

FOR DONORS AND FRIENDS OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2020

# DEVELOPMENTS

## NEVER ALONE

*Student success is always paved  
with help from others*

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**Preparing a Unique Breed of Medical Researchers**

\$1.3 million gift to support DVM/Ph.D. dual-degree program

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*For Donors and Friends of Michigan State University*

MSU Developments, published three times each year, is devoted to the inspiration and impact of private philanthropy at Michigan State University.

The generosity of thousands of alumni and friends empowers MSU's students, faculty and leaders to accomplish the extraordinary every day.

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To remember MSU in your will, personal trust, qualified retirement plan or IRA, contact the Office of Gift Planning at (800) 232-4678 or (517) 884-1000.

The correct reference is Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, and the federal tax identification number is 38-6005984. If you have already named MSU in your estate plans, please contact us so we can welcome you to the Linda E. Landon Legacy Society. For more information, visit [giftplanning.msu.edu](http://giftplanning.msu.edu).

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**Learn more at [givingto.msu.edu](http://givingto.msu.edu)**

**UP AN OCTAVE!**

The Billman Music Pavilion is set to rocket the College of Music forward with 37,000 square feet of new space along with renovations on another 8,500 square feet in the MSU music facilities. The official ribbon cutting is yet to be scheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but this photo of the newly built large rehearsal hall on its first and only day of use in March offers a sneak peek of what's to come.

# DEVELOPMENTS

**ON THE COVER:**

A full scholarship brought Carlot Dorve, '16 (Music), to Michigan State. He's a shining example of what passionate young people can accomplish with support. Carlot, who grew up in Haiti, lost his right arm to an infection at age 5. Teachers had discouraged him from the musical arts, but today he is pursuing his Ph.D. in music education at the University of Missouri. See page 10 for more on the role of scholarships in student success.



# new DEVELOPMENTS

## OPENING HEARTS AND MINDS

*Couple supports education abroad with named endowment*

**A**lumni Dave Durham and Ed Farnham have one regret about their MSU experiences: they never participated in education abroad.

But they've very much managed to capture the education abroad spirit in their lives since.

Their DVM degrees from the College of Veterinary Medicine led to rewarding careers as veterinarians and enabled them to become world travelers—the kind who are as likely to stay in a hut as a hotel. The couple strives to travel as ambassadors rather than tourists, with humility about themselves and an open mind about others. They've seen how the approach can change people's hearts, including their own.

So, when it came to supporting their alma mater, education abroad represented exactly how they wanted to help the next generation of Spartans. They started with support for First-Year Seminar Abroad scholarships and

have made an estate gift to establish an endowment in their names for education abroad. They are working on funding the endowment with cash, making gifts each year on Give Green Day.

"The world is becoming a smaller and smaller place," says Ed. "And it's really important to appreciate what we have in the United States but also to understand that people are not dissimilar wherever you go. We all boil down to wanting the same things: good health and clean environments and prosperous lifestyles for ourselves and our kids."

Dave adds: "We really value the education that we are getting now from traveling and we are thrilled to be able to help students experience that sooner than we did."

Both Dave and Ed love to document their travel experiences through photography. In 2018, their work was selected in the International Studies and Program's Global Focus Photo Contest: Ed for "Scarface," a close-up of a lion taken on an African safari, and Dave for "After the Flood," a scene from inside a Vietnam home that also functions as a restaurant and had flooded from a monsoon just two weeks prior.

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**LEARN MORE** about supporting education abroad by contacting Interim Senior Director of Development Daniel Spadafore at [dms@msu.edu](mailto:dms@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 884-6789.

Dave Durham and Ed Farnham on a trip to Puerto Morelos, Mexico, and their MSU Global Focus award-winning photography.



## INNOVATIVE PROCESS FOR REUSING N95 MASKS

*Consumers Energy Foundation grants \$100,000*

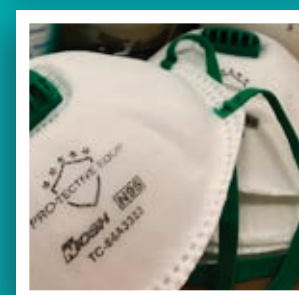
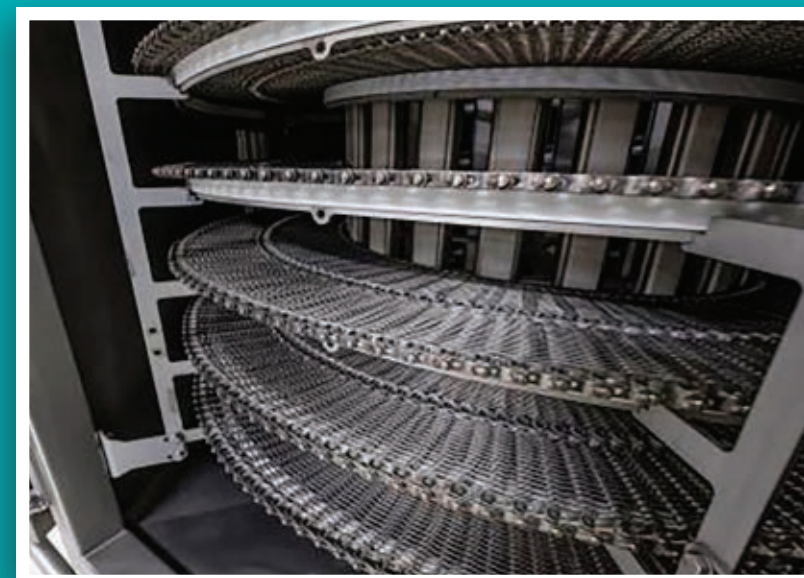
**I**n early April, MSU Extension, in partnership with Sparrow Health System, developed a new way to sanitize N95 respirator masks so they may be recycled for medical personnel amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Consumers Energy Foundation granted \$100,000 in critical start-up funds for the project.

