YOU ARE HERE

(EVEN WHEN YOU COULDN’T BE)
As the novel coronavirus changed life as we knew it, a place generally bustling with activity and energy was one of the first to become unrecognizable. By March 11, MSU students could no longer learn in classrooms. Days later, we heard there would be no March Madness for the Spartans. By the end of that week, parking on campus wasn’t an issue for anyone.

Even those who typically would have been at MSU seven days a week found themselves isolated from the physical place where they dedicated their time and talent to discovery and learning. Yet, in the ways that truly count, they are still here. And you are too.

In the first few months of the crisis, more than 4,760 Spartans gave $462,241 to emergency assistance funds for students in immediate need. That’s only a portion of the more than $76.5 million given by over 43,431 alumni, parents, students, faculty, staff and friends of MSU throughout the year.

We could give you a whole annual report on numbers like these—and there are impressive numbers to be sure—but the numbers only scratch the surface of what your gifts meant to the students and faculty of MSU. So, this year’s report is dedicated to stories about your impact.

At a time of great uncertainty for everyone, we hope these stories convey the one thing that has remained steadfast. You are here. And your being here makes all the difference.

NO ONE WILL EVER FORGET THIS YEAR
Grace Beltowski, ‘20, a professional writing alumna and member of Honors College, learned that writing and storytelling have a place in every work environment. “I used my (Citizen Scholars) scholarship for a study abroad to Peru, and I was there for a month studying environmental communications, learning about what different environmental issues exist in Peru such as illegal mining, deforestation, global warming and then the different communication measures that are in place to talk about these issues,” Grace said.

Last summer Grace interned at MSU’s W.K. Kellogg Biological Station, putting her skills as a writer and communicator to work in a real-world setting. “There’s a very important need for accurate and effective communication within the scientific community not only because we have the responsibility of sharing our findings with the public, but because we need to keep people engaged and educated so we can continue to receive support for our work,” she said.

PHILLIP (Natural Science) and TONYA (Arts and Letters) COLLIER, both ‘87, and daughters LAURA, ‘16 (RCAH/Honors College) and TYLOR, ‘20 (James Madison) support the College of Arts & Letters Citizen Scholars program. The initiative helps students put their voices, knowledge, skills and practices within the arts and humanities into action, toward a more just, inclusive and open society.

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“We are proud of the institution that educated us and we’re willing to give back so that future generations can have a wonderful experience as well.”
Deciding where to go for college wasn’t something Valerie Lerma, ’23, took lightly, and her strong desire to do something out of her comfort zone brought her from her hometown of Glendale, Arizona, to East Lansing. Valerie, a physiology major with a minor in Spanish, dreams of getting into a good Physician Assistant program and eventually becoming a PA. Entering her sophomore year, she has no doubt that her MSU education is preparing her well and will set her apart from other applicants if she chooses to apply to programs closer to home after graduation. She also has no doubt that her fellow Arizona Spartans already have her back, because Valerie is the 2020 recipient of the AZ Spartans Endowed Scholarship, which is funded through the efforts of the alumni club in Phoenix.

“When I found out I had received the AZ Spartans Scholarship, I was extremely surprised—I had no idea!” Valerie said. “I was also very excited, because my parents were originally on the fence about letting me come to Michigan State, due to it being more expensive than me staying in-state.” For Valerie, the experience certainly feels like money well spent.

“I chose to attend MSU because it was something completely new for me. I love the beautiful campus, and I have met so many people from so many different backgrounds, who have taught me more than I could ever imagine.”

KATRINA MASHACK, ’09 (Social Science), is a marketing professional and an officer of the Phoenix, Arizona, alumni club who stepped up to support the AZ Spartans Scholarship.

“AZ Spartans established a scholarship fund to annually help support a local student who decides to attend Michigan State University. Our main fundraising event, Sparty Gras, as well as generous donations from our members, help raise money to grow our endowment and to encourage more local students to explore MSU’s educational opportunities.”
The MSU Student Food Bank has long been a source of comfort—a place where students find not just help with hunger but also support from other students, right in their own community. So, it is little wonder that hundreds turned to the food bank after the COVID-19 pandemic upended their lives and caused uncertainty, panic and food insecurity.

Our Spartan community rallied. Annual gifts to the Food Bank totaled $146,037 this year, and nearly a quarter of them were made in the critical weeks following the onset of COVID-19. Contributions of time and resources from across campus and throughout the Spartan community resulted in serving more than 750 MSU students and families and an additional 150 community members in local shelters, on a single weekend in March.

