as we know, and this is something we will see echoing across campus for years to come. And yet, even in the face of their own grief, our team stepped up. When our Spartans are in need, we are there to provide.

When we talk about our purpose being to “deliver outstanding Spartan experiences,” it goes so much further than providing a warm meal or a quiet space to study. This team organized the sale and distribution of thousands of fundraising Spartan Strong T-shirts,

created a circles of support mentor plan, supported hospitalized students and their families, worked with the Department of Police and Public Safety to update access to buildings, partnered with University Health & Wellbeing to provide resources, closed and reopened the MSU Union in accordance with trauma-informed experts, and so much more.

Our team also continued to do what they do best: their jobs. In fact, students in the MSU College of Arts and Letters’ Integrative Studies in the Arts & Humanities 209 class in Artistic Citizenship dedicated their time to creating block printed cards to thank our dining hall staff for their continued work after Feb. 13. One student noted, “Your continuous work and dedication to feed our faculty and students doesn’t go unnoticed. So, thank you again for your support.”

This issue of Serving State focuses on the great work of our team members amidst all the chaos of the last year. We explore the partnership that led to the installation of complementary menstrual product dispensers across campus. We visit with Erika Austin and discuss the

importance of protecting the MSU brand. We review the changes to the Residence Education and Housing Services facilities team and welcome the Student Organic Farm into the division. We also discuss the passion of our student team members, from the University Activities Board and Women’s Student Services to the Sustainability Eco Reps.

I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again, this team inspires me. I have hope that we will get some much-needed rest this summer and be ready to welcome our Spartans back this fall.



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



MSU MULTICULTURAL CENTER

Coming Fall 2024

Northeast corner of Farm and Shaw lanes

MSU is on the cusp of making history, with construction of the university's first free-standing multicultural center beginning this spring. The new center will make for a culturally rich and welcoming environment that promotes intellectual curiosity among students and their peers to learn and share experiences with one another.

Learn more at mccenter.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.

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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.

Cover photo: Student Organic Farm
Photos courtesy of: Chris Buller, Carla Iansiti, Residence Education and Housing Services, SLE Creative Services, SmithGroup, Sara Stratilatov, Student Organic Farm, University Communications

CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 SERVICE AMIDST CHAOS
A MESSAGE FROM SVP VENNIE GORE
- 5 MSU LICENSING:
PROTECTING THE
MSU BRAND
- 7 STUDENT ORGANIC FARM
JOINS SLE
- 9 RESTRUCTURING REHS
FACILITIES
- 11 MSU ECO REPS ARE
PASSIONATE ABOUT
SUSTAINABILITY
- 13 THE WILD ROAD TO
WILD 2022
- 15 COMPLIMENTARY
MENSTRUATION PRODUCTS
AVAILABLE AT MSU
- 16 BRINGING THE
COMMUNITY TOGETHER
THROUGH CRAFT



MSU LICENSING: PROTECTING THE MSU BRAND



Michigan State University's reach is wide, with more than 500,000 living degreed alums, nearly 40,000 current undergraduate students and an immeasurable number of Spartan fans. These alums, students and supporters of the university are responsible for bringing in millions of dollars' worth of royalties on licensed merchandise each year, according to MSU Director of Licensing Erika Austin.

"Collegiate licensing is so special because of the affinity of the fans to collegiate athletics and especially to Michigan State," Austin says. "The academic reputation paired with the athletic reputation of Michigan State has really helped further our brand."

The University Licensing Programs manage the behind-the-scenes efforts to get official merchandise on the shelves for Spartan consumers.

"The mission and primary goal of MSU Licensing is to protect the MSU brand, and we do that by using our great alums, students, corporations — they're all brand ambassadors," says Austin. "The opportunity to come and

be a brand ambassador with everyone else and really help promote and support and protect the MSU brand has been the main reason I came to Michigan State."

COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS

Protecting the MSU brand from counterfeit product production and negative use of imagery is one of the key responsibilities of the licensing department.

"We know how important it is for our alums and our current students to see that Michigan State brand used correctly and effectively," Austin says. "We know there are times we have to protect the brand. Whenever we have success that breeds opportunities for counterfeiters to abuse our brand and we want to make sure that we have all eyes out there as we continue to find success, not only academically but athletically as well."

Official merchandise can be identified by a hologram sticker on the tag of the merchandise; if that tag is not present, it is usually counterfeit.