The protocol—awaiting Food and Drug Administration emergency approval when we went to press—involves heating N95s in commercial ovens to kill off contaminants, including the virus that causes COVID-19.

"Our scientists in the Food Processing and Innovation Center were able to spool up this process in less than a week," says Jeff Dwyer, director of MSU Extension. "Having clean PPE, especially N95 masks, has the potential to save lives in hospital settings in Michigan and throughout the world. We are grateful that the Consumers Energy Foundation saw the potential and is willing to help fund our front-line workers."

Delta Dental of Michigan also provided \$25,000 for the effort and was the first corporate partner to get involved.



Thanks to support from donors and corporate partners, the MSU Extension Food Processing Innovation Center is developing protocols for a dry heat decontamination system for N95 respirators using the center's Marlen Spiral Oven.

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**LEARN MORE** about support for the project by contacting MSU Extension Director of Development Bridget Paff at [paff@msu.edu](mailto:paff@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 353-1337. A CrowdPower funding page has also been set up for individual gifts.

**Visit [go.msu.edu/masks](http://go.msu.edu/masks)**

## NEW TAX LAW

**T**he CARES Act of March 2020 not only aims to provide financial relief from the coronavirus pandemic but also could influence your charitable giving decisions in 2020.

### UNDER THE NEW LAW:

- You may deduct up to \$300 in gifts to charities, even without itemizing your deductions.
- Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from your individual retirement accounts are suspended for 2020. Previous tax law increased the age for RMDs to 72. You

may still make direct distributions from your IRA to charities, starting at age 70 ½.

- You may apply up to 100% (rather than 60%) of your cash gifts to charities against your adjusted gross income.

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**LEARN MORE** about giving options in estate planning by contacting Senior Director Deanna Gast in the Office of Gift Planning at [gastd@msu.edu](mailto:gastd@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 884-1000.

**Visit [go.msu.edu/cares-act](http://go.msu.edu/cares-act)**



## A GIFT FROM THE HEART

“The whole idea of theatre is built on a family or a community that comes together to create a work of art,” says Linda Stone, ’65.

In fact, in the case of Linda and her husband, Larry, ’64, M.A. ’68, coming together to create art is what brought them together as a couple: they met working on a play’s set as students at MSU.

Their love and appreciation for theater has been an integral part of their lives ever since.

A recent gift from the Stones will honor the Summer Circle Theatre’s 60th anniversary and the passionate leadership of Kirk Domer, the chairperson of the Department of Theatre, who will step down from his position as chair this summer.

With a \$50,000 bequest through their estate, the Stones will create the Kirk Domer Summer Circle Theatre Award, which will be awarded each summer to students who show promise in any area of theater production, from performance to playwriting to technical design to stage and arts management.

“It’s important for us to do what we can to foster more relationships, perhaps, like we have,” Larry says.

Linda agrees, “I don’t think we would be the people we are today if it weren’t for Michigan State University and for people like Kirk Domer, who understand the basic importance of the arts in all of our lives, no matter what we do.”

**LEARN MORE** about support for the Summer Circle Theater by contacting Senior Director of Development Christine Radtke at [radtkech@msu.edu](mailto:radtkech@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 432-6693.



MSU Summer Circle Theater in the summer of 2019 (top); Larry and Linda Stone



**A NOTE:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of in-person activities on campus, the 2020 Summer Circle Theatre season has been postponed until June 2021—a necessary decision, but difficult for SCT participants and fans alike.

But there is a bright spot: everyone involved in putting up this year’s SCT productions, including all graduating seniors and graduate students, will be offered the same roles next year if their schedules permit. In the meantime, many members of this season’s production team have been able to continue working on designs for costumes and set pieces remotely, for use next summer.

And for fans of the Summer Circle Theatre looking for a diversion as they ride out the pandemic at home, the SCT is offering a remotely taped reading of its family-friendly show “6.” Curriculum and activities that would ordinarily be used at the SCT Kids Camp for 1st through 6th grade students are also available online.

**FOR ALL OF THIS AND MORE,** visit the SCT online at [theatre.msu.edu/sct](http://theatre.msu.edu/sct)

## NEW FACES IN UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT LEADERSHIP

*Akins, Shoup to help build and maintain fundraising momentum*

University Advancement announces that after an extensive national search, two seasoned advancement professionals, Floyd Akins and Anne Shoup, have accepted key leadership roles that will help position MSU for the next chapter in its fundraising success.

Named associate vice presidents, the pair brings decades of experience from large universities and will help lay the foundation for the university’s next campaign.

Floyd will provide oversight for constituency programs, individual giving, and corporate and foundation relations, while Anne will oversee marketing and communications, the Alumni Office, and information technology and data systems.

“MSU Advancement is a sophisticated organization charged with engaging more than 1 million Spartan alumni, donors, parents, friends, fans and patrons across the globe to support the world’s pioneer and premier land-grant university. We are most fortunate that both Floyd and Anne have agreed to join our team in roles that are critical for charting the course for MSU’s next comprehensive capital campaign,” says Marti K. S. Heil, vice president. “It is testament to Michigan State and its community of donors and Spartans that we have been able to attract these outstanding leaders.”

Floyd has served in higher education and advancement for more than 25 years, holding numerous leadership positions. He was executive director of development at the Tippie College of Business and assistant vice president of principal gifts at University of Iowa Foundation, where he also served in the Office of Graduate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which has been at the forefront of his career. He also held leadership roles at The Ohio State University Foundation and the University of Tennessee Foundation. Most recently, he was a consultant for the Aspen Leadership Group, placing advancement professionals in positions nationwide.

