New MSU STEM Center: Midland Funders Invest in the Future
The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation

The Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation

The Charles J. Strosacker Foundation

The Dow Chemical Company Foundation

The George Lucas Educational Foundation

MSU and Midland Foundations Open New MSU STEM Center

Creating more opportunities to motivate teachers, encourage students and empower young people to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math is the inspiration behind the new Michigan State University STEM Center for the Great Lakes Bay Region. The collaboration has been made possible with support from The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, the Charles J. Strosacker Foundation and The Dow Chemical Company Foundation.

Together these foundations are working with MSU to invest $10 million into the MSU STEM Center, which will be located at the former Michigan Molecular Institute in Midland.

“We are proud to strengthen our already significant collaborations with MSU, which consistently ranks high in the nation for its educational programming,” said Andrew N. Liveris, Dow chairman and CEO. “By enabling our youth to become STEM problem solvers, we are investing in the shared future of our company, our community and even our planet.”

The center’s curriculum will be targeted at K-12 learners. It also will include select MSU courses for college students as well as innovative teacher enrichment programs in collaboration with MSU’s College of Education. Students, teachers and administrators from Great Lakes Bay Region school districts, including Midland Public Schools, will be engaged in programming and implementation.

“With MSU’s growing presence in Midland with the Midland Research Institute for Value Chain Creation and ongoing community investments through Momentum Midland, this partnership was a natural fit as we pursue more ways to broaden our research, educational and economic impact in Michigan,” MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon said.

A variety of concepts are under consideration as part of the overall STEM program offerings. They include a Dow science-in-residence program that offers learners access to Dow science professionals; laboratories equipped with global communication technology to enable connectivity around the world; and state-of-the-art STEM programming. Initial programming is expected to be launched in May 2016.

The center is a further example of philanthropic and business support for Midland community development, similar to its support of Momentum Midland’s effort to enhance downtown Midland and the surrounding community, said Mike Whiting, president, The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.

“The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation has a 45-year legacy of supporting scientific education and research in that very facility since the building opened in 1972,” he said. “This gift builds on that legacy and is further evidence of our desire to collaborate on community priorities, to make a collective and lasting impact.”

Michigan State University researchers and their partners plan to create a model for teaching elementary students science while also improving their skills in math, reading and writing. The project is funded by a five-year, $5 million grant from Lucas Education Research, a division of the George Lucas Educational Foundation. Executive Director Kristin De Vivo said the goal is to bring the benefits of project-based learning (PBL) – an approach that encourages kids to explore real-world problems – to more classrooms throughout the nation.

“Educators are in agreement based on classroom experience that project-based learning keeps students engaged and promotes deeper understanding,” said De Vivo. “However, very little research currently exists to prove the benefits of PBL, and also to help educators develop and implement this kind of leading-edge curriculum. This grant supports a team with exceptional credentials and ideas.”

Joseph Krajcik, director of Michigan State’s CREATE for STEM Institute, will lead colleagues from MSU and University of Michigan as they develop and design materials for Grades 3 and 4. Teachers working in under-resourced communities will assist in testing and enacting the new learning units with as many as 1,800 students over the five years, focusing not only on making the curriculum effective but also personally relevant in students’ lives.

Krajcik said the project will build on previous research and help teachers make stronger connections between two sets of education standards now being implemented in most states: the Next Generation Science Standards and the Common Core State Standards in language arts and mathematics.

“We are pleased that Lucas Education Research shares our excitement about what project-based learning can do for our schools and our students,” said Krajcik. “This grant makes it possible for us to design a curriculum that will bring science to life for young learners with thoughtful incorporation of literacy, mathematics and learning technologies to promote collaboration and agency.”

“Michigan State University is at the forefront of conducting research on STEM education and applying the results – a pressing need in our state, across the country and around the world,” said MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon. “We are grateful to the George Lucas Educational Foundation for partnering with us in our quest to enhance STEM skills in students of all ages.”