"We understand that it's sometimes

hard for a fan to tell the difference between officially licensed product and that of an infringer, so we welcome anyone that has questions about if a product is officially licensed or if a vendor is officially licensed to reach out to our office," says Austin.

"You'll see people using the plume," says Stephene Benkert, Spartan Spirit Shop's retail manager. "Other people around the area will start using that so it almost looks like Michigan State endorses whatever it is that they're doing."

"When we get reports, we work with our licensing agency, Collegiate Licensing Company, to educate those infringers on the necessity of being licensed in order to produce product," Austin says. "Then if they don't comply, we go through the necessary steps to remove that product from the marketplace so that our consumers know that they are buying officially licensed product."

Benkert says that when unlicensed brands use MSU marks, they are taking advantage of the university's reputation.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BUY OFFICIALLY LICENSED SPARTAN MERCHANDISE?



UNIVERSITY SUPPORT

A portion of your purchase is returned to the University for scholarships and student programming.



PROTECTED RIGHT

MSU has granted the manufacturer the right to use its trademarks. Use of MSU trademarks without permission is illegal.



QUALITY PRODUCTS

Your product has passed through a system of quality control.

"We don't know what kind of ethics this place has or if they're doing all the right things," she says.

BENEFITS TO LICENSED MERCH

"We make it mandatory that all MSU licensees must be a member of the Fair Labor Association or the Workers' Rights Consortium so we can verify to the consumers that they are buying product that is being made responsibly and that those factories have a strict code of conduct," Austin explains. "That is important to us, and we can stand behind the quality of the merchandise as well."

In addition to ensuring ethical labor standards, further benefits of purchasing officially licensed merchandise include the return of royalties to the university itself, according to Austin.

"All of the royalties earned from officially licensed product comes back to Michigan State University. Those individuals that are purchasing officially licensed product are supporting MSU students because those royalties are going toward the general scholarship fund as well as special programming," she says.

"The University Activities Board gets a part of it, MSU Athletics gets a part of it," says Benkert.

In addition, there are efforts taken by the University Licensing Programs to ensure those associated with the university are being protected as well, says Austin.

"Right now, with NIL, name, image and likeness, it'll be interesting to

see how that affects the royalties," she says. "It's important for us to have those opportunities for the student athletes to be able to promote and profit their own personal brand tied to Michigan State University as well."

INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SPARTAN SPIRIT SHOP AND LICENSING/CRAFTER'S LICENSE

While the licensing office is busy facilitating the paperwork behind the products, Benkert and the Spartan Spirit Shop team are working firsthand with consumers and vendors to fulfill their needs.

A guest came in to Benkert's location looking for a Michigan State swim cap.

"Well, that's not something that we'd normally stock in our store. Sometimes there's little niche specialty places, you know, there might be a swimming emporium that sells all sorts of swim caps, and maybe they have a licensed thing," she explains. "I'll call either Erika or Kaye [Blossey] and say, 'Hey, I have somebody who is looking for a swim cap, do we have any licensees that sell swim caps?' Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't; sometimes we have to get creative and figure out another way to help that guest get what they want, and most of the time we're able to do it."

One way to connect Spartans to the specific merchandise they are looking for is to supply smaller creators with crafter's licenses.

"We welcome all of those entrepreneurs that have that skillset

and want to become a crafter. Those are the smallest licensees that we work with; our friends and family of the community that are interested in that crafter's license," says Austin. "It's also a great introduction to someone that wants to get into licensing. I always advise those individuals to maybe start with the crafter's license because there is a limit on how much you can sell and how much you can make before moving to the standard license."

This allows Spartans and fans to sell their products and keep the MSU brand whole, adds Benkert.

PROCESS TO BECOME LICENSED

Working with MSU to sell licensed merchandise is made easy through the use of a simple and quick application process administered by the Collegiate Licensing Company, according to Austin.

"As they go through that process, we vet out the company to make sure they're in good standing and making sure that their brand is something that we want to put the MSU brand with," she says.

The full process takes around four to six weeks and is followed by licensees as small as Etsy shop owners to large corporations like Nike.