Anne comes with more than 20 years of experience and a passion for nonprofits and higher education. She has served



Floyd Akins



Anne Shoup

in multiple fundraising and leadership roles, including her most recent positions at University of Colorado Boulder, as associate vice chancellor for Advancement and assistant dean for Advancement for the College of Engineering and Applied Science. Earlier in Anne’s career, her passion for the arts and conservation efforts led her to work for non-profits including The Climate Reality Project, The Leelanau Conservancy and Interlochen Center for the Arts.

Both have some past ties to Michigan State.

Floyd recalls that his favorite shirt as a high school sophomore was an MSU T-shirt, purchased in part to show his admiration for Magic Johnson. Though threadbare from use, he has hung on to that shirt for nearly 40 years and it was the only collegiate shirt he wore in high school.

Anne started her career and family in Northern Michigan and remembers the critical role MSU Extension played in her life as a new parent in a rural area, as well as the deep trust that the farming community held for Extension. The obvious pride in Michigan State throughout her extended family made a strong impression and she says she is thrilled to become a Spartan.





MBA students and leaders of digital experience design at Handsome are submerged in experiential learning thanks to a gift.

## MBA STUDENTS GET INSIDE VIEW AT LEADING DIGITAL AGENCY

*Gift helps students connect classroom learning with hands-on innovation*

BY CHELSEA STEIN

Thanks to a \$250,000 gift from alumnus Sanjay Baskaran (MBA Marketing '99) and his wife, Linda Chon, the Eli Broad College of Business is advancing the experiential learning aspects of the MBA program.

As an MBA graduate, Baskaran says he is giving back to the program that was a key part of his own career path. He has been a leader for companies such as Amazon and TaxAct, and today, he's the CEO of One Technologies.

Baskaran's gift helped fund a corporate partnership and connected the MBA students and faculty with Handsome, a digital experience design agency, for a four-day, behind-the-curtain series of workshops.

"I knew the Handsome team would be a perfect resource for MSU and would be able to give students an inside look at their methodology, as well as a hands-on understanding of how their holistic approach to innovation works in practice," he says.

The students worked alongside Handsome's executives to learn how to define market opportunities, build research protocols, design prototypes based on qualitative and quantitative insights, empathetically interview and observe people in the field, and then create and present a business case based on their lessons and research.



"The overall experience was extremely positive," Ayla Olvera (MBA '20) says. "This experience, and in particular the process, is something I look forward to sharing with my teams in the future."

The students were joined by Richard Saouma, associate dean; Ken Szymusiak, managing director for the Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, and Travis Corrigan, a veteran operator and expert in digital product management from Los Angeles, who provided ongoing training and scaffolding for MBA students.

"Sanjay Baskaran has selflessly opened countless doors for our MBA students, from enabling special courses to personally delivering Broad MBA resumes to senior tech leaders—his kindness is incredibly humbling," Saouma says.

"Handsome had the courage to pull us in behind the curtain, onboard us to their proven processes and hold Broad MBA students accountable for the same deliverables with gentle nudges along the way. Bridging the knowledge-doing gap is nearly impossible in a traditional classroom. We are infinitely grateful for any and all opportunities that afford students safe, real-world at-bats where they can develop the muscle memory to confidently deliver everything they've learned in the classroom to the unbounded opportunities awaiting them beyond Broad."

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**LEARN MORE** about making a gift to support the Eli Broad College of Business by contacting Senior Associate Director of Development Kristen Caswell at [caswellk@msu.edu](mailto:caswellk@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 432-7446.

## REVERED VENUE READIED ANEW

*Cowles House has new life as campus hospitality hub*

An invitation to Cowles House is a special honor for any Spartan or friend of MSU.

It is the university's most intimate venue for celebrating student and faculty achievement. Venerated for its age and history—originally built in 1857 to house MSU's first faculty—as well as its location tucked into the beauty of the north campus park, Cowles House has long been a center of campus hospitality.

Stalwart Cowles House hosts more than 150 events each year, welcoming MSU's most distinguished guests to campus and marking some of MSU's most significant milestones, while also serving as the official residence for MSU's president. Yet major upgrades and repairs were sorely needed.

Recently, thanks to the generosity and partnership of many stakeholders, Cowles House has been transformed to become fully accessible, more accommodating and user-friendly—ready for the next chapters in its long MSU history.

MSU Trustee Melanie Foster and Former First Lady Nancy DiBiaggio led a restoration effort and in 2017, HopkinsBurns Design Studio and Christman Company were retained to begin the process.

Every construction project at MSU—whether a new building or a renovation of an existing one—should be considered as a 100-year addition to the campus, simultaneously respectful of MSU's legacy while preparing for its future. Both companies have proven track records with

building, preserving and modernizing MSU's most iconic structures and both made significant gifts to the project, along with several sub trades. Additional collaborations ensured the project achieved its full potential.

Herman Miller Company donated furnishings that honor Michigan's role in the mid-century modern movement and returned Cowles House to the style Clifton and Dolores Wharton remember from their tenure there.

The Musser family, former owners of the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, generously lent their design expertise to the private areas of the home back in the 1980s, and Dan Musser III followed in his family's tradition with the assistance of renowned interior designer Carlton Varney.

Additionally, five former university presidents or their families and several MSU Trustees made gifts to Cowles House, helping to usher in numerous unique MSU artifacts.