Ongoing support allowed the food bank to continue serving nearly 40 students and their families daily.

“This was all about what it means to act as a community and a Spartan,” said Dennis Martell, director of health promotion in the division of Student Health and Wellness at Olin Health Center. “Giving assurance to those that may not have come out all week, that their community cared, meant as much to some as the resources.”

A SPARTAN SAFETY NET

SPARTANS CAME TOGETHER TO HELP THE STUDENT FOOD BANK MEET INCREASED NEED IN THE COMMUNITY.

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“FoodSEC does to leave our legacy by supporting the MSU Student Food Bank since the pandemic disrupted life for those in need—especially in regard to food supply—and we were in a position to help.”

JORDAN GEORGE, ’20 (James Madison, Social Science and Honors College), president of the Senior Class Council, was among the first to make a gift to the food bank, pledging $50 of his own as well as authorizing a $1,000 contribution from the Associated Students of MSU.
Each year, 80 of MSU’s top freshmen are selected to serve in Tower Guard, an honor society that, since the 1930s, has helped make MSU a welcoming place for students with disabilities that affect reading. In the founding days, students read textbooks aloud for peers who were blind. Today, students work with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities producing state-of-the-art, accessible materials in Braille, large print and audio/electronic formats. These leaders build community where disabilities do not stop students from achieving their highest aspirations.

Every Tower Guard member pledges to volunteer at least 120 hours. The commitment can make it difficult to also find the time to work, but thanks to donor support, exceptional Tower Guard members with financial need can receive scholarship support. The bright young men and women of Tower Guard inherit a legacy of service that leaves a lasting mark on them, and they in turn leave their own mark on the university, on each other, and most importantly, on the students with disabilities whom they serve.

Current Tower Guard president Mackenzie Desloover, an MSU Nursing junior, said the work ethic and dedication to service within the organization continues to amaze her. “I am honored to volunteer alongside who I believe are some of the most incredible people, not just on campus, but in the world,” said Desloover. “I am so proud of Tower Guard’s impact on the community. We had an incredibly successful year, despite facing much adversity with the unforeseen shift to online learning. I am eager to see all that the incoming Tower Guard class will accomplish in the coming year.”

HELPING THE HELPERS

MSU TOWER GUARD SCHOLARSHIP HELPS MAKE SERVICE POSSIBLE.

MACKENZIE DESLOOVER (’22)

MSU TOWER GUARD AND RESOURCES CENTER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

READY TO HELP SPARRANS FACE THE WORLD

SPARTAN STRONG

PRISCILLA (BRAIDS) BELLARS, ’66 (Arts and Letters/Honors College), after years of “keeping up” through the Spartan magazine and letters from MSU, fully reconnected with MSU at her 50th reunion, and made annual gifts to areas meaningful to her: the College of Music and of Arts and Letters, the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities and the Tower Guard Scholarship.

“MSU gave me a wonderful undergraduate education, the foundation for a long and life-long career and friends. MSU has grown even better over the years, and so has my ability and enthusiasm for giving back.”
When the Edward J. Minskoff Pavilion opened in the fall of 2019, it was clearly no ordinary academic hall. Every inch of its 100,000 square feet is dedicated to enhancing the student experience through a seamless design that emphasizes community, collaboration and teamwork.

More than 1,700 donors contributed to the space, following the lead of alumnus Edward J. Minskoff’s $30 million gift. Collectively, donors provided all $62 million needed to complete the project.

The result is positioning the Eli Broad College of Business ahead of the curve in higher education. Generations of students will immerse themselves in collaborative learning within flexible classrooms, team rooms, an entrepreneurship lab, a media studio, a large-scale career center and more. At the same time, the entire business community is inspired by the breathtaking atrium, the inviting grand staircase and the wall of spectacular three-story windows that overlook the beautiful banks of the Red Cedar.

“Spartans for generations to come will now have an appropriate home in which to innovate, build relationships and work together, while our Broad faculty can leverage these state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces to develop transformational business leaders,” said Sanjay Gupta, Eli and Edythe L. Broad Dean.

Added University Distinguished Professor and Eli Broad Professor of Management John Hollenbeck: “It is true that I have seen a lot in my time here at Michigan State, but I can say without any fear of contradiction that I have never seen anything like the Minskoff Pavilion—not even close. This is a truly spectacular and inspirational building.”

JOHN HOLLENBECK (PROFESSOR)

SPARTAN INSPIRED

JEFF GE, ’99 (MBA Eli Broad College of Business), is a supply chain executive in San Francisco, California, and pledged annual support for the Edward J. Minskoff Pavilion.