While the team welcomes the creativity of the entrepreneur, there are often some products that the university will not accept or work with. These include alcohol, anything related to guns or violence, and anything of a political nature. ☪



STUDENT ORGANIC FARM JOINS SLE

The Division of Student Life & Engagement (SLE) exists to support Spartans both within and beyond the classroom. So, it only makes sense for the MSU Student Organic Farm, a teaching and production farm, to be the latest unit to join the division. The Student Organic Farm (SOF) takes “beyond the classroom” literally. The 15-acre, certified organic year-round farm offers an immersive, hands-on farming experience for undergraduate crew members, participants of the Organic Farmer Training Program and volunteers. The farm also collaborates with MSU faculty to offer courses in organic farming, internships, interdisciplinary experiential educational activities, and research opportunities.

The SOF is a valuable resource for all students to learn about organic food, farming and the impact of food on the planet. Now, as part of SLE, the farm will gain more resources and support to expand its impact and continue its

mission of educating the next generation through hands-on learning and engagement with sustainable agriculture.

“Senior Vice President for Student Life & Engagement Vennie Gore saw the synergies with the farm and all units within SLE,” said Laurie Thorp, director of Residential Initiative on the Study of the Environment and one of the founders of the SOF. The farm has long provided fresh organic produce to the MSU dining halls, where teams of professional chefs use the farm-to-table fruits and vegetables in meals served in the dining halls — all grown right here on MSU campus.

Moving forward, MSU Culinary Services intends to use even more of the farm’s harvest in the MSU residential dining halls. A crop planning session was held in January, led by Darby Anderson, the new SOF manager, and the Culinary Services’ team to ensure harvest yield would contribute to menu needs planned for the 2023-24 academic year.

Additionally, Culinary Services’ retail operations will benefit from the farm’s offerings as they use the crops in operations such as Sparty’s and Sparty’s Market for fresh, grab-and-go items. The Market plans to offer some of the farm’s harvest in their grocery and fresh produce areas.

During the merger, Gore observed the farm could benefit from additional administrative support. Enter Darby Anderson.

“My main goal is to work toward creating an operation that balances engagement and experiential learning with efficient, innovative and sustainable farming practices,” says Anderson. “The SOF is in such a unique position to impact more students and community members than ever through farm visits, volunteer opportunities, and through just eating at the dining halls. Being a new member of the SOF, it’s been so much fun working with our student crew members, meeting the chefs and just generally being welcomed into the



community. It’s very clear that so many people care about the success of the SOF, and I’m just really excited to be a part of it.”

Gore had a vision that the SOF should be a part of SLE because the farm has such an impact on student engagement. He saw it as a valuable institutional asset as well as a pillar of the community.

SOF has also been a patron toward diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by being a space that provides accessible healthy food and hands-on engagement for divergent learners who volunteer at the farm. The SOF also engages with intersectional agriculture via indigenous farmers who tend to the farm, as well as keeping focus on creating a diverse space for the community to enjoy. In addition to this, the SOF has proudly hosted the annual Farm-to-Table Gala,



an event that raises money for student scholarships, for several years.

Many assume the SOF functions mostly with student volunteers from the agricultural college, while in fact, there are a variety of students who volunteer at the farm who have little experience in the agricultural field. Programs across the university interact with the farm. For example, students from James-Madison College regularly visit the SOF to understand food origins through the lens of globalization.

The future of the SOF looks bright as upcoming endeavors include building an energy efficient straw bale workhouse. The goals of building the workhouse are focused on sustainability and maintaining a small carbon footprint. The proud team at the SOF hopes to continue to cultivate wonderful bounties of produce, providing a sense of belonging at MSU, and expanding outreach throughout the Spartan community. 🌱





RESTRUCTURING REHS FACILITIES

Being the Best at Delivering Outstanding Spartan Experiences

The Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) Facilities unit at Michigan State University is being restructured to offer a better Spartan experience for everyone on campus. The department includes 35 leadership and supervisory staff, along with 200 frontline and administrative staff. Charles Stephens, associate director of Residence Hall Services within REHS, works with the teams that service the 27 residence halls on MSU's campus and shares what the REHS restructuring project entails and the progress it has made.

Residential Facilities has taken a "new, people-centric approach to their work," says Stephens, wherein they're working to identify how to ensure they're able to efficiently serve everyone, from staff and students to stakeholders. The second part of the process involves evaluating duties, processes and structures to identify the best course of action for the unit as a whole. In the past year, 26 positions have been added to the unit in an effort to meet staffing demands of legitimizing the second shift.