Two columns salvaged from the 2013 Morrill Hall demolition became a focal point for the exterior landscape. Inside, Detroit's Pewabic Pottery crafted a tile mural depicting campus traditions and Snares to Wares, an MSU-led, community-based conservation initiative dedicated to improving human livelihood and protecting wildlife in Uganda, created two animal sculptures.

A final, uniquely MSU touch is a mural that honors donors, constructed by the university's Sustainable Wood Recovery Initiative from trees felled on campus.



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**LEARN MORE** about supporting the Cowles House project by contacting Senior Regional Director of Development Pam Serwa at [serwap@msu.edu](mailto:serwap@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 884-1050.

A bank of windows and an accessible, multilevel patio are some of the features awaiting visitors to a newly renovated Cowles House, where President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D. catches some fresh air while social distancing.



# YOUR *Scholarships,* THEIR FUTURE

BY DEVON BARRETT

**F**or so many students, coming to Michigan State is the first time they are thrown fully into an environment where not everybody looks like them, sounds like them, or comes from the same socioeconomic background or region of the world as them.

All of these students, from all of these backgrounds, are seated in the same classrooms, listening to the same lectures, receiving the same assignments in a setting where everybody has access to the same academic resources, the same library, and the same sources of enrichment, nourishment and entertainment.

On the surface, the playing field looks level. The university looks like the “great equalizer,” the place where every student has equal access to a bright future, upward social mobility, “the dream.”

But, there are potholes on the playing field.

While universities were designed to serve a lot of different purposes, they were not designed to serve the needs of all the students they admit. In fact, through intention or neglect, many of the students who meet a school’s admissions criteria fail to be adequately supported as they work their way toward graduation. For these students, college isn’t a level playing field. It’s full of potholes: structural inequalities embedded in the policies, procedures and norms of higher education.



## What is the playing field, anyway?

Right now, MSU's admissions standards are higher than ever, so let there be no question that every student admitted is well qualified and deserving. They most certainly are. But playing an active role in ensuring that all of them not only stay here, but succeed here, and go on to graduate, is a new look for Michigan State—and requires deep analysis on the university's part of the pathways from matriculation to graduation.

The change excites Interim Provost Teresa Sullivan.

"[The student success agenda] has been a mindset change from the university as a sieve that is essentially involved in a weeding-out function for those who are not worthy to be here," Sullivan says. "That's the old phrase about, 'Look to your right, look to your left. Only one of you will be here.' I think that has changed to the view that,

if you got admitted, we have a responsibility to make it possible for you to succeed."

So if the university is the playing field, it is MSU's responsibility to take a close look at it, find the inequities—potholes, if you will—and address them: fill the ones that need to be filled, help students find a route around them or, in some cases, build a new playing field entirely. MSU's student success agenda raises the expectations of its students and better supports them as they tackle challenges.

## And what are the potholes?

Some potholes are in the curriculum and are being addressed at an academic level. A common first-year mathematics course, for example, just underwent a massive reform to make it more productive, more equitable and less of a "weeding-out" experience for students while at the same time increasing the material students are expected to master.

But many of the potholes are—you guessed it—related to money.

On a structural level, the implementation of flat-rate tuition is making it easier and more cost-effective to take 15 credits per semester (though as few as 12 and as many as 18 per semester cost the same), so students will remain on the standard four-year, eight-semester timeline for graduation, which saves them the additional living expenses associated with having to take summer classes or tack an additional year or more onto their studies to complete their degree.

Still, in-state costs for an undergraduate degree are as high as \$100,000, and out-of-state costs could be as much as \$200,000, which is why it is more important than ever that these and other student success initiatives help to ensure that students are getting what they pay for.

It seems to be working. In fact, MSU's increasingly good value is widely recognized. Money magazine ranks MSU 59th on its 2019 list of "Best Colleges for Your Money," which lists quality of education, affordability and outcomes as its criteria.

Kiplinger's 2019 edition of "Best College Values" has MSU ranked 53rd among public universities for in-state students (a ranking that has improved from 85th in 2007.) Kiplinger bases its rankings entirely on measurable criteria such as student-faculty ratio, admission rate, graduation rate, cost and financial aid.

So MSU is worth the money, but when the money isn't there, scholarships can make the difference for many students.

## Scholarships will fill the potholes

Sometimes, a financial issue is straightforward: a student doesn't have enough money to pay their tuition.

But sometimes the issue is more nuanced than that. Maybe the student is dealing with or recently overcame a personal hardship. Maybe the student really needs their summer job to make ends meet but also really needs to take an internship in another city. Or maybe they can't afford the expenses associated with an education abroad program that could open a lot of doors for them.

In some cases, a monetary reward can go a long way in recognizing a student for their outstanding achievements in the classroom or in the community and give them the inspirational boost they need to keep working toward their dream.

Bottomline, scholarship funds give Michigan State the flexibility to award more money to more students and change their lives for the better.

## A METAPHOR FOR SYSTEMIC INEQUITY

*In his words: Mark Largent*

Mark Largent is the associate provost for Undergraduate Education and dean of Undergraduate Studies. He is one of the people leading the charge to make MSU a more equitable place for all. Instead of illustrating his point through potholes and playing fields, he tells a story about highways and bridges.

The story is that of Jones Beach in Long Island, New York.

Built in the 1930s, Jones Beach was a beautiful creation, an oasis for New Yorkers during the stifling summer months in the city. And unlike so many waterfront spaces, Jones Beach was open to the general public.

Anyone who wanted to go to the beach, could go to the beach.

Sort of.

At the same time the beach was being hailed as a shining example of a recreation space for the masses, the expressway built from New York City to Jones Beach had overpass bridges intentionally designed with such low clearance that buses were unable to pass beneath them.