“When faced with challenges in finding a job in 1999, I was supported by the Career Development Department led by Shilo Doshney, and eventually landed a great job. I want to give back to MSU to help others.”

BUILDING SUCCESS

A COMMUNITY INVESTS IN FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS.
YOU WERE HERE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

ANNUAL GIFTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2020 • July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

43,431 MADE A GIFT

• 10,716 of you gave nearly $700,000 after connecting on the phone with an MSU Greenline student caller.
• 3,536 of you gave $412,569 in online donations to 122 different CrowdPower projects.
• 7,834 of you gave on Give Green Day or Giving Tuesday Now—1,013 for the very first time.
• 1,140 of you make your donation through our recurring credit card giving program.

THANKS TO YOU, $76,564,233 WENT TO WORK IMMEDIATELY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS, PROGRAMS AND FACULTY.

MSU honors its top annual donors in recognition levels, which are renewable annually.

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE OF ANNUAL GIVING

SPARTAN STRONG gifts of $1,000–$2,499/year
SPARTAN GREAT gifts of $2,500–$4,999/year
SPARTAN BOLD gifts of $5,000–$9,999/year
SPARTAN INSPIRED gifts of $10,000–$19,999/year
SPARTAN EXTRAORDINARY gifts of $20,000+/year

LOYALTY LEVELS OF ANNUAL GIVING

SPARTAN LOYAL gifts of $100–$499/year
SPARTAN PROUD gifts of $500–$999/year

8,331 LEADERSHIP LEVEL DONORS CONTRIBUTED MORE THAN $71.3 MILLION

35,100 LOYALTY LEVEL DONORS CONTRIBUTED MORE THAN $5.2 MILLION

*Recognition includes all donations and matching gifts received during the fiscal year July 1–June 30. Lifetime recognition begins at $50,000 in cumulative giving.

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Lyman Briggs College student Hannah Lalonde had only been on campus a few days when she was hit with the feeling of being “home” at MSU. “When Holmes Hall hosted ‘open door night’ that first week, I met so many people who shared my unique interests. That was the night I met my Spartan family and knew Lyman Briggs College was my home,” she said.

First-year students in Lyman Briggs live in Holmes Hall. They take their core classes, build connections with faculty and meet with their advisors there, too. And throughout their entire undergraduate career, they are part of a close-knit academic and social community centered around deeply understanding science and its relationship with society.

Another thing that helped Hannah feel the support of her new community was receiving the Pamela Ann Merry Endowed Scholarship. “Like many of my classmates, I am paying for college myself,” Hannah said. “I work not one, but two part-time jobs. I have been fortunate to receive a donor-funded scholarship...created in memory of a fellow Briggsie, Pamela Merry, which really furthered my connections to Briggs and reminded me that I am never alone on this journey.”

HANNAH LALONDE (‘21)

SUSAN E. OLNEY, ’72 (Lyman Briggs), gave $1,000 through the College Campaign to the Pamela Ann Merry Endowed Scholarship Fund in Lyman Briggs and an additional $100 to the Lyman Briggs College Book Scholarship on Give Green Day.

“Lyman Briggs College gave me the support and foundation to be a woman in science. It exposed me to how science interacts with the rest of the world. I want to help others experience that support.”

SUSAN E. OLNEY, ’72 (Lyman Briggs), gave $1,000 through the College Campaign to the Pamela Ann Merry Endowed Scholarship Fund in Lyman Briggs and an additional $100 to the Lyman Briggs College Book Scholarship on Give Green Day.
The Support Our Spartans Emergency Needs Fund—which is known as S.O.S.—is helping students struggling financially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to donors and students themselves.

Established in 2010 to provide students financial support to pay unexpected expenses that arise from emergency situations, the S.O.S. fund received a major boost beginning in March of 2020 with a $265,360 contribution from the Associated Students of Michigan State University and the MSU Residence Halls Association.

Once applications opened for students to request help from the fund, more than 7,400 applied—3,000 of them within the first 24 hours. Eligible students received a one-time grant of up to $500 and are not required to repay the award. During fiscal year 2020, more than 1,800 annual donors contributed more than $90,000 to the S.O.S. fund. By the end of June, 10,988 donors gave $1,180,755 to college-level emergency assistance funds and community response funds, as well as the S.O.S. fund.

“It is impressive and gratifying to see how Spartans are looking out for one another,” said 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.”