Marque Black, associate director of Apartments and Central Services within REHS, also highlighted efficiency as a key part of the restructuring project. Black talked about the various steps REHS is taking to rework its infrastructure, including adding more people to it, moving

people into roles that fit them best, getting more eyes on operations and spreading out responsibilities.

"Delivering outstanding Spartan experiences" is what it is all about, says Black. He mentions they are already seeing positive results of their work in the form of quicker maintenance request response times and effective and direct communication and customer service to residents.

REHS, as a whole, is reinvesting in its people. The department aims to "recruit, retain and develop talented staff, leverage [their] resources safely and responsibly, and adeptly meet the needs of [their] students, families and guests," says Stephens.

Not only is Residential Facilities training frontline workers on safety and technical procedures, but it is also working on interpersonal and identity-conscious training. There is also a focus on automating where possible and incorporating the latest technological advancements in the field to maximize efficiency.

Black says that with the planning underway and personnel being brought in, it's only going up from here.

"The bar is going to keep rising," he says. "And we have to keep changing our style and adapting to our residents to maintain our commitment to provide excellent Spartan experiences."



That is the vision. He says in his area of work, he believes in three C's: competency, consistency and champions. Competency involves learning enough about the job to be able to teach it to others. It requires becoming proficient and becoming the best at what they do. Next comes consistency, which involves "taking what we do and being awesome at it and then keep being awesome at it." Black believes in then taking the first two C's and tying them into being champions. The important part, he says, is not being able to do a job, but being able to do it the best way possible.

The restructuring project is in the planning and evaluation phase with a focus on "positively affecting the lived and work environment for our students, guests and staff," says Stephens. While some decisions, like staffing models, can be evaluated and made internally, most others that impact student experience require REHS to "engage multiple partners within the matrix organization that is Michigan State University." REHS does not believe in making decisions unilaterally and works to continually engage students and other stakeholder organizations within the university. "It truly is a collective effort," says Stephens.

"It's not a small group," adds Black. "It's everyone from the faculty to Student Leadership & Engagement, to IPF [Infrastructure Planning and Facilities]. We all have a part to play in terms of the success of every resident and student here."

He mentions they regularly meet with Infrastructure and Planning Facilities to help create both residential and

academic spaces within MSU buildings. With faculty and classrooms in residence halls, the focus is on balancing the two aspects of those spaces efficiently and keeping the consistency right in helping residents and students in being happy, safe and, ultimately, to graduate. Classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned every day along with hallways. REHS also coordinates with dining hall teams to make sure they're getting everything they need to function well. They also meet with the Residence Halls Association and student groups that are in the halls to understand what more can be done to strengthen student experiences.

Black says the REHS team is always trying to figure out ways to strengthen how they carry out job responsibilities. Restructuring is an ongoing process, as they continue to keep providing students what they need and asking whether they are delivering it efficiently and consistently. This constant feedback loop is how they examine the efficacy of the everyday work of their unit, department and division. Receiving feedback from the student body and residents is the key to development and betterment. That feedback is taken back to the table for further discussion on how positive and effective change can be created from it. From top leadership including Vennie Gore, senior vice president for Student Life & Engagement (SLE) to every member of the SLE team, they all continue to keep thinking, brainstorming and collecting ideas on the best way to deliver the outstanding Spartan experiences in the most efficient way. 🎯

RESTRUCTURING REHS FACILITIES





MSU ECO REPS ARE PASSIONATE *About Sustainability*

Throughout the world, countless products are produced and consumed daily with much of this consumption contributing to waste. This is one reason MSU has taken action to emphasize sustainability. Although MSU may seem small in the grand scheme of things, the smallest steps can surmount into much larger strides toward a more sustainable and less wasteful future.

The Office of Sustainability has a highly committed staff constantly seeking new methods for MSU and the entirety of the Spartan community to reduce waste and give new life cycles to various elements of daily living. Although these efforts may seemingly only effect the MSU diaspora, the Office of Sustainability strives to extend its efforts outside MSU and broaden into the general community.

Starting within the Spartan community and steadily branching out to the local community creates a steadily

broadening impact. With this in mind, the Office of Sustainability has extended itself toward the student body in the effort of creating a more sustainable environment with the help of the MSU eco reps.

The MSU eco reps is a group of highly dedicated and passionate volunteers who strive to improve sustainability efforts at MSU. The eco reps are responsible for development of the Spartan Green Living Certification, a program designed to aid students on their journey to adapt more sustainable ways of living. The eco reps also coordinate a variety of projects around campus to spread the word about their mission, including a Sustainability Tour.