Literacy researcher Annemarie Sullivan Palincsar, a professor at U-M, is co-principal investigator on the project. Other team members include Deborah Peck-Brown of MSU, Elliot Soloway of U-M and Emily Miller of the University of Wisconsin.

George Lucas Educational Foundation Grants $5M to MSU for Science, Math and Literacy Education

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Connecting Families to STEM

Corporate partnership helps annual MSU Science Festival expand its reach

Imagine what would happen if science was taken out of the laboratory, put on display, and explained by a professional, passionate about sharing the wonder and excitement of a science career.

This is the MSU Science Festival—a celebration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) that gets everyone involved and inspired.

“With make connections,” says Renee Leone, coordinator and co-founder of the MSU Science Festival. “We connect scientists with the public, professionals with other professionals, and disciplines with other disciplines. We connect people with educators, mentors and career options. We connect STEM with everyday life.”

The Science Festival happens, in large part, thanks to sponsors. “Sponsors make everything possible,” Leone says. “They’re the reason the festival has grown so much and will continue to grow. Most importantly, they’re the reason we’re able to make every single event free of charge.

Media partners like the Lansing State Journal and local TV stations help get the word out about the festival. Some partners contribute goods. Dean Transportation and CATA provide free rides between venues. Sponsors help offset costs for running the festival.

Some corporations take their sponsorship a step further by bringing in display booths of their own, where visitors can experience their STEM career opportunities and bring awareness to their work.

One such company is Johnson Controls, which specializes in battery optimization and efficient electrical systems. As the emphasis on STEM grows, the move to make science and technology more accessible has gained traction around the world.

“Leone’s inspiration came from a visit to the UK, where she saw how the Cambridge University Science Festival sparked conversation and curiosity in its visitors. Now, MSU and more than 40 others in the Science Festival Alliance across the U.S. and Canada collaborate to bring the best science and technology offerings to their communities each year.

MSU’s 2013 inaugural Science Festival attracted 10,000 people. In both 2014 and 2015, it brought in more than twice that number.

The festival’s physical presence has grown, too. Initially concentrated on campus and venues around Lansing, the 2015 festival expanded to Detroit for a day, with help from the MSU Detroit Center.

It featured events at the Charles Wright Museum of African American History, the Scarab Club and the Michigan Science Center in Downtown Detroit. Visitors could choose to attend sessions in topics ranging from genomics to vehicle technology to inspiring stories of African Americans who have made great contributions to science. Detroit Day was so successful that an entire week of Detroit events has been added to the 2016 lineup.

Five years from now? “We want the MSU Science Festival to be statewide,” Leone says, “and this state, with its large network of museums and universities, is equipped for it.”

The 2016 MSU Science Festival will take place April 12-16 on MSU’s campus, April 18-24 in Detroit, and will have a statewide astronomy night on April 15.

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Dean Transportation
Dean Trailways
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MSU Astronomer Named Packard Fellow

Michigan State University astronomer Jay Strader has been named a fellow of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, a prestigious award that honors the country’s most innovative early-career scientists.

Strader and 17 other fellows will receive a grant of $875,000 over five years to pursue their research.

The Packard Foundation established the national program in 1998 to provide early-career scientists with flexible funding and the freedom to take risks and explore new frontiers in their fields.

“I am humbled to have been selected and am honored to represent MSU as a Packard Fellow,” Strader said.

An assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, Strader’s work focuses on black holes. Specifically, he discovers and studies black holes in the dense stellar environments of globular clusters using data from optical, X-ray and radio telescopes.

This work sheds light on the formation of black holes in the death throes of massive stars and helps guide tests of Einstein’s theory of general relativity.

Much of Strader’s work is conducted through use of the Southern Astrophysical Research (SOAR) telescope. SOAR is a 4.1-meter telescope located in Chile and is a joint venture among MSU, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the country of Brazil and the National Optical Astronomy Observatories.

