NEW DEPT. WILL FOCUS ON AFRICAN STUDIES

KIM PDPIOLEK // ACADEMICS

The MSU Board of Trustees has approved the establishment of a Department of African-American and African Studies, which will be part of the College of Arts and Letters.

The new department will support the work of students, faculty and staff associated with the existing African-American and African Studies, or AAAS, program and will help re-establish MSU’s position as a national leader in Black and African studies.

“Establishing a Department of African-American and African Studies has long been the goal of the unit since its founding,” said Glenn Chambers, associate professor and director of the African-American and African Studies program. “I’m elated that the faculty, students and staff all the units in the College of Arts and Letters get to see the fruition of our efforts. What has transpired today has truly been a collaborative effort and all involved should be proud.”

The board voted on Feb. 15 to support the creation of the new department. The emphasis on gender and sexuality studies and critical feminist approaches as they relate to African peoples and African-descended peoples — which are major areas of study for the department — are lacking at other higher education institutions and will position MSU to be a leader in the discipline, said Christopher P. Long, dean of the College of Arts and Letters.

“This is a landmark moment for the college and university,” Long said. “We are putting our commitment to equity into practice by creating a department that will support the intellectual lives of scholars and students in African-American and African studies for generations to come.”

A major goal of the new department is to establish an undergraduate major within the next five years. The bachelor’s degree in AAAS will provide opportunities for graduate students in AAAS to acquire much-needed experience in teaching their discipline. The AAAS undergraduate minor, which recently was revised to streamline courses and allow more course options for minors in the College of Arts and Letters and the College of Social Science, will continue to be offered with no changes anticipated. Also, no changes are anticipated to the AAAS offerings of the graduate program, but the new department will help re-establish the AAAS Ph.D. program as a national and international leader in the field.

FACULTY DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY TOOL
This resource page provides a checklist of accessibility questions you should ask before adopting digital content.
go.msu.edu/rbha

LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE AVAILABLE
Optional benefit available to eligible employees and their families to help with unexpected life events.
go.msu.edu/24h

GRIEVANCE OFFICIAL NAMED | 2
PROF HONORED FOR WORK WITH YOUTH | 3
CHECK OUT CAMPUS EVENTS | 4
NEW FACULTY RESEARCH SITES | 4

INITIATIVE LINKS ADVOCATE WITH POLICY MAKERS

MADDIE CURLEY // GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

As a public university, MSU is funded in part by the state of Michigan, with roughly 20 percent of its operational budget costs supported by state appropriations. Historically, state appropriations served as the primary funding line for public universities. In 1986, MSU received more than 58 percent of its operational budget from the state. However, declining state support for higher education has been the trend for the past several decades and has a direct impact on university operations.

Governor Gretchen Whitmer, an MSU alumnus, proposed a 3 percent increase education to their representatives. Higher education has been the trending facts, resources and opportunities, sources provided through the Spartan Advocate initiative.

“Now the issue top of mind for state officials, who are also alumni, brokered at Bridy Square with the MSU Government Relations team and discussed the governor’s proposed budget, while also offering support from the university on various legislative committees through research and expertise.”

The priority is to provide support and assistance for the survivors as soon as possible. Setting up an intermediate fund means survivors can get the help they need now while we work to establish a permanent solution,” said MSU Board of Trustees Chairperson Dianne Byrum. “We feel we learned a great deal since the identification of alleged fraud in the original fund and are confident we can move forward with an intermediate fund in a manner that supports survivors while reducing the risk of fraud.”

Commonwealth Mediation & Conciliation Inc. is again serving as the administrator for the intermediate fund; however, the team staffing the fund is different. In addition, for this fund, providers are required to sign an affidavit stating they are located in the state where they do business and that the treatment was related to Nassar’s abuse.

The eligibility for the intermediate fund is the same as the eligibility for the original Healing Assistance Fund. It is available to MSU health clinic patients and student-athletes whom Nassar abused, as well as the parents of these victims. Status in civil law-suits against MSU is not a determining factor.