This tour consisted of the eco reps visiting multiple places on campus and how each of departments within Student Life & Engagement (SLE) personally contributes to



decreasing waste. One of the programs on this tour was the RISE program at Brody Dining Hall. RISE, the Residential Initiative on the Study of the Environment, is a hybrid real world learning experience for first year students invested in environmental studies. Within this program, students explore environmental concerns throughout campus as well as engaging in research and hands-on experiences.

At Brody Dining Hall, the eco reps shared a product of the RISE program, Vermicomposting: a culinary food scrap sorting method. Vermicomposting is a means of sorting that helps designate between food scraps and compostable materials. Taking the time to sort through the scraps is a dedicated effort toward an environmentally friendly method of disposing of food waste. The eco reps were also able to observe earthworms in their line of duty of composting at the MSU Recycling Center and Surplus Store.

To expand their mission even further, the eco reps also met with Michigan government officials from Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) at their 2022 annual conference. Being included in a government-coordinated event was highly motivational for the eco rep mission, and the reps plan to attend more government events in the future.

Dani Vincent, an SLE Sustainability assistant and eco rep coordinator, is hopeful to see collaborations between the resident assistants on events that would allow students living in residence halls about budget-friendly ways to be sustainable as well as eco-friendly alterations to their daily routines. A large portion of MSU students live in residence halls, making use of many resources, so their contribution to sustainability is greatly impactful.

The future is no abstract concept, but a conscious effort that must be contributed to by all members of the Spartan community in the present. 🌱



The Wild Road to WILD 2022:

the Leadership Behind a Leadership Conference

When the Women's Resource Center was dissolved in 2016, the Women's Initiative for Leadership Development (WILD) went with it. Back again now for its fourth year, resurrected by Women's Student Services (W*SS), the annual WILD Conference took place at the MSU Union Nov. 6, with interactive workshops and powerful speakers once again.

"In 2019, Dr. Heather Shea and I created the Office of Women's Student Services and when we were hired, our entire charge was to bring back the WILD Conference," says Assistant Director of W*SS, Gabby Wahla. "We got so many excited notes when we brought it back in 2019, and it was super successful. We had a lot of fun."

PLANNING PROCESS

"This has been the fourth WILD conference our office has planned, and it just keeps getting better year after year," shares W*SS Director Dr. Heather Shea. "The work we put in on the front end – I think it led to a very rewarding experience."

The theme of this year's conference was Amplify: Community, Culture and Collaboration.

"The idea behind 'amplify' is really aligned with what we see in social justice movements broadly, and that is finding ways to amplify and center the voices of those who are most marginalized and bring community leaders and activists to the various tables to have them be a part of those conversations," says Shea. "When we put out the call for proposals to have workshop presenters, the workshop presenters could pick one, two or all three of those subthemes of



community, culture and collaboration."

The theme, speakers and all other aspects of WILD were put together during a series of eight workshops starting in September and running weekly until three days prior to the conference.

"Some of the workshops were really directly talking about the way we need to build communities of support; some of them were talking more about cultural aspects of what it means to engage within a leadership model when all of the components are about

collaboration," says Shea. "The workshops are created and distributed by the staff and the chairs."

The staff consists of Graduate Assistant Makenzie Morales, Co-chairs Ashleigh Lowe and Joslyn Miller, and team members Maddie Leaver, Millie Nevelos, Jada James, Noihrita Masud, Bella Lopez and Jordyn Bradley. "We have a really good retention rate, so it's great to watch these students start out as sophomores and end with their senior WILD Conference," says Wahla.

Everyone helps in the selection of the presentations. "We look through the different sessions and the proposals, decide if they meet our theme and if we can see where they might go with it and if we feel

it's up to the caliber that we're looking for the conference," says Wahla. The process allows students to gain more leadership and event planning experience. "In the past we haven't done it that way, we kind of let them present what they were going to present," she adds. "This year we're trying to be way more collaborative."

The planning workshops are guided by two books: "Emotionally Intelligent Leadership" by Marcy Levy Shankman, Paige Haber-Curran and

Scott J. Allen and "Unapologetic: A Black, Queer and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements" by Charlene Carruthers.