More than 4,760 Spartans gave to emergency support funds for students affected by COVID-19.

The Support Our Spartans Emergency Needs Fund also funded a $500 gift to the Support Our Spartans fund on the same day that MSU CrowdFower created a site to share the urgent need for emergency support.

“It led and we found a way to help,” said Janet. “We strongly believe it is our Spartan obligation to provide support whenever possible to our students, especially during these unexpected and unprecedented turbulent times.”
The Robert T. Anderson Award in Religious Studies is bestowed each year on the soon-to-be senior Religious Studies major who has the highest grade point average—a reward for their hard work and dedication to their studies, and motivation to carry it through their senior year. The 2020 recipient was senior Lauren Chapman, who is dual majoring in Religious Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, and minoring in Japanese. After three years of hard work, she certainly feels rewarded.

“I always strive for academic excellence,” she said, “and while there have inevitably been many challenges over the years, it was very exciting to see my effort paying off.”

Lauren is particularly interested in the way religion gives insight into cultures and the relationships within them, and how those topics can be applied to peace, development and international relations—something she hopes to pursue, possibly working with women and children through the Peace Corps, after graduation.

“I believe in paying it forward. I would like to help students get their degree or help faculty advance their research in Religious Studies. By studying religion, we may better understand each other, even if we do not agree.”

Retired educator Bob Pettapiece, ’63, ’67 (Arts and Letters), never forgot the kindness of the late Religious Studies Professor Robert T. Anderson, who was his mentor and teaching role model. Bob has made an annual gift to support Religious Studies and the Robert T. Anderson Award every year for 45 years.
College of Nursing senior Zach Collen doesn’t mince words about how hard he and his family have had to work in order to pay for his education. “I have watched my mother work one full-time and three part-time jobs so that I could concentrate on my studies and not have to worry about finances,” Zach said.

And the COVID-19 pandemic certainly didn’t help. While it upended all the traditional celebrations for an entire class of seniors, it also forced many students into difficult financial situations that took away from their ability to focus on completing the school year. That was certainly true for Zach, and that’s why a scholarship from the Nursing Student Emergency Fund couldn’t have come at a better time.

“This generous gift allowed me to concentrate on my studies when I was under financial pressure to help my mom with some of my monthly expenses,” Zach said.

Zach wasn’t alone. Collectively, annual donors gave more than $763,500 to college-level emergency funds—which went right to work, helping students overcome financial challenges.

As Zach prepares to make the leap into the workforce, gratitude is top of mind, and someday he hopes to pay it forward financially. Until then, he plans to pay it forward through his actions: treating his patients with respect and dignity, making them feel special and taking extra care with those that are most in need.

And during a pandemic, that’s an extremely reassuring thing to hear.

“I support MSU because others supported me. As a first-generation college student, I knew nothing about college living. Many people contributed financially along the way. Even still, I had hard times. I show gratitude by paying it forward.”
THE MANY WAYS YOU ARE HERE

IF YOU’D LIKE TO HELP, YOU CAN GO TO ANY OF THESE CHANNELS THAT WORK BEST FOR YOU:

CROWDPower enables individuals to raise money for programs and projects they care deeply about. Current needs can be found at givingto.msu.edu/crowdpower.

The RECURRING GIFT PROGRAM processes gifts on a schedule you choose. Learn more at givingto.msu.edu/recurring-gift.

GIVE GREEN DAY is a 24-hour opportunity for Spartans near and far to give back and make a difference to impact current and future Spartans. Visit givingday.msu.edu for details.

MSU GREENLINE students connect with alumni, friends, faculty, staff, fellow students and parents each year via phone.

COLLEGE CAMPAIGNS gather vital alumni support for their college’s priorities each fall.

No matter how you choose to make your annual gifts, rest assured your presence means everything to students.
Collectively, gifts between $100 and $999 from Spartan Loyal and Spartan Proud donors brought in more than $5.2 million last year to support Michigan State. Combined with the generosity from Leadership Circle donors last year, annual gifts added up to more than $76 million.

Your annual gifts went to work immediately to provide a wealth of opportunities.

Your generosity provides direct financial support for students, for research that leads to discoveries to make our world better and for learning opportunities that go far beyond the confines of a classroom or computer screen.

We can never thank you enough. So, we want to say it again loud and clear:

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE.

THREE WAYS TO MAKE A GIFT

PHONE: (800) 232-4MSU
ONLINE: givingto.msu.edu/1982
MAIL: University Advancement
Spartan Way
515 Chestnut Road, Room 300
East Lansing, MI 48824