So, yes, people who wanted to go to the beach *by car* could go to the beach. But people who relied on the bus system—a demographic overwhelmingly composed of poor people and people of color—could not go to the beach.

"Our university, like all others, is full of low bridges," Largent says of the metaphor. "Things that were accidentally or intentionally designed to keep people from 'going to the beach.' It is our job to find them, to root them out, to fix them and to build new expressways."



### MSU'S INCOME AND EXPENSES

The university's revenue—\$2.87 billion last year—comes from several sources, with tuition and fees and grants and contracts being the top two. State appropriations accounted for just 12% of MSU's revenue.

MSU draws on its revenues for instruction and research to keep facilities running and, among other things, to provide aid to students. For the 2019-2020 school year, Michigan State budgeted \$164.9 million for financial aid for students.

To help the largest number of students, MSU cannot rely on tuition revenue alone.

During the *Empower Extraordinary* campaign, donors contributed \$483 million for scholarships—enough money that if every dollar were immediately available and pooled in one place, it could be divided into 3,500 new scholarships of \$5,000 each.

These scholarships are already having a tremendous effect on students, but there is more to be done, especially as the university and the world at large venture into uncharted territories during these unprecedented times. Privately funded scholarships will allow Michigan State to continue to take care of its own by directly addressing the needs of students as they arise.

**1**  
AN ENDOWMENT GIFT OF  
**\$100,000**  
IN 2011

**10**  
PROVIDES  
**\$52,000**  
OVER A 10-YEAR PERIOD  
FUNDING

MORE THAN  
**10**  
SCHOLARSHIPS  
**\$5,000**  
EACH  
And continues to grow.

+

THE INITIAL INVESTMENT GROWS TO  
**\$103,000**  
BY 2021





## LIVING THE DONOR LIFE: THE PEOPLE WHO FILL THE POTHOLES

*In their words: Ann and Jeff Feld*

The Felds “are” because of MSU.

They met here. They earned degrees here. They laid foundations for successful careers here. And, now retired and living in Las Vegas, both Ann and Jeff have found a deep sense of purpose and belonging as active members of the Spartan community and the community of MSU’s most loyal and committed donors.

But for Jeff, especially, it’s easy to imagine a scenario where none of that would’ve been possible.

If not for Michigan State’s effort to cobble together scholarships, grants and a work study to help him pay for his degree, Jeff wouldn’t have been able to go to college—any college—at all.

“I knew I wanted to go to college, but the fields weren’t level. Essentially, what it boiled down to is, because of financial aid, MSU gave me a shot. With financial aid, I was on the same footing with everybody else.”

Ann’s parents were able to help her, financially, in her pursuit of a college degree—but they had to carefully save every penny they possibly could in order to do it. Their determination that Ann become the first in their family to graduate college is something that still brings sentimental tears to her eyes.

Though Ann’s own success in life is the embodiment of her parents’ legacy, she was so worried that their names would be forgotten.

So Jeff devised a plan. As a surprise for Ann, he worked with development staff in the College of Education to create a scholarship in her parents’ names that would provide financial support to students who aspired to be teachers.

Following the journeys of the students who receive the Harry and Bertha Konopko Endowed Scholarship each year, along with the recipients of the two scholarships the Felds have created to support student athletes, has brought Jeff and Ann immense joy.

“You get all kinds of thank-you gifts when you create a scholarship, but the letters—the thank-you letters from the students—are the gifts that mean the most,” Jeff says.

“And it’s so nice when we get to meet them in person,” Ann adds. “The Konopko Scholarship recipients right now are two wonderful young women, and it was so nice to meet them last fall, have dinner with them and talk with them. We find out about their backgrounds; they learn about us. It’s something Jeff never got to do as a scholarship recipient. He never knew who to thank.”

Being a donor, and paying it forward to the next generation, is his thank-you for the chance Michigan State took on him all those years ago.

“For us, it was really important to give a student a chance. And hopefully they’ll always remember that, and take full advantage of it, and then, someday, when they’re very successful, they’ll follow the lead and pay it forward, too.”

## LIVING THE SCHOLARSHIP LIFE: SCHOLARSHIPS CREATE NEW PATHS

*In his words: Evan Griffis, '23, Fisheries and Wildlife,  
STARR Scholar*

**Evan Griffis, shown here at MSU’s Corey Marsh Ecological Research Center, just finished his freshman year and comes to Michigan State from the small town of Newberry in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.**

**When we asked Evan to contribute his thoughts on what it meant to him to be the recipient of one of MSU’s most generous donor-funded scholarships, we had no idea that he was also an excellent writer, who would convey his story to us with rich detail and deep sincerity. So, well, we’ll let him tell you:**

“My parents, father Randy a high school history teacher and mother Linda owner of a small daycare business out of our house, were hard working and ever encouraging of my interests.

“The bird feeders outside the living room window of my home provided countless hours of entertainment and observation. My once passive interest in birds began to develop into something more serious. I realize now that simply the setting of my upbringing in the rural Upper Peninsula had enormous implications on developing my interests and sense of purpose in life; this purely natural landscape was my home, with so many fantastic features within that many people cannot and will not ever recognize. To realize this, it required the countless days of wandering the woodlands and exploring to develop a respect and interest in our natural world. I cannot imagine that I would have developed this anywhere else.

“I chose Michigan State University primarily for their outstanding Fisheries and Wildlife Department. I saw extensive course offerings and learned of many undergraduate research positions available within the department... After learning of all

these opportunities, I had a sense that I would more than likely be attending MSU after my senior year. Little did I know that would be confirmed in a few short months with the outcome of the STARR scholarship.

