

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

SNYDER HALL

EMPOWER
EXTRAORDINARY

THE CAMPAIGN *for* MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Supporting the

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Live Your **Learning**

“To live your learning in RCAH means pursuing the ideas, questions, puzzles, and ethical dilemmas that you encounter in class and out of class, wherever they may lead. It means being open to interpretations other than your own. It means making the pleasure and insight that can be drawn from the arts and humanities part of your life—who you are and who you want to become.”

STEPHEN L. ESQUITH

DEAN, RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES



Through an active living and learning environment, RCAH students practice how to compose their thoughts more clearly, communicate them more effectively, and reflect on them more cooperatively—so they can be of use in the world.



Weaving Together **Passion, Imagination, and Wisdom**

It is the mission of the RCAH to weave together the passion, imagination, and wisdom found in the arts and humanities to promote individual wellbeing and the common good. We believe that the arts and humanities not only give us great joy, but also the knowledge needed to make sound judgments and choices, both personal and societal. RCAH faculty and students work together with community partners to understand complex problems, hear and learn from others, and contribute to the making of a better world.

In order to grasp the main currents of world history, the resulting cultural challenges and opportunities, and the ethical values that are at stake, students and faculty of the RCAH are actively learning in a variety of ways. Students expand their intellectual horizons and develop their creativity through the relationships and learning nurtured in the residential setting. Students grow with each text they study, each image they create, and every score and script they perform. Through this active, engaged process, students learn to compose their thoughts more clearly, communicate them more effectively, and reflect on them more cooperatively—so they can be of use in the world.

OUR CAMPAIGN **VISION**

Civic engagement in the RCAH is at the center of the college's mission, and is an essential form of active learning. Students work to develop a mutual understanding with the people they meet in diverse communities—near and far—in their native and foreign languages. From the Art@Work collaborative mosaic of portraits at local nonprofit Peckham, Inc., to ongoing dialogue with the youth and adult community members of Edgewood Village in East Lansing, civic engagement at the RCAH moves beyond compassion and tolerance. It evolves into the creative application of the arts and humanities through the design of a more democratic, just, and sustainable world.

World history, art and culture, and ethics—as they are explored and made meaningful through active learning—define the RCAH's open-minded, public space within which students, faculty, staff, and community partners can create shared moral visions for the future. These core commitments represent the distinctive characteristics of the RCAH community.



ADVANCING RCAH *through* **YOUR GIFTS**

The Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH) seeks to raise \$1 million through the Empower Extraordinary campaign to provide the college's undergraduate students with scholarship support and to bolster opportunities for innovative, active learning and educational programming with one another, faculty, staff, community partners, and visiting artists.

The RCAH Center for Poetry encourages the reading, writing, and discussion of poetry, and works to create awareness of the power of poetry in our everyday lives.





An Engine of **OPPORTUNITY**

Attracting and retaining hard-working and talented students is critical to the mission of the RCAH. The costs of higher education—especially tuition and experiential learning opportunities—constitute one of the great barriers to education for many of our students and their families. For them, the availability of scholarships can be the major factor that enables promising students to experience the life-changing opportunity that higher education offers.

Scholarships funded through the Empower Extraordinary campaign will provide students—regardless of their financial circumstances—access to the RCAH’s active learning opportunities: transformative field experiences, study abroad programs, internships, and undergraduate research opportunities. The power of your support is visible in the RCAH students who are:

- Engaging in ongoing relationships with educators and students in local public schools, through conversations about self-esteem, culture, identity, and countless other critical topics.



OUR FUNDING GOAL TO PROVIDE MORE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STUDENTS IS **\$500,000.**

- Making initial and return trips to collaborate with community non-profits in countries they first visited through scholarship-funded study abroad programs.
- Living their learning through internships in which they gain valuable experience and insight for future career choices.
- Creating their knowledge through partnerships with faculty and gaining hands-on experience as they research, plan, and facilitate youth empowerment programs, community meetings, and collaborative arts projects.





A Force for

CREATIVITY, DISCOVERY, AND LEARNING

RCAH's cornerstone of engaged learning serves as a guiding force for the college's faculty as they break new ground with innovative approaches to imagining what's possible for students, community partners, and visiting artists. Through published research about the significance of informal learning spaces, the pedagogy of art as social justice, cutting-edge intersections between arts, humanities and social science, and critical components of civic engagement, RCAH faculty are evaluating and sharing the results of their practices in active teaching and learning. The presence of creativity in action—from photography to poetry, and screen-printing to reader's theater—defines the RCAH approach to teaching and learning.

As an arts and culture program, the RCAH strives to recognize and more completely understand the contributions and context of the arts and humanities, and to see them as cultural practices. This kind of active, engaged learning can be seen throughout the RCAH curriculum, in and out of the classroom, and within the college's community partnerships. Visiting artists, filmmakers, writers, musicians, ethnographers, actors, and community leaders meet, engage in dialogue, and imagine with students in the college's creative spaces.

RCAH faculty and staff:

- Create mutually-meaningful collaborations with organizations and nonprofits in Lansing and beyond;
- Build public art installations that empower participants;
- Use documentary film and photography to explore culture and community; and
- Infuse critical dialogue around performances, exhibits, and art-making.




As is evidenced by RCAH faculty and student experiences, the diversity and range of active learning within the arts and humanities is extraordinary, and support for new and existing initiatives makes future development and growth possible.

OUR FUNDING
GOAL TO BE A
GREATER FORCE
FOR CREATIVITY,
DISCOVERY, AND
LEARNING IS
\$200,000.



