

The Engaged Scholar Magazine

Engage

Vol. 15
2021



ENGAGING DURING THE PANDEMIC

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of COVID in Dance and
Spoken Narrative

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UNIVERSITY

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The Engaged Scholar Magazine

is published annually by University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University. The magazine focuses on collaborative partnerships between MSU and its external constituents—partnerships forged for mutual benefit and learning, with an emphasis on research.

All issues of *The Engaged Scholar Magazine* are available online at engagedscholar.msu.edu.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, send a request to esmag@msu.edu.

Published by:

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219 S. Harrison Road, Room 93
East Lansing, MI 48824
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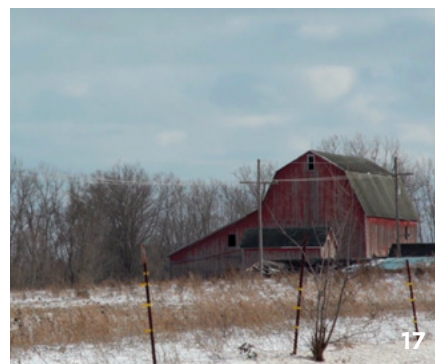
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Engaging

DURING THE PANDEMIC

Learning to pivot. To turn on a dime, and take it online. As we finally see the first year of COVID in the rear-view mirror, we tentatively hope the worst is over, even as we fear that it is not.

Still, we have a new respect for the fragility of existence and are beginning to achieve a hard-won sense of what works and what doesn't in facing down this formidable enemy. These are valuable assets.

This issue of *The Engaged Scholar Magazine* looks at how Michigan State University faculty, students, and staff are learning to work with each other and the communities with which they collaborate to create a “new normal” that we all can live with into the future.

Some researchers are on the forefront of COVID-inspired innovations to help us navigate the paradoxes of being alone together and getting our work done. We have stories about faculty who are bridging the rural broadband gap (Keith Hampton and Johannes Bauer); creating interventions to assist young students, who are struggling with feelings of isolation and failure (Dante Dixon); and developing partnerships for delivery of medical education and practice online (Dawn Goldstein).

Others are addressing long-standing community priorities. They offer training programs to assist beginning Latinx farmers to learn about sustainability practices (David Mota-Sanchez); collaborations with local housing agencies and tribal councils for safe and healthy housing

in Alaska (Kristen Cetin); a business model to help keep hospitality businesses afloat through the pandemic and beyond (MiRan Kim); and partnerships with African American churches and other faith-based organizations to improve health and well-being in the Flint community (Vicki Johnson-Lawrence and Rodlescia Sneed).

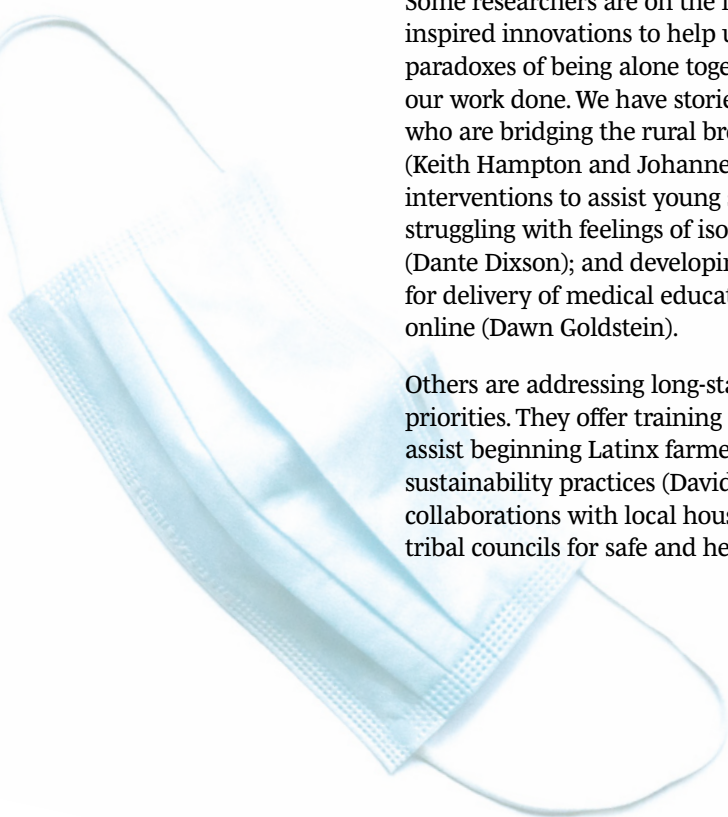
Still others are committed to ensuring that nobody gets left behind as we move into our new digital world, especially young children with complex communication needs (Sarah Douglas); and imagining a new role for virtual reality in keeping musical theatre students connected and engaged with their curriculum (Brad Willcuts).

We also have a thoughtful overview of the year and its changes by UOE interim associate provost Laurie Van Egeren, and a summary of conversations with a wide range of MSU stakeholders about what our partners want and do not want during the pandemic from their University collaborators, conducted by Miles McNall, director for community-engaged research, Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship.

Finally, you might want to take notice of our fresh new look, courtesy of UOE graphic designers Kelly Hansen and Mike Davis.

Stay safe and well,

Linda Chapel Jackson
Editor



University-Community Partnerships in a Pandemic: Connecting, Understanding, Responding

BY LAURIE VAN EGEREN

Recently, I went to a gas station to fill up my car for the first time since May 2020. It didn't go smoothly. I wasn't sure what side the gas tank was on. I forgot to push the button to open the gas tank cover before getting out. I was confused as to how to insert the credit card, what buttons to press, which kind of gas to get. I didn't use the squeegees to clean the windows, thinking the only option was to wash the whole car. In short, after nine months of not doing this simple, automatic, everyday activity, I was out of practice.

And it occurred to me that this is what it will be like to return to the post-COVID world. We will be out of practice.

In March 2020, MSU shuttered all but critical on-site operations and asked faculty, staff, and students to work and study remotely. One year later, our lives have been transformed in ways that could not have been anticipated last March. Universities as large and complex as MSU are like enormous ships with all the mass and momentum that propels them inexorably forward. Small, specific changes can be made with relative ease—for example, innovations in programs, courses, research—but the notion that the *entire ship* could be turned was unimaginable.

And yet, the ship *was* turned, and turned without capsizing. MSU never stopped pursuing its mission, even for a day, as the crisis broke over the world. Instead it transformed how it served its 49,695 students, delivered 6,000 courses, and conducted groundbreaking research. In the process, MSU has discovered unexpected opportunities to serve the state and beyond.

Responding as a Community During the Pandemic

But MSU is not only known for its stellar

educational experiences and groundbreaking research. It is part of a vast community—in fact, hundreds of deeply connected communities that span Michigan and cross the world. Through the tireless efforts and unique knowledge each community brings to its collaborations with MSU faculty, staff, and students, millions are touched each year by the engaged scholarship—engaged research, engaged creative activities, engaged teaching, and engaged service—for which MSU is renowned. Every one of these communities was damaged by the pandemic, and many continue to experience grief and trauma from the human, economic, and environmental loss.

While the majority of MSU faculty and staff were able to work at home for an extended time, a great many people in our partner communities were not, and the hundreds of faculty and staff who worked directly with those communities were deeply concerned about the stress and trauma within them.

To coordinate its pandemic response, MSU organized a university-wide team with subcommittees responsible for a wide range of areas, including: COVID testing, communications, teaching and learning, transportation issues, residential living, contact tracing, equity and inclusion in response, and more. And unique to most universities, MSU created an outreach and engagement subcommittee to address the University's response within the context of issues affecting MSU stakeholders and community-based



Laurie Van Egeren, Interim
Associate Provost for
University Outreach and
Engagement
Photo by Paul Phipps



Sparty sets an example by donning a mask.
Photo courtesy of University Communications

activities. Ultimately, this group involved over 120 faculty, staff, students, and community members in anticipating and responding to issues of concern for:

- **Community-engaged learning experiences** offered by community partners for MSU students through course-based placements, internships, and volunteer opportunities
- **Community-engaged research** collaborations involving neighborhood residents, clinical populations receiving health services, children and families, farmers and business owners, PreK-12 students and their teachers, and many more
- **Public events and festivals**, such as the MSU Science Festival and the Summer Solstice Jazz Festival
- **Community programs** provided by MSU Extension and many departments that focus on physical and behavioral health, tax support, foster care, legal issues, financial well-being, and sustainability
- The 150+ **pre-college programs** for K-12 students in science, arts, humanities, college access, and athletics, and the hundreds of thousands of 4-H participants
- MSU's esteemed **public arts and science venues** such as the Broad Art Museum, the MSU Museum, the Beal Gardens, and the Wharton Center for Performing Arts
- **Connections with stakeholders** such as local and state government, generous donors, and committed alumni
- **Business and corporate partners** who provide real-life student work experiences, entrepreneurship development, and cutting-edge research collaborations
- The **local East Lansing and surrounding community** in which MSU students live and patronize restaurants and businesses

MSU was committed to doing right by our communities, both the communities of our faculty, staff, and students, and the many communities we serve. Despite the prodigious economic effect of the pandemic, it was gratifying to see that MSU leaders did not put finances first, but focused on safety, equity, and quality in making hard decisions.

Sustaining Partnerships During a Pandemic

Partnerships are all about relationships. Ask anyone who works with communities, "What is the most important factor in a successful collaboration?" The answer will be a trusting relationship, one characterized by activities driven by community needs, that is mutually beneficial and respects the knowledge and expertise of all partners, and that shares leadership and resources. Fruitful community-university collaborations are one of the most effective ways to create meaningful change.

How does a partnership endure a pandemic? Unfortunately, no partnership-sustaining miracle process has emerged during the crisis. Relationships between MSU students, staff, and faculty and their community partners have been predominantly managed through Zoom and other imperfect technologies, just as our business and personal relationships have been. Many collaborations have been affected, sometimes severely.

Throughout the past year, University Outreach and Engagement convened faculty, staff, and community partners to talk about the pandemic-related challenges they have faced in maintaining partnerships and conducting impactful activities. Some challenges are common to most of us: stress, uncertainty, isolation, the inability to plan, the pressures of working from home, the fear of not working from home. But they also talked about the difficulty of disrupted projects designed to make a positive impact, as well as communities' lack of reliable, high-speed Internet access, which made it virtually impossible to sustain partnerships or participate in critical education, research, and clinical services, and exacerbated racial and economic inequities. Moreover, the cost of the pandemic fell disproportionately on poor communities and communities of color, which were also coping with the racial justice crisis ignited by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others by police. Communities experienced closures of their organizations and businesses, canceled programming, lost income and funding, difficulty accessing federal relief, and staff layoffs. University and community partners alike are struggling with trauma and grief, both personally and for their peoples.

Together, Spartans and the Community Will

Although far from ideal, community-engaged work has adapted, continued, and in some cases, even expanded. In the first months, MSU faculty and staff turned their considerable knowledge and skills toward addressing immediate issues by creating new methods to test for COVID and sanitize protective equipment. MSU medical, nursing, and veterinary faculty and students stepped to the front lines, and telehealth became a common way to deliver critical physical and mental health intervention. MSU faculty communicated about the latest research and interpreted changing guidance for the public.

Over the year, many programs serving K-12 youth modified their curricula to online formats, enabling students across the state and even nationally to participate. MSU Extension's considerable catalog of programs moved online. Lively in-person events such as the MSU Science Festival were transformed into virtual presentations and developed supplementary materials for activities at home. A host of efforts from colleges as varied as Arts and Letters, Education, and the Broad College of Business focused on helping schoolteachers prepare to teach online. Performing, visual, and cultural arts venues such as the Wharton Center, the Broad Art Museum, and the MSU Museum have created online exhibitions and programs, and, in the case of the Broad, put extensive safety precautions in place to allow visits to resume.

Moreover, the thousands of MSU students who would typically work on-site with community organizations continued to help in important ways through engaged learning experiences conducted virtually. When possible, research collaborations continued data collection online, and in some cases research was reshaped to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 physically, educationally, and socially. Over time, millions of dollars in grant proposals to further investigate the pandemic and its effects will likely fuel further university-community collaborations.

Take-aways Going Forward

Some vital lessons have emerged over the past year that we can heed moving forward. For example:

1. University-community relationships can be cultivated through Zoom, but at some cost—relationships are less personal and immediate when we're not in the room

together. The kind of half-day or full-day planning and review sessions that bolster collaboration are difficult to sustain online. We must adopt different strategies to engage and problem-solve together.

2. Although depth and quality of collaborative research and educational programs are sometimes, but not inevitably, affected by lack of in-person contact, access can actually be increased.
3. Reliance on technology has exacerbated inherent inequalities. Our more vulnerable communities—poor communities, communities speaking languages other than English, persons with a variety of disabilities, rural communities, and many communities of color—are disproportionately likely to lack reliable Internet access or computers, yet these are communities where university-community partnerships often have considerable impact. The United States needs 100% broadband access and technology support. In the meantime we must be ingenious in generating ideas, focusing resources, and developing funding to enable access. Lessons may be learned from those who work internationally in developing areas.
4. Effective collaborations require mutual understanding of the goals, expectations for roles, responsibilities, resource allocation, and intended products. Documenting partnership processes and expectations in an informal agreement—not necessarily a formal contract—provides a roadmap that can be adapted to create unexpected but fruitful pathways for impact.

The past year's conversations have revealed that despite universal stress and strain, both MSU and community partners remain eager and committed to working together to make a difference on critical societal issues—and sometimes, just to stay engaged. Witness the MSU Science Festival, which has reinvented an annual month-long celebration around the state as an interactive, online event with more than 200 live presentations from a wide variety of disciplines, participation from more than 70 MSU units and 50 community partners, and offering more than 50 programs directly to schools.

Truly, even as we grieve what we have lost, we must move forward to claim and celebrate what we have and continue to grow.



Students paint the rock on campus with messages of unity.
Photo courtesy of University Communications

Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship: Informing Pandemic Era Strategies for Engagement

University Outreach and Engagement's Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship (OPES) organized a series of three virtual sessions, convening MSU faculty, staff, and students, as well as various community stakeholders, to gather their feedback on how each group has been impacted by the pandemic, and to inform strategies for helping MSU and community partners move forward in their community-engaged work.

Forums on Community-Engaged Research and Partnerships

In April and May 2020, OPES convened the virtual forums for MSU faculty, staff and students to share their experience about how the pandemic is affecting their community-engaged research and partnerships. An important purpose of these events was to document and share the information gathered during the forums, and use it to develop additional resources and professional development opportunities to support community-engaged research.

View the report with feedback from over 70 participants and links to resources, at: engage.msu.edu/CER-forums

MSU Stakeholder Listening Sessions for Restarting Community-Engaged Research

In August 2020, the Community Engaged Research Workgroup of the Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee of the MSU COVID-19 Reopening Campus Task Force held four stakeholder listening sessions to gather input and recommendations from community partners and community liaisons about how researchers could safely, ethically, and equitably resume on-site research with communities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ten participants, representing a diversity of stakeholders, shared their responses in a focus group type setting. The information gathered during these sessions informed MSU's plans for resuming on-site research activities.

View the summary of participant responses, at: engage.msu.edu/CommunityListening

What Communities Expect from Researchers: A Panel Discussion

In December 2020, OPES brought back a group of panelists from the August stakeholder listening sessions to participate in a discussion to address the disruptions and social inequities throughout the pandemic, and to express their expectations for partnerships, offer advice for researchers who have not worked in their communities before, look at issues that are important to address in this present moment, and discuss their expectations of the benefits of research to communities. What does this mean for community-engaged research? What questions do we ask to understand how our community partners are doing? What are crucial considerations for how we collaborate with partners on research in ways that are respectful, ethical, and helpful during this time? The discussant and panelists sought to help attendees come away with specific strategies to strengthen community-engaged research during the COVID-19 pandemic.

View the report of the panel discussion, at: engage.msu.edu/WhatCommunitiesExpect



What I have learned in my work is when the people begin to speak, and when the people begin to organize, those systems start to break down and shift begins to happen. And it is not because we, as researchers, came in, but it is about the empowerment we do together and the data that research provides to help lift up the voice, story, and agency of the people's experience.

Monica Villarreal

Flint Community Initiative Program Coordinator
MSU School of Social Work



COMMEMORATING THE YEAR OF COVID IN

dance AND spoken narrative

BY LINDA CHAPEL JACKSON

Dance is for the most part a social thing. People tend to dance *together*. So you might think doing collaborative dance projects during a pandemic lockdown would be impossible.

Brad Willcuts thinks otherwise.

Willcuts is an assistant professor who teaches musical theatre and choreography in MSU's Department of Theatre. He has a long-standing interest in virtual reality and other technological enhancements to the performance experience.

He is also always on the lookout for projects that engage with the public. Currently he has several irons in the fire.

"The Day It All Began": Dancing the Pandemic

One collaboration got its start when Willcuts happened to get into conversation with East Lansing High School visual arts instructor Jacqueline Carroll, who lives in his neighborhood. Their two families became friends after Carroll's family moved to Lansing last year.