“I vividly remember how I learned of being selected to be a STARR scholar. It was a joyful phone call, and I knew that the news was positive as soon as I picked up. I was ecstatic, relieved and honored. It was really hard to believe that this incredible award had been bestowed upon me. Receiving the scholarship made me feel ready to begin my college career and I knew that I would be able to passionately explore my interests in college without worry.

“While it plays a large part in easing financial concerns, the time which I may have spent working had I not received the scholarship is now spent exploring my interests. For example, I was able to buy a car to work off-campus at the Michigan State Bird Observatory as a mist-net intern for three days a week during the fall migration season.

“I also believe that I must see the world if I am to work to conserve what natural aspects remain. With this in mind, as well as the contributions of



the STARR scholarship, I have decided to enroll in an education abroad program to Antarctica over winter break of 2020-21. This opportunity perhaps best highlights what being a STARR recipient has allowed me to do that I otherwise would not have been able to. The finances are daunting, and the STARR scholarship makes it much less so.

“I cannot say that I would not be at MSU without the STARR, but I can say that my experience is certainly much different with much more opportunity before me than if I had not been selected to be a recipient. I honestly think about how fortunate I am quite often, that donors who have never personally met me think highly enough of me to finance my entire college career, believing in my success and committed to helping me develop both academically and personally. Their generosity inspires me, for its magnitude is difficult to comprehend.”

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**LEARN MORE** about scholarship support for students by contacting the advancement office in your college or unit or Senior Director of Development for Scholarships and Fellowships Jennifer Bertram at [bertram9@msu.edu](mailto:bertram9@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 432-7330.



# A NEW HOME FOR A LIFETIME OF WORK

*\$6.1 million gift honors alumnus; supports Libraries' Special Collections/James Madison College*

**R**esearch scientist Keelung Hong, Ph.D., has made a \$6.1 million gift to Michigan State University in honor of his spouse, alumnus Stephen O. Murray, a sociologist, anthropologist and independent scholar who died in 2019.

MSU Libraries will receive \$5 million from the gift to renovate space in the Main Library for its Special Collections—the largest cash gift in the Libraries' history. MSU's James Madison College will receive \$1 million—the largest gift in its 52-year history—to support the Stephen O. Murray Scholar in Residence. An additional \$100,000 will be used by MSU Libraries for travel fellowships to bring other researchers to MSU Special Collections.

"This is a significant gift that will help MSU build and maintain scholarly resources that are critical to support research related to diversity and inclusion," said MSU President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D. "We are grateful to Dr. Hong for his trust in us to carry forward this important work."

In honor of the gift, MSU Libraries is renaming its special collections division the Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections.

"This gift is a tremendous act of generosity and philanthropy," said Dean of Libraries Joseph A. Salem. "The etymological root of philanthropy begins with love, and this is

MSU Libraries' Special Collections makes rare books and special materials accessible for scholarly work.



Keelung Hong's demonstration of love for Stephen Murray, for MSU Libraries, and for research, teaching and learning."

The residency program and travel fellowships will support visiting scholars who will teach and conduct research with access to the Libraries' Stephen O. Murray Archival Collection and other resources. Special Collections holds over 450,000 printed works, numerous manuscript and archival collections, and an extensive collection of ephemera supporting research in popular culture, radicalism, comic art and gender. These materials can be seen and used in the Special Collections reading room, which will remain on the first floor of the Main Library.

"My donation is intended to ensure that Stephen O. Murray's research, whether complete and published or incomplete and remaining unpublished at his death, remains accessible to other scholars, and to support additional research into the topics that interested him," Hong said. "His commitment to libraries really helped me understand that I should continue to support his interests and continue to support libraries for future generations."

Murray and Hong were together for 38 years. After graduating from James Madison College at MSU, Murray earned a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Toronto, was a postdoctoral fellow in anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley, and worked in public health in California, Ohio and Texas. But his primary work and love was his dedication to scholarship and writing. He wrote and contributed to more than 20 books and published studies in sociolinguistics, the history of social sciences, and extensive historical and cross-cultural studies on homosexuality in multiple cultures.

Hong, who holds a Ph.D. in chemistry from UC Berkeley, was a research scientist at the University of California, San Francisco for 20 years. His work in improving cancer therapy has led to a series of breakthroughs and a number of patents in drug carrier technology for improving drug and gene delivery. After being a consultant to several biotech companies, Hong founded Taiwan Liposome Company in Taiwan and its subsidiary, TLC Biopharmaceuticals in the United States, where he currently serves as chairman and CEO.

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**LEARN MORE** about supporting the MSU Libraries by contacting Director of Development Seth Martin at [marti981@msu.edu](mailto:marti981@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 884-6446; or about supporting James Madison College by contacting Director of Development Rocky Beckett at [beckettr@msu.edu](mailto:beckettr@msu.edu) or by calling (517) 432-2117.



Scholar and alumnus Stephen O. Murray (left) and his spouse, research scientist Keelung Hong.



# PREPARING A UNIQUE BREED OF MEDICAL RESEARCHERS

*\$1.3 million gift to support DVM/Ph.D. dual-degree program*

BY LIAM BOYLAN-PETT

**T**racy Hickman and Chad Munger are a Spartan family. They both graduated from MSU. Both sets of parents went to MSU, too, and it doesn't stop there. Even their dogs—two Newfoundlands—have a Spartan connection: Banks is named after the banks of the Red Cedar, and Dawson's namesake is former basketball star, Branden Dawson.

It is safe to say MSU had a profound impact on Hickman and Munger, who own Mammoth Distilling in northern Michigan.