"Each week they put together a really great half-hour-to-45-minute discussion based on one of the aspects in either of the two books," says Shea. Half of the meetings are dedicated to feminist leadership lecture-style content and the other half is reserved for planning the conference. "I think the best part about that is we weren't just sitting around trying to figure out what color T-shirts to get; we were also engaging in our own leadership development."

"When we started the WILD curriculum for the planning committee, we wanted to make sure the planning committee was getting leadership skills alongside with planning the conference," says Wahla. "Those sessions have been really interesting, and we've had some great conversations at them."

INTERSECTIONALITY

One of the opportunities W*SS is presented with is keeping the WILD curriculum current and inclusive to represent the student population. Wahla says their team works closely with potential presenters and contributors and workshop their content. "Equity, in itself, and feminist leadership are always evolving and changing, so we want to make sure we're supporting everybody so that we're on the same page. We wouldn't want anyone to use outdated terminology; we want to make sure everybody is receiving good support to be the best presenter they can be."

"Our conference tries to be and

works toward an intersectional feminist lens, an anti-racist lens and really thinking about 'how do we bring everybody along on this journey,' knowing that everybody might be entering that conversation from different places," says Shea. "We want leadership to be seen as inclusive and connective and a part of a community

"We have a really good retention rate, so it's great to watch these students start out as sophomores and end with their senior WILD Conference," says Wahla.

that values equity."

"We want to make it more intersectional. Obviously with 'women' in the title, it does feel limiting for some people, so we have an asterisk in our name to complicate that you are more than just your gender in this space, and feminist leadership styles aren't just for women," says Wahla.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

This year's keynote speaker was civil rights activist Dolores Huerta. Huerta co-founded the United Farm Workers union with Cesar Chavez, as well as founded the Dolores Huerta Foundation, which focuses on educating voters and supporting small, grassroots movements.

"I can't even put into words how much I have adored learning about

Dolores Huerta and all that she's done for all feminists, specifically American labor workers. I just think she's such a cool person," says Wahla. "We were keeping it under wraps for so long, and it was hard to keep a secret."

With previous speakers including Gretchen Whitmer, Elissa Slotkin, Debbie Stabenow and Dr. Mona

Hanna-Attisha, the W*SS team is no stranger to hosting influential figures. In addition to these high-profile names, the directors both said they want the focus to be on the students involved with and attending WILD.

"It's not just about bringing in outside voices, it's also about learning and engaging with students who are here," says Shea. "There's lots of great leadership initiatives happening on campus, but sometimes when all we do is bring in CEOs and people who sit on a stage, that's

great and can be really beneficial, but we have a lot of wisdom within the student body too. That's why we had an open call for proposals students could submit as well as the student keynote."

"We had a very diverse population of students who attended WILD: we had freshmen through seniors, we had grad students, we had community members and lots of alum that came, too. It's really cool to see people network and see the connections that come from this," says Wahla. "I hope these sessions made the students feel like they were able to network." 📍

Complimentary Menstruation Products available at MSU

THE MSU DIVISIONS OF STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT (SLE) AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND FACILITIES (IPF) RECENTLY INSTALLED COMPLIMENTARY MENSTRUAL PRODUCT DISPENSERS IN WOMEN'S AND ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS ON THE FIRST FLOORS OF STUDENT-FACING BUILDINGS.

MSU recognizes menstrual products are a basic health necessity and the lack of access to products can take a toll on the physical health, mental health and education of university students. The availability of these products will help create an equitable environment for Spartans to manage menstrual hygiene safely and with dignity.

This initiative was the result of the advocacy work of many MSU student organizations. The Mission Menstruation X MSU student organization worked closely with the MSU divisions of SLE and IPF throughout the research, trial and implementation processes of this initiative.

"We appreciate the advocacy efforts of MSU student leaders, particularly the leadership of Mission Menstruation X MSU," says Senior Vice President for SLE Vennie Gore. "They helped us gather and present data to show the importance of this initiative. We believe that this is a positive step forward to creating a more just and equitable campus environment for our students."

Their efforts, along with other student leaders and faculty and staff advocates helped move this initiative to implementation. Additional partners include Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU), Residence Halls Association (RHA), Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff (WACSS), Gender and Sexuality Campus Center (GSCC), and Women*s Student Services.