Carroll had earlier done a project with spoken word poetry to get students thinking about finding symbols to express subjective reactions to the poetry. She and Willcuts put their heads

View the student videos at: cal.msu.edu/news/choreography-composition-and-collaboration/

Olivia Walters performs her dance interpretation of "The Day It All Began," written by Emmerson Davis.
Photo courtesy of College of Arts and Letters



Emmerson Davis, East Lansing High School student.
Photo courtesy of Mike Davis

together and created a joint lesson plan for the fall 2020 semester.

Carroll's high school students each wrote a story about their experience with the quarantine and their classmates then recorded vocal readings of the stories. Willcuts brought seven MSU students from his Choreography and Composition class (DAN 354) to the mix. His students choreographed and danced the stories in solo videos, each narrated by one of the story writer's classmates.

Carroll attributed much of the project's success to her students' realizing that their work would be read and translated into a new art form. She said, "Just the fact that most high school writing doesn't extend beyond the teacher creates a culture of apathy. This translation opens the mind to the potential within any creative outlet they follow."

Jake Price, an MSU arts and humanities student in the DAN 354 class who was one of the choreographers on the project, said, "This collaboration displayed the importance of community outreach and dance, as it gave young high-schoolers a chance to see their stories come to fruition through dance. Brad curated a course that trained aspiring choreographers to think creatively and analytically about dance."

Emmerson Davis, a student in Carroll's class who wrote "The Day It All Began," thought it was a wonderful project: "I really enjoyed doing it. When Ms. Carroll announced it I was a little bit skeptical. But after getting into it and writing my story, hearing that it was going to be turned into a dance was cool. The video of the dance was really cool." She said the most important thing she learned was that stories aren't only written: "They can also be received through dance or through movement or through hearing them. Seeing something that I wrote turned into a different thing that still conveys the same message is mind-boggling."

Carroll and Davis were completely in sync about one thing: How to encourage creativity.

Carroll's advice was, "Make friends. Allow opportunities that fall into your lap to happen. Brad and his family live two doors down from us. I work in English and art, Brad is more movement-based. But we got talking about 'what if we do this,' and in no time we had a project going. When these moments occur, pursue them."

Davis agreed. "Give new things a try," she said. "I did not think my story could be turned into a dance, or that it could be read in a different way than how I had written it in my head. Give it a try, because it turned out amazing and I'm really happy with everything about it."

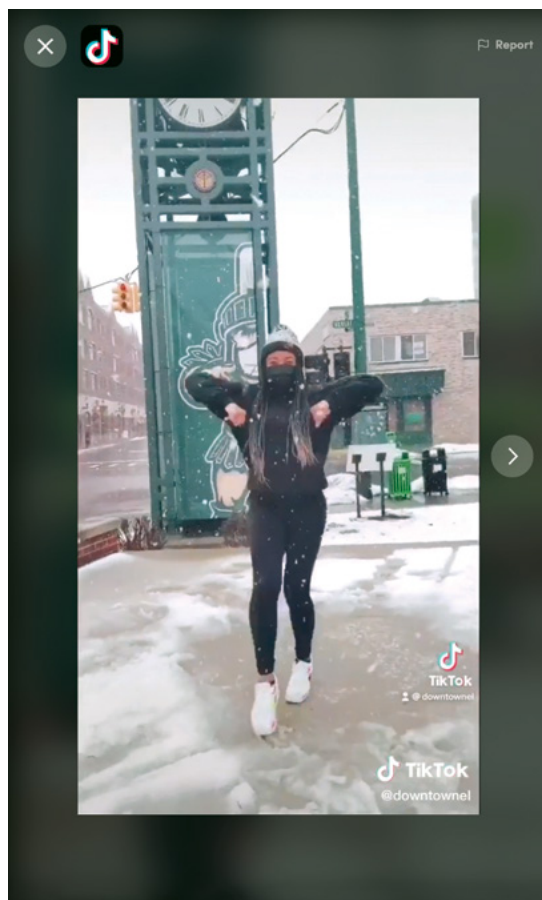
The project culminated in a virtual "show and tell" day at the end of the semester. The students were all in attendance and Carroll had made "this wonderful Google forum where we could see pictures, and we all put up pictures of ourselves when we were in seventh grade," said Willcuts. "We've got the ball rolling now. Hopefully we will be collaborating a lot more in the future."

TikTok Challenge with Downtown East Lansing Development Authority

In January 2021, East Lansing's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) launched a TikTok Challenge on the theme of "Daytime. Nighttime. Anytime. Place Project" to promote downtown businesses. Contestants were asked to record a video of themselves, first performing a dance in front of a downtown EL business or landmark and then following it up with their own improvisations. Willcuts and MSU media and information student Jaylin Coleman choreographed a dance for the prototype to post

on the city's website, and Coleman performed it. The winner of the contest received a \$200 Downtown East Lansing eGift Card from the DDA.

Coleman has been in Willcuts' jazz and contemporary class for two semesters, and "loved every second with it. As a creative and a dancer, Brad has personally pushed me beyond my comfort zone and limits. We collaborated on the choreography for the Downtown East Lansing project, and it was a positive experience for me to learn from a working professional, while also contributing my own style and sass into the choreography."



View the video at:
tiktok.com/@downtownel/video/692845595409051621?is_copy_url=0&is_from_webapp=v2&sender_device=pc&sender_web_id=692430779092485885

Jaylin Coleman performing the dance she created for the TikTok Challenge with Downtown East Lansing Authority.

ĩmáGen: Collaborating with Broadway Professionals

For the past seven years the ĩmáGen program has brought six people from New York to MSU to work on a show they want to bring to Broadway. "It's one of my favorite things," said Willcuts. "This year we had to do it all online. Over the last few weeks with the Broadway professionals, we were all waxing emotional about the end of the process."



Assistant professor Bradley Willcuts teaches a class.
Photo courtesy of the
College of Arts and Letters

He said all of the Broadway people had started out saying that being online was “weird, it doesn’t make sense, I need to be in the room with students.” But by the end of it, “we had been able to dig in so much more to the purpose and craft of working on a show and story. You never get that opportunity when you’re in a commercial space, because time is money. It’s the lights and the costumes and the marketing, and so on.”

According to Willcuts, this year’s production was one of the better ones they had ever done, because they were forced to find their way without the glitz. “In a weird way, trying to find the silver lining in the restrictions sets you free,” he said.

Creative Arts and Humanities: The Creative Process (IAH 241E)

In the spring of 2018 Willcuts was tasked with creating an Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities course on the creative process (IAH 241E). He set out to create a social dance course that went back through time. He read about dance in a wide variety of times and cultures, and thought about what values from those cultures spill out into their dance forms. Over the spring semester of 2018, the students spent

one day a week in the lecture hall and one day in the dance studio, doing everything from the waltz and the gavotte and the mambo to an ancient Greek war dance.

Then he got rid of lecturing and started interviewing professionals on podcasts so the students wouldn’t have to just sit and watch a PowerPoint.

By summertime he had begun working to make the class available online. “I actually pivoted this class towards online before the pandemic hit,” he said. He paired up with colleague Daniel Trego, an educational and media design specialist at the College of Arts and Letters who has since become a regular partner and friend, for help figuring out the transition: “What Dan helped me do is reimagine how the class could still be engaging and experiential, but without actually having to be next to one another.”

They went in two opposite directions at once to accomplish this. One direction involved taking all context out of the discussion by putting motion-capture suits on some dancers, making videos, and showing the dancing avatars to the students. “You don’t see gender, you don’t see race, you don’t see costume or environment, you just see a body moving,” said Willcuts.

The students interpreted by trying to guess or create a context for the dances: Was it like John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*? A Greek wedding dance? A dance at a club?

The other direction was to bring in the full cultural context by building a virtual reality experience that puts students right into the setting for the dance. With assistance from Trego, Willcuts' goal is "to have costumes in the set so they can literally walk up to a sock hop in the 1950s, and see some of my dancers in class, like in poodle skirts. And then step into it. Or different civilizations, where students can 'go back in time' and ask questions." He is hoping to have this ready by summer semester 2021.

The average student who takes an IAH course is not necessarily involved in dance or performance. "So, when they're surrounded by their peers, and asked to waltz and mambo together, they shut down. It takes a while for them to express themselves," said Willcuts. "However, when they're on film, they don't feel like they're being judged, so they figure out how to mimic the teaching. Then when they upload their videos, their inhibitions really melt away and they are able to access the dance."

Regarding the collaboration to develop this class, Trego commented, "My work with digital media is centered around exploring ways to create deeper, more meaningful connections amongst students, professors, and course content. Working with Brad has brought another dimension of engagement that I had always wanted to explore but never had the right context. We have been able to bring students together in different 'spaces' that both value their unique social and cultural contexts and provide opportunities to broaden their perspectives and understanding."

Musical Theatre Acting Class

Willcuts co-teaches a musical theatre acting class with Dave Wendelberger, who is also an instructor on the Musical Theatre faculty. This was the class that took the worst hit when the pandemic arrived.

Willcuts and Wendelberger, along with Trego, responded by doubling down on teaching the students to create their own content—how to edit video, lip sync, harmonize with themselves, create tracks—all the techniques to crisp up the voice and the production. Professionals they have talked to since have all said they wish



We have collaborated on at least six fully produced musicals. Brad sets the bar at its highest level for everyone involved, the creative team, the actors, the musicians. His energy in the room is infectious and propels actors and creatives together.

Dave Wendelberger
Musical Theater Faculty

they'd had that skill set when they were younger because they use it all the time now.

Wendelberger summed up what it's like to work with Willcuts by saying, "We have collaborated on at least six fully produced musicals. Brad sets the bar at its highest level for everyone involved, the creative team, the actors, the musicians. His energy in the room is infectious and propels actors and creatives together."

Willcuts said, "We all went through some dark, tough times. But the videos in that class were far better than the ones in basic studio; the project has turned into something that will always be part of the class." Overall, he thinks the pandemic experience has been rough for students but believes that at least for some, "it's increased their grit. They're stronger for it."

NOTE: This work was supported in part by a Catalyst grant and a Faculty Fellowship, both from the MSU Hub for Innovation in Learning and Technology.

Brad Willcuts, MFA

Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre
College of Arts and Letters

Assistant professor Bradley Willcuts teaches a class.
Photo courtesy of the College of Arts and Letters





LA COSECHA

(The Harvest)

Growing Sustainable Farming Businesses

David Mota-Sanchez (left) with program participants, Sigifredo Morales, Erik Alcaraz, Jesse Gamino, Layne Cameron (University Communications), and Ramon Villegas.

Photo taken fall semester, 2019.
Courtesy of Juan Pedro Solorio

BY AMY BYLE

New farmers attempting to establish a profitable farming business face daunting challenges: a steep learning curve, expensive acreage and equipment, federal and local guidelines, the need for credentials and business savvy, stiff competition, and a declining labor force, to say nothing of pest damage and climate concerns. For Latino/a farmers, these challenges can be intensified by cultural and linguistic barriers. For new farmers to be successful, access to funding and up-to-date information is indispensable.

David Mota-Sanchez, assistant professor in MSU's Department of Entomology, directs La Cosecha, a three-year training program for first and next generation Latino/a farmers, that seeks to help farmers access the resources they need to establish sustainable farms that can potentially be passed to the next generation.

The training program provides a series of workshops in areas of key importance to farmworkers and growers primarily in southwest Michigan, such as blueberry integrated pest management and production,

food safety practices, accessing USDA programs, marketing and business, field training, and crop diversification, as well as MSU 4-H programs to introduce Latino/a youth to agriculturally related fields. In 2020, the program added new courses to the curriculum related to packaging and the environment, pollinators, and regional food hubs. “It’s a complete package,” said Mota-Sanchez. “There are many pieces to have a successful production.”

Mota-Sanchez collaborated with Antonio Castro-Escobar, recertification and worker protection specialist with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, to begin planning for La Cosecha. “We wouldn’t have been able to get funding for La Cosecha without some preliminary work,” explained Mota-Sanchez. “When I met Antonio Castro-Escobar, we started talking and then collaborating with other people, and then started applying for grants.”

Cultural and Financial Capital are Key Components

In 2017, Mota-Sanchez and La Cosecha co-directors Luis Garcia, director of MSU Migrant Student Services; John Wise, professor, MSU Entomology; and Donald Kuchnicki, director of community programs at Telamon Corporation, received initial funding for the program as part of a USDA-NIFA national initiative, called the *Beginner Farmer and Rancher Development Program*. Then, in 2020, they received a new \$600,000 grant to expand on the program’s success.

According to Mota-Sanchez, incorporating Spanish language and cultural understanding into the curriculum was essential for the program’s success. “Maybe half of the people participating in La Cosecha speak Spanish, and about 90 percent of them have a Mexican cultural background. So, when we teach our courses, we do it with a cultural reference that helps them understand the problems.”

Another critical component of La Cosecha and prior programs is providing access to funding. “Workshops and training by our Latino/a program in collaboration with USDA program officers resulted in access to funds from zero dollars to about \$3 million in USDA grants,” said Mota-Sanchez. “And most of these grants were for Latino/a farmers.”

By providing access to funding and culturally relevant, up-to-date information, La Cosecha’s

team hopes to ensure the sustainability of farms for years to come, eventually passing them on to the next generation. Some of the youngest “future farmers” attend camps offered by MSU 4-H as part of La Cosecha. Mota-Sanchez has observed that if children begin hearing about agricultural opportunities at a young age, they are more likely to follow in their parents’ footsteps. However, he acknowledges that there are challenges.

“I think one of the issues with the next generation is the physical demand of working in agriculture, especially harvesting,” said Mota-Sanchez. “The younger generation, the sons and daughters, see families struggling, and some of them don’t want to do farming because they see all the effort involved. And then the other thing is that it’s very risky to be a farmer. But despite this situation, there are some who are interested in farming. And that is our objective: to train the next generation. And they are more prepared because they speak English and are more skillful in technology.”

A Key Partner Facilitates Trust and Communication

One of La Cosecha’s key community partners is Telamon Corporation (www.telamon.org), an NGO that provides services to many groups, including the migrant and seasonal farmworker community, in early childhood education, workforce and career development, and housing and financial empowerment.

“We have a holistic approach, encompassing all of those details to make sure that we empower the farmworker community,” said Salvador Chavez, workforce development specialist at Telamon and supervisor of Telamon’s Paw Paw office in southwest Michigan.



Kids enjoy learning about agriculture at a 4-H camp.
Photo courtesy of David Mota-Sanchez

His partnership with La Cosecha began in 2018 when he was introduced to Mota-Sanchez and began training a program participant to be an outreach worker for La Cosecha.

Because Telamon has been working with the farming community in southwest Michigan for many years, they have built a platform of trust essential for La Cosecha programming to successfully connect with the growers. “La Cosecha relies a lot on one-on-one communication with the growers,” said Chavez. “It is not easy for someone to come in with all the certifications to try to work with the individuals who may not have the formal education but who have the hands-on knowledge. Building that trust by having a cultural understanding is important.”

According to Chavez, Telamon works with La Cosecha to facilitate the connection with the Latino/a grower community on a daily basis, letting them know about upcoming workshops, answering questions and concerns, keeping up attendance, assisting with applying for local and federal programs, and helping them network with other growers to fully utilize the techniques presented in La Cosecha workshops.

“We have to make sure we communicate in a way that is clear to our growers, so they can understand how this is going to benefit them,”

said Chavez. “A key component is to really have that support from Telamon, working in conjunction with MSU Extension, to make that click for our growers.”

A Grower’s Success During COVID

La Cosecha programming is focused primarily in southwest Michigan—Van Buren and Ottawa Counties—where blueberry farming is strong.

Nahun Avalos, a blueberry grower in Covert, Michigan, came to the U.S. from Mexico when he was 17. He now has three children of his own—a son who is a college graduate working as a CPA, a daughter at Harvard, and a son in middle school. He has a full-time job in Chicago but began blueberry farming part time in southwest Michigan in 2006, driving back and forth on weekends. He is a participant of La Cosecha but connected with Mota-Sanchez and Chavez back in 2008.

Avalos said that his first two years of farming were very difficult. He lost a lot of time and money and almost gave up.

“That first two years, when I was selling my blueberries to the big companies, I learned that I didn’t have quality blueberries, because I didn’t know what to do,” said Avalos. “At one point I was about to say, ‘This isn’t worth it. I can’t get any information.’ When I got connected

Blueberry grower Nahun Avalos inspects a blueberry bush at his farm in southwest Michigan.

Photo courtesy of David Mota-Sanchez



with them [Chavez and Mota-Sanchez], it was a big thing for me because I started learning everything and trusting people who were telling me the truth about how to farm.”

By continuing his education with La Cosecha, as well as following weekly updates on the MSU Extension website, he has gained vital knowledge. “When I started learning about spraying techniques and how to keep these blueberries, that’s when my business started being successful,” he said. “And now my customers really love the quality of my blueberries.”

Avalos has also witnessed a correlation between farming and his children’s success. “Farming has helped me a lot in creating a new mentality for them,” he said. “They really appreciate everything more, and that not everything comes easy. I think that’s the number one reason they have been so interested in higher education and farming also.”