More information about intermediate fund eligibility and submitting claims to Commonwealth Mediation & Conciliation, Inc. is available on the Our Commitment website.

The MSU Police Department’s investigation into the reported fraud in the original Healing Assistance Fund continues.
EXECUTIVE CHEF EARNS TOP DESIGNATION

The MSU-Fraunhofer Center for Coatings and Diamond Technologies is to illustrate the university’s developing a scalable treatment option for PFAS-contaminated wastewater.

The MI Spartan Impact initiative, a data program used to identify high-impact activities that improve the university experience and community impact, is being showcased.

“Many of the audiences we interact with want to know what’s going on with the university, but find it difficult because the geographical distance between northeast Michigan and East Lansing,” she said. “Anytime we can extend connections with campus and provide additional resources to our staff, it’s proven to be of value for education.”

The Mi Spartan Impact initiative, a data program used to illustrate the university’s impact on the statewide economy, is part of the Spartan Advocate program. Mi Spartan Impact is used largely to encourage legislators to make decisions with higher education and MSU’s land-grant mission in mind. In 2018 alone, the university contributed to $5.8 billion in total economic impact statewide.

“I encourage all my district staff to sign up for this program,” Warner added. “They have expedited the process of writing to their local representatives and made it easy to stay on the know on issues we face in higher education.”

Jeremy Reuter, director for statewide advocacy for MSU, oversees the Spartan Advocacy initiative and its database of 1,500 highly engaged advocates. Reuter keeps advocates in the loop through a series of email and social media communications, but he plans to expand efforts by connecting with departments on campus and alumni groups across the state.

“From a government relations perspective, campus is very strategically poised,” he said. “Because we’re only a few miles away from the Capitol, it’s easier to host state officials and encourage advocacy from the Spartan community as a whole.”

At the Spartan Caucus on March 5, alumni legislators were invited to campus to dine with MSU’s Government Relations team at Brody Square. The governor’s proposed budget was a topic of discussion along with partnerships between MSU and the state and ways MSU can help support various legislative committees through research and expertise.

“The face time our team gets with legislators is important to keeping advocates informed on the current priorities,” Reuter added. “It’s also a great opportunity to connect research and expertise on campus with the various committees our Spartan Caucus legislators serve.”

David Bertram, associate vice president for State Relations, sees polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS,

being an immediate topic that MSU will be working with the legislature on in the coming year, as it’s been identified as a priority by Whitmer and others. PFAS are a group of harmful man-made chemicals that are very persistent in the environment and in the human body. PFAS have been discovered in several water sources across the state.

“MSU is poised to provide significant research and remediation resources in partnership with the state to address this PFAS issue,” Bertram said.

Now is a great time to become a Spartan Advocate, according to Reuter; there are 28 elected officials currently serving in Michigan’s 100th Legislature. Anyone with an interest in advocating for MSU and higher education can become a Spartan Advocate at mispartanimpact.msu.edu. You can also explore the MI Spartan Impact data and read stories about Spartans making a difference across the state.

African Advocates Engaged in Advocacy Initiative

“MSU already has tremendous faculty and students with research and interests in the focus areas of the new department, and we’re looking forward to continuing this work,” said Kristin Donalson, associate professor of sociology, who has been leading the AAAS vision process, bringing interested faculty together to imagine and contribute to the new department. “Having official department status means greater support for research, teaching and engagement beyond the campus that promises to be transformative.”

Focusing on the study and production of knowledge of Africa and the African Diaspora, especially in the United States, the Caribbean and Latin America, the new department will bring together the expertise of regional African-American and African-descended populations and themes across the Midwest and/or the Upper Midwest into dialogue with the broader African Diaspora.

“We must embrace the intellectual substance of African-American and African studies by building curriculum and support- ing an organizational structure that conveys with clarity and urgency, how important Black and African studies is to Michigan, from Flint to Muskegon, from Lansing to Detroit, to the United States to Africa and the broad African Diaspora,” Long said.

The current AAAS program at MSU was founded in 2002.

