CAMPUS EMBRACES STEM FUTURE

Leaders to break ground on $100M teaching facility at former power plant site

THE NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART STEM Teaching and Learning Facility will be one more reason why students should choose to study at MSU,” MSU Interim President John Engler said. “This amazing new facility will not only leverage the research being conducted at MSU on STEM teaching and learning, but also will facilitate scientific interactions at the undergraduate student level and enhance the university’s ability to successfully compete for and retain talented students.”

Located at Red Cedar Road and Shaw Lane, the 117,000-square-foot structure will house undergraduate teaching laboratories, project laboratories and breakout space. Photographs courtesy of IPF.

New exhibit at Michigan State University tells the decades-long tale of “Africa in mid-Michigan.”

As part of the university’s Year of Global Africa, a new exhibit at the MSU Main Library, “Nsukka to Now: The History of African Studies at MSU” pays homage to the rich history of African Studies at Michigan State.

“As we celebrate MSU’s history of connection with our many partners across Africa and throughout the African diaspora, we thought it was an excellent opportunity to tell the history of those connections through materials we hold in our special collections,” said Jessica Achberger, African Studies librarian and adjunct assistant professor of history.

In the late-1950s, under President John Hannah, MSU faculty and their families traveled to Nigeria to help establish the nation’s first indigenous university. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria’s then-governor, reached out to Hannah in search of a partner to build what he called a “people’s university.” With support from USAID, MSU helped establish and build curriculum for University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Africa’s first land-grant university, which opened in 1960.

Many of the pieces in the exhibit are items from collections held in MSU Library.
TRUSTEES SELECT MEMBERS FOR PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

In another step forward in the selection of a new MSU president, the Board of Trustees has appointed 19 members to the presidential search committee. “Our commitment to the university community was to identify a search committee that is inclusive, diverse and representative of the broader MSU stakeholders, including students, staff, faculty, deans and alumni,” and we have done that,” said Board Trustee Dianne Byrum, who serves as the presidential search committee co-chair.

The committee will have a diverse group of nine women and 10 men, a representative cross-section of the colleges and members with unique backgrounds and experiences. “We approached organizing the search committee as one Spartan community and sought input from students, faculty, staff and the broader MSU community,” said Trustee Melanie Foster, who serves as the other co-chair. Members of the search committee represent alumni from the private sector, Associated Students of MSU, Athletic Council; Council of Graduate Students; deans; Faculty Senate, distinguished professors and endowed chairs; labor leaders and staff and trustees.

Search committee members will participate in campus listening sessions and provide input on the selection of a search firm. Members will also help compile the characteristics and qualities desired in MSU’s next president and provide input on the position description, as well as screen and interview applicants to advance a pool of qualified candidates to the Board of Trustees for further consideration.

INSIDEMSU STAFF // ADMINISTRATION

Committee includes alumni, students, faculty, staff

INSIDEMSU

ON THE WEB

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH: For updates about the search process, including biographies of all 19 committee members and a search timeline, go to msu.edu/presidentialsearch.

The announcement of the search committee members follows a request for proposals for a presidential search firm, announcement of the timeline to hire MSU’s 21st president and the selection of Teresa A. Sullivan, retired president of University of Virginia, to advise on the presidential search process.

It is the goal of the Board of Trustees to have a new president announced not later than June 2019.

4,000 TOUR FRIB, NSCL DURING OPEN HOUSE

The six-hour open house, made possible by 150 volunteers, offered an array of hands-on activities and demonstrations related to FRIB and NSCL research. PHOTO/THOMAS BAUMANN, NSCL

KAREN KING // RESEARCH

More than 4,000 members of the public toured the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams and National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory during an open house on Aug. 18. The event included activities, demonstrations, presentations and tours that allowed attendees to learn more about a world-leading science facility in operation (NSCL) and one in the making (FRIB).

The six-hour open house, made possible by 150 volunteers, offered an array of experiences for all ages. Tours were held in the operational areas in NSCL that will be used in FRIB experiments, and visitors explored the FRIB linear accelerator under construction.

Hands-on activities and demonstrations showed the fields of FRIB and NSCL research, including a 3D model of the FRIB facility under construction, the “Isotoplasma” video game, coloring pages and activity sheets related to nuclear astrophysics.

MSU is establishing FRIB as a scientific user facility for the Office of Nuclear Physics in the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Science. Operation of NSCL is supported by the Physics Division of the National Science Foundation.

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JENNIFER OLSON: TECH FOR TANZANIA

Jennifer Olson is an associate professor in the Department of Media and Information in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. Olson has more than 15 years of experience living and working in Africa, including research in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

Recently, she traveled to Morogoro, Tanzania to lead a joint College of Engineering and College of Communication Arts and Sciences education abroad service-learning program with Erik Goodman from the College of Engineering.

The program, Information and Communication Technology for Development in Tanzania, is a month-long course that works with five local schools and provides computers, internet connection and training for Tanzanian teachers and students in how to use the computers for teaching and learning. The MSU students do individual projects as well as help out with the computer labs and training. Besides working with the schools, the students visit wildlife parks and get to know a bit of the language, history and culture of Tanzania. According to Olson, the program has made a huge difference in the lives of the Tanzanians and the MSU students.

As part of an MSU Education Abroad service-learning program with Jennifer Olson of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, students had the opportunity not only to learn first-hand about the culture of Tanzania (above) but also to help renovate computer labs and classrooms (right).

Professor aids schools with digital support

Jennifer Olson (fourth from the left, in the blue shirt) is an associate professor in the Department of Media and Information in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. Recently, she traveled to Morogoro, Tanzania to lead a joint College of Engineering and College of Communication Arts and Sciences education abroad service-learning program with Erik Goodman from the College of Engineering.

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CAMPUS EVENTS

Includes events happening during the next two weeks. More campus events can be found online at events.msu.edu

EDUCATION ABROAD GETS NEW DIRECTOR

Rachel Warner //INTERNATIONAL

International Studies and Programs at Michigan State University has appointed Opat Leesman Bartzis as executive director of education abroad, effective Sept. 24. Bartzis will direct MSU’s Office for Education Abroad and provide strategic leadership to the university related to education abroad and international exchange programs.

MSU is an international leader for education abroad, offering more than 275 academic programs in 60 countries, on all continents. MSU has been ranked in the top 10 nationally for education abroad participation for more than a decade.

Bartzis comes to MSU with more than two decades of experience in education abroad as well as three years of experience as a foreign language teacher of German and Russian. She is currently the vice president for academic affairs at the Institutes for Study Abroad, Butler University, one of the nation’s largest and oldest study abroad program providers.
Catherine Ryu, MSU associate professor of Japanese literature and culture, accepted the prestigious 2018 Esperanto “Access to Language Education” Award presented by CALICO or Computer Assisted Language Consortium, the Esperanto Studies Foundation and Lernu.net for her online database of the Mandarin language, Tone Perfect.

Commercialization of this technology, fully realized in the educational app Picky Birds, is expected to begin as soon as fall 2018. The app and database come from Ryu’s Tone Perception and Efficacy Study, where Ryu and team studied the perception of tonal differences.

“Conditional transfer office can maximize access to resources developed at MSU,” Ryu’s research includes Japanese literature, Heian narratives, gender studies, tanzeichi studies, global studies and game studies. Tone Perfect includes the full catalog of monosyllabic sounds in Mandarin Chinese (410 altogether) in four classic Mandarin tones, equating to a library of 1,640 tones in female and male voices. Ryu has said the goal of the app is to help create an avenue for native English speakers who do not possess the “infrastructure in their brains” to perceive the tonal complexities of Mandarin to learn the language better and create those “neural pathways.” Picky Birds was developed by College of Arts and Letters faculty and staff, and its media team includes members of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences.

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