Strader has been an MSU faculty member since 2012. From 2007-2012 he was a Hubble Fellow and Menzel Fellow at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in physics and mathematics at Duke University, and his Ph.D. at the University of California Santa Cruz.

Two other MSU faculty members have won a Packard fellowship: Kay Hollowell, University Distinguished Professor of zoology (1995), and Marcos Dantus, professor of chemistry (1995).

Each year, the foundation invites 50 universities to nominate two faculty members for consideration. The Packard Fellowships Advisory Panel, a group of 12 internationally recognized scientists and engineers, evaluates the nominations and recommends fellows for approval by the Packard Foundation Board of Trustees.

Since 1988, the foundation has awarded $346 million to support 463 scientists and engineers from 52 top national universities. The Packard Fellowships are among the nation’s largest nongovernmental fellowships, designed to allow maximum flexibility in how the funding is used.
**Using Math Models to Study Patterns in Ecological Community**

Understanding the overall structures of ecological communities is crucial to maintaining the health of ecosystems. One such complex but vital community is the plankton in freshwater lakes. Combining mathematical models with experiments and analysis of field data, two MSU professors are working to discover the cause behind patterns of plankton communities in lakes and oceans. The work has received support from the Simons Foundation of New York, which has awarded its first major grant to Michigan Lakes the team studies. Finally, the team will put their new models to the test using controlled experiments, a more powerful form of model testing than has been applied to SAD theories. Litchman and Klausmeier are involved in other ongoing projects, such as (1) developing and testing models of the vertical distribution of phytoplankton; (2) understanding the role of spatial heterogeneity on species competition and coexistence; (3) determining the causes of seasonal succession in plankton communities; (4) applying game theoretical approaches to models of community assembly; (5) explaining different sources of variation in the dimensional stoichiometry of phytoplankton, and (6) exploring the dynamics of nonlinear food web models.

**The Simons Foundation**

The Simons Foundation’s MMLS program seeks to foster a culture of theory-experiment collaboration similar to the work in the physical sciences. It supports the development of mathematical models that explain classes of experimental results and suggest new directions for research and experimentation aimed at testing theoretical ideas and expanding their reach. The Simons Foundation’s MMLS program supports research in the life sciences that breaks new conceptual or theoretical ground and relays closely to experiment, for example, by introducing new and experimentally testable concepts by or developing models that can explain data and motivate new classes of experiments. The professors are based at MSU’s Kellogg Biological Station near Kalamazoo in southwest Michigan. Dr. Klausmeier is a theoretical ecologist who uses mathematical and computational models to uncover the principles that form the structure of ecological communities. His main focus is on plankton communities found in lakes and the ocean. Dr. Litchman is an experimental and conceptual ecologist who also focuses on phytoplankton communities. Her work applies trait-based approaches to plankton ecology, combining lab experiments with metagenomic and genomic analyses of distribution, abundance, and community composition.

**Species Abundance Distributions** Dr. Klausmeier explained that species abundance distributions (SADs) — the patterns of commonness and rarity in a community — have fascinated ecologists for over a century. Over time many explanations have been developed, but they are often based on unrealistic biological assumptions or are merely statistical in nature. In addition, these existing explanations have been tested only by comparing patterns in nature with model predictions. The problem is that many models can lead to the same patterns, leaving these tests unable to distinguish among competing hypotheses. In the new study, Klausmeier and Litchman will develop new models based on more realistic assumptions of how species interact. One key is embedding a local community in the broader landscape through immigration of individuals. Another novel aspect of the models will be investigating the dynamics of these SADs in changing environments, such as the Michigan lakes the team studies. Finally, the team will put their new models to the test using controlled experiments, a more powerful form of model testing than has been applied to SAD theories.