>> ADVOCATES from pg. 1

>> AFRICAN from pg. 1
Editor's note: Renowned sociologist Carl Taylor is being honored by the university with the MSU Community Engagement Scholarship Lifetime Achievement Award. He recently discussed his work with Russ White for the MSU Today podcast. Listen to the full program at go.msu.edu/84H.

The Community Engagement Scholarship Lifetime Achievement Award program was established to provide university-wide recognition for senior faculty members of outstanding sustained accomplishment in community-engaged scholarship through research, creative activities, teaching, service and practice. Due to the highly selective nature of this recognition, it is intended to be conferred rarely, by a truly exemplary body of work.

Given Carl Taylor's long years of collaboration and leadership designed to improve community life, MSU is honored to present him with the award.

“I’m humbled,” said Taylor, whose research is focused on reducing violence among urban youth. His work has evolved over the years. “It focused in the beginning on urban America, and in particular, Detroit,” Taylor says. “That means we’re looking at post-industrial America, post-industrial Detroit. And it’s a very conflicted viewpoint, my work is. It started with me looking at reality — I don’t like the word ‘inner city’ because Detroit is designed funny — but it definitely is the urban location and urban schools. We’re never looking at the dissolution — I think, very strongly — of public education. We’re looking at the loss of employment and the introduction of artificial intelligence. More importantly, I think we have ignored, or not put enough focus on, the disintegration of the American family in different communities, in particular the black community.

Taylor discussed the challenges facing Detroit, other urban centers and the entire nation. “And it brought the profound impact former MSU president Clifton Wharton had on him. Taylor was part of Wharton’s Presidential Fellows Program at MSU.

“That was the pivotal turn in my very young career,” he said.

Taylor said students have changed over the years. “One of my major pro-tests as a professor in the classroom — and it’s the whole society — is we don’t read newspapers. How we get our information has changed. I think that’s hurt us tremendously. I see it in the students. We used to have more contact of one on one, or even collectively, with human beings.”

Taylor, though, is somewhat optimistic about the future as he proposes solutions. “I think our two greatest challenges are, first family. The reality is that we need to come together with agreeable, functional, basic training and understanding. That’s what we have to use.

“Families are the foundation for everything else. I also think that more public education is important. And public education goes beyond the bricks and mortar. Public education is in our spiritual faith-based institutions, but is also about the atmosphere that we create.”

MSU Today airs Sunday afternoons at 4 p.m. on 105.1-FM and AM-870.

RUSS WHITE // ACADEMICS

MARCH 13 // SPEAKING TRUTH AND ACTING WITH INTEGRITY: The Office for Inclusion and Interdisciplinary Initiatives is hosting a forum and Q & A on the American Council of Education Report regarding confronting challenges of campus racial climate from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the Kellogg Center Auditorium. Learn more at go.msu.edu/3MH.

MARCH 13 // ROADMAP TO RETIREMENT: Any faculty or staff who plans to retire within a year or two should consider attending this free half-day workshop. The class covers a range of topics critical to a successful retirement. Two sessions will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m. in Robert Building, Suite 10. Learn more at go.msu.edu/WHH.

MARCH 14 // STUDIO (IN)PROCESS: Drop by the MSU Broad on Thursday evenings from 6 to 9 p.m. to experiment with different art materials and processes in this hands-on art-making experience. $8 at the door gets you the material and guidance to start creating. Learn more at go.msu.edu/WHH.

MARCH 20 // INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICA- TION SKILLS FOR A GLOBALIZED WORLD: In this workshop, sources of cultural misunderstandings and strategies for overcoming them in academic settings will be discussed. The seminar will be held from 11:30 to 2 p.m. in C304 Snyder Phillips. Learn more and register at go.msu.edu/7MH.

MARCH 20 // ORCHESTRA AND JAZZ ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE: Consider a leading improviser on the trombone, Steve Davis has a lyrical, hard-swinging style that has earned him critical acclaim since the 1990s. Reserve seating: $70 for adults, $55 for seniors, $7 for students and those under age 18. Learn more and buy tickets at go.msu.edu/WHH.