In 2018, they established the Dewey Memorial Endowed Scholarship, named after their late Newfoundland, Dewey. The \$1.3 million endowment will help recruit top students to the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine's dual-degree program, which educates, trains and prepares tomorrow's clinician-scientists to help address evolving scientific, social, ethical, political and humanitarian challenges that face animals and public health care.

The way Hickman and Munger see it, it was the least they could do. And naming the endowment after Dewey was a no-brainer: they believe the endowment will be just like Dewey, determined and one of a kind. Helping Michigan State's already-strong veterinary was the best way to give back.

Neither Hickman nor Munger went to veterinary school—Hickman majored in interior design and Munger was an English major—but giving to CVM was always going to be the area they wanted to assist.

"My wife and I have had dogs for 40 years," Munger says, "and when they've needed care beyond the scope of office treatment, we always go to MSU." That is saying something for Munger and Hickman, who live on Torch Lake in northern Michigan—and it was always worth it. "The students and faculty," Munger says, "added years to the lives of a number of our dogs. It hasn't been forgotten."

Hickman and Munger are impressed with the dual-degree program, particularly with Dean Birgit Puschner, who came to MSU in 2018. Hickman and Munger are thrilled that Puschner is willing to invest time and resources into developing the vet program by integrating in-depth research into human and vet medicine.

Puschner is excited, too. Plus, she is grateful for the endowment and what it will mean for MSU. "Our dual-degree program produces clinician scientists that are in high demand today," Puschner says. "The COVID-19 pandemic is a perfect example of how important the connection between research and scholarship is in preparing for tomorrow's challenges, be them biomedical, agricultural, medical, surgical or environmental."

The Dewey Memorial Scholarship will support veterinary medicine students who engage concurrently in a formal scientific training program, thus enabling them to graduate with dual DVM and Ph.D. degrees.



Banks and Dawson, the Newfoundland dogs of alumni Tracy Hickman and Chad Munger.

"Those veterinary scientists will be especially well prepared to help meet challenges facing animal and public health care," Puschner says. "With this scholarship, we can increase support to our students, attract the best and brightest future veterinary scientists, and continue doing what Spartan veterinarians do best—making a difference in animal and human lives around the world."

**"I FEEL GOOD ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL WHO WILL EARN THE SCHOLARSHIP BUT ALSO THAT MSU WILL GET THE BEST CANDIDATE, AND BE EVEN BETTER OFF BECAUSE OF IT."**

—CHAD MUNGER

Currently, the Dewey Memorial Endowed Scholarship will support one to two students as they make it through the dual-degree program, but the hope is, as it grows, more students will feel the impact. Munger and Hickman are excited not only to make a difference in a student's life with the scholarship, they are hopeful the scholarship will attract even more talent to MSU.

"It is fantastic that MSU will be able to get the best people in those positions, whether they can afford it or not," Munger says. "I feel good about the individual who will earn the scholarship but also that MSU will get the best candidate, and be even better off because of it."

Hickman and Munger hope the endowment is only a piece of the impact they leave at MSU. They are looking for more ways to help. "For us this is just the beginning," Munger says. "Having one or two students with a scholarship is fantastic, but we'd like to have more and find other ways to make a more lasting impact."

That is good news for MSU's College of Veterinary Medicine. It is good news for dogs like Banks and Dawson, too.

**LEARN MORE** about supporting the College of Veterinary Medicine by contacting Associate Director of Development Eric Langdon at langdon4@msu.edu or by calling (517) 353-7891.

## Stepping Up

Small businesses have risen to the occasion in the fight to control the COVID-19 pandemic, and Chad Munger and Tracy Hickman's Mammoth Distilling in northern Michigan is no different. The still used to make Mammoth's spirits kicked into high gear in mid-March, not only producing whiskey and vodka, but also kicking out thousands of gallons of hand sanitizer.

Serving many living in the areas surrounding Traverse City, Mammoth offered free hand sanitizer in small batches to individuals who could stop by one of the distillery's tasting rooms, and sanitizer for sale in bulk. "We're in a position to offer our services," Munger says, "and we're motivated to help."

Mammoth Distilling's hand sanitizer is doing exactly that.





Alumni, donors and friends of MSU can point with pride to the many strengths of our university. As the world faces the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSU has been working hard to marshal its resources to combat the virus on many fronts. Here are some examples:

## MSU hits back against COVID-19 with one-two punch in decontaminating PPE

MSU has developed two processes to decontaminate and repurpose personal protective equipment for front-line responders. A heating process developed by MSU Extension (see page 3) combines with a second decontamination process using vaporized hydrogen peroxide. Using both methods, the university itself has the capability to clean nearly 15,000 pieces of PPE each day.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/clean-ppe](http://go.msu.edu/clean-ppe)

## Newly graduated doctors and nurses licensed early to aid in COVID-19 response



As Michigan worked swiftly to expand its health care workforce, hundreds of

MSU health care students stepped into the fight after MSU worked with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs to expedite the licensure of health care professionals who graduated in May. Health care systems now have access to 87 baccalaureate-prepared nurses, 61 medical doctors and 213 osteopathic physicians.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/health-grads](http://go.msu.edu/health-grads)

## MSU Health Care Team provides



## drive-through COVID-19 testing

Members of the public with a physician's order for COVID-19 testing can receive drive-through testing in Parking Lot 100 at 804 Service Road, just east of the Radiology Building at the MSU Clinical

Center. The site was up and running by MSU Health Care nurses and doctors on April 1.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/drive-thru-test](http://go.msu.edu/drive-thru-test)

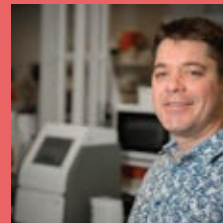


## MSU leads national COVID-19 convalescent plasma project

As part of the next step to advance the use of convalescent plasma for the treatment of COVID-19 infection, the

National Convalescent Plasma Project launched a website for patients who have recovered from COVID-19 infection and want to donate plasma. MSU Epidemiologist Nigel Paneth led the development of the National Convalescent Plasma Project, with colleagues from Johns Hopkins University and the Mayo Clinic.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/plasma](http://go.msu.edu/plasma)



## Potential COVID-19 emergency room test delivers fast results

A new in vitro diagnostic test developed by Brett Etchebarne, an emergency physician and assistant professor in

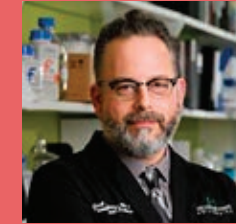
the College of Osteopathic Medicine, could meet the need for faster, more accessible testing in hospital emergency rooms.

