MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SUSTAINABILITY



2025

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Cultivating Change

Working together for a more sustainable MSU

Sustainability is not the work of a single office, department, or initiative. It is advanced every day by Spartans across Michigan State University through teaching, research, operations, outreach, and student engagement.

Like any thriving ecosystem, sustainability depends on the ability to adapt, grow, and renew. In 2025, the university continued to navigate change while strengthening the partnerships, programs, and practices that support long-term progress.

This report highlights both the accomplishments of the past year and the groundwork being laid for continued growth in the years ahead.





Spartan Pride

28 2025 QS Sustainability Ranking

61 2025 THE Impact Rankings

Gold-Level Bicycle Friendly University

Tree Campus Higher Education

Bee Campus USA Affiliate

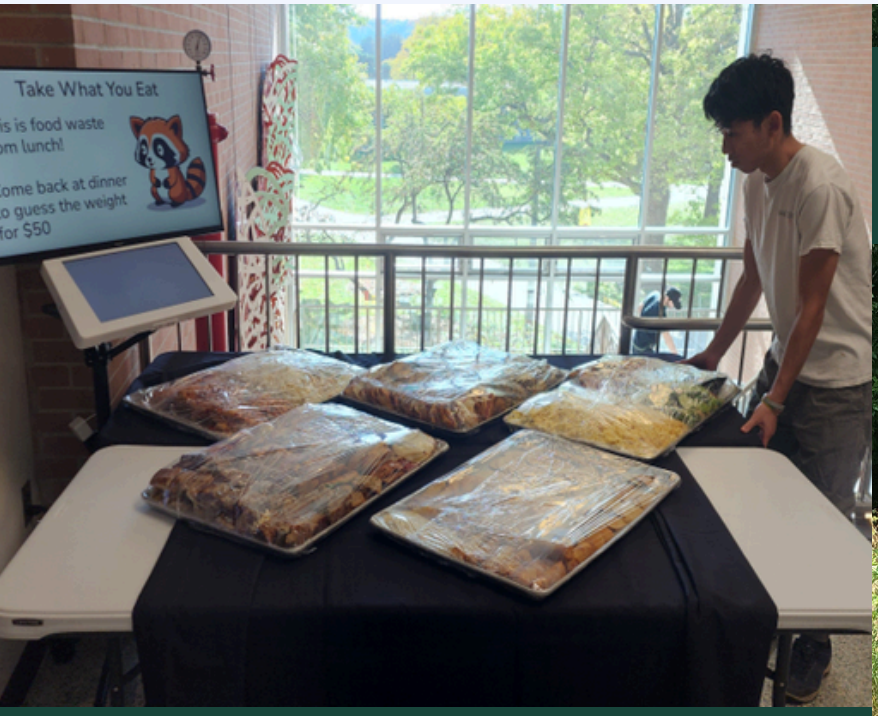
Year in Review: 2025 Highlights

Sustainability Systems Think Tank

In summer 2025, the MSU Office of the Executive Vice President for Administration launched the Sustainability Systems Think Tank to inform the university's long-term sustainability strategy and strengthen MSU's commitment to embedding sustainability across teaching, research, operations, and outreach. During the fall, the think tank gathered insights through a horizon scan, materiality assessment, peer benchmarking and stakeholder engagement. Through surveys and interviews over 1,500 students, staff, faculty, and community members shared their perspectives on sustainability priorities. A final report of findings will be shared in 2026.



Operational Excellence



MSU Culinary Services launched a pilot program in Akers and Landon Dining Halls to reduce food waste. Using "Raccoon Eyes" software, Culinary Services is able to assess post-consumer food waste and improve menu planning.

MSU continues to expand pollinator habitat on campus. IPF and campus partners converted over 20 acres of turf grass to pollinator habitat in 2025.



Temperature Set Point Policy

MSU adopted a temperature set point policy that established 68F as the set point during the heating season and 75F during the cooling season for all general office spaces, classrooms, and common areas on the East Lansing campus. The policy, which went into effect in September 2025, supports the university's long-term sustainability goals and promotes fiscal stewardship. This change is expected to reduce energy use and save roughly $400,000 in annual utility costs.

Shared Vehicle Pooling Program

A new shared vehicle pooling program was rolled out to Infrastructure Planning and Facilities, the Department of Policy and Public Safety, Informational Technology, and Athletics in 2025 with plans to roll it out to the rest of campus in 2026. Any university-owned or Motor Pool leased vehicle that is driven less than 2,000 miles per year must enroll in the program, allowing it to be shared across multiple departments. This will help optimize resources for the university fleet.