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**Supporting Sufferers by Supporting Science**

The Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America is a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization committed to finding a cure for Crohn’s, ulcerative colitis, and other inflammatory bowel diseases by supporting research efforts like Guibersen’s. The CCFA’s Senior Research Award is for established researchers who seek funding to gather enough critical preliminary data to become competitive for funding from the government. Through its Targeted Grants in the Mathematical Modeling of Living Systems (MMLS) program, the CCFA provides resources and support to the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America to fund research in the life sciences that breaks new conceptual or theoretical ground and relays closely to experiment, for example, by introducing new and experimentally testable concepts by or developing models that can explain data and motivate new classes of experiments.
The Russell Sage Foundation and the William T. Grant Foundation have awarded grants to study aspects of social and economic inequality.

The topic of inequality has gained considerable prominence and stirred passionate debate across the country in recent years. Studying Controversial Aspects of Social Inequality

We look forward to investigating whether there are distinct advantages to people who succeed more when they speak for the rich. Professor Imberman said the grants will help us deepen our understanding of college achievement. "The grants from the Russell Sage and Grant Foundations have been instrumental in helping our work progress. We are required to travel to work with the data on-site, and to hire research assistants as well. There are also substantial up-front and ongoing fees to maintain access to the data. Our work would not be possible without the funding."

The study will look in particular at whether the interventions increase the likelihood that low-income students enroll at UT or A&M; whether enrolled students experience better educational outcomes—in terms of such outcomes as college majors, GPA, graduation and time to degree—and whether greater success in college translates into the students getting higher paying jobs.

The Russell Sage Foundation

The Russell Sage Foundation is the principal American foundation devoted exclusively to research in the social sciences. Located in New York City, it is a research center, a funding source for studies by scholars at other academic and research institutions. It publishes, under its own imprint, books and articles that advance theory, policy, and practice related to human relationships and the environment in the United States. I. The William T. Grant Foundation

The William T. Grant Foundation was established in 1936 by the founder of the W.T. Grant Stores. Grant believed that human relationships and the environment were powerful forces in shaping our abilities to lead successful lives. Building on the vision of its founder, the foundation invests in research with the potential to advance theory, policy, and practice related to children and youth in the United States.

Detroit Students Learn from Career Journalists

Crain Communications and the MSU School of Journalism have come together to support journalism in Detroit high schools. The Crain MSU Detroit High School Journalism Program will use journalism as a tool to enrich the educational experiences of students in Detroit-area high schools. The program will bring together students and educators to provide professional journalists, MSU faculty and MSU journalism students to produce a newspaper and website about issues affecting the students’ schools, their peers and the community.

The program will be actively engaged with students from planning to storytelling throughout production, including providing meeting space for training and design sessions. Help operate the program over a multiyear period.Crain journalists and staff also will work with MSU to assist students and teachers in creating high school publications at least four times per year. The company will be actively engaged with students from planning to storytelling throughout production, including providing meeting space for training and design sessions.

Headquartered in Detroit, Crain Communications is a privately held media company, which publishes a variety of trade newspapers and periodicals, including Automotive News, Crain’s Detroit Business and Advertising Age.
The Joyce Foundation works with grantee partners to discover, develop and advance innovative and effective policy solutions for the central challenges of our time. With a focus on the Great Lakes region and also achieving national impact, Joyce strives to improve quality of life, promote community vitality and achieve a fair society.

April M. Zeoli, PhD, MPH, is an associate professor and coordinator of undergraduate studies in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Her research brings together the fields of public health and criminology and criminal justice. Her main field of investigation has been the prevention of intimate partner violence and homicide through the use of policy and law. Specifically, she has studied closely the role of firearms in intimate partner violence and homicide, as well as the criminal and civil justice systems responses to intimate partner violence. Using an infectious disease model, she also has studied the spread of homicide over time throughout Newark, New Jersey.