Etchebarne's test can deliver results in five to seven minutes

with the possibility of running much higher numbers of tests at once than methods currently used and with more readily available equipment.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/ER-test](http://go.msu.edu/ER-test)

## Researchers identify new COVID-19 testing process



A more accurate test that can detect the virus much earlier than other tests has been adapted and validated by Jack Lipton, chair of the College of Human Medicine's Department of Translational

Neuroscience and his team of researchers. The new testing method is 500 times more sensitive than the standard coronavirus test. That is important, he said, because it reduces the number of false negative test results that incorrectly diagnose people as free of the disease, allowing them to infect others. The test could be available quickly pending U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorization.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/lipton-test](http://go.msu.edu/lipton-test)

## MSU engineering team designs DIY ventilator

To address a shortage of ventilators, MSU mechanical engineers built a prototype using commonly available, low-cost parts. The team also developed an instruction manual and video for assembling the ventilator in less than a day. This ventilator prototype has not been tested on human subjects, nor does it have FDA approval for use in the U.S., but team leader Ricardo Mejia-Alvarez said the ventilator should be free for development and distribution in the developing world.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/ventilator](http://go.msu.edu/ventilator)



## Predicting COVID-19 outbreaks through wastewater

Funded by the Great Lakes Water Authority, MSU's Irene Xagorarakis and her research team are using a method

from one of her recently completed studies to test and predict COVID-19 in Detroit that can deliver warnings of potential outbreaks even before they appear in health facilities. Xagorarakis is also working with the Institute for Global Health in the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine to extend this to international locations.

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/water](http://go.msu.edu/water)

## A nanotech solution for pandemic diagnostics

Assistant Professor Morteza Mahmoudi believes nanotechnology may be the answer to identifying COVID-19 risk factors in patients prior to the manifestation of major complications. In a paper published in Molecular Pharmaceutics, Mahmoudi said that such a solution "would not only be useful in protecting health care centers from becoming overwhelmed...but could also prevent severe shortages of health care resources, minimize death rates and improve management of future epidemics and pandemics."

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/nano](http://go.msu.edu/nano)

**HOW TO HELP:** Learn more about how you can support these and other developing projects by contacting the development officer for your college or unit, or by calling University Advancement at (517) 884-1000.



## STUDENT Spotlight



*"Ecological restoration is a fairly young field, so understanding which methods are most effective is necessary to advance the field. My research demonstrates that there is a benefit to having restored prairies that have a high diversity of native species, and effort should be put toward creating healthy native ecosystems for the benefit of both plants and insects."*

*"Spending time at the Kellogg Biological Station has allowed me to make connections with scientists at every stage of their academic journeys. Collaborating with so many great people who hold such vast collective wisdom has really inspired me to make the most out of my time as an undergraduate and start thinking about where I want my academic journey to go from this point on."*

**ALLY BROWN, '20**  
College of Natural Science Dean's Research Scholar  
and W.K. Kellogg Biological Station Apprentice

**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/brown](http://go.msu.edu/brown)



## Developments

University Advancement  
Spartan Way  
535 Chestnut Road, Room 300  
East Lansing, MI 48824



## Emergency Support Helps MSU Students

### *ASMSU and RHS provide boost to available funds*

The Support Our Spartans Emergency Needs Fund is helping students struggling financially from the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to donors and students themselves.

Established in 2010 by donors to provide students financial support to pay unexpected expenses that arise from emergency situations, the fund received a major boost in early April from two student government organizations. The Associated Students of Michigan State University and the MSU Residence Halls Association contributed \$265,360.

“Supporting the fund was a meaningful way for us at ASMSU to impact the lives of students with their immediate needs. The uncertainty that students face adds a level of anxiety and concern on making ends meet. Our hope is to alleviate the added financial burdens that they are encountering,” says Mario Kakos, ASMSU president.

Students understood the issues facing their friends and classmates due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially those who had to remain on campus or in the East Lansing community, often alone and without jobs when nonessential operations closed, notes Vice President and Associate

Provost for Student Affairs and Services Denise Maybank, who administers the funds.

Once applications opened for students to request help from the fund, more than 7,400 applications were received, 3,000 of them within the first 24 hours. Eligible students receive a one-time grant up to a maximum of \$500 and are not required to repay the award.

The Support Our Spartans Emergency Needs Fund is one of several ongoing funds receiving contributions from donors, faculty, staff and students. As of early April, more than 3,010 donors contributed more than \$308,000 to the SOS fund as well as a number of college-level emergency assistance funds and other funds for students in need.

“It is impressive and gratifying to see how Spartans are looking out for one another,” says President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D. “Many in our community are experiencing financial difficulties and your support is providing a lifeline when they need it most.”

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**LEARN MORE:** [go.msu.edu/SOS-for-students](https://go.msu.edu/SOS-for-students)