MARCH 20 // BIRDS OF PREY VIEW: Meet the VSU Kellogg Bird Sanctuary to see the resident red-tailed hawk, barred owl and great horned owl up close. Learn about their unique characteristics that make them unique hunting and flying machines. Costs to attend vary. Learn more at go.msu.edu/WHH.

APRIL 1 // ADVANCEING SCIENCE-BASED SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF CHEMICALS: Join the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, the College of Medicine and MSU’s Center for Integrative and Functional Genomics to celebrate the career of Jay Goodman. This free symposium features six speakers on a variety of topics, and is being held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Radiology Auditorium. Learn more at go.msu.edu/WHH.

APRIL 3 // NIGHT AT THE MUSEUMS: Visit the MSU Museum and the Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum from 5:30 to 8 p.m. for an evening of family-friendly, hands-on learning as part of the MSU/Edible Mural. Unravel the mysteries of our world through the investigative lenses of art, history and science. Visit go.msu.edu/WHH for more information.

APRIL 14 // RACE FOR THE PLACE 5K WALK/ RUN: The Race for the Place supports MSU Safe Place, a program that addresses relationship violence and stalking. This is a fun-filled family event, with events for kids of all ages. Early registration ends March 29. Sign up and learn more at go.msu.edu/WHH.
RESEARCH WEBSITES SERVE AS RESOURCE FOR FACULTY

SOCIAL SCIENCE MAKES NEW HIRES AS PART OF RESEARCH INITIATIVE

TRUMP’S CLIMATE EXPERT IS WRONG: THE WORLD’S PLANTS DON’T NEED MORE CO₂

Asil Jain, a professor of computer science at Michigan State University and expert in bio-metrics, says that the sound waves are typically around 200 kilohertz when measuring something like a fingerprint. At higher frequencies, ultrasonic testing is used in medicine (you’ve heard of ultrasound, no doubt), or to look for a flaw inside a metal object, like an airplane wing. Jain says.

In this case, the sensor is using sound waves to measure something it doesn’t have to penetrate deeply: your fingerprint. Samsung says that the sensor can see your print in three dimensions. “Three-dimensional simply means that they can extract from the fingerprint,” Anil Jain, professor of computer science at Michigan State University, said. “The more information you extract from the fingerprint, the better you are able to authenticate someone.”

WANT LOVE? SWIPE RIGHT FOR ‘NICE’ AND LEFT FOR ‘NEUROTIC’

Gabriel Sanchez holds a monkeyface problem white discussing ecological policy with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band on the California coast. PHOTO/COURTESY OF THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Gabriel Sanchez, professor of political science at the University of California at Los Angeles, says that his research interests revolve around understanding how identity informs formal politics. “The College of Social Science’s strategic priority has been the study of identity, attitudes and inequality, in both domestic and international contexts,” Sanchez said. “The more information we have on identity, the better we understand how it shapes social policies.”

HOW THE SAMSUNG GALAXY S10’S COOL NEW FINGERPRINT SENSOR WORKS

Anil Jain, a professor of computer science at Michigan State University and expert in bio-metrics, says that the sound waves are typically around 200 kilohertz when measuring something like a fingerprint. At higher frequencies, ultrasonic testing is used in medicine (you’ve heard of ultrasound, no doubt), or to look for a flaw inside a metal object, like an airplane wing. Jain says.

In this case, the sensor is using sound waves to measure something it doesn’t have to penetrate deeply: your fingerprint. Samsung says that the sensor can see your print in three dimensions. “Three-dimensional simply means that they can look at the depth of the ridges and valleys,” Jain says.

POPULAR SCIENCE

go.msu.edu/LMH

INSIDE MSU STAFF //ADVANCEMENT

Two new online resources for research faculty, MSU Scholars and Faculty In-sight, are now live.

MSU Scholars, a public-facing site, showcases MSU faculty scholarly activity, including information on both tenure-system and fixed-term faculty and other scholars.

The site includes detailed profiles, displaying scholarly activity (publications, grants, conference pro-ceedings, books, scholarly awards and patents). Users can search for experts at MSU on any given re-search topic entered. The “Collaborations” section displays the network of colleagues with whom the given scholar has worked on publications and/or grants.

It can be found at scholars.msu.edu. Faculty Insight is an internal-facing site accessible via MSU NetID that displays granting opportunities as well as experts at MSU who may be available to collaborate.

Users can search for grant opportunities specific to their own research interests or any topic of their choosing. Such opportunities include not only federal but also industry and foundation grants. Each funding opportunity displays the name of the opportunity and funding agency, dollar amount, application instruc-tions and deadline, URL to the grant website and a list of similar opportunities.

“A Collaborations” section displays the network of colleagues with whom the given scholar has worked on publications and/or grants.

It can be found at go.msu.edu/tMH. Faculty can make edits to their individual profiles, such as adding a scholarly activity, or make competitive opportunities available. The edits will populate both websites.

Questions regarding either website can go to Kyle Sweitzer in the Office of Planning and Budgets, at ksw@msu.edu.

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REBECCA JENSEN //RESEARCH

Four new research associ-ates have been hired in the College of Social Science as part of the Dean’s Research Associate Program, estab-lished in 2018 as a major college initiative aimed at promoting an inclusive scholarly environment.

The four associates have a minimal teaching load while being mentored and sup-ported and participating in the Dean’s Research Asso-ciate Development Program, with the goal of a possible transition into tenure-sys-tem positions at MSU after two years of productivity.

Nwando Achebe, the Jack and Margaret Swain Endowed Professor of History and the Faculty Excellence Advancement for the college, is leading the initiative.

“The College of Social Science’s strategic priority of broadening opportunities is coming, deriving strength from a plurality of identities and lived experiences is embodied in the scholar contributions of these four talent-ed social scientists,” Achebe says.

The college is com-mitting significant resources to support the program, including salaries, research and travel space and faculty time in mentoring the individuals. The scholars are:

• Monique D. A. Kelly, Department of Sociology, is currently a PhD candidate in the Sociology Department at the University of California Irvine. Her research focuses on racial and ethnic identi-ties, attitudes and inequality, as well as on immigration processes connected to those social dynamics.

• Danielle Lemi, Department of Political Science, is a postdoctor-al fellow in Latinx Pub-lic Policy at the Latino Center for Leadership Development and the John E. Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Meth-odist University in Dallas, where she teaches American politics. Her current research interests revolve around understanding how identity informs formal politics.

• Nakia Parker, Department of History, is a doctoral candi-date in the Department of History at the University of Texas at Austin. Her project, “Fails of Fear and Freedom: Slavery, Migration, and Emancipation in the Indian Territory Border-lands, 1830–1897,” exam-ines the forced migrations, resettlement patterns and labor practices of people of African and black Indian de-scent enslaved in Choctaw and Chickasaw communities.

• Gabriel Sanchez, Depart-ment of Anthropology, is an indigenous anthropologist completing his doctorate at the University of Califor-nia, Berkeley. His research focuses on immigration, deriving strength from a plurality of identities and lived experiences is embodied in the scholar contributions of these four talent-ed social scientists,” Achebe says.

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INSIDE MSU //MEMORIAM

NORMALEE FISHER

J. RAY GILLESPIE

WILMA GILLESPIE

HELEN HEAD
Helen Head, College of Osteopathic Medicine Dean’s Office administrator, died Jan. 22. Head joined the staff in 1965 and retiring in 1989.

EVELYN HOWE

ROBERT HUBBARD
Robert Hubbard, College of Engineering pro-fessor, died Feb. 5. Hubbard joined the staff in 1977 and retired in 2006.

MYRON KELSEY

JOSEPH KUSZAI JR.

BRUCE MITCHELL
Bruce Mitchell, associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education, died Jan. 11. Mitchell joined the staff in 1972 and retired in 2002.

A new online resource for research faculty, MSU Scholars and Faculty Insight, is now live.

MSU Scholars, a public-facing site, showcases MSU faculty scholarly activity, including information on both tenure-system and fixed-term faculty and other scholars.

The site includes detailed profiles, displaying scholarly activity (publications, grants, conference pro-ceedings, books, scholarly awards and patents).

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