"As we review research at other institutions, it suggests there will be a high use of menstruation products at the start of the launch," says Dan Bollman, vice president for strategic infrastructure planning and facilities. "We expect that once students see this product is always available, usage will decrease to a steady number and will become like other products that we supply in restrooms. I am pleased we can provide this expanded access to students."

MSU is funding this initiative with operating dollars, similar to funding for restroom soap and toilet paper.

Learn more about the initiative and see a map of dispenser locations at sle.msu.edu/menstruation-products.

Photo - Special thanks to members of the implementation team, some of whom are pictured here: Brandon Baswell, Charles Stephens, Bethany Balks, Christine Leese, Nupur Huria and Allyn Shaw.



BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER
THROUGH CRAFT: THE UAB WINTER
Arts & Crafts Show



This story was written prior to the violence experienced on MSU's campus Feb. 13, 2023, and makes reference to the MSU Union, which may be triggering to readers. We wanted to present the story as it was initially intended: to recognize the efforts and impact of the many Spartan Community members who made this wonderful event possible.

Every December in East Lansing, when snow covers the sidewalks and winter coats and boots are out, the MSU Union draws in thousands of people for its Winter Arts and Crafts show. Beginning 59 years ago, this winter show was initiated by then University Activity Boards (UAB) Manager Colleen Hennessy to be a "holiday" show modeled after the East Lansing Arts Festival. The idea was to use the show as a source of income for the programming board to fund student events, says Cathy Fitzpatrick, director of the MSU Union and Alumni Memorial Chapel. Today, it is held the first week of December and hosts more than 120 artists and crafters along with upwards of 8,000 guests and patrons, made up of students, faculty and staff as well as the greater Lansing community.

Having worked with the show for about 20 years herself, Fitzpatrick finds it to be a fun and festive meeting place for old friends to meet and connect while shopping arts and crafts, something she herself has also done at the show.

"Seeing groups of shoppers attend the show year after year is amazing," she says.

She believes the show builds community by providing an opportunity for people from MSU, the greater Lansing area, and even further away to come together and enjoy some holiday and winter shopping.

"It gives an opportunity to some who have never been to

MSU or the MSU Union to experience hospitality at its best," says Fitzpatrick.

There are multiple goals the show hopes to accomplish. First and foremost, it is a large-scale fundraiser that allows UAB to host events for the student community, mostly for free. The UAB holds about four events a week, all on campus and alcohol free. Not only does it provide employment and learning to the student coordinators who plan these events, but also gives them opportunities for skill development.

UAB also "provides MSU students with safe environments to connect with other students and create Spartan memories," says Sara Stratilatov, UAB assistant director.

The proceeds from the booth fee for the show go directly to the UAB budget for such events. The fundraiser is also "a beloved community tradition that supports handcrafted artists and crafts, and it also provides a place for local community members to find unique items," she says.

Stratilatov is also the show lead for both the Winter and Spring Arts and Crafts shows. She plans, coordinates and implements all aspects of the show and is also involved in the artist and crafter selection process.

The show highlights unique artists and crafters across many mediums and does not allow wholesale or resell items. Products must have "handcrafted" elements. These could be items such as pottery and jewelry made by the artist or crafter, or digital works by designers or illustrators printed on T-shirts. Applications for having a booth at the show open in August and there are several rounds to guarantee acceptance. The show planners ensure artists and crafters meet their regulations and contribute to the holistic balance of the show with a variety of mediums, prints and styles. Booth mapping is also done in a way to



help artists and crafters be assigned to locations in which they will do well and provide a fun experience to guests.

Fitzpatrick highlighted the integral role played by the MSU Union staff in ensuring the smooth running and consistent success of the Winter Arts and Crafts Show. She says they do an outstanding job of preparing and restoring the building both before and after the show.

"When you walk into the building the Monday after the show, you'd never know that over 8,000 guests and 120 crafters had been in the building!" she says.

Fitzpatrick also credits UAB students and staff with organizing booth spaces, coordinating volunteers, making sure information booths are always staffed, handing out show maps, and then wrapping up smoothly.

The show has been a success at the MSU Union for 59 years now, and is loved by students, staff, faculty, and the Lansing community alike. UAB receives strong positive responses from the MSU community and patrons of the show consistently. Guests and crafters of the show return year after year.

Many have been with the show for 20 years and some for 40 years. It is widely considered a beloved tradition and as Fitzpatrick puts it, "The community absolutely loves the show. I think there might be protests if it decided to end for some reason!"