When COVID first hit in early 2020, Avalos feared what it might mean for him and his family, physically and financially, and almost did not attempt the blueberry farming. But with his family’s encouragement, he forged ahead, and 2020 turned out to be a particularly good year for him. “I thought I was going to have a bad year at the beginning. But to be honest, this has been my most successful year,” he said. “I had 40 acres, and I added 50 more this year. I doubled my production, and I did it under COVID-19. I had about 50 guys working for me picking blueberries this year, and none of us have been sick.”

Avalos credits programs like La Cosecha for helping him be successful and is happy to pass along the information he is learning to other farmers, especially those who do not speak English. “It’s a very good program,” he said. “It really helps the Spanish community right now. It’s a lot of information for us and is wonderful, especially what they’re doing in our language. It’s a helpful tool.”

Farming During COVID

Mota-Sanchez and Chavez agree that, while there have been some opportunities and successes during COVID, there have also been challenges and barriers. Workshops that typically provide hands-on and in-the-field training had to be moved to online formats, which was a barrier to farmers who do not own

computers. While they adapted to using smart phones for presentations, with applications such as WhatsApp, it was not ideal. “It’s another way to stay connected, and we have to make sure we evolve and develop so that it’s a way to disseminate information,” said Chavez. “The challenge is that if the other person is not able to connect, it’s more of a barrier.”

Another coronavirus impact that Mota-Sanchez noted is the labor shortage. “One thing that impacts them is the lack of labor, especially for harvesting,” he said. “Nobody wants to be together because there are more restrictions. In general, I think it is definitely impacting the farms. There are many interruptions in many activities.”

Success Worth Celebrating...Even if Delayed

The first La Cosecha cohort was set to celebrate its graduation in September 2020, but due to COVID that had to be postponed. “They like to meet face-to-face, but we need to be responsible,” said Mota-Sanchez. “Now everyone is isolating because they don’t want more cases and we don’t want anybody to be infected. But we will reschedule it!”

As an entomologist, Mota-Sanchez has applied his expertise in various capacities all over the world...from Monarch butterfly conservation in Mexico, to pesticide use in corn grains in Ecuador, to work with legume farmers in West Africa. Working with Latino/a farmers through La Cosecha here in Michigan gives him a deep sense of fulfillment.

“I feel a social responsibility to train Latino farmers in Michigan because they are an important part of this community,” said Mota-Sanchez. “This is a wonderful population; they are very hard workers. And I see how the university can impact their access to resources. At the beginning I saw that it was going to be difficult. But then they started adopting the technology, and they created networks of people. And I think one thing we accomplished is that the farmers achieved knowledge and they applied this knowledge to their farm. That’s the thing that excites me.”

David Mota-Sanchez, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Entomology
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dr. Mota-Sanchez would like to acknowledge these additional partners:

- Omar Alejandro Posos, Ph.D. student, MSU Department of Entomology
- Eva Almenar, MSU School of Packaging
- Pedro Martinez, Van Buren ISD
- Juan Pedro Solorio, Program affiliate
- Estaban Valtierra, Rural Development COLPOS
- Angel Zamora, Telamon Corporation

From MSU 4-H:

- Dixie Sandborn
- Janice Zerbe

From MSU Extension:

- Mariel Borgman
- Florencia Colella
- Ron Goldy
- Ana Heck
- Mark Longstroth
- Phil Tocco
- Benjamin Werling

(Funding: USDA NIFA BFRDP Award #s [2017-70017-26860] and [2020-49400-32429] Michigan State University)



KEEPING FARMWORKERS SAFE

CHAMP: COVID-19 Hazard Assessment and Mitigation Program

MSU Extension has developed a tool designed to help agricultural operations reduce the risk of worker exposure to COVID-19 and mitigate disease spread. The COVID-19 Hazard Assessment and Mitigation Program (CHAMP) is an e-tool designed as a flexible format toolkit for farm owners and operators to conduct, methodically and with rigor, a hazard-based risk assessment to identify risk factors for disease transmission amongst workers and between the public and workers in public-facing operations, and to develop a comprehensive mitigation strategy tailored to their operation following an established hierarchy of controls. The agriculture-centric pandemic preparedness education and support materials developed are designed to align with federal, state, and local guidance.

To download the CHAMP tool and learn more:

**[canr.msu.edu/agriculture/
Rapid-Response-for-Agriculture/
MSU-Extension-CHAMP-
COVID-19/index](https://canr.msu.edu/agriculture/Rapid-Response-for-Agriculture/MSU-Extension-CHAMP-COVID-19/index)**



Critical Connections

Rural Broadband Access and School Learning Gaps

BY CARLA HILLS

In groundbreaking research led by Keith Hampton, professor in MSU's College of Communication Arts and Sciences, and Johannes M. Bauer, professor and MSU Quello Center director, there is now evidence that middle and high school students who cannot connect sufficiently to the Internet at home are falling behind in educational accomplishments. It has been called the homework gap, but it's much more than that.

Partnering with Merit Network, a Michigan nonprofit with roots in technology development and advocacy, Hampton and Bauer worked with a network of collaborators to measure and quantify the realities of broadband access in rural communities, and what it means for educating Michigan's students.

Internet Access is Beginning to Affect Every Area of Life—and Our Children's Future

There is a growing divide between those who can and cannot access resources on the Internet. It impacts everything from workforce preparedness and college readiness to individual quality of life issues related to finances, health, shopping, news, entertainment, and more.

Educators and policymakers are focused on meeting the challenges required for teaching digital skills, but this fundamentally requires that students have access to reliable, affordable broadband service in their homes. Students who lack access to broadband Internet are increasingly at a disadvantage. And while it is usually thought of in terms of economically disadvantaged households, there is a need to

A student accesses the Internet at a local business in order to complete a schoolwork assignment.

Photo courtesy of the Merit Michigan Moonshot Initiative



Left to right, Johannes Bauer, director, MSU Quello Center; Keith Hampton, director of academic research, MSU Quello Center; Craig Robertson, Ph.D. student; Laleah Fernandez, assistant director, MSU Quello Center
Photo courtesy of Keith Hampton

understand and address the lack of access in rural regions that include farming communities and small towns.

Mary Beth Faba taught French at St. Clair High School for four years. Students often visited her classroom in the morning so they could use a computer to review, edit, or reformat their homework before class.

“They would work on a cell phone in the evenings because they didn’t have any other option,” said Faba. “It took them longer to do their homework on tiny screens, and then they still had more to do when they were able to get on a computer to reformat papers or study sheets to complete their assignments.”

One student told Faba that high speed Internet was scheduled to be installed down their dirt road, but when the work was completed, it only reached as far as a cable worker’s property. It stopped a few yards before the student’s residence and homes farther along the road.

Building a Partnership

The Quello Center is a multi-disciplinary center within the Department of Media and Information of MSU’s College of Communication Arts and Sciences. As director, Bauer works with faculty, researchers, research assistants, and collaborative partners to foster rigorous interdisciplinary research in technology, policy, and practice. Hampton is the director for academic research. The Quello Center has a

strong track record of providing expertise and independent research to public and nonprofit institutions, as well as to the communication and Internet industry.

Hampton and Bauer share a strong commitment to working with partners who seek solutions to improve public understanding and access to technology. Their recent work with Merit (a longtime collaborator) included dozens of meetings and conversations about concepts, goals, research methodology, privacy of students and families, and public policy advocacy.

“It was an effort of love, it’s fair to say,” said Bauer.

The Michigan Education Research Information Triad (Merit) nonprofit was created in 1966 by Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and Wayne State University. It was envisioned as a way to increase technology advances and connect mainframe computers at the three universities, as well as at other computer supercenters around the world. It was the beginning of the Internet frontier and much of the work sought to establish connections to strengthen collective efforts.

In Merit’s 50-plus year history it has continued to uphold the principles of an open Internet with a mission to offer organizations advanced networking technology research, education, peer-to-peer connectivity, and collaborative initiatives.



Merit launched the Michigan Moonshot Initiative in 2018. Described as a statewide call to action, it aimed to build a statewide ecosystem that can be leveraged to help local communities learn, plan, and take action to expand broadband access to all citizens in order to bridge the digital divide.

“The Moonshot is an expansion of Merit’s mission as a nonprofit research and education network,” said Charlotte Bewersdorff, Merit vice president for community engagement.

“Historically we have focused on high-capacity connectivity for community anchor entities like municipalities, libraries, and schools. But there are people living in Michigan communities that don’t have equitable access to affordable broadband, and that needs to be addressed. This issue impacts so much within our lives, including online learning. We saw value in partnering with research faculty at MSU and the Quello Center for quantitative research that provided more information about ways in which lack of access has real and lasting impact on student outcomes.”

The K12 Citizen Science Working Group and Building an “Ecosystem”

“We held a meeting in 2018 that called different stakeholders together to discuss shared interest in identifying information about gaps in broadband and student outcomes. There was representation from superintendents, curriculum specialists, teachers, administrators, and specialists from the Michigan Department of Education,” said Hampton. “From that early discussion we asked for ISDs who would be interested in partnering with us to pilot an initiative to identify those gaps and consequences.”

Three intermediate school districts (ISDs) volunteered to work with MSU and Merit Network to develop and pilot a plan:

- Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District
- Mecosta Osceola Intermediate School District
- St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency

Collectively, the three ISDs included fifteen participating school districts, along with the administrators and teachers in the schools and classrooms.

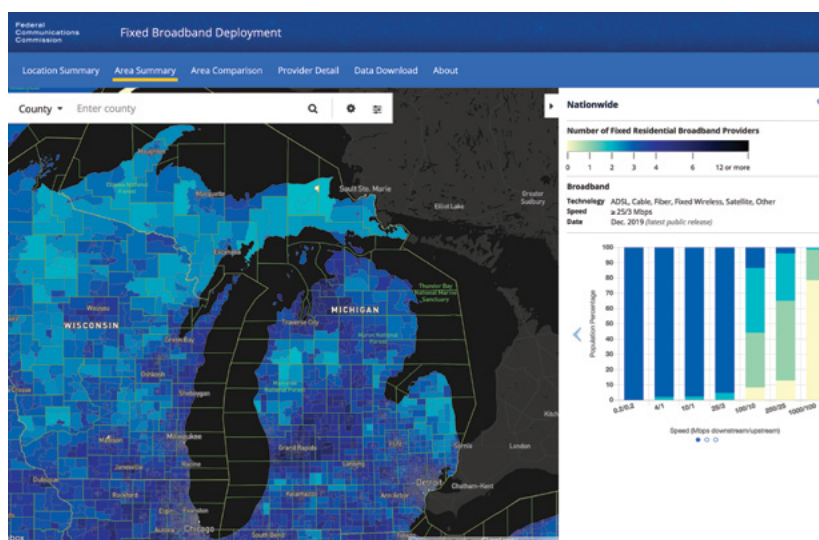
The collaboration led to an ambitious community-based research project with two primary goals:

1. Estimate how many students had home connectivity in Michigan’s rural regions, and what kind of connection it was (broadband, hot spot, cell phone, etc.)
2. Gain insight about connectivity and student performance by developing a framework

to measure the number of students with Internet connectivity and quantify the consequences of insufficient or absent broadband connectivity and digital skills for students

Jason and Amy Kronemeyer were instrumental collaborators at those sessions.

“I met Johannes Bauer at a Michigan Moonshot meeting,” said Jason Kronemeyer, director of technology at the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District’s Regional Educational Media Center. “He has been so involved in understanding the issues we have faced trying to get broadband access.”



One of the issues has been inaccurate or poorly identified mapping of broadband access in rural or remote areas, as well as geographic pockets in more populated areas.

The first broadband map was made available in 2009 by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) now produces the information but relies on self-reporting from broadband service providers.

The research findings produced by Hampton and Bauer explain the deficits generated by this method and call out the need for improved data mapping to more accurately assess infrastructure development. The framework developed by their project methods addresses the granularity and accuracy needed to generate quantifiable, unbiased information.

Federal Communications Commission broadband map of Michigan.
Retrieved from broadbandmap.fcc.gov

“Keith’s research was a critical part of what we needed to evaluate what can be done for students to improve their educational outcomes,” said Amy Kronmeyer, director of student achievement for Sault Ste. Marie Area Public Schools in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. “Broadband access needs discussion at both local and federal levels. What if students who qualified for school lunch programs could also qualify for broadband access? That way, students in underserved areas have the same support for digital literacy.”

Broadband and Student Performance Gaps Report

Hampton and Bauer, along with Laleah Fernandez, Quello Center assistant director, and doctoral student Craig T. Robertson, authored the Broadband and Student Performance Gaps Report documenting the research and work designed and executed by the working group.

The report was released in early March 2020, and the timing couldn’t have been better—or worse—for the findings on broadband access and student learning gaps. The coronavirus pandemic was emerging quickly, and there was a presidential impeachment process playing out in the nation’s capital.

“Unbelievably enough, right at that moment we became incredibly irrelevant and incredibly relevant at the same time,” said Hampton with a slight smile.

“Everything was beginning to close down because of the pandemic,” he said. “It certainly pointed to the importance of broadband connectivity at home because schools were facing that reality. But it was a tough time to address it.”

Among the significant findings:

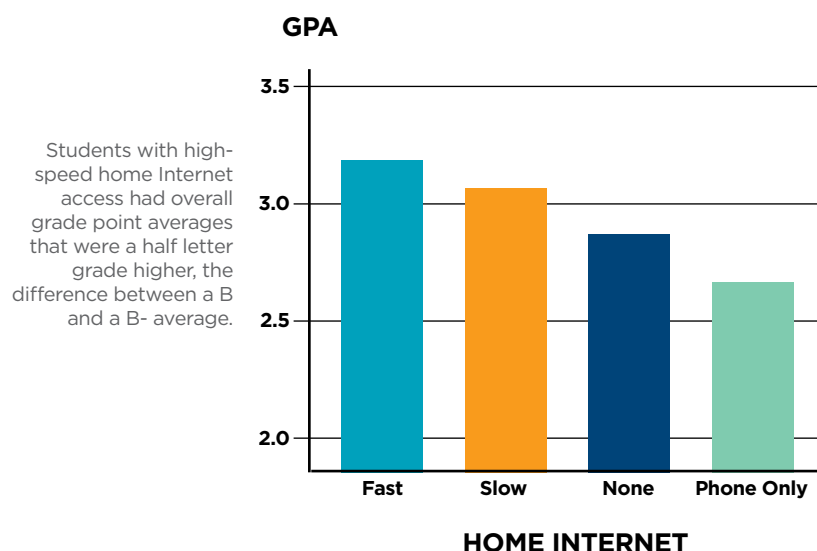
- Information supplied by the federal government regarding data and mapping of broadband connectivity is insufficient and/or inaccurate and does not reflect the scope of geographic deficits in broadband access in rural areas.
- Students who do not have access to the Internet from home, or are dependent on a cell phone only, perform lower on a range of metrics, including digital skills, homework completion, and grades.
- Students lacking home Internet and those dependent on a cell phone are also less likely to consider post-secondary education.
- A deficit in digital skills compounds inequalities in access, contributing to lower standardized test scores and less interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) careers.
- Lack of broadband access not only impacts school performance, but also has broader repercussions for career choice, life income, and the ability to adapt to emerging demands of the workforce.

Coronavirus Pandemic Impacts

A year later, Michigan school districts are facing a new era. New methods of remote learning—including instruction, lectures, demonstrations, homework, and testing—are developing rapidly to reckon with a global pandemic.

“I don’t think any of us realized that issues of access and inequality of access would become the dominant concern. I’ve sat through a record number of school board meetings since the report came out, and broadband access is a primary issue,” said Hampton.

To introduce new methods to students, understanding who has broadband access, and how to get it to those who do not, is imperative.



“The framework that was created is applicable to other communities that want a more detailed reference of where the broadband access gaps are located,” said Bauer.

“What started out as a commentary on public data has turned out to be useful and timely,” he noted.

“We realized the implications of the pandemic meant that schools had to react quickly to get students online. That meant that we very quickly retooled after we released the report, and we put out a series of white papers about what schools should do—and steps to take—for equitable access. That was needed quickly to get their students online to finish the 2020 school year,” said Hampton.

“Access is only a first step; it isn’t enough,” he said. “Students need to build their skills online to assure they can do what they need to do to accomplish online learning. That is also included in the report, but it was something that the pandemic implications really forced school districts to confront.”

Future Projects

The Quello Center and Merit stakeholders continue to hold bi-weekly meetings. “We continue to keep the conversation alive. We are mulling over potential opportunities and exploring different paths of expansion; at the very least a statewide data set is needed,” said Bewersdorff.

Hampton sees promise in sharing their research on data, mapping, and student performance gaps with other states and regions of the United States. “What we have done in Michigan can perhaps be applied to other communities,” he said.

According to Bewersdorff, Merit has moved from research to local community action. “We are taking a very pragmatic approach,” she said. “The data collection methodology developed by the Quello team is currently being used in projects with municipal and educational collaborators seeking granular and accurate broadband access and adoption information.”

“Change has to be at the very local level, not a county level, but township by township,” said Jason Kronmeyer.



HOW ARE RESEARCH FINDINGS BEING USED?

- Research findings enable rural school districts to link gaps in home broadband connectivity to lower student performance, educational aspirations, and less interest in 21st century skills and careers.
- Local and county governments are using the pioneering mixed-method approach to data collection to identify broadband gaps in their communities.
- Research findings have contributed to a better understanding of the repercussions of discrepancies in broadband access for learning outcomes. They have helped decisionmakers write more compelling proposals to obtain funding to overcome short-term challenges and develop forward-looking initiatives to address the problems in a sustained way.
- The approach to measuring broadband access speeds based on detailed and granular data, which was developed in this project, has since been further developed and utilized by Merit Network and several community partners to develop better plans to overcome the broadband gap.

Internet connectivity is essential for students' college readiness, especially with rapidly developing methods of virtual and remote learning.
Photo courtesy of the Merit Michigan Moonshot Initiative



There is a pressing need to understand and address the lack of access in rural regions that include farming communities and small towns. Photo courtesy of College of Communication Arts and Sciences

SEVERAL REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS WERE CREATED FROM THIS GROUNDBREAKING WORK:

- Hampton, K. N., Fernandez, L., Robertson, C. T., & Bauer, J. M. *Broadband and student performance gaps*. James H. and Mary B. Quello Center, Michigan State University. <https://doi.org/10.25335/BZGY-3V91>
- Bauer, J. M., Hampton, K., Fernandez, L. H., & Robertson, C. T. (2020, September). *Overcoming Michigan's homework gap: The role of broadband Internet connectivity for student success and career outlooks*. Michigan Applied Public Policy Research Paper; Quello Center Working Paper No. 06-20 (see www.ippsr.msu.edu/mappr/overcoming-michigans-homework-gap-role-broadband-internet-connectivity-student-success-and). (Report produced for MSU's Institute for Public Policy and Social Research)
- Hampton, K., & Bauer, J. M. (2020). Four things school districts need to know before moving learning online. *MSU Today*. Retrieved from msutoday.msu.edu/news/2020/four-things-school-districts-need-to-know-before-moving-learning-online/
- Bauer, J. M., & Hampton, K. (2020). *Broadband and student performance gaps: Designing short and long-term responses to the SARS-Cov-2 shutdown*. Quello Center Policy Brief 02/20. Retrieved from quello.msu.edu/broadbandgap

An educator focused on student achievement, Amy Kronemeyer offers a broader viewpoint to policymakers: “Broadband Internet access should be like electricity, meaning it should be accessible and affordable to everyone.”

As for future projects, Hampton, Bauer, and Bewersdorff each acknowledge the potential.

“It’s always a long process to establish good relationships,” said Bauer. “We see an opportunity to broaden the framework, and Keith and I have each reached out to other potential collaborators. Practically, conceptually, theoretically, we have a lot of thinking going on and we are sure some other things will come about from this work.”

“The Quello Center study is one of a kind in the nation. They were able to control for all socioeconomic drivers and isolate the impact of broadband on students,” said Bewersdorff. “It’s absolutely phenomenal work that helps tell a story. As we see the industry poise for infrastructure funding, the topic of good data will be ever present. We’ve built a great foundation on principles of research, local user-driven data, utilizing an open-source platform, and in leveraging a community ecosystem – all which provides so much opportunity for everyone involved.”

Keith Hampton, Ph.D.

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Johannes M. Bauer, Ph.D.

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Department of Media and Information
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1 Hampton, K. N., Fernandez, L., Robertson, C. T., & Bauer, J. M. *Broadband and Student Performance Gaps*. James H. and Mary B. Quello Center, Michigan State University. <https://doi.org/10.25335/BZGY-3V91>

2 Hampton, K. N., Fernandez, L., Robertson, C., & Bauer, J. M. (December 15, 2020). *Repercussions of Poor Broadband Connectivity for Students in Rural and Small Town Michigan*. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3749644> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3749644>

Online Learning Communities Support Children with Complex Communication Needs

BY LINDA CHAPEL JACKSON

When the global pandemic hit in March 2020, Sarah Douglas was not too concerned about moving her research to an online format. Douglas is an expert on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) technologies for young children with disabilities, especially autism spectrum disorder; the family, school, and community partnerships that support these children; and online learning for school-community partners in general. She has been publishing articles on those topics for the past several years.

“Many of the children we work with use alternative means to communicate. They might use picture symbols or apps on

an iPad. They might use sign language, different things like that. Children who might have autism, or developmental or genetic disabilities, are included as well,” Douglas said.

Her current research, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is to develop and implement an online training program for preschool teachers, their teaching assistants, and other paraeducators who work with children that have complex communication needs. The goals are to get the most out of the available AAC technologies, build partnerships for mutual support of caregivers and educators, and make the training available to a wider audience once it has been tested and evaluated.





When we initially started this project, we wanted to make everything, all the training and the materials, available online. But we still had the idea that we would go into classrooms to collect the data, that we would still interface with the teachers, because we wanted to have a connection with the people in our research. And we wanted to be able to troubleshoot. But COVID-19 put a stop to all that.



Dr. Sarah Douglas develops online training programs for paraeducators and teachers who support children with complex communication needs.

Learning How to Pivot

During the first couple of years of the project, the team had carried out its mission with only limited contact needed in the schools. The training was online, complete with materials the teachers and paraeducators could use to lead their own training sessions once they became more adept at the coaching model that the research team was working from—but the in-school data collection had to stop.

As it became apparent that COVID was not going to go anywhere very quickly, and it was going to affect data collection for the year, the team had to switch gears and figure out how to do it all virtually. Thankfully, Douglas said, she had previously done a project that involved training a whole family to work with a child who had the same communication challenges, learning how to support them using a computerized system. “We were training five different members of this family, and all of it was being done virtually over Zoom,” she said. “The only time that we needed to meet with the families was in the beginning, to give them an iPad to facilitate the Zoom meeting where we asked them a few questions for screening. And then we were supposed to have a meeting at the end also.”

They knew that wasn’t going to happen. But then they got an idea. They knew there were some children who were receiving services directly in the classroom. This population is considered especially high risk, not just for COVID but also for losing major skills from being away from school. Many schools are doing some sort of modified learning, where children may be in the classroom a couple of days a week. In smaller communities in Michigan, they are still in classrooms four to five days a week, as they would be normally. So, thought Douglas, we can still do the intervention as planned, only collect the data in classrooms rather than in

homes. All of the training is online, and all the team would have to do was pivot in how and where they would actually collect the data. They would observe and record the paraeducators at work with the children via Zoom.

“I started by reaching out to our funder, finding out what would be allowable for changes that we needed to make,” she said. “They’re pretty flexible about the work that we were doing. A lot of people that are funded currently just did an extension, basically a year without funding, because they couldn’t do what they needed to in schools. For our work, they felt like we were well positioned to make adjustments and still make it work. And schools are so hungry for support right now.”

Douglas has only just received approval from the University for her revised plan, but she has four partner schools that she is hoping to work with this next calendar year. Those schools are all very interested in providing the training, especially given that they may have to do any number of things in a virtual format and be able to provide support at a distance. In some districts, the paraeducators still go into the child’s home and facilitate that way. The training specifically for the paraeducators is critical, she said, because they often don’t have very much training in general.

“So all of our training is already online,” Douglas said, “but now we’re also going to do all of the data collection virtually. I’m not exactly sure how that will work out. We’ve decided to use mics, because we think that will help with being able to hear what’s happening between the paraeducator and the child. But it’s definitely complex. And there are some schools that are just like, ‘No, we’re not interested in participating.’ But that’s given us the opportunity to reach out to other schools that aren’t usually approached for this type of work.” She is working with her project manager for the grant, Dr. Sarah Dunkel-Jackson, a colleague in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, who has contacted about 30 different districts or intermediate units across Michigan, trying to connect with this particular population.

Some challenges to this plan are not directly related to COVID-19’s intrusion into the classroom—for example, the researchers have

found that it's harder to find a quiet spot for a paraeducator to work one-on-one with a child in a busy classroom than it is at home—but most challenges are COVID related. For both of Douglas's current projects, the study with families and the one being carried out in preschool settings, she had to stop data collection altogether, at least for a time.

Meanwhile the team was able to maximize what they already had by doing more follow-up interviews with the paraeducators than they had originally anticipated, “trying to get a little more feedback from them since we wouldn't have as much data as we'd hoped,” Douglas said.

She was less satisfied with the derailment of the family study, which was essentially stopped in its tracks for a while. “With the family that we were doing the study with, and all that being done virtually, still, with COVID hitting, the University told me I had to stop data collection... I knew I wasn't doing anything that was outside of the safety measures they're asking us to engage in, but because my study was listed as human subjects research, it was automatically coming down. At least we were able to continue with that study after a lot of justification for the work that we needed to do.”

Partnerships Based on Trust Make a Difference

Douglas had nothing but good things to say about her school partners: “They're giving us a lot of trust right now. They often don't know exactly what their teachers and paraeducators will learn. But they trust that when we send them iPads and materials, that we will set everything up as much as we can to make this easy for them and their teachers,” she said.

“We've had such good experiences in some of our other partnerships; we've shared those success stories and the word is starting to spread. At one of our partner schools, we recruited them to work with some of their children in homes. And seeing how successful that was gave them the confidence in our work to be able to do this also in school settings.”



Kelli Corey

Mom on the family project

What did you gain from this collaboration?

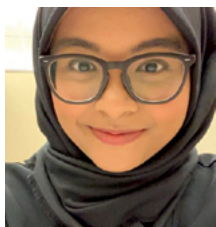
The whole program helped me to communicate with Amelya [daughter who has communication challenges] so much better. The program took longer [because of having to re-orient for the COVID-19 lockdown] but I am actually thankful it took longer. Amelya got into using her device. She'll bring me the tablet now, but she also comes to me and says, 'I want this or that.' It's a new way to communicate for her. It's special because we weren't sure we would ever have that. Atikah [the project's data collector] guided us through the whole program.

Our son Eli [typically developing sibling] is now asking for the device. It's created a richer relationship between brother and sister. It's the same for my husband and me. We are so grateful for this program.

What did you contribute to it?

We were able to contribute encouragement about the value of this type of program with families. It can and does promote the ability to communicate. It is possible! I am hoping it will reach other people with kids like Amelya. It gives families options and opportunities to communicate.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) technologies present information in ways that are compatible with the child's learning style.



Atikah Bagawan

Data collector on the family project and doctoral student, Human Development and Family Studies, College of Social Science

What did you learn from this project?

I learned a lot. The top three things...First, it was amazing to see the family, including the extended family members, being able to build their family capacity to support the child's communication. Second, the mom providing the training and coaching to the typically developing sibling. It's great to see because she understood how her son learns, and not just using our training and coaching materials, but in a way that she modifies it individually. Third, the method of telepractice helps families to navigate their training and coaching amidst their already tight schedules.

How did the COVID pandemic affect your work?

At first it just made me thankful that implementation of the intervention is already underway, so the project itself is not highly impacted. But for a couple of weeks, the extended family couldn't come [due to quarantine]. So we had to strategize on how can we collect data and still follow our protocol. That was very interesting to navigate.

I also thought about how things can change within the family support system. I have to be mindful of all of that, because it's safer not to assume how the families will be impacted. So I need to approach the family with extra compassion when scheduling for sessions, and with a lot of understanding. If they can't make it, that's okay. And just make myself more available for the family, with their needs.

Can you give us a success story from the project?

I think it was the third session, when I was data collecting, and it was one of the extended-family sessions, just before the session. The grandma was like, 'She has been using the AAC device! She's using the device much more now, and she told me that she needed to get to the bathroom. She needed help!' And that just made my day. Because if they tell you these things, it's like, 'Oh, my gosh, she is communicating!'

Douglas and her team have built trust with their partners by being responsive to their partners' needs. "We say tell us about what school is going to look like for the kids you're working with, and we'll tell you what we can do as far as research," she said. "So if they say, 'We're only going to have this particular child that we'd love to have in this project at school two days a week'? Awesome. We can work with that. Or they may say, 'We're going to have so many changes with PPE and our cleaning and sanitizing routines, we don't want to start the project until we've had a few months of figuring that out.' And that's fine."

Advice for Working in the COVID Context

A coaching model is useful. What's changed as a result of the COVID context? According to Douglas, in her field there has been a lot more coaching of family members to learn how to support their child, with good long-term implications: "Traditionally, schools have maintained the role of educator and have not taught families and loved ones, who support these children day to day, how to best help them with their communication. And we've seen some really good things that have come from that."

Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Douglas also believes it's important as a researcher to have a variety of projects on hand: "I was already working on some literature reviews and analyses and I was able to funnel some of my efforts there when things got shut down."

Use downtime to write. "In some ways this is a great time, as a researcher, to write. That is what I spent most of the summer doing, writing and getting as much of my research out as possible. So far this year I have 11 publications, because I was able to keep moving things along in a quicker fashion when normally there would have been things like data collection that I needed to be facilitating, and some of those things got paused. It enabled me to focus in on other things."

Beware: Funding limits are coming. Douglas believes that more than ever, funding is going to be limited at universities. She said, "it's really important for faculty to make sure that their research will be funded. It's about getting those external grants as much as possible, because we will see more cuts in the future."

Finally, Douglas said, "I would say, don't be afraid to continue to do research. These children are so young and have such limited communication, and they're really resilient. They just roll with the punches. This is their life; this is their day-to-day. There are a lot of ways in which researchers who are trying to support schools can still do important and valuable work. Schools need our support now more than ever. I think innovation is going to be so important the next few years, and we have to be ready to think creatively about how we continue our work, what is the most important thing to be looking at and how we continue to support those who are most vulnerable."

Sarah N. Douglas, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies
Director, Research in Autism and Developmental Disabilities Laboratory
College of Social Science

Community-Engaged Learning at Michigan State University

The Center for Community Engaged Learning supports university faculty and academic staff across all colleges and majors as they partner with communities to create community-engaged learning (CEL) experiences for students as a part of academic coursework or beyond-the-classroom experiences.

Total Registrations for Academic and Beyond-the-Classroom CEL



Skills Gained

Many students who participated in CEL reported that they:

- Improved their critical thinking about issues.
- Learned about cultures different from their own.
- Improved their understanding of how communities and/or cities function.
- Critically reflected on their own values and biases.
- Improved their problem-solving skills.
- Improved their written and verbal communication.

2018-2019

32,348

2019-2020

36,933

Academic Community-Engaged Learning

Academic community-engaged learning experiences are for students as a part of academic coursework. Community-engaged learning strategies in the classroom range from direct service to advocacy to social innovation to philanthropy and more.

Academic CEL Registrations:

2018-2019

14,088

2019-2020

14,297

Number of community partners who worked with Academic CEL staff:

2018-2019

46

2019-2020

45

Placements focused on:

- Community administration
- Community nutrition
- Education
- Health and wellness
- Human services
- Pre-school and day care
- Recreation leadership
- Seniors
- Hospitals
- Youth mentoring

Beyond-the-Classroom Experiences

Beyond-the-Classroom experiences are co-curricular opportunities that are not tied to specific academic coursework, but simply reflect the student's personal goals or desire to give back to their communities.

Beyond-the-Classroom Registrations:

2018-2019

18,260

2019-2020

22,636



Day of Service Hours

2018-2019

5,620

(1,124 participants)

2019-2020

7,385

(1,477 participants)

Sponsors who helped break down barriers to CEL with transportation assistance

Generous financial assistance from **Michigan State University Federal Credit Union** allowed CCEL to employ eight driver ambassadors, coordinate two shuttle vans, and register 249 (2018-2019) and 205 (2019-2020) student riders.

Generous financial assistance from **Capital Area Transportation Authority** enabled CCEL to distribute over 5,000 CATA bus tokens to student volunteers each academic year.



TEENAGERS, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS, AND *The Science of Hope*

BY CARLA HILLS

Dr. Dante Dixon conveys infectious enthusiasm when he talks about his work with teenagers, despite the fact that his research addresses some of the most challenging topics in education. Dr. Dixon specializes in understanding variables that increase students' academic achievement during adolescence and how to construct interventions that guide students toward success, especially minority or disadvantaged young people.

"I do this work because I want to make a difference," says Dixon. "The people I work with want to make a difference."

Dr. Dixon is a California native who earned an undergraduate degree in psychology, a master's degree in education, and a doctoral degree

in school psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. He was hired by Wayne State University in 2016, then joined the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education in MSU's College of Education in 2019. "Support comes from all corners at MSU, including administrators, faculty, students, and the surrounding community. It's the total package and a team mentality," said Dixon.

A licensed psychologist, Dr. Dixon aligns engaged scholarship and community collaborations with his research expertise in the educational and psychological functioning of children and adolescents. His research interests include psychosocial precursors of achievement, at-risk youth, gifted education, the achievement gap, and the translation of research findings into school-based practices.

Influences in the Science of Hope

Why has Dr. Dixon focused on hope? It is a well-worn word used in a variety of ways, including descriptions of desire, anticipation, wishful thinking, and optimism. In a number of peer-reviewed articles, Dr. Dixon recognizes that “hope can be assessed as a state that is a temporary frame of mind,” but has focused on “hope as a trait.”¹

Dr. Dixon maintains that hope among adolescents has two critical aspects: 1) vision—the ability to envision, with as much detail as possible, the path to the goal or outcome that they desire, and 2) belief—their perceived ability to follow through on their vision and make it a reality.

“I read an article a few years back called *Social-Psychological Interventions in Education: They’re Not Magic*, written by Stanford University researchers David S. Yeager and Gregory M. Walton². It was groundbreaking in my understanding of the world. The concept is simple; they argued in that paper that one’s thoughts influence subsequent behaviors, and one’s behavior influences subsequent achievement, and subsequent achievement reinforces one’s thoughts,” said Dixon.

“I am convinced that intelligence is not directly related to academic achievement. Instead, I think it is related to the odds that one engages in success-oriented behaviors, which I believe is related to academic achievement.”

As Dr. Dixon explains, “For example, if one thinks they are a good student, they act like a good student, meaning that they engage in success-oriented academic behaviors and do well academically. If they don’t do well, they figure out what happened, so they do better the next time. When the student achieves, likely as a direct result of their behavioral academic efforts, it reinforces the student’s perception that they are a good student.”

Hope Interventions with High School Students

There have been many studies that have evaluated academic achievement based on family income, family education levels, race, gender, social status, and other factors. Dr. Dixon takes that information and adds a component that identifies student attitudes. Designing a hope intervention involves listening to students.

“You can have an IQ of 200, but if you can’t see how to accomplish a specific goal, or believe in your ability to do it, then it’s going to be hard to accomplish,” Dixon said.

“I am convinced if we can intervene when students are young, and get them to believe they can reach higher, it changes attitudes. It will help them see the path to bigger goals and motivate them to engage in the behaviors that will likely lead to them accomplishing those goals. I believe that implementing hope interventions widely will help more students experience positive outcomes despite some factors such as where they come from, or that nobody in their family has ever graduated, or they’ve never personally known someone who has a graduate degree,” said Dixon. “If you break down the steps, show how it can be done, then it doesn’t become a scary journey. The knowledge provides confidence; each achievement bolsters the confidence, leading to more behaviors and experience that lead to more achievements.”

Hope interventions can be brief, sometimes 90 minutes, and the effects can last months. Dr. Dixon and his team often work with classrooms containing 20 or more students, but can also produce intervention plans for entire schools.

The Hope Laboratory and School Partnerships

Much of Dr. Dixon’s collaborative work with schools is conducted through The Hope Laboratory, offering partners a suite of deliverables that can identify and inform student well-being and attitudes.

Dante Dixon, assistant professor in the College of Education, is principal investigator of The Hope Laboratory. Dixon believes in a broad shift in thinking about student achievements. He advocates for the inclusion of hope and positivity in American education policy.



The Hope Laboratory specializes in positive perception-based academic interventions that aim to increase the achievement of minority and disadvantaged youth.

By partnering with schools, Dr. Dixon and his team offer benefits that include student survey data, teacher and administrator training, workshops, cutting-edge research, and interventions designed to increase hope, engagement, school-belonging, and a sense of well-being among students.

Dr. Dixon works with both urban and suburban schools and with students across diverse circumstances, ranging from the at-risk to the gifted and talented.

How the Coronavirus Pandemic Affects the Work

During 2020—a year that has created seismic impacts in just about every aspect of daily life for students, parents, and educators—Dr. Dixon and his team have remained focused on how to make systemic changes in their work, in order to both sustain and increase opportunities for youth to succeed.

Development is underway to produce eight 10-minute videos that can be viewed by high school students, as well as teachers, administrators, and parents. The content targets hope, motivation, and student well-being. The modules are designed to be visually entertaining, while conveying serious messages related to academic success, especially with minority and disadvantaged populations.

Dr. Dixon maintains that hope among adolescents has two critical aspects: 1) vision—the ability to envision, with as much detail as possible, the path to the goal or outcome that they desire, and 2) belief—their perceived ability to follow through on their vision and make it a reality.



“The videos are creatively designed, modeled in the style of the late Sir Ken Robinson’s work with cognitive whiteboard animation,” said Dixon. “If we put them on a website for students to access, teachers can make assignments that can be sprinkled in coursework and homework. Initially, it’s a universal intervention for a specific school. However, over time we can scale the modules while incorporating new information to better serve our partners.”

In doing so, Dr. Dixon also addresses the issue of equity. “Everyone deserves a fair shot, so we are trying to make the modules as widely available as possible, to reach those that haven’t yet been reached. A universal intervention first. Then we can start scaling up,” he said.

Looking into the Future

Dr. Dixon believes in a broad shift in thinking about student achievements. He advocates for the inclusion of hope and positivity in American education policy.

“We treat symptoms, not the underlying issue of why students are not trying harder in the first place. I want people to understand that students’ perceptions matter. And the more attention we pay to that, the better off students will be,” Dixon said.

What does all this mean for today’s teenagers? True to his perspective and his work, Dr. Dixon is positive, brief, and hopeful, saying “Show them how to get from here to there. Teach them that they can.”

Dante D. Dixon, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Department of Counseling, Educational
Psychology and Special Education
College of Education

1 Dixon, D. D., Worrell, F. C., & Mello, Z. (2017). Profiles of hope: How clusters of hope relate to school variables. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 59, 55–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2017.08.011>

2 Yeager, D., & Walton, G. (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education: They’re not magic. *Review of Educational Research*, 81, 267–301. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0034654311405999>

Scientists Pivot Research to Tackle SARS-CoV-2

Many scientists across the University have worked under challenging conditions and restricted laboratory capacity to forge ahead with vital research, finding innovative ways to collaborate across disciplines to tackle the coronavirus.



Guowei Wei

MSU Department of Mathematics professor Guowei Wei and his team develop machine learning computer models that use deep learning techniques to create datasets that can predict variables to guide the design and testing of therapeutics. When COVID-19 hit, Wei repurposed his technology to focus specifically on the SARS-CoV-2 protein, using the models to predict key behaviors of more than 100 protease inhibitors that target the virus's main protease to disable the means of viral replication. By highlighting the most promising inhibitors, Wei's data saves labs and companies valuable time and resources by focusing on therapeutics that will be most effective against the coronavirus. See more: <https://natsci.msu.edu/news/machine-learning-helps-hunt-for-covid-19-therapies/>

<https://natsci.msu.edu/news/machine-learning-model-finds-sars-cov-2-growing-more-infectious1/>



Yong-Hui Zheng, Dohun Pyeon, and Xuefei Huang

MSU Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics professor Yong-Hui Zheng and his lab members study viral biology and the first step in viral infection—how the virus enters the cell. As with other viruses, such as HIV and Ebola, understanding a key feature of the virus—the “spike protein”—is critical to understanding how the coronavirus initiates infection. With more than 20 years experience studying viruses, Zheng was able to quickly apply previous research to the study of COVID-19.



Dohun Pyeon, associate professor in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, is investigating how SARS-CoV-2 interacts with and hijacks the host cellular mechanism for entry, replication, and pathogenesis. He is collaborating with Xuefei Huang, MSU Foundation Professor of chemistry, to develop a neutralizing antibody that can be used to develop therapeutics. See more: <https://natsci.msu.edu/news/scientists-focus-on-fundamental-virology-and-therapeutics-in-covid-19-fight/>



Frances Pouch Downes

MSU Biomedical Laboratory Diagnostics (BLD) Program professor, Frances Pouch Downes, collaborating with a team of BLD alumni and medical laboratory scientists, developed one of the world's first SARS-CoV-2 proficiency testing programs. Downes' team enrolled more than 300 clinical laboratories from 46 states and four countries to determine the accuracy of methods being used to test for coronavirus. Her study was able to show that these new and rapidly developed tests are highly accurate, giving confidence in medical decisions based on their results. See more: <https://natsci.msu.edu/news/spartan-scientists-administer-international-proficiency-testing-program-for-sars-cov-2/>



Forefront research to help solve the critical challenges facing humanity is central to the mission of the College of Natural Science, namely, “A thriving planet and healthy communities through scientific discovery.” I want to thank these outstanding researchers, and many other contributors in the college, for their ongoing work directed at resolving the threat of viral diseases such as COVID, which are one of the greatest challenges of our times.

Phillip Duxbury

Dean
College of Natural Science


An aerial photograph of a coastal town in Alaska, likely Kotzebue. The town is situated on a narrow strip of land between a large body of water and a rocky coastline. The town features numerous small, colorful houses and buildings, some with blue roofs. A large, dark, rocky area is visible in the foreground, and a long, straight road or runway extends from the town towards the right side of the image. The background shows a vast expanse of water and distant mountains under a clear sky.

No Place Like Home

Addressing the Need for Safe and Healthy Housing in Alaska

BY AMY BYLE

A home should be a safe place of refuge from all types of assaults, of which 2020 has had many, including the ongoing impacts of the coronavirus. For Alaska Native communities, these difficulties come on top of the housing challenges they already faced due to increasing environmental and social pressures—challenges that threaten the safety and well-being of their places of refuge.



Kristen Cetin, assistant professor in MSU's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, is part of a team of researchers working on a project that addresses housing vulnerabilities due to climate change in rural Arctic regions. According to Cetin, overcrowding, poor indoor air quality, high costs of electricity and fuel, permafrost thaw causing structural issues to building foundations, coastline erosion requiring communities to move their buildings away from the coast, and housing stock being built without consideration of local community values are issues contributing to a housing crisis.

The goal of the project is to identify culturally appropriate solutions to these housing issues, relying both on the multi-disciplinary expertise of the research team, as well as local

expertise of community members and stakeholders, to ensure that the research is planned and conducted in ways that will benefit the community for generations to come. The research team is working primarily with the community in Unalakleet, Alaska, a village with a population of around 800, south of Nome on the west coast of Alaska, bordered on one side by the ocean and on the other side by the Unalakleet River.

"They are a small community, and we're working with them on housing related issues and on building some new housing," said Cetin. "They haven't had new housing in this community for a while, so they're excited about it and they want to set up the process—make the process 'right.' They want to go through the process of including the community in the development of the housing, so that it's something that people will accept and that will perform well and can be a model for other communities to use in developing additional housing."

Kristen Cetin and her husband Bora Cetin, who is also a faculty member in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, came to MSU from Iowa State University in 2019. They are both working on the Alaska housing research project. While Kristen is addressing concerns around indoor environmental quality, Bora, with his expertise in geotechnical engineering, is addressing structural issues resulting from permafrost thaw. Together and individually, they are part of many collaborative research projects, drawing on their unique skill sets and expertise.

City of Unalakleet, Alaska
Photo by Andreanna Grishkowsky



Kristen and Bora Cetin, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, are part of the research team addressing housing needs in Unalakleet.

A Transdisciplinary Approach

The project falls under the Navigating the New Arctic (NNA) initiative, one of the National Science Foundation's 10 Big Ideas. According to their website, NNA supports "the research and dissemination of new knowledge needed to inform the economy, security, and resilience of the Nation, the larger Arctic region, and the globe with respect to Arctic change."

The project is led by Cristina Poleacovschi, an assistant professor in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering at Iowa State University (ISU). She leads an interdisciplinary research team from Iowa State University, Auburn University, and Michigan State University who bring combined expertise in geotechnical engineering, energy and thermal performance, atmospheric science, erosion, and social systems. They are collaborating with local experts from the Cold Climate Housing Research Center, the Tribal Council of Unalakleet, and the housing director in Unalakleet, as well as with members of the Unalakleet community.

With a background in knowledge-sharing in project-based organization, Poleacovschi is addressing the social systems component, working with the housing director to conduct interviews with community members, ensuring that community and stakeholder voices are guiding the research and development of new housing.

"It is exciting to work on a project that has engaged the community from early on," said Poleacovschi. "We have included the community itself and the housing authority in our discussions and meetings to ensure a strong community engagement, which I believe will create stronger research impacts. History shows that, way too often, engineering designs may not follow cultural and historical preferences which can result in unsustainable outcomes. We try to avoid this—making this project unique."

Kari Duame is a key partner on the project. Originally from Nome, after college she reconnected with the Native Alaska community through employment with the Aleutian Housing Authority and is currently the housing director for the City of Unalakleet. She has been vital in making local connections and setting up interviews so that community members can share their knowledge and experience.

"I interact with people in the community a lot," said Duame. "It's the nature of my job, and people share what their concerns are. Besides the obvious—lack of housing—other concerns are the aging infrastructure in the City, elders living in unsafe and unsanitary conditions, and the usual village housing issues like mold and ventilation problems, even in newer housing."

The changing climate is both creating and compounding the housing problems, especially in a village surrounded by water. "Climate change is a concern, and a lot of work has been done to prevent erosion and flooding," said Duame. "However, the City is encouraging new development to occur on the "Hillside," on the hills that rise up just east of town, where new housing will be safe from future flooding."

Bridging Engineering and Culture

With expertise in energy performance, indoor environmental conditions, and ventilation, Cetin is addressing the causes of poor indoor air quality in the homes. Several factors, such as overcrowding and lack of ventilation, can lead to unhealthy conditions, such as mold growth, that make the indoor environment unhealthy. She has collected information from Alaska housing surveys to identify typical building characteristics and issues and has worked with the Cold Climate Housing Research Center to discuss these issues. She and the team are using building simulation tools to mimic the conditions in the buildings to assess and consider possible solutions.

"Many people live in very small and old homes that have a lot of issues with them," said Cetin. "And overcrowding is a big challenge. Housing is designed for a certain number of people, and when you have more people living in tighter quarters, with lots of cooking, it creates a lot of moisture. Moisture is a big problem in these homes—lots of mold, condensation, air quality, and ventilation issues. Groups in Alaska have been working to help improve it, but it's still a big issue."

Cetin is working with Poleacovschi to develop interview questions around indoor environmental conditions. "The purpose of the interviews with local community members is to understand how they perceive these issues of air quality and ventilation," explained Cetin, "so that when we work with the housing director

to go through this process of developing new housing, we can make sure that we understand both what should be done and what people understand is the right thing to do and try to bridge that difference—to try to make something that people like and feel is culturally appropriate, but also encourages a healthier environment, and more sustainable building operation.”

Impacts of the Coronavirus

Originally, the team’s plan was to travel to Alaska in summer 2020 to begin doing hands-on research and face-to-face interviews, but due to coronavirus, the trip has been postponed until 2021.

“Unfortunately, COVID came right before we planned to go to Alaska this summer, so we couldn’t go,” said Cetin. “So the data collection has involved talking with people remotely. We developed a survey and sent it out to a diversity of stakeholders to get a sense of what the most important things are to the community, and the way they construct, operate, and maintain housing in the Alaska region. We’ve also met with the Tribal Council and talked with the housing director, but everything has been over Zoom for the most part. On my end, I’ve worked with Cristina to develop some questions as part of the interview process related to housing.”

The virus has impacted all of Cetin’s research—one project even had to be canceled. “We had to stop doing lab work for almost five months, significantly impacting the construction of my lab and several of our laboratory-based research projects,” she said. “Project timelines have had to be extended because we are not able to be in the lab to complete work. Mentally it is challenging, and everyone is stressed.” And while she is thankful for the ability to develop more flexible means of communication, she says, “It’s harder to do work virtually; it’s just not the same.”

The Unalakleet community has also been drastically impacted by the virus, due to stringent quarantine requirements and unemployment. “There used to be daily flights out of Anchorage, but the air carrier went bankrupt due to COVID, which had a very negative impact on the community,” said Duame. “It put a lot of people out of work and also made it hugely expensive to leave the village. We had some CARES act funding that we used to pay three months of rent and utilities for those who

were out of work, but it wasn’t enough when the crisis continued.”

Planning Post-Virus

Looking ahead, the team plans to use the collection of data and information from this planning grant to help with the submission of a larger collaborative grant. This would allow the team to begin applying their research into the design and construction of new housing.

Cetin is hoping the new year will bring an opportunity to continue the research in person, as she enjoys doing work that allows her to collaborate with and learn from an interdisciplinary team of researchers and community members.



“As a result of the collaboration you learn so much from each other and from the project efforts and expand your knowledge base, not only in your own field but in other fields as well,” she said. “I enjoy being able to work with a community and in a location where there are significant challenges and opportunities for collaboration where research related efforts can help improve living conditions.”

Hopefully, in 2021, that collaboration will be on the ground in Unalakleet.

Kristen Cetin, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Department of Civil and
Environmental Engineering
College of Engineering

Unalakleet is a village on the West Coast of Alaska with a population around 800.

Photo courtesy of Kari Duame

Frightful **to Delightful**

A newly remodeled suite.
Photo courtesy of Inn at Bay Harbor



“Customer Delight” as a Sustainable Business Model

BY AMY BYLE

The year 2020 has been frightful for almost every sector, and few industries have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as severely as the hospitality industry. According to the American Hotel and Lodging Association’s State of the Hotel Industry Analysis as of August 31, 2020, more than \$46 billion in room revenue and 70 percent (4.8 million) of hospitality and leisure jobs had been lost.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic hit in early 2020, the hospitality business faced an increasingly challenging environment. Rising consumer sophistication and expectations, evolving social and generational norms, and fluctuating economic conditions challenged the industry to be continuously innovative.

“We know the business market is getting tougher, more competitive, and customers are becoming more sophisticated. They compare the experiences they receive with what they expected to receive from the service providers,” said MiRan Kim, associate professor in The School of Hospitality Business. “In the hospitality business, service innovation is vital for survival; it is the engine of competitive advantage.”

Beyond Satisfaction to Delight

Companies that succeed today are going beyond customer satisfaction to customer delight, providing guests with a pleasurable element of surprise that exceeds expectations. This concept comes from the Cajun word, *lagniappe*, which means a little bit extra. Having spent much of her life training in and researching the hospitality business, beginning in her home country of South Korea and then expanding internationally, Kim has become, in her words, an “ambassador of customer delight,” passionately pursuing guest service innovation in her research and instilling these principles in her students.



Dr. MiRan Kim, an “ambassador for customer delight” in the hospitality industry.

Kim and co-researcher Bonnie Knutson, professor in The School of Hospitality Business, along with undergraduate students Christina Heydenburg and Vinh Le, have received funding from the Society for Hospitality and Foodservice Management to research customer delight and its impact on sustainability in the hospitality business.

“This study is designed to help hospitality practitioners clearly understand the difference between satisfying and delighting a customer,” said Kim. Quoting Ken Blanchard, a well-known author on leadership development, she said, “Just having satisfied customers is not good enough anymore. If you want a booming business, you have to create raving fans.” The findings will help demonstrate the importance of delight as a management tool to create advocates, thereby increasing customer lifetime worth and generating referrals.”

Delight From the Inside Out

Looking at sustainable business practices from the inside out, this research considers a company’s employees as its “internal customers,” the workers on the front line of providing delightful experiences to external customers, the consumers.



The Inn at Bay Harbor, in Bay Harbor, Michigan, is an industry partner assisting with Kim's research.

Photo courtesy of Inn at Bay Harbor

“Staff and customers are critical elements in developing innovative services and products,” said Kim. “Thus, to build a sustainable business, this study’s primary learning goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of delight—employee delight, customer delight, and the relationship between employee delight and customer delight—as a core business practice.”

Utilizing a quantitative online survey approach, the research is being conducted in two phases: the first phase is surveying the perspective of industry employees on the effects of diverse and inclusive leadership on employee delight, examining similarities and differences in relationships among inclusive leadership, team-member exchange, and employee delight across different generational groups. The second phase is surveying hotel and restaurant guests to identify how customer service factors (safety/health, innovativeness, uniqueness, fun/enjoyment, compliment/upgrade) impact customer delight, and to examine if factors of employee delight (such as diverse and inclusive business environments) consequently impact customer delight.

Sustainability in the Face of Unsustainable Losses

When the coronavirus pandemic hit in early 2020, “sustainable business practices” took on a

new level of meaning. Even looking at just the foodservice industry, the statistics are dismal. According to Knutson, data are showing that approximately 60 percent of restaurants will never reopen. “And most of those are going to be mom-and-pops and independents,” she said. “They are the neighborhood gathering places, the glue that hold the culture of a city or town together.”

As thousands of businesses have had to scramble to accommodate the restrictions and impacts of the pandemic, Kim and her team have broadened the focus of their research to reflect the current situation. For example, recent surveys now include such questions as whether hand sanitizing stations are available or whether there are signs reminding guests to maintain social distancing. Customer delight must now, by necessity, include increased measures to ensure safety around COVID-19, creating new expectations for both employees and customers and a new normal for businesses moving forward.

“Currently, no one can accurately predict when this COVID-19 pandemic will be at a point where the U.S. hospitality engine can reopen in what will be a new normal,” said Kim. “However, current projections do not envision that the U.S. will be back to any normal within the next several months. Therefore, the timing of our research and its publication is particularly relevant as it will provide data from both customers and “front line” employees for valuable input to guide tomorrow’s sustainable hospitality business models.”

According to Knutson, the surveys will also provide a point-in-time comparison with previous research. “A survey is a snapshot; it’s a point in time,” said Knutson. “MiRan and I have done other delight-type studies, so we have an idea of what it was like pre-COVID. Some of the questions we have integrated into this study are some of the same questions we used in previous studies. So, we’ll be able to say, ‘Is there a difference? And post-COVID, is there going to be another difference?’”

After the surveys are completed, they will be analyzed by expert sources and industry professionals for content validity and will be followed up with pilot studies involving both employees and guests. Ultimately, the goal is to

inform the translation of results into effective business models.

“Research is only as good as it answers the question, ‘So what?’ I’m here to say, ‘Here’s how the industry can use this. Here’s what this means. Here are some ideas for you to take this and operationalize it.’ Because if we just do research to take and stick on a shelf, it’s interesting research. But we are a land-grant university. We are charged with helping our state, our nation, and the world,” said Knutson.



Currently, no one can accurately predict when this COVID-19 pandemic will be at a point where the U.S. hospitality engine can reopen in what will be a new normal. However, current projections do not envision that the U.S. will be back to any normal within the next several months. Therefore, the timing of our research and its publication is particularly relevant as it will provide data from both customers and “front line” employees for valuable input to guide tomorrow’s sustainable hospitality business models.

Emerging Into a New Normal with Delight-Focused Business Models

Kristi Noyes, managing director of Systopia International, Inc. and foundation chair of the Society for Hospitality and Foodservice Management, explains how customer input will be vital for the industry as the economy begins to improve. “Obviously, the economy is key, as the hospitality industry relies in large part on discretionary spending by its customers,” said Noyes. “Assuming a reasonable economic recovery, businesses that survived the pandemic will need to listen to their customers with a keen ear (what delights their customers in the new normal?), innovate to meet new challenges (regulatory, physical, social), and



One goal of Kim’s research is to demonstrate the connection between employee and customer delight.
Image based on graphic provided by MiRan Kim

ensure that their employees are in-tune and on-board with new ways of conducting business.”

“Dr. Kim’s team’s research is unique in that it explores several trending management initiatives (inclusion/diversity, employee retention, customer loyalty), explains their delicate inter-connections, and provides a roadmap for businesses to excel in all initiatives, separately, and therefore to succeed holistically,” she said.

Kim is passionate about passing along these principles to her students, who have the potential, as emerging young hospitality professionals, to contribute to new growth in the industry. One of Kim’s seniors, Christina Heydenburg, is enthusiastic about the experience she has received. “My involvement in this research will help me learn about the importance of looking at the big picture of hospitality and all the different factors that contribute to delighting guests,” she said.

As hospitality businesses emerge from the losses and impacts of the pandemic, being sustainably focused will be more critical than ever.

“With an unknown future ahead, industry leaders are struggling to design sustainable hospitality business models at the very time that these models are becoming increasingly important,” said Kim. “Customer delight, one of the inspirational and innovative service concepts, will be an imperative tool for sustainable business.”

MiRan Kim, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
The School of Hospitality Business
Eli Broad College of Business

International Engagement During COVID

International Studies and Programs (ISP) advances MSU's global engagement by facilitating research, scholarship, educational programs, international experiences, and partnerships around the world.

While travel restrictions due to COVID-19 have severely impacted in-person international collaborations and research of thousands of faculty and students and their global partners, many have forged ahead with innovative ways to continue dialogue and collaboration with their international colleagues. One example is the Alliance for African Partnership.

Alliance for African Partnership (AAP)

Founded in 2016, the AAP is a consortium of MSU and ten leading African universities committed to working together in accountable, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and transparent ways to address global challenges.

In 2020, the AAP organized a six-part Public Dialogue Series, in which leaders from consortium institutions discussed the impact of the pandemic on higher education and national economies. Moderated by Professor Paul Zeleza, vice chancellor of the United States International University in Nairobi, Kenya, the series attracted faculty, academic staff, students, and leaders in higher education, as well as non-academic representatives of the public and private sectors from 61 countries.

The series began in April with a discussion about initial lessons learned from African universities and best practices moving forward and concluded in July with an exploration of opportunities for partnership and engagement, post-pandemic.

Given the success of the series, the AAP is continuing the virtual global engagement by hosting additional dialogues this spring on important topics such as vaccine inequities and race relations. For more information and to view the AAP Public Dialogue Series, visit: aap.isp.msu.edu/dialogues.



While we may not be able to physically travel or be together in traditional settings right now, we can and should still be globally engaged. This pandemic has proven that the world is incredibly interconnected, and the global solutions we seek require international collaboration. I encourage you to find your path as a Global Spartan. May we all be guided to do the next right thing—whether in the digital classroom, in the field, or in our communities.

Steven Hanson

Associate Provost and Dean
International Studies and Programs

Office of Global Health, Safety and Security

Operating under the auspices of ISP, the Office of Global Health, Safety and Security (formerly the Office of International Health and Safety) provides guidance on the policies and procedures to help navigate the travel restrictions. Serving as a central hub for all travel-related health and safety information including information regarding screening requirements, border closings, recommendations for airline arrangements, and procedures to protect your health and safety when traveling, the Office is a key resource for keeping Spartans safe and informed. For more information, please visit: globalsafety.msu.edu.



New Jerusalem Full Gospel
Baptist Church

THE CHURCH CHALLENGE

Improving Health and Well-being in the Flint Community

BY CARLA HILLS

In a community lacking some of the most essential needs in life there is one thing that Flint residents have in abundance, and that is faith.

Participation in congregations and faith-based organizations (FBOs) is strong in this predominantly African American city and serves as an important component of the community's social fabric.

During the past thirty years, public health officials and FBO leaders alike have increasingly

explored the value of working together to address the needs of their constituents.

One of the most pressing needs in Flint and the surrounding community is to improve the physical and mental health of the people. The Flint community has weathered numerous public traumas (one of the most recent being the Flint water crisis) that have contributed to racial, economic, education, and health disparities.

The MSU Division of Public Health is in the College of Human Medicine's Flint campus



Above: Vicki Johnson-Lawrence and Rodlescia Sneed

and stands in partnership and collaboration with the community when confronting the challenges residents face.

In 2016, in response to much of the trauma experienced by the Flint community, the Flint Center for Health Equity Solutions was established within the Division of Public Health and funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). It serves as a transdisciplinary collaborative center, promoting research studies that address both physical and mental health.

Interventions to Promote and Sustain Health Equity and Well-being for African Americans

Public health officials and community leaders alike recognized that residents were coping with myriad factors that deter self-care. The Church Challenge is a physical fitness and nutrition intervention, developed and piloted in the Flint community “by pastors and congregations in primarily African American churches, for primarily African American congregations.”¹

Vicki Johnson-Lawrence is the lead investigator for the Church Challenge. She is a social epidemiologist and community-based researcher who examines the health of residents in vulnerable communities where people are impacted by complex individual and collective stressors.

Rodlescia Sneed is a co-investigator on the Church Challenge team. She is a social and health psychologist who utilizes community-engaged approaches to understand how chronic disease prevention and intervention efforts work best among older adults in community settings.

Johnson-Lawrence and Sneed work with an interdisciplinary team of partners with expertise in church and FBO leadership, human services, public health, fitness instruction, and health services.

Their goal is to identify and address the factors that contribute to chronic disease risks, and work with the community to implement programs that help people begin, and then continue, sustainable healthy behaviors.

The initial Church Challenge was led by the Community Outreach for Family and Youth (COFY) Center, New Jerusalem Full Gospel

Baptist Church, Bridges Into the Future, and other members of the Flint faith community and centered around competitive weight loss efforts for African American adults in Flint.

Community, Church, and Individual Levels

The Church Challenge was developed using community-based participatory approaches and is rooted in the original program. Their mission is to support and improve the health of the Flint community.



Described as a three-level intervention, the work addresses health at the community level, church level, and individual level. The goal is to reduce blood pressure, reduce chronic disease risk, and promote health equity and well-being in Flint.

A major focus is hypertension management and reduction. It is well established that African American men and women have higher rates of risk associated with high blood pressure. While hypertension can be a silent disease, the impacts are severe, including stroke, congestive heart failure, and kidney failure.

Noting that successful programs incorporate multiple lifestyle changes to improve health, the consortium partners have created opportunities for diet and nutrition, physical activity, safe environments for physical fitness, stress management, chronic disease management, and strategies for living a healthier lifestyle.

The researchers and church members work together closely to continually observe, support or refine the necessary steps to meet both individual and church goals.

Impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic

COVID-19 has greatly impacted the Flint community and the Church Challenge is no exception. With social distancing mandates, in-person group activities (a key component of the project) are simply not possible. Further, the Flint faith community has experienced significant grief and loss, as many church leaders and their congregation members have been lost to the pandemic. Those who remain find themselves now tasked with attending to the mental and physical needs of their friends, families, and others around them.

In March, Church Challenge leaders started an initiative called Church Challenge Cares to respond to the needs of the local faith community. Church Challenge Cares offers supportive listening sessions to pastors and health team members, with a goal of reducing distress and offering public health guidance to church members. It also includes a monthly “Church Chat,” a virtual platform where local experts share their knowledge on issues relevant to the faith community during this time. Topics have included Going Back to School during COVID-19, Chronic Disease Management during a Pandemic, and Faith and Health Policy.

Conclusion

According to Johnson-Lawrence and Sneed, the work being done by the Church Challenge team is “highly significant and innovative because it uses a combination of evidence-based practices simultaneously supporting health behavior change for individuals and their faith organizations, and evaluates multilevel efforts to sustain long-term health promotion activities in vulnerable communities like Flint.”²

Vicki Johnson-Lawrence, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Rodlescia Sneed, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Division of Public Health
College of Human Medicine

1,2 Johnson-Lawrence, V., Bailey, S., Sanders, P. E., Sneed, R., Angel-Vincent, A., Brewer, A., Key, K., Lewis, E. Y., & Johnson, J. E. (2019). The Church Challenge: A community-based multilevel cluster randomized controlled trial to improve blood pressure and wellness in African American churches in Flint, Michigan. *Contemp. Clin. Trials Commun.* 14:100329. Published online 2019 Feb 2. doi: 10.1016/j.conctc.2019.100329

New Jerusalem Full Gospel
Baptist Church exercise group.



Public Health in Flint

The pandemic brought into even sharper focus the health care disparities faced by communities of color. The MSU College of Human Medicine's Flint campus is working in multiple ways with partners to address the area's most pressing public health needs.



“

I have a commitment to Flint that began early in adolescence. My action-oriented research is embedded with the principles and practices of community-based participatory research, so that I conduct my research *with* my community and other research partners and not ‘to’ them or ‘for’ them.

Dr. Debra Furr-Holden

Associate Dean for Public Health Integration
College of Human Medicine

MSU College of Human Medicine Division of Public Health

Community and health organizations from the Flint area have a long history of activism, passion, and commitment to the people who live, work, and care about the City of Flint and Genesee County. In 2004 those organizations began working to bring a medical school to their area with the belief that it would advance their ability to address public health issues and ongoing efforts for economic revitalization.

The MSU College of Human Medicine's Flint campus was established to work side-by-side with community partners and health care providers in a community-identified and community-participatory public health focus model, with particular attention to health disparities and health equity solutions.

The Division of Public Health was established in 2015 and is the community-engaged public health program at the MSU CHM Flint campus. Debra Furr-Holden, an epidemiologist and C.S. Mott Endowed Professor of Public Health, has been its administrative and programmatic leader since 2017. In June 2019 Dr. Furr-Holden, a returning Flint resident, was named associate dean for public health integration. In this role she provides strategic leadership to shape and implement university-wide public health initiatives in research, education, community outreach and engagement, and service. publichealth.msu.edu

Flint Research

Division of Public Health researchers address pressing community needs: COVID-19, drug and alcohol dependence, depression, suicide risk reduction, racial disparities in mental health, improving the health of adult Black men, colorectal cancer awareness, toxic stress in children, protecting the health of Flint children exposed to lead, and more. From 2015 – 2021, Michigan State University's public health researchers have been awarded

an estimated \$76 million in externally sponsored grants for community research. publichealth.msu.edu/flint-research/flint-public-health-research

Master of Public Health

The MSU College of Human Medicine offers an online master's degree in Public Health that prepares students to protect the health of people and communities, stand up for health disparities, and become part of the solution to better health outcomes. mph.msu.edu/master-of-public-health-home

Flint Center for Health Equity Solutions (FCHES)

FCHES is a Transdisciplinary Collaborative Center funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). Dr. Furr-Holden is the director and principal investigator for FCHES, giving leadership to community-based, collaborative intervention research projects. The *Church Challenge* focuses on prevention of chronic physical health conditions, specifically obesity and cardiovascular disease. The *Strengthening Flint Families* project focuses on prevention of chronic behavioral health conditions, specifically substance abuse and mental illness. These initiatives are aimed at reducing health inequities in Flint and providing insights to promote translational approaches in the community and more broadly across the United States. www.flintcenter.org

Pediatric Public Health Initiative (PPHI)

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha is founder and director of the Michigan State University and Hurley Children's Hospital Pediatric Public Health Initiative. PPHI was formed in 2016 to mitigate the impact of the Flint Water Crisis and serve as a national resource for best practices. Efforts include community and clinical programs, childhood health policy, advocacy, and evaluation. msuhurleypphi.org

Partnering with Clinicians to Transform the Nursing Preceptorship Experience

BY LINDA CHAPEL JACKSON

In the early spring of 2020, Dawn Goldstein was happily absorbed in connecting with clinics and hospitals, setting up placement opportunities for students in the MSU College of Nursing's Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program. Goldstein is the program director and an assistant professor in the College.

Then COVID-19 hit, swiftly followed by near-total lockdown. Goldstein's problems were more urgent than some. Because clinical placements involve close contact onsite with both patients and medical staff, many important decisions had to be made on the spot. Some students who had already started their placements were sent home and told not to return. Clinical partners who had initially agreed to sponsor a student backed out over the summer.

Shifting to the Long-Term View

The quandary then became how to continue. "We had to get creative with how we taught different skills to students, using technology to mimic the live placement experience," Goldstein said. But Zoom was not a one-size-fits-all solution; it might be possible to provide some semblance of normal student-patient interaction in a clinical setting virtually, but not in a hospital. Besides, hospitals had problems of their own.

For Goldstein, not being able to drive out to meet potential partners and talk about the

program was a real handicap. "You're trying to call people who are no longer in their office. You're trying to email them, and they don't know who you are. So, I had a very poor response rate all through spring and summer," she said.

Life was not easy for the students, either. "Especially in the spring, our students really suffered," Goldstein said. Her program is a graduate program, and all the students in it are working nurses. Many of them who ended up working in COVID units were asked to put in extra hours. Others were furloughed when their facility turned into a COVID facility and they had to go somewhere else or reduce their hours.

After weathering the initial shock and scrambling to put temporary solutions in place, faculty and administrators across the University began turning their attention to the long view. It had become obvious that (1) the pandemic was not going away anytime soon, and (2), as Goldstein said, "You can't just take a face-to-face class and plop it into an online platform; you have to take the time to build and develop an interactive curriculum."

Health Care Delivery is Changing

Even before the impact of COVID, the delivery of health care has been quietly changing for some time.

Telehealth is coming into its own as a communication option for any number of



Dawn Goldstein directs the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program at MSU's College of Nursing.



Margaret Keeler is a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner at the Lansing Institute of Behavioral Medicine, a designated clinical site for MSU's College of Nursing.

reasons. It is especially a boon to remote rural areas that previously had very few medical services available. Patients who have mobility or transportation issues love it. But there are problems, some related to the medium itself and some related to the circumstances of the pandemic.

Before COVID, patients would come into their local clinic and have a telehealth session with a specialist, usually someone from outside. The clinic would set up the session and make sure

that everybody who needed to be signed on was ready and the technology was working.

Now face-to-face contact between patients and clinicians is discouraged and patients are expected to do their sessions at home.

“This means they have to build an infrastructure of how to do telehealth from someone’s home,” Goldstein said. “And you can’t get a patient’s vital signs, you can’t do a lot of things that you used to do before you sat down and talked with them. Then you have struggles with the patient’s Internet connectivity. Do they have the technology at home? It’s one thing for them to come into the clinic and get set up for a telehealth encounter, it’s another thing for them to do it by themselves. They may have their session in the kitchen with other family members present and listening in on the appointment. It’s not very private. They may not have accessibility to reliable Internet or have adequate bandwidth. They may not have a laptop, so they’re using their smartphone. So—a lot of barriers, but at least they’re being seen.”

For Clinical Faculty, Institutional Support Makes a Big Difference

Goldstein has only good things to say about the supports her college and other departments have offered to help faculty navigate the

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the sudden relaxing of regulations and unprecedented insurance support, clinicians have been enabled across a variety of settings to adopt telehealth services. At Lansing Institute of Behavioral Medicine (LIOBM), a designated clinical site for MSU College of Nursing, we rapidly converted outpatient services over to telepsychiatry, becoming fully operational in March 2020. In this large practice, which schedules over 900 patient visits per week, meeting the challenge required significant coordination between office and clinical staff.

For MSU College of Nursing student scholars, the experience has been gratifying and rich, while posing some challenges. The advantages of telepsychiatry include making it possible for the students to continue with their clinical experience, ease of asking the patient if the student can join the meeting, ease of scheduling patients back with the student, and allowance for keeping a brisk pace of seeing patients with a wide variety of psychiatric disorders for medication evaluation. Disadvantages include challenges of learning to provide add-on psychotherapy, such as the use of silence as an effective intervention tool and reading nonverbal communications (subtle changes in tone of voice, inflection, affect and gaze), which are so important in the learning experience. Overall, the experience has been educational and positive.

Ms. Margaret Keeler, PMHNP

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Dr. Roy Meland, D.O.

Psychiatrist and co-owner of LIOBM

transition to the online platform. “I applaud the departments for these efforts,” she said. “You’re with other faculty, from different colleges, in synchronous webinars, and you’re working on problem solving with those people. It’s helpful to see what they’re doing and what’s working.”

She took a writing workshop about how to assist and evaluate her students with writing in the virtual environment. Normally her students would have gone for a monthly simulation at the Collaborative Learning Center, but now all those simulations are virtual. Instead, they are learning to build their own virtual scenario as though a patient is coming into a clinic or being seen at home. These skills help them prepare for conducting a psychiatric evaluation or follow-up via telehealth. Although the exercise is being done out of necessity, Goldstein believes that in this case, that’s not a bad thing: “Telehealth is a good skill that they’ve had to learn.”

Honing Skills for Online Learning Environments

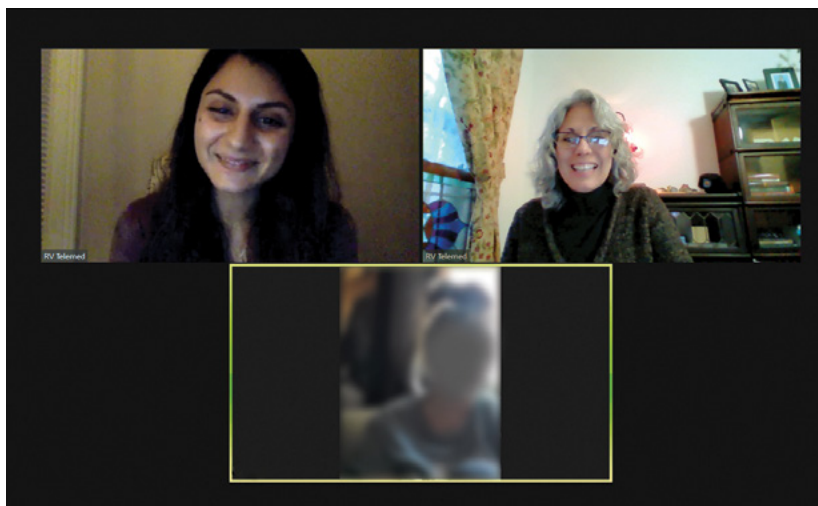
Goldstein is excited about “honing our skills on how we deliver content online, making it meaningful and understanding that you can’t just throw an hour-long lecture online for students to listen to—but how do we tailor what we deliver? How do we help students be more engaged?” She sees technology as playing a major role but wonders how it can be utilized better.

“I don’t think that my students will be able to see patients face-to-face unless they go on an inpatient setting,” she said. “And then it’ll be wearing the masks, the goggles, a face shield, whatever PPE they need. And there’s the risk—I walked around a psychiatric unit about a month ago and noticed that the staff was all wearing PPE, but none of the patients were. Students must be worried about who they’re sitting down with for an hour. Technology is going to have to take a much more active role.”

Beyond COVID: Moving Clinical Nursing Preceptorships Online

Some clinics are still seeing patients face-to-face; most are not. Telehealth has become the norm, but not all are ready to bring back the students, even virtually. Clinical preceptors as well as faculty mentors have to understand how to create online experiences that advance student learning as well as train them in the basic process of conducting therapy sessions online.

Primary care Improved Outcomes with Nurses in Evolving and Expanding Roles (PIONEER) is a federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant based at Virginia Commonwealth University. Tamara Zurakowski, clinical associate professor at the VCU School of Nursing, is principal investigator; Goldstein is a co-investigator for this four-year sub-grant of the project. Numerous clinical partners are involved.



PIONEER aims to design and deliver education in primary care nursing to senior nursing students, educate and support the clinical partners’ RNs in their enhanced role in primary care, and assist clinical partners in adopting primary care practices from the LEAP project, which is housed at VCU’s Center for Disability Leadership. LEAP clinics emphasize team-based care, enhanced roles for MAs and RNs, layperson involvement, complex illness management, behavioral health integration, and clinic-community connections.

The MSU team’s role in this larger picture is to provide the training. “HRSA was generous to give additional monies to all the recipients of the grant to help us develop telehealth education, certification for our clinical partners, and supplies like peripherals,” Goldstein said. “Some clinics were also interested in electronic devices that can be given to patients in the home, such as iPads or peripheral devices, e.g., dual ECG and digital stethoscope, or electronic blood pressure monitor device.”

Goldstein’s future plans include a new grant proposal to be submitted in January, looking

A patient talks to a therapist during a telehealth meeting. Telepsychiatry is fast becoming a norm of psychiatric practice.

Photo courtesy of Dawn Goldstein

at a few primary care clinics in the Upper Peninsula and providing them with an online source of education to train their staff in behavioral health with a focus on children, adolescents, and transitioning adolescents.

Integrating behavioral health and primary care is her first goal. She plans to enlist faculty from at least two different disciplines within MSU; she is particularly interested in partnering with the Department of Psychiatry, along with the College of Nursing's psychiatric nursing and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner programs, to deliver care, education for these clinics, and telehealth.

Advice for Navigating the Post-COVID World

Goldstein advises fellow travelers to take advantage of every educational opportunity they can get: "When your college offers these educational opportunities to learn how to do the translation of your curriculum from a face-to-face to an online environment, you're looking at the people who have that expertise. Take up that opportunity. Take advantage of it to learn and integrate it into your curriculum. Even though I've been teaching online, I found it invaluable."

She has been thinking about developing an educational video to help her partners understand that they can still precept a student and see a patient via telehealth, "because that was such a barrier for some clinics they thought 'Nope, we can't have your students because we're doing this.' But it really is possible, because I've been doing it. And it does work and some of my other students are with other clinical partners. They're seeing patients via telehealth as well. I don't see that going away."

Dawn Goldstein, Ph.D., RN, PMHNP-BC

Assistant Professor
Director, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program
College of Nursing

Dr. Dawn Goldstein was my faculty advisor for completing my doctorate in nursing practice (DNP). Her guidance has helped me become a stronger scholar and clinician in my current role as nurse practitioner at MSU Pediatric Pulmonary. I have learned how to conduct research and perform quality improvement projects to implement evidence-based practice for patient care.

I am one of six in the first cohort enrolled in the post-master's Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) certification program at MSU. I am learning how to conduct a psychiatric evaluation, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment plan for individuals with mental health issues. The program also includes learning psychotherapy techniques to reinforce coping and behavioral training to augment medication management.

My clinical site is at Lansing Institute of Behavioral Medicine (LIOBM) with Margaret Keeler, PMHNP. Margaret has been a stellar preceptor, allowing me to use my interviewing skills and help formulate a plan of care. She has included me in mental health community events and allows me time to ask questions and review clinical cases. She has supported me to work from home via telehealth during the pandemic, which allows me extra time to care for my two children. Margaret is also a mental health advocate in the Lansing community, which has allowed me insight to the mental health barriers at the local and state levels.

Kimberly Krummrey, DNP, RN, FNP-C

Student, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certification Program
Care Coordinator, PIONEER Program at LIOBM



Kim Krummrey is one of six in the first cohort to be enrolled in the College's post-master's PMHNP certification program. Margaret Keeler is Krummrey's clinical preceptor. Dr. Goldstein was Krummrey's faculty advisor for completing her doctorate in nursing practice.

Recognition of Outstanding University-Community Collaborations

Michigan State University established university-wide recognitions of community engagement in 2005 with the creation of the Community Engagement Scholarship Award, formerly known as the Outreach Scholarship Community Partnership Award. Since then, University Outreach and Engagement (UOE) has introduced additional awards that are conferred at the annual MSU Outreach and Engagement Awards Ceremony. The exemplary projects and collaborations recognized through these awards programs represent the powerful impacts of University faculty, staff, and students working together with community partners to address societal concerns.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting scheduling adjustments, the 2020 and 2021 awards are featured in this issue of *The Engaged Scholar Magazine*. A full list of past award recipients is available on the web, at: engage.msu.edu/awards.



Community Engagement Scholarship Award

The Community Engagement Scholarship Award (CESA) recognizes exemplary engaged scholarship with a community partner. MSU scholars and their partners share a stipend of \$5,000.

2021 RECIPIENT

Anti-Racist English Language Teaching and Scholarship

- April Baker-Bell, College of Arts and Letters
- Denby High School

In 2008, Dr. April Baker-Bell initiated and sustains a community-university partnership between the MSU English teacher education program and a network of high school English teachers and students in Detroit. For the past three years, Baker-Bell has worked with Mimi Henderson-Hudson and the students in her senior English class at Denby High School on the THUG Collaborative, an acronym for the novel and film *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. The project involves developing and refining anti-racist approaches to the teaching of Black language in partnership with classroom teachers and Black students.

2020 RECIPIENT

Menominee Sustainable Development Institute Partnership

- Kyle Powys Whyte, College of Arts and Letters and College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Natural Resources Sustainable Development Institute, College of Menominee Nation

Kyle Whyte collaborates with Chris Caldwell of the Menominee Sustainable Development Institute on a partnership that seeks to support Indigenous peoples' preparedness for climate change through a diverse portfolio of research, outreach, and education projects. These projects include the development of Indigenous-based scenario planning for climate change, peer reviewed publications in major journals on the ethics of collaboration between Tribes and scientists, conferences hosted by SDI that build dialogue toward cooperative climate change planning, and educational events that inspire Indigenous students toward leadership in their own Tribal communities.

NOTEWORTHY NOMINATIONS

Extraordinarily competitive nominations for the Community Engagement Scholarship Award are submitted each year that address the critical needs of communities and the individuals in those communities. The following partnerships were nominated in 2021, reflecting work that is making a positive difference in communities near and far.

- ***Sustainable Community Development in Tanzania.*** Jonathan Choti, College of Arts and Letters, with Naitolia Village, Monduli, Tanzania
- ***A Partnership of Service.*** Robert Kolt, College of Communication Arts and Sciences, with the Michigan Community Service Commission
- ***Kinawa Middle School MathCircle.*** Rajesh Kulkarni, College of Natural Science, with Kinawa Middle School, Okemos, Michigan
- ***Youth Voices Project.*** Joanne Marciano, College of Education, with Edgewood Village Housing Nonprofit, East Lansing, Michigan
- ***Designing Safe Neighborhoods: Co-Creating Crime Prevention Policies with Communities.*** Linda Nubani, Holly Madill, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Harmony Fierke-Gmazel, MSU Extension, with the cities of Adrian, Albion, Howell, and Lansing, Michigan
- ***Documenting the Effects of the Water Crisis on Women in Flint: A Community-Engaged Photo Voice Project.*** Lucero Radonic, College of Social Science, with the Healthy Flint Research Coordinating Center - Community Core, Flint, Michigan
- ***Early Childhood Music with Grow Up Great.*** Karen Salvador, College of Music, with Capital Area Community Services Early Head Start, Early On Ingham County, and the Capital Area District Libraries - Downtown Branch, Ingham County, Michigan
- ***Local Government Finance and Policy Partnership with the City of Flint.*** Eric Anthony Scorsone, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and MSU Extension, with the City of Flint, Michigan
- ***Enhanced Digital Learning Initiative.*** Scott Schopieray, College of Arts and Letters, and Jeremy Van Hof, Eli Broad College of Business, with the Okemos Public Schools, Okemos, Michigan



Distinguished Partnership Awards

The Distinguished Partnership Awards (DPAs) comprise University-wide recognitions for highly engaged and scholarly community-based work that positively impacts both the community and scholarship. Nominations for these awards are invited annually in the categories of Research, Creative Activities, Teaching, and Service. Recipients are selected in each of these categories from among all nominees for the Michigan State University Community Engagement Scholarship Award, for which they are also named as finalists. The awards are jointly conferred on faculty recipients and their community partners and come with a shared stipend of \$1,500.

Distinguished Partnership Award for Community-Engaged Creative Activity

2021 RECIPIENT

Anti-Racist English Language Teaching and Scholarship

- April Baker-Bell, College of Arts and Letters
- Denby High School

This partnership won MSU's 2021 Community Engagement Scholarship Award. See previous description on [page 49](#).

2020 RECIPIENT

Sense-Ability Ensemble: Creating Innovative, Multi-Sensory, Interactive Theatrical Performance for Neurodiverse Audiences

- Dionne O'Dell, College of Arts and Letters
- 4th Wall Theatre Company

Dionne O'Dell and the student-led Sense-Ability Ensemble partner with 4th Wall Theatre Company to offer a ten-week theatre residency program to neurodiverse students, including those with autism spectrum disorders, which culminates in a final performance for friends and family. The collaboration has expanded to include a modified residency program in Genesee County as part of the Imagine Flint program and has developed two world premiere productions that tour special education classrooms around Michigan: *Farm! A Musical Experience* and *Soda Pop Shop*, which contribute to a wider understanding of the arts, health, and social/emotional well-being.

Distinguished Partnership Award for Community-Engaged Teaching

2021 RECIPIENT

Equine Welfare in Practice: Clinical Clerkship for 3rd and 4th Year College of Veterinary Medicine Professional Students

- Harold C. Schott II, College of Veterinary Medicine
- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- Universidad Veracruzana

Since 2017, Dr. Schott has led three-week clinical clerkships for 3rd and 4th year College of Veterinary Medicine professional students in partnership with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Dr. Hernandez Gil) and Universidad Veracruzana (Dr. Estrada Taylor). The program begins with an intensive two-week clerkship in Mexico City, followed by 10 days traveling to rural communities to provide veterinary care to working equids, essential economic assets of impoverished Mexican families. Students spend the final week back at MSU completing medical records and preparing a seminar.

2020 RECIPIENT

Teacher Leadership Development for Great Lakes Watershed Stewardship: The GRAND Learning Network and Annie's BIG Nature Lesson

- Shari L. Dann, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Annie's BIG Nature Lesson

Since 2007, the GRAND Learning Network and Annie's BIG Nature Lesson partnership has offered teacher leadership professional development on the topics of Great Lakes watersheds, community, sense of place, and stewardship to more than 447 teachers, who then worked with local communities on watershed stewardship. The partnership has produced numerous peer-reviewed articles, case studies generated by teachers, a PBS-aired video, presentations at environmental education conferences, an invited policy article for the Governor's *State of the Great Lakes* report, and best-practice guides co-developed with other institutional leaders throughout the state.

Distinguished Partnership Award for Community-Engaged Service

2021 RECIPIENT

Racial Justice and the Administration of the Death Penalty

- Catherine M. Grosso and Barbara O'Brien, College of Law
- Center for Death Penalty Litigation

In response to the passage of the North Carolina Racial Justice Act in 2009 (RJA), the Center for Death Penalty Litigation (with Gretchen M. Engel), a nonprofit law firm that serves indigent capital defendants in North Carolina, invited Catherine Grosso and Barbara O'Brien to design and conduct two studies—a jury selection study and a capital charging and sentencing study. Their completed research, presented as evidence in North Carolina RJA hearings and published in two law review articles, garnered national attention, and eventually led to the removal of defendants from death row. Their ongoing research supports the trial bar in North Carolina and informs jury selection reforms in Washington and California.

2020 RECIPIENT

Spartan Project SEARCH

- Connie Sung and Marisa Fisher, College of Education
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services
- Ingham Intermediate School District

In 2016, Connie Sung and Marisa Fisher, in collaboration with Ingham ISD and vocational rehabilitation agencies, initiated Spartan Project SEARCH at MSU, a program that helps transition-aged youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) overcome some of the obstacles and anxiety often experienced during the transition to adulthood. To date, Spartan Project SEARCH has provided internship and employment opportunities to over 25 individuals with IDD. The program also involves undergraduate students in a peer mentoring program, provides disability awareness training to units across campus, and provides clinical and research training opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

Distinguished Partnership Award for Community-Engaged Research

2021 RECIPIENT

Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Potter Park Zoo Animal Health Program: A Half-Century of Collaboration in Animal Health Education, Research, and Outreach

- Dalen W. Agnew, College of Veterinary Medicine
- Potter Park Zoo

Since 1974, the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and Potter Park Zoo have collaborated around shared goals of animal health, veterinary and public education, and environmental conservation. Spearheaded by CVM's James Sikarskie and Dalen Agnew, and Potter Park Zoo's Drs. Harrison, Nofs, and Eustace, the program has offered clinical and advanced residency training of veterinary students, K-12 outreach, research, career advising, sharing of medical expertise, and joint participation in seminars, advisory boards, volunteer opportunities, and media communications. This relationship has resulted in MSU-trained zoo veterinarians and professionals distributed around the world and an exemplary zoo in the Greater Lansing Area.

2020 RECIPIENT

Menominee Sustainable Development Institute Partnership

- Kyle Powys Whyte, College of Arts and Letters and College of Agriculture
- Natural Resources Sustainable Development Institute, College of Menominee Nation

This partnership won MSU's 2020 Community Engagement Scholarship Award. See previous description on [page 49](#).

Michigan State University Community Engagement Scholarship Lifetime Achievement Award

Recognizing individuals of outstanding sustained accomplishment in community-engaged scholarship through research, creative activity, teaching, and/or service and practice over the span of a career.



2020 RECIPIENT

Hiram E. Fitzgerald

University Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychology
College of Social Science
Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement Emeritus

Hiram Fitzgerald's tireless dedication to community-engaged scholarship has advanced the University's reputation as a national and international leader in the scholarship of engagement. His major areas of funded research include the study of infant and family development in community contexts, the impact of fathers on early child development, implementation of systemic community models of organizational process and change, the etiology of alcoholism, the digital divide and youth use of technologies, and the scholarship of engagement.

He has published over 237 peer-reviewed journal articles, 96 chapters, 77 books, 147 peer-revised abstracts and 19 technical reports, and served as editor-in-chief of the *Infant Mental Health Journal* and associate editor of *Child Development*, the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, and *Perspectives on Infant Mental Health*. Currently, he is associate editor of *Adversity and Resilience Science: Research and Practice*.

He is past president and executive director of both the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health and the International Association for Infant Mental Health, and for 16 years served as executive director of the World Association for Infant Mental Health.

Professor Fitzgerald has received numerous awards, including the ZERO TO THREE Dolley Madison Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to the Development and Well Being of Very Young Children, the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Selma Fraiberg Award, and the designation of Honorary President from the World Association for Infant Mental Health. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association of Psychological Science, and is an elected member of the Academy of Community Engagement Scholarship and the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame.

Spartan Volunteer Service Awards

A presidential recognition, this award celebrates MSU students' commitment to community-engaged learning and is given to students who volunteer 100 hours or more in one year. Of the 82 students who received the award in 2021 and the 128 students who received the award in 2020, the following students were recognized for having volunteered the most hours each year.

2021 RECIPIENTS

- **Mary Farmer**, Lyman Briggs College
- **Anusha Mamidipaka**, Lyman Briggs College and College of Social Science
- **Christa Schafer**, College of Human Medicine
- **Erika Shiino**, College of Natural Science and Honors College
- **Leigh Anne Tiffany**, College of Communication Arts and Sciences
- **Michelle Zorine**, College of Natural Science

2020 RECIPIENTS

- **Justice K. Bass**, College of Social Science
- **Sydney A. Burch**, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- **Nick Piner**, Lyman Briggs College
- **Kiersten E. Walsworth**, Lyman Briggs College

Graduate Student Award for Community Engagement Scholarship

Recognizing a graduate or graduate professional student for outstanding community-engaged scholarship.

2021 RECIPIENT

Mary K. Kitzmiller, College of Social Science

Juvenile Risk Assessment: Reducing Recidivism and Improving Service Delivery for Justice-Involved Youth in Michigan

In May 2018, Kitzmiller began partnering with the Ingham County 30th Circuit Court as project manager of the Juvenile Risk Assessment Team (JRAT). Her research focuses on growing grassroots support for the integration of evidence-based practices in the evaluation and treatment of justice-involved youth. Kitzmiller works with a team of juvenile court managers, data analysts, clinicians, and MSU students and faculty to provide training, technical assistance, and quality assurance to the juvenile division of the Court. The work with JRAT has led to significant change in the evaluation and treatment of justice-involved youth, both within Ingham County and in court jurisdictions across Michigan.

COMMENDATIONS FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP

- **Shavonna Green**, College of Social Science, for *Criminal Justice Reform: Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration*
- **Will Langford**, College of Education, for *Metro Detroit Youth Arts Competition*
- **Ellie Small** and **Justin Abadejos**, College of Osteopathic Medicine, for *Detroit Street Care*



Awards and Honors



Chelsie Boodoo



Renee Brown



Rebecca Campbell



Jessica S. Saucedo

Chelsie Boodoo has received the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) Disciplinary Leadership Award. The award was created for individuals who demonstrate leadership in their respective disciplines at the local to international levels. Boodoo was one of five awardees chosen for 2020-2021. She is the student digital content creator for the MSU Science Festival and is an MSU biomedical engineering doctoral student, founding president of MSU SciComm, and the host of *The Sci-Files* on Impact 89 FM. She is also an active community member around science communication and community engagement who was named a “Changemaker” by the *State News* and called an Emerging Leader in the City of East Lansing for creating two public science pieces for the community.

Renee Brown, director of the Center for Community Engaged Learning, has received a Community Engagement Professionals Servant Leadership Award from Campus Compact for Michigan. The award honors the contributions of community engagement professionals at Campus Compact for Michigan partner institutions. It acknowledges the critical work of empowering communities and securing community-based, co-educational environments to strengthen students’ confidence, competence, and self-efficacy through modeling, influencing, and/or informing.

The American Council of Education Michigan Women’s Network has honored professor of psychology **Rebecca Campbell** with its 2020 Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award for her groundbreaking work outside the scope of her formal faculty responsibilities. The award honors Michigan women who have distinguished themselves by providing outstanding leadership to women in their institutions, in their profession, and in society at large. Campbell is well known for her research around sexual assault and violence against women and children and the effects of treatment by law enforcement and medical staff on victims’ psychological and physiological well-being. She served as the lead researcher for the National Institute of Justice’s Sexual Assault Kit Action Research Project, which helped Detroit develop evidence-based strategies for testing 11,000 unprocessed rape kits.

Jessica S. Saucedo, a graduate student in ecological/community psychology, received first place for her oral presentation at the MSU Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Student Success Conference. AGEP provides programming and fellowship awards to increase the pool of candidates pursuing master’s or doctoral degrees from underrepresented backgrounds.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT. MSU was again named a **Voter Friendly Campus** for 2021-2022 by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, a U.S.-based student affairs organization boasting more than 13,000 members at 1,400 campuses in 25 countries. MSU has been a Voter Friendly Campus since 2016 by making full use of several strategies to encourage students to participate in elections, including voter vans on Election Day, voter registration at summer orientation programs, and a partnership with Associated Students of MSU. In 2020 student advocates worked closely with local clerks to encourage students to be part of a permanent absentee voter list.

MSU Priorities



Nwando Achebe

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION. **Nwando Achebe**, recently featured in *The Engaged Scholar Magazine* (Vol. 13, 2018), has been named the new associate dean for diversity, equity, and inclusion of the College of Social Science. She is leading college activities that will enhance and maintain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture. Achebe has been a leader on campus when it comes to diversity for many years, as she leads the College of Social Sciences' Dean's Advisory Board on Diversity and Inclusion. She is also the Jack and Margaret Sweet Endowed Professor of History and Faculty Excellence Advocate.

Changes at UOE

University Outreach and Engagement is the new home of the **Office of College Access Initiatives**, a set of pre-college programs designed to assist low-income and first-generation students to graduate high school and enter post-secondary education. The programs—Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, GEAR UP, and the King-Chávez-Parks Initiative—were formerly housed in the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. We welcome **Stephanie Anthony**, director; **Paolo Gordillo**, associate director, and all their staff to UOE.



Stephanie Anthony



Paolo Gordillo



Kathleen Smith has joined UOE as its fiscal and human resources officer. She has worked at MSU for over 30 years and is active on the MI-ACE Women of Color Committee and the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program in Lansing. She holds a master's degree in administration from Central Michigan University.

Lynne J. Devereaux, operations manager for University Outreach and Engagement, is retiring in June 2021. Her duties at UOE have included budget, personnel, and facilities management. She was also a member of several University committees. Devereaux worked at MSU for over 35 years.

Hiram E. Fitzgerald, University Distinguished Professor in the Department of Psychology and former Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement, retired in June 2020. Dr. Fitzgerald's tireless dedication to community-engaged scholarship advanced the University's reputation as a national and international leader in the scholarship of engagement.

JoDee K. Fortino, laboratory manager for Usability/Accessibility Research and Consulting and administrative assistant with the Office of the Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement, is retiring in June 2021.

Carla J. Hills, communications manager for University Outreach and Engagement, retired in March 2021. Hills served as the UOE media contact for press inquiries and was her unit's liaison to University Communications.

John H. Schweitzer, professor with the Center for Community and Economic Development and adjunct professor in the School of Planning, Design, and Construction, is retiring in May 2021. Over a long career, Dr. Schweitzer has used his knowledge of the social science research process to study the impact and effectiveness of educational and social programs and policies.

About University Outreach and Engagement

University Outreach and Engagement (UOE) is composed of a number of coordinated departments. Each department targets a different segment of the mission and provides different services.

Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement

The Office of the APUOE provides budget, personnel, and facilities management to the UOE departments. Laurie Van Egeren, interim associate provost for University Outreach and Engagement, leads the office.

Center for Community and Economic Development

CCED is located in downtown Lansing, Michigan. Its mission is to create, disseminate, and apply knowledge to improve the quality of life for people in distressed urban and regional Michigan communities.

Center for Community Engaged Learning

In partnership with campus and community, CCEL advances community-engaged learning at Michigan State University and prepares students for lifelong civic and social responsibility in an increasingly diverse and complex global society.

College Access Initiatives

CAI provides academic enrichment programs to students in the Lansing area in order to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in post-secondary education. Programs also serve individuals who have dropped out of high school, to age 27.

Communication and Information Technology

CIT offers outreach project consulting and services to MSU faculty and their community partners in website and information systems development, graphic design, publications, event management, and integrated communication. CIT also fosters public access to University expertise and information about university-wide outreach initiatives.

Gifted and Talented Education

GATE is dedicated to promoting differentiated educational programs for students in elementary school, middle school, and high school. Its mission is to provide educational experiences that benefit academically able students intellectually, cultivate social relationships, and encourage a global understanding of their world.

Julian Samora Research Institute

JSRI is committed to the development of Latino human capital, including leadership development, empowerment, and education. JSRI conducts research in Latino communities, transmits its findings to academic, governmental, community, and private sector leaders, and provides technical support to Latino communities.

Michigan State University Detroit Center

The Detroit Center is home to College of Education programs and Detroit internship headquarters; Community Music School Detroit classes, programs, and events; offices for admissions, advancement, and governmental affairs; and research offices for the departments of Geography and Psychology.

Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship

OPES advances MSU's engagement mission by supporting faculty, staff, and students in their community-engaged research and creative activities, teaching, and service. OPES also contributes to the University's reputation as a national and international leader in community engagement.

Usability/Accessibility Research and Consulting

UARC is a worldwide leader in conducting research to improve the experiences of a diverse range of users on websites, mobile apps, software, and other technologies. UARC works with clients from business, government, academia, and community organizations, and collaborates with faculty and researchers from a variety of disciplines.

Wharton Center for Performing Arts

The Wharton Center is committed to presenting all disciplines of the performing arts from around the world. Wharton Center Educational Programs provide arts education opportunities to more than 30,000 school-age children annually.

LAURIE A. VAN EGEREN
Interim Associate Provost
for University Outreach
and Engagement

University Outreach and Engagement

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2021-2022 CALENDAR

MSU Outreach and Engagement

National Alliance for Broader Impacts Summit

May 10-13, 2021 | Virtual
researchinsociety.org

Summer Solstice Jazz Festival

June 18-19, 2021 | East Lansing, Michigan
www.eljazzfest.com

Innovations in Collaborative Modeling: Participatory Modeling Field School

August 16-19, 2021 | Virtual
modeling.engage.msu.edu

Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference

September 13-15, 2021 | Virtual
engagementscholarship.org/conference

Michigan Pre-College and Youth Outreach Conference

October 21-22, 2021 | Virtual
michiganpcc.org

Imagining America National Gathering

October 1-3, 2021 | New Orleans, Louisiana
imaginingamerica.org

Community-Engaged Scholarship Writing Retreat

October 14-15, 2021 | Hastings, Michigan
engage.msu.edu/about/projects/scholarship-of-engagement/community-engaged-scholarship-writing-retreat

UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Intensive on Community-Engaged Scholarship

Held annually in June | Paused for 2021
engage.msu.edu/learn/learning/summer-intensive-on-community-engaged-scholarship

Innovate Michigan! Summit

Held annually in early fall
ced.msu.edu/events/innovate-michigan-summit

International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement Conference

Fall 2021 (date TBD)
researchslce.org/annual-research-conference

MSU Outreach and Engagement Awards Ceremony

Held annually in February
engage.msu.edu/awards/distinguished-partnership-awards

MSU Science Festival

Held annually in April
sciencefestival.msu.edu