A Global **PROBLEM SOLVER**

RCAH study abroad and study away programs are centered on opportunities that provide mutually-valuable experiences for students and partners. The community of Kati, Mali, and students and faculty from the RCAH are engaged in a dialogue of learning that is contributing to the process of healing and reconciliation following civil war and upheaval in that country. Students have met with teachers, artists, and other community members to compare and share educational practices. In rural Costa Rica, students' understanding of eco-tourism's ethical complexities is grown through community conversations about resource usage and the history of the tourism industry—all while they build knowledge and craft sustainable solutions with residents.



In order to meet global challenges, funding is needed to find new paths that will allow for greater mutual benefit for the university and study abroad partners. Relationships can be enriched and reciprocity deepened by establishing programs that invest in the partner's educational institutions and transfer the value—and many applications—of active learning.

OUR FUNDING GOAL
TO BE GLOBAL PROBLEM
SOLVERS WHO CULTIVATE
TRUE RECIPROCITY
IS **\$250,000.**

A Vibrant **COMMUNITY**

The active study and use of world languages is an essential and enriching part of the RCAH student experience. In learning a second language, students are able to gain greater insight into other cultures as well as their own. Language proficiency is a way to understand, listen to, and interact with other cultures, and is a valuable skill for employment. The college's Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum (CLAC) model has been created to provide opportunities for students to apply and strengthen their knowledge of world languages and cultures, in a variety of curricular and extra-curricular contexts. Support for the language program would provide resources to continue expansion and evaluation within the college, and facilitate sharing the innovative model with other institutions.

Engaging in the arts through active learning is also central to the RCAH community of students, faculty, staff, community partners, and visiting artists. Art is created in the RCAH classrooms and the art studio, in residence hall rooms and the gallery, and in informal learning spaces and community spaces with local organizations and schools. In order to increase the RCAH capacity for art-making outside the college and to spark community dialogue about art as cultural practice, the college seeks funding to research, plan, and create a mobile art vehicle—fuel- or people-powered—for increased outreach opportunities.



YOUR **IMPACT**

Your support of the RCAH is an investment in an educational experience that creates active learners and creative, well-rounded thinkers. Our graduates are expected to make a difference in communities from rural Michigan to the far side of the world, and they are doing just that. RCAH alumni are:

- Attending the nation's most prestigious universities for graduate school;
- Serving as educators in nonprofit organizations locally, nationally, and abroad;
- Creating dialogue as storytellers in the communications and journalism fields;
- Collaborating as advocates and community leaders in arts organizations and youth empowerment programs; and
- Working in government, and local and national agencies to shape policy decisions.

We hope you will join us in our journey, and support our students in theirs.



OUR FUNDING GOAL
TO CREATE A VIBRANT
COMMUNITY THROUGH
LANGUAGE AND ART IS
\$50,000.





At the End of **the Day**

Making the case for an arts and humanities residential college program within a large public research university is both necessary and challenging in the current political and economic climate.

We have all heard the criticisms of liberal arts education these days: too expensive for the limited employment possibilities, not practical enough, and not what taxpayers want to spend their money on. We have also heard the counter-arguments: a liberal arts education provides critical thinking skills, it teaches multi-cultural understanding, it teaches you how to write clearly, and it even leads to competitive lifetime earnings.

While we certainly cannot afford nostalgia for the liberal arts at a time when the pressures on public higher education are so great, we also cannot afford to reduce them to either mirror images of other disciplines or their handmaidens. Climate change, poverty and hunger, civil war and violence are critical issues. We know that they must be addressed holistically and from multiple disciplinary perspectives. We know that motivating people to take them seriously is just as important as teaching how to analyze them. Whether it is a rural community or an urban center in Michigan, or a developing country seemingly far from our own shores, these problems that define our age are human problems. That is, human beings have created them and only human beings who want to work collaboratively and cooperatively together can solve them.

The Residential College in the Arts and Humanities is a place where the arts and humanities are organized with this ambitious mission in mind. This is why we place civic engagement at the center of our curriculum, and it is what we mean when we say the arts and humanities should contribute to the common good. Our faculty and students develop special skills and competencies; they become highly proficient, but they never lose sight of this paramount value and the need to integrate their learning and see the world synoptically.

It is one thing to claim to do this. It is another to actually do it. We can now point to the exemplary work of eight cohorts of entering RCAH students and four full graduating classes. Their stories are easily found on our website and in many other places on and off campus. They are not just problem solvers; they are problem definers. They are not just team players; they are team leaders.

I invite you to experience this kind of education firsthand. Come to our monthly Wednesday Night Live College Colloquium series to listen to the energetic way our students interact with artists and scholars who are still living their learning for the sake of the common good. Bring on one of our students to work with you as an intern or apprentice on a project of your own or your firm's. Visit our LookOut! Art Gallery or first-year Open House to learn from the students about what they've made and studied. And, if you would really like to get a feel for the arts and humanities for the common good, attend the RCAH-intensive Parents College in the summer.

The RCAH is more than a distinctive residential program in the arts and humanities that is swimming against the current. We are setting a new direction for the arts and humanities at a time when it could not be more needed. Please join us. Support our students and faculty. Be part of the RCAH.

STEPHEN L. ESQUITH

DEAN, RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES





**RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE
ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

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COVER IMAGE:

*The front door of Snyder-Phillips, home to the
Residential College in the Arts and Humanities.*

SPARTANS WILL.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE *and*
EMPOWER EXTRAORDINARY TODAY.

EMPOWER.MSU.EDU

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