Health Promoting Campus

MSU Adopts the Okanagan Charter

In February 2025, MSU joined three other U.S. universities in adopting the Okanagan Charter, which calls for embedding health and well-being into all facets and functions of the university and demonstrate leadership and partnership in health promotion. The Charter acknowledges the interconnected nature of health and sustainability: healthy people and a healthy planet are inextricably linked.

To further MSU's commitment as a health promoting institution, University Health and Well-Being (UHW) unveiled the University Health and Well-Being Plan after engaging over 5,000 stakeholders across campus. The plan will guide health promotion strategy for the next five years. In addition, UHW launched the Spartan Well-Being Collective to help implement and support the plan.

For further details, visit uhw.msu.edu.

MSU's W. J. Beal Botanical Garden is also furthering health promotion at MSU, expanding its Nurture Your Roots well-being offerings. In addition, in 2025, the garden became the first and only botanical garden in Michigan to earn accreditation from Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), demonstrating its commitment to plant conservation.





The People Behind the Progress

Behind every sustainability achievement are employees working to make MSU a more resilient, efficient, and engaged campus. Spartans are volunteering, serving on committees, supporting student learning, improving operations, and identifying new opportunities for impact. From Eco Ambassadors and Waste Warriors to faculty leading campus-based capstone projects and employees championing sustainability within their units, these efforts demonstrate how all Spartans play a role and can contribute to lasting institutional change.





Engagement Highlights

Multiple campus partners help campus and the community embrace what it means to Be Spartan Green. The university's engagement efforts play a key role in helping foster a culture of sustainability.

By the numbers

2,950
Spartans reached through campus sustainability programs and events

109
Tours of campus sustainability resources like the Surplus Store and Recycling Center or Student Organic Farm

23
Eco Reps helping Spartans living on campus embrace sustainable practices

3,622
lbs of clothes distributed through Surplus Store and Recycling Center's student swap days

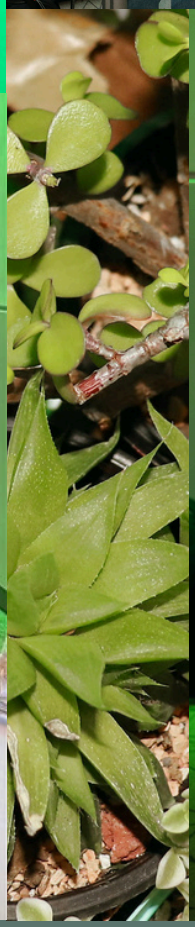
Campus Sustainability Resource Fair

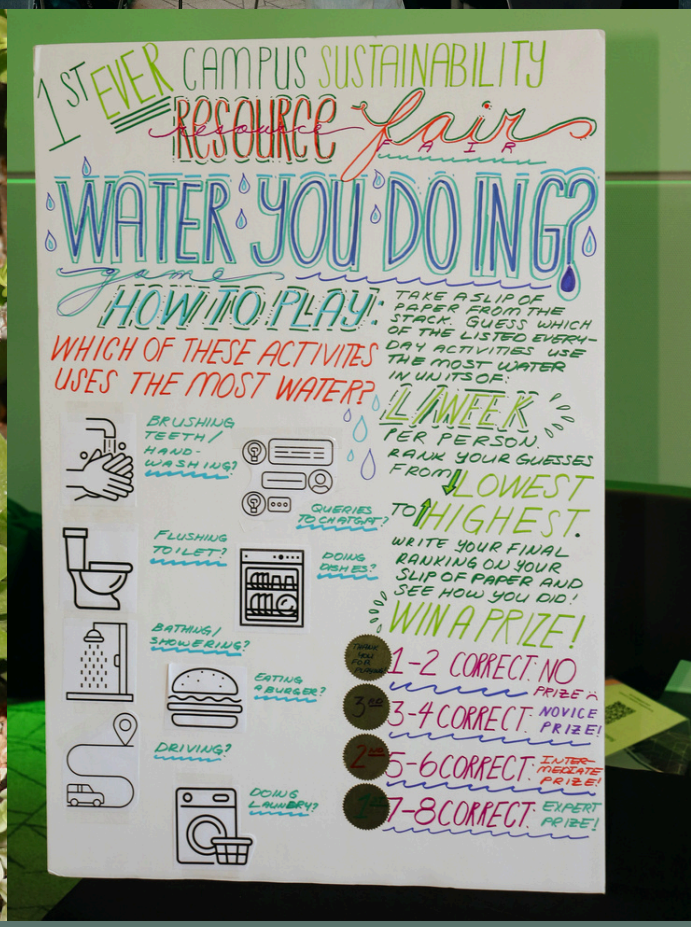
During Sustainability Month in October, the Office of Sustainability hosted its inaugural Sustainability Month Resource Fair at the Minskoff Pavilion. The event brought together more than a dozen student organizations and campus partners, including Spartan Sierra Club, Environmental Studies and Sustainability United, MSU Bikes, Eco Reps, and Beal Botanical Garden. More than 70 students were able to engage with activities ranging from plant giveaways and upcycled crafting to making blender bike smoothies. The event also provided a valuable opportunity for students to help shape the future of sustainability at MSU by contributing feedback to both the RISE 2.0 visioning process and the Sustainability Systems Think Tank.