### The Joyce Foundation and the Prevention of Gun Violence

Over many years the Joyce Foundation has supported dozens of projects to help law enforcement, policy makers and advocates develop common sense laws and policies that keep communities safe. The foundation recognizes that this work is an urgent matter. Gun violence affects a heavy toll on families and communities in many ways. More than 100,000 Americans are killed or injured in gun violence every year.

A growing body of research shows that strong gun laws correspond with lower rates of gun death and injury. The Joyce Foundation's support for Dr. Zeoli's work is part of its effort to expand on this research, building awareness about the problem of gun violence in America, and to educate the public, policy makers and the media about the effectiveness of policies intended to improve public health and safety.

#### Studying Firearms Restrictions and Domestic Violence

An MSU Criminal Justice professor has received a grant from the Joyce Foundation to study whether certain state-level laws restricting access to firearms for domestic violence offenders affect levels of domestic violence homicide.

Dr. April Zeoli will analyze how effective two main types of laws are: (1) laws restricting people who have been convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence from legally possessing firearms, and (2) laws that restrict those under certain domestic violence restraining orders from accessing firearms.

Dr. Zeoli said the study will examine domestic violence homicide levels in 46 states from 1979 through 2013 to determine if they were impacted by the passage of these state-level firearm laws. She also will study the impact of key provisions of the laws, such as whether people prohibited from firearm possession must surrender their firearms or whether state law does not specify that prohibited persons must be dispossessed of firearms currently in their possession.

The Chicago-based Joyce Foundation includes gun violence prevention among its several areas of focus. Program Officer Jeseyca Dudley, MPH, believes the research will produce valuable findings. "We look forward to supporting the proposed research, which will have direct implications for policies regarding the enactment and enforcement of domestic violence firearms restrictions. We anticipate the results will provide lessons and insights to inform policy-making and enforcement at the federal, state and local levels."

Dr. Zeoli’s study will answer questions regarding whether the strength of legal firearm restrictions for domestic violence impacts domestic violence homicide levels. The study will also look at a number of related issues:

- Because many states do not cover dating partners in their domestic violence firearms restrictions, it is important to know if covering dating partners significantly impacts domestic violence homicide.
- Greater degree than not covering dating partners in the law.
- Does domestic violence homicide decrease when a state law provides for the dispossessing of firearms from domestic violence offenders?
- Does the presence of a system to prevent prohibited persons from purchasing firearms, such as universal background checks, affect the impact of laws prohibiting domestic violence offenders from purchasing firearms on domestic violence homicide?

Even further, the project will investigate how local jurisdictions enforce state laws that restrict firearms to domestic violence offenders, as well as the conditions that help or hinder the enforcement of firearms laws in cases of domestic violence.

Dr. Zeoli leads the investigation with collaborators Dr. Daniel Webster and Dr. Shannon Furtaroli from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The Joyce Foundation supports this research to help law enforcement, policy makers and advocates develop common sense laws and policies that keep communities safe.
MSU Study Looks at Education Abroad

Michigan State University researcher Amita Chudgar is leading an effort to improve our understanding of why students in developing countries don’t stay in school.

Chudgar received a $200,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to study the home and community life of youth in India, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It will be the first in-depth analysis of large existing datasets that can provide insights for improving secondary education not only in those nations that can provide insights for improving secondary education not only in those nations, but throughout the world.

Until recently, Chudgar said, researchers have focused on how to get children to start school. “In the last 10 to 15 years, we have had, as a global community, quite a bit of success in that initial goal,” said Chudgar. “But now we have another set of issues to think about. We don’t see that many children making it through primary and into secondary schools. Once enrolled, retaining children in secondary education is also a challenge.”

Assisting with the research are Alyssa Mosley, Pablo Bezman and Young Ran Kim, all students in MSU’s Educational Policy doctoral program. Chudgar and her team use nationally representative Demographic and Health Survey data to identify how factors such as health, gender and family circumstances affect secondary education outcomes for youth ranging from 12 to 24 years old. For two countries, India and Nigeria, they use additional data to create a more detailed profile of enrollment and retention patterns.

Chudgar, an associate professor of educational administration and policy, is committed to encouraging her students and colleagues around the world to explore similar research projects with publicly available resources. “There are so many existing good datasets that are underutilized and could be used to address questions for which we know very little,” she said. “Our job is to generate findings that are relevant and that can be used by governments and policymakers to make a difference.”

The MacArthur Foundation funded the project as part of the Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education, a collaborative that seeks to increase secondary education access and improve learning outcomes for marginalized populations. The partnership works toward this goal by funding in-country interventions that accelerate innovation, support evidence-based policy reforms, and capture and disseminate learnings to key stakeholders. The partnership is led by a group of private donors and donor advisors, including the MacArthur Foundation, The MasterCard Foundation, The MasterCard Foundation, Human Dignity Foundation, Intel Foundation and an anonymous donor.

MasterCard Foundation Scholars Gather in NYC

Every year, about 10 scholars from the MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program’s participating institutions across Canada, the United States and Costa Rica take part in its annual partner appreciation dinner in New York. Scholars are selected from a pool of nominations based on the uniqueness of their backgrounds and a well-defined giveback plan. The Annual Partner Appreciation Dinner is an opportunity for partners and scholars present to inspire one another. This year, successful scholars were invited for a three-day event, which included a daylong boot camp on social and business entrepreneurship with successful entrepreneurs such as Mikki and Radha Agrawal, Andrew Horn and Doug Akin. The scholars also spent time connecting with counterparts from other universities and countries across Africa (Burundi, Ghana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) to share their personal education and leadership journeys and their giveback projects with one another. It was also an opportunity to explore New York City and meet with the foundation partners who are thought leaders in education, including university presidents from across the scholars program partnership.

In their opening remarks at the Annual Partnership Appreciation Dinner, Reeta Roy, president and CEO of the MasterCard Foundation and Jim Leech, board chairman of the MasterCard Foundation, acknowledged the contributions of partners who work tirelessly to fulfill the vision of the Foundation in providing university education to academically talented young people in Africa who dare a commitment to giving back to their communities. Together with the audience, they recognized the scholars with a standing ovation. In response, scholars expressed their gratitude and shared personal and inspiring stories about their background and life journeys prior to their MasterCard Foundation Scholarship awards.

Caroline Latona, a graduate scholar in advertising who was selected to represent Michigan State University commented that, “every MasterCard Foundation scholar has an interesting and inspiring story, including all 83 of us at Michigan State and others I have met these past three days. Our experiences have motivated us to reach where we are now and to continue to forge ahead despite the challenges. Not only do we get a first class education at Michigan State, we also get to take part in leadership and personal development trainings that prepare us to become well rounded professionals.” Scholars urged the foundation for continued support, as there is so much more to be done in addressing the imbalances in access to education, particularly for the girl-child, the stigmatization of mental illness, unemployment and other concerns based on their experiences.

“For me, it was really a pleasant experience networking with top officials in partner organizations with the MasterCard Foundation but more importantly being inspired by the stories of the scholars who were represented. Sometimes you think you have experienced the worst of things but when you listen to others who have experienced much more, you get really motivated to do more with what you have,” Caroline said.
Visionary Network Strengthens Michigan Food Businesses and Access

Food hubs are emerging win-win innovations: a business model that makes healthy local food products available to diverse markets and offers a way for small producers and value-added food businesses to succeed.

“The MSU Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) has received a $450,000 continuation grant from the Kresge Foundation to expand the Michigan Food Hub Network, the nation’s first statewide learning community that helps food hubs become profitable while supplying healthy food to low-income communities. "With this renewed award, we will build on the network’s unique infrastructure, which gathers food hub managers and business partners to develop strategies for business viability, reaching new markets and increasing food security in the state,” said Rich Pirog, senior associate director of CRFS. "The center will also collaborate with neighboring states to help them learn from our model.”

Over the next three years, the project will increase buyer-seller relationships and specialized assistance, emphasizing business collaborations between food hubs and food service directors of institutions (e.g. schools and hospitals).

"Institutional food service directors and buyers across the state continue to express great interest in purchasing Michigan foods, but face challenges in sourcing the foods they want at a local or regional level,” said Colleen Marte, farm to institution specialist and co-leader of the Michigan Farm to Institute Network. “Food hubs are in a position to fill that critical gap to help meet institutional demand.”

Helping Small Food and Farm Businesses

"With the network’s support I was able to attend the University of Vermont’s food hub management certificate program, participate in network meetings, and collaborate with other Michigan food hubs in an IT feasibility study," said Rita O’Brien, associate director of Lansing’s Allen Market Place. “These experiences helped us to develop a stronger business model which has set our hub on a path of success.”

Throughout Michigan, representatives gather three times per year to build peer relationships and share lessons learned. The network also collaborates to address regional food value chain challenges.

For Natasha Lantz, co-leader of the Upper Peninsula Food Exchange, these partnerships have been important. “The Michigan Food Hub Network has been invaluable in helping to establish, develop, and continue to grow our food hub. The statewide meetings allow us to share resources, get new ideas and see the groundwork to coordinate efforts. The network takes our needs seriously and works with us to obtain resources and find solutions to common challenges. This is evidenced by attention to both farm food safety and food hub technology, two issues that are proving to be challenges to food hubs in our state.”

Expanding the Network

Michigan’s food hubs are well positioned to expand connections between the state’s producers and markets. Over 1.8 million Michigan residents, including an estimated 300,000 children, live in low-income communities with limited supermarket access.

“We have seen too much emphasis on getting local food into the untransparent large distribution system rather than doing the work to build a side-by-side local system that is traceable and tradable,” said a participant at a network meeting. Eighty-two percent of Michigan school food service directors reported interest in purchasing local foods in a 2013 survey. Their top logistical challenges were lack of labor to prepare local foods, lack of storage and lack of a distribution method to get local foods to their programs. Working together to turn these challenges into opportunities is the Michigan Food Hub Network’s philosophy. "Strong, collaborative relationships are key to the success of any business; building such relationships across hubs and their business partners is what the Michigan Food Hub Network does best,” said Pirog.

Kresge Foundation

Kresge Foundation is a $3.5 billion private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America’s cities through investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services and community development.

United Shore Gift Creates Faculty Fellow Position In Sales

A former Michigan State University basketball player turned business executive is teaming up with the Eli Broad College of Business to enhance sales research and education.

Mat Ishbia, president and CEO of United Shore, a Troy-based mortgage lender, will create a new faculty fellow position in the Department of Marketing through a gift of $500,000.

"Talent and workforce development keep MSU at the forefront of knowledge and teaching in sales to help develop new generations of sales leaders. "The United Shore gift will allow the Department of Marketing to provide support for a faculty member—even at the assistant professor level—who has exhibited leadership in sales research and teaching. A leader in wholesale mortgage lending, United Shore believes its sales as a pivotal and critical aspect of business. "The United Shore gift demonstrates confidence in the Broad College and our ability to graduate strategic thinkers who have a business acumen and can make an impact on the business world from day one,” said Sanjay Gupta, Eli and Edythe L. Broad Dean of the business college. “This gift helps us in our commitment to develop transformational thinkers and doers who make business happen.”

About United Shore

Founded in 1986, United Shore is home to United Wholesale Mortgages, the top lender among America’s independent mortgage brokers. In addition to receiving the Crain’s Cool Place to Work in Michigan award, United Shore has been named a Best and Brightest Company to Work For and a Detroit Free Press “Top Workplace.”
34 businesses and organizations sponsored MSU’s 2015 Science Festival

300 H.S. journalists helped by Crain Communications

197 members in the MSU STEM Alliance improving STEM education