SAFE PLACE IMPACTS THOUSANDS OF LIVES, MARKS ANNIVERSARY

Shelter program began 25 years ago as nation’s first

TOM OSWALD //CAMPUS LIFE

A quarter of a century ago, former MSU First Lady Jo-anne McPherson had an idea that would not only change the lives of hundreds if not thousands of individuals and families, but possibly save their lives as well.

The idea was a first-of-its-kind, university-based fac-
cility where students, staff, faculty and their partners experiencing abusive rela-
tionships could seek shelter and get help in navigating the confusing path to figure out options.

The MSU shelter and sup-
port program became MSU Safe Place.

“IT was 1994, and there was a great deal of national atten-
tion being paid to MSU for opening an on-campus do-
mestic violence shelter,” said Holly Rosen, who has served as Safe Place’s director since its founding. “To provide perspective, we opened our shelter doors shortly after the murder of Nicole Brown Simpson. There was extensive media interest due to increased national interest in the subject.”

However, Rosen is quick to point out this homicide was not the reason the shelter came to be. She said Mrs. McPherson got the ball rolling months before the murder of Brown Simpson.

“IN the spring of that year, prior to all the media frenzy,” Joanne McPherson organized campus and community partners to meet and try to evaluate whether a shelter might be needed and utilized on campus,” she said. “We were not expected to open until July or August, but we started getting calls for service requests from campus survivors before then, so we opened early.”

Today, Safe Place’s mission remains unchanged.

“We provide shelter for people who need to escape from their abusive home,” Rosen said. “But we’re not just a shelter. We also provide advocacy and counsel-
sing. In fact, I’d say the majority of our clients use our advocacy services.”

Providing advocacy services means helping clients get the help they need, no mat-
ter how large or small. It can include helping someone get a same-day bus pass to navigating the family court system to helping finance a car repair.

To learn more about MSU Safe Place’s services, visit safeplace.msu.edu, call (517) 355-1100 or email nosbau@msu.edu.

All of Safe Place’s services are confidential and free of charge. Services are even provided to those who may be undecided about whether to leave an abusive relationship.

“Sometimes people don’t really want services until they are at the point of...”

RACE FOR THE PLACE

A fun way to support Safe Place is to participate in the annual Race for the Place 5K. This year’s race is Sun-
day, April 14, beginning at 1 p.m. at IM West. For details, visit safeplace.msu.edu.

WHITMER, COUSINS TO ADDRESS GRADUATES

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer will address the MSU’s ad-
vanced degree graduation ceremony May 3 and re-
ceive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

In addition, former Spartan quarterback Kirk Cousins, now with the NFL’s Minnesota Vikings, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree and speak at the May 3 under-
graduate convocation.

“Michigan State is proud to welcome home two distinguished alumni who personify the cherished Spartan qualities of service and leadership in their respective fields,” said MSU Acting President Seth Silsbe. “Both Gov. Whitmer and Kirk Cous-
ins have earned national acknowledgment of those qualities and are sure to be inspirational speakers for our graduates.”

The convolution will be held at 1 p.m., and the ad-
vanced degree ceremony will be held at 3:30 p.m., both at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center. Commencement ceremo-

ies will be live-streamed at MSU’s commencement website.

For the safety of attendees, no bags or purses will be allowed in Breslin Center for any commencement ceremo-

nies. Cameras and camcorders are permitted, but cases are prohibited. No food or beverages — includ-
ing bottled water — will be allowed. Breslin Center will offer a limited concessions menu during the ceremonies.

All additional prohibited items include noisemakers, selfie sticks, pets, signs and weapons of any form. Bres-

IN Center is a smoke-free...
INNOVATIVE TIMBER PRODUCT TO BE USED IN STEM BUILDING

EILEEN GIANIODIS /SCIENCE & TECH

MSU's future STEM Teaching and Learning Facility will be the first in Michigan to use an innovative wood product, rather than concrete and/or steel, for its load-bearing structure. PHOTO/ COURTESY OF MSU

MSU's future STEM Teaching and Learning Facility will be the first in Michigan to use an innovative wood product, rather than concrete and/or steel, for its load-bearing structure.

IT'S ON US WEEK

STUDENTS, faculty and staff attended a series of events April 1-5 as part of the spring “It's On Us” Week of Action. Activities included an open mic night, trauma-informed yoga and a keynote address by author Gail Stern. Above, Leah Short (right) of MSU’s Prevention, Outreach and Education Office and student Emily Lovasz took part in Start Right Believing Day at Wells Hall, a forum to encourage survivor support. For more information, visit poe.msu.edu.

/ CAMPUS LIFE

STUDENTS, faculty and staff attended a series of events April 1-5 as part of the spring “It's On Us” Week of Action. Activities included an open mic night, trauma-informed yoga and a keynote address by author Gail Stern. Above, Leah Short (right) of MSU’s Prevention, Outreach and Education Office and student Emily Lovasz took part in Start Right Believing Day at Wells Hall, a forum to encourage survivor support. For more information, visit poe.msu.edu.

/ SHELF from pg. 1

leaving,” Rosen said. “But we'll always be there to provide ongoing advocacy and support, no matter the status of the relationship.”

Safe Place care/advocacy coordinator Erica Schmittel said the work she does is beyond rewarding.

“An example of how rewarding it can be is when people reach out for help and see that there are people who care, won't judge them or tell them what to do,” said Schmittel, who has worked with Safe Place since 2001. “Clients often tell us that they feel like they are not the only ones going through relationship violence or stalking, even though it's actually quite common.”

“Working in this field is very challenging,” said Alyssa Baumann, Safe Place’s volunteer and advocacy coordinator. “When our clients face disappointments, we feel those as well. But we also get to see the victories, face and small. It's a great honor to be able to walk alongside survivors, even in the darkest times.”

After all these years, Safe Place remains the only shelter of its kind located on any college campus. “It’s unfortunate, Rosen said, as many presidents and chancellors worry more about a university’s reputation than educational background.”

HOW TO HELP

Financial donations are gratefully accepted, as are donations of in-kind items such as personal hygiene products and used cell phones. A needs list can be found at safeplace.msu.edu.

/ CAMPUS LIFE

SHELTER from pg. 1

leaving,” Rosen said. “But we'll always be there to provide ongoing advocacy and support, no matter the status of the relationship.”

Safe Place care/advocacy coordinator Erica Schmittel said the work she does is beyond rewarding.

“An example of how rewarding it can be is when people reach out for help and see that there are people who care, won't judge them or tell them what to do,” said Schmittel, who has worked with Safe Place since 2001. “Clients often tell us that they feel like they are the only ones going through relationship violence or stalking, even though it's actually quite common.”

“Working in this field is very challenging,” said Alyssa Baumann, Safe Place’s volunteer and advocacy coordinator. “When our clients face disappointments, we feel those as well. But we also get to see the victories, face and small. It's a great honor to be able to walk alongside survivors, even in the darkest times.”

After all these years, Safe Place remains the only shelter of its kind located on any college campus. “It’s unfortunate, Rosen said, as many presidents and chancellors worry more about a university’s reputation than educational background.”

HOW TO HELP

Financial donations are gratefully accepted, as are donations of in-kind items such as personal hygiene products and used cell phones. A needs list can be found at safeplace.msu.edu.

/ CAMPUS LIFE

SHELTER from pg. 1

leaving,” Rosen said. “But we'll always be there to provide ongoing advocacy and support, no matter the status of the relationship.”

Safe Place care/advocacy coordinator Erica Schmittel said the work she does is beyond rewarding.

“An example of how rewarding it can be is when people reach out for help and see that there are people who care, won't judge them or tell them what to do,” said Schmittel, who has worked with Safe Place since 2001. “Clients often tell us that they feel like they are the only ones going through relationship violence or stalking, even though it's actually quite common.”

“Working in this field is very challenging,” said Alyssa Baumann, Safe Place’s volunteer and advocacy coordinator. “When our clients face disappointments, we feel those as well. But we also get to see the victories, face and small. It's a great honor to be able to walk alongside survivors, even in the darkest times.”

After all these years, Safe Place remains the only shelter of its kind located on any college campus. “It’s unfortunate, Rosen said, as many presidents and chancellors worry more about a university’s reputation than educational background.”

HOW TO HELP

Financial donations are gratefully accepted, as are donations of in-kind items such as personal hygiene products and used cell phones. A needs list can be found at safeplace.msu.edu.

/ CAMPUS LIFE

SHELTER from pg. 1

leaving,” Rosen said. “But we'll always be there to provide ongoing advocacy and support, no matter the status of the relationship.”

Safe Place care/advocacy coordinator Erica Schmitter said the work she does is beyond rewarding.

“An example of how rewarding it can be is when people reach out for help and see that there are people who care, won’t judge them or tell them what to do,” said Schmitter, who has worked with Safe Place since 2001. “Clients often tell us that they feel like they are the only ones going through relationship violence or stalking, even though it’s actually quite common.”

“Working in this field is very challenging,” said Alyssa Baumann, Safe Place’s volunteer and advocacy coordinator. “When our clients face disappointments, we feel those as well. But we also get to see the victories, face and small. It’s a great honor to be able to walk alongside survivors, even in the darkest times.”

After all these years, Safe Place remains the only shelter of its kind located on any college campus. “It’s unfortunate, Rosen said, as many presidents and chancellors worry more about a university’s reputation than educational background.”

HOW TO HELP

Financial donations are gratefully accepted, as are donations of in-kind items such as personal hygiene products and used cell phones. A needs list can be found at safeplace.msu.edu.
I have always valued great interpersonal relationships. Whether it is in my personal life or in my collaborations at work, I highly prioritize this core philosophy. Many people have helped me throughout my life, and it is important to pay it forward.

Placing value on relationships has significantly influenced my research direction.

Before coming to MSU, I worked as an undergraduate student researcher at the University of the Philippines Diliman. Host-pathogen interactions fascinated me because of this complex interplay between two organisms, and the myriad mysteries waiting to be uncovered therein.

There, I studied virulence mechanisms of the shrimp pathogen Vibrio. For my master’s and doctoral programs, I continued probing host-pathogen interactions at the University of Guelph in Canada. Here, I functionally characterized key tomato genes involved in resistance to the wilt fungi Verticillium.

After finishing my doctorate in 2016, Sheng-Yang He gave me the wonderful opportunity of working in his group here at MSU. Currently, my research thrust is to investigate the impact of environmental conditions (like elevated temperature) on plant defense responses at the molecular level.

As a postdoc, I am expanding my repertoire of skills and broadening my experience in various plant-pathogen systems. Through MSU, I have been able to endlessly enrich my participation as an active member of the scientific community.

With the new support from NSERC, I can continue doing cutting-edge research and implementing projects of great importance.

I have also been equally passionate about teaching and academic service during my graduate and postdoctoral programs. I formally mentored and supervised several students in Guelph and East Lansing, and feel tremendous pride that they have pursued further studies in graduate programs or have ventured into positions in industry.

I have also taught several undergraduate courses in bioethics at Guelph and recently led a class session in PLB 203 (Biolog of Plants) for Diane Ebert-May. In my interactions with junior students, I am pivotal toward my continued enthusiasm for science and for sharing my knowledge and excitement to the students, engineers, entrepreneurs, and leaders of tomorrow.

My background encompassing the Philippines, Canada, and the United States provided me with a holistic worldview and allowed me the privilege to work with a diverse group of people.

As a molecular biologist interested in inter-organismal interactions, I have likewise placed great meaning and value in my own interactions with people. Human relationships, like host-pathogen systems, can be complicated and may even prove difficult sometimes. However, as the French saying goes, “C’est la vie!”

Christian Danve M. Castroverde

Editor’s Note: Christian Danve M. Castroverde is a postdoctoral scholar in the lab of Sheng-Yang He of the MSU-DOE Plant Research Laboratory and MSU Plant Resilience Institute. Danve Castroverde was recently awarded a postdoctoral fellowship in Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).
2 ADVISERS HONORED WITH NATIONAL AWARD

KENNETH WILLIAMS // ACADEMICS

Ariel Robbins, academic adviser in the College of Natural Science and the Charles Drew Science Scholars Program, and Justin St. Charles, advising director of MSU’s Bro- dy Neighborhood, have been selected as the 2019 Region 5 recipients of the Excellence in Advising awards from the National Academic Advising Association.

“I really love what I do and guiding students through- out their undergraduate experience,” Robbins said. Designed to support stu- dent success, the awards provide opportunities for recognition and profes- sional development. “I am both honored and excited to be receiving this award from such a re- spected body of advisers, counselors, faculty, admin- istrators and students,” St. Charles said.

PROFS HONORED FOR WORK USING DATA TO STUDY LAKES

CAMERON RUDOLPH // ACADEMICS

Patricia Soranno and Kendra Cheruvelil, professors in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, have been named fellows of the Association for the Sciences of Limno- logy and Oceanography, or ASLO.

For more than 60 years, the ASLO has sought to advance aquatic science ed- ucation, research and public outreach.

Alongside Soranno and Cheruvelil, 18 other scientists were honored by the ASLO Fellows program, which began in 2015 to recognize members of the association who have provided exce- ptional contributions to ASLO publications, meetings and other activities.

“It is an honor to be recog- nized by my professional society that I have been a member of since graduate school and that has con- tributed much to my career as an aquatic scientist,” Soranno said.

Soranno and Cheruvelil are co-directors of the Data In- tensive Landscape Limnol- ogy Lab at MSU. The lab is focused on studying inland lakes and their features on a macroscale, including the relationships between freshwater, landscape and human systems. Soranno and Cheruvelil promote collaborative science to solve large-scale problems, studying thousands of lakes and leading a team of inter- disciplinary researchers.

While ecologists have decades’ worth of data, to truly understand how these ecosystems are changing broadly, researchers need to work together to bring all of these data together. The team approach to data collection has led to leaps in understanding the physical and biological character- istics of freshwater eco- systems in and around the Great Lakes region.

ON THE WEB

For more information on the Data Intensive Landscape Limnology Lab at MSU, visit bigdatalimno.org.

WHY AMERICANS MIGHT NEVER NOTICE CLIMATE CHANGE’S HOTTER WEATHER

Aaron McCright, a sociology professor at Michigan State University who has studied public understanding of climate change, told me he is uncomfortable analyzing Twitter data to measure changing attitudes on climate change. Ultimately, only a computer program is up to the task of ana- lyzing 2.1 billion tweets — and even then, comput- er programs make basic mistakes, get confused and don’t recognize sarcasm.

THE ATLANTIC
go.msu.edu/gO9