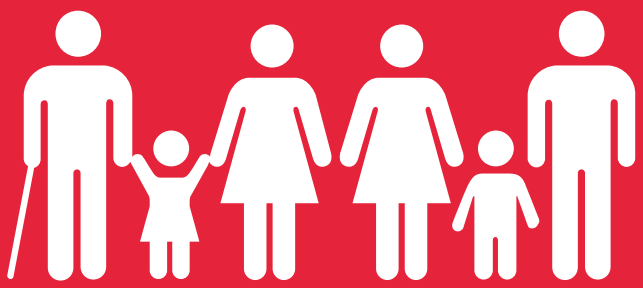


Making an Impact

The following section showcases the ways in which the work of the Spartan community aligns with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals through partnerships, research, outreach, and student engagement on campus, in Michigan and around the world.



1 NO POVERTY



Campus Resources

- Employee Assistance Program
- First Generation College Student Initiative
- MSU Extension: Food & Health
- MSU Student Food Bank & Basic Needs Program
- Office of Financial Aid
- TRIO Student Support Services

SDG 1: No Poverty



Program Spotlight: Expanded Access to Basic Needs With Opening of 2nd Spartan Shelf

MSU opened a new Spartan Shelf location in the MSU Union to help expand access to food and basic necessities for students. Spartan Shelf is a self service pantry that allows students to choose groceries and essential items in a low-barrier and welcoming environment. The new pantry space makes it easier for students to access resources with new extended evening and weekend hours.



Researcher Spotlight: MSU Evaluates Out-of-School Programs

Research team at Michigan State University received a five-year $530,000 annual grant to evaluate Michigan's federally funded out-of-school-time programs. Out-of-school-time programs are supervised activities during non-school hours where students have access to learning experiences, community service opportunities, and other activities. Community learning centers are important for supporting students in high-poverty areas and low performing school districts. MSU researchers ensure these programs provide high quality experiences and show outcomes of participants.



Student Spotlight: From A Cold Walk to A Burning Purpose

Goodness Adefope, a medical student at MSU, launched Keep Lansing Warm to aid people experiencing homelessness by distributing blankets, sandwiches, and warm winter gear during extreme cold weather. Adefope used the little money he had from his student load refund along with his friends to help people that are unhoused in -5-degree weather. He furthered his outreach and joined the Spartan Street Medicine in MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine where he can continue to serve people in need of health care and are experiencing homelessness in the Ingham County.



DID YOU KNOW?

MSU opened a **new Spartan Shelf location** in the MSU Union to help expand access to food and basic necessities for students. Spartan Shelf is a self service pantry that allows students to choose groceries and essential items in a low-barrier and welcoming environment. The new pantry space makes it easier for students to access resources with new extended evening and weekend hours.

2 ZERO HUNGER



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Center for Regenerative Agriculture
- Center for Regional Food Systems
- Institute for Food Laws and Regulations
- Kellogg Biological Station
- MSU Culinary Services
- MSU Extension
- MSU Food Bank and Basic Needs Program
- MSU Student Organic Farm
- Vermicomposting Program

SDG 2: Zero Hunger



Program Spotlight: MSU Student Food Bank Addresses Systemic Issues

Kara Swain, the MSU Student Food Bank coordinator, advocates for meaningful change to address the systemic causes of issues like hunger. Swain works with many students and sees how they navigate to secure enough food for themselves and their families. Each year the food bank serves more than 6,000 students with food and basic household and hygiene products. The MSU Student Food Bank operates year-round with a team that carefully packages each participant's online request for the food and supplies they need.



Researcher Spotlight: Protecting Our Food System Through Research

MSU researchers are becoming more vital in helping to ensure that fresh, healthy food stays available, affordable and safe. With the help of federal agencies, these scientists are working with farmers, policymakers and communities to build a more resilient food system. At MSU, more than 100 researchers are advancing critical work in today's agriculture, food safety, sustainability and economics to help secure our food supply. An average of $27 million in annual federal research expenditure supports their drive for innovations that improve lives in Michigan and beyond.



Student Spotlight: Student Group Champions Campus Food Security

In the Fall of 2021 two students, Spencer Good and Aditi Kulkarni, started a new student organization called the Spartan Food Security Council (SFSC). SFSC mission is to end food security on campus and in greater East Lansing area through advocacy, education and service. Four years later they are now working with University Health and Wellbeing to develop guidelines for the use of funds and how to support off campus student needs. The group has also continued their support on campus through education and service.

OUTREACH INIATIVE

During the November 2025 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) freeze, 1.4 million Michiganders that rely on snap were left uncertain about receiving their benefits. **MSU Extension**, a SNAP outreach agency, launched a Community Food Assistance website. The site offers resources and tips to help Michigan families plan, stretch their food budgets and connect with local services. They have also released a series of videos to answer common questions about food assistance programs and how to support those in need.



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Department of Public Health
- Henry Ford Health Partnership
- College of Human Medicine
- College of Nursing
- College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Institute for Health Policy
- MSU Extension
- MSU-Hurley Children's Hospital Pediatric Public Health Initiative
- One Team One Health MSU
- Institute for Health Policy
- University Health and Well-Being

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being



Campus Spotlight: MSU Adopts International Health Framework - Okanagan Charter

MSU has adopted Okanagan Charter, an international framework that encourages colleges and universities to embed health into all aspects of campus culture. By joining the U.S. Health Promoting Campuses Network, MSU is committed to integrating well being policies, programs and everyday campus life for students, faculty and staff. MSU is also launching the University Health and Wellbeing Plan with insights from over 5,000 students, faculty, and staff to help shape the plan.



Researcher Spotlight: Supporting MSU College of Human Flint Health Initiatives

Researchers at the MSU College of Human Medicine have secured more than $220 million in external funding to support public health research and community partnerships. Most of the work is centered in Flint, Michigan where researchers collaborate directly with community members to address issues such as maternal health, nutrition and chronic disease. Programs like Rx Kids and other community initiatives aim to improve health outcomes and economic stability for families while demonstrating how research partnerships can create lasting public health solutions.



Student Spotlight: Diversity Sciences Initiative to Expand Mental Health Access

A group of MSU Psychology graduate students are leading an initiative, called the Diversity Sciences Committee. The committee aims to use their expertise as clinical psychologists to help make mental health resources more accessible to those beyond campus and into the greater Lansing community. Each year, the committee will focus on different initiatives to address emerging needs and concerns. One of the goals for the committee is to give mental health presentations that are tailored to specific community needs.

BY THE NUMBERS

550	free therapy visits were provided through MSU Extensions Managing Farm Stress Program
3,058	MSU Extension programs offered by health and nutrition educators and program instructors
46,000	experiences related to healthy living by Michigan 4-H and MSU Extension

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Campus Resources

- Center for the Study of Curriculum Policy
- College of Education
- College of Education - Teacher Preparation Program
- MSU Extension
- MSU Science Festival

SDG 4: Quality Education



Program Spotlight: College Assistance Migrant Program Provides Essential Support

MSU is continuing to reinforce their commitment to migrant and seasonal farmworker students through the Migrant Student Services and the College Assistance Migrant Program, known as CAMP. Migrant Student Services plays a critical role in providing programs, resources and events rooted in creating a strong sense of belonging at MSU. The residential program assists seasonal farmworker students with academic, social and financial support to help them complete their first year. The resources and community offered through the MSU CAMP program has helped bring many students to MSU.



Researcher Spotlight: Spartans Developing Innovative Teaching Materials

MSU's education research, supported by federal funding, is improving how students learn and empowering teachers across Michigan and nationwide. Recent reports show that U.S. students are not keeping pace with essential knowledge, skills and technology. A team of MSU researchers developed new materials, assessments and workshops to improve curriculum that have already shown to improve students test scores. Spartan researchers are developing innovative ways to teach science, improve writing, integrate AI, and support mental health and school safety.



Student Spotlight: TRIO SSS is Empowering Students to Succeed

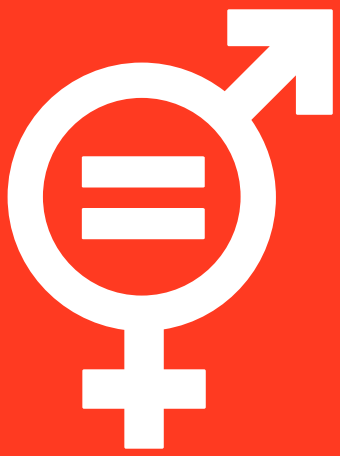
TRIO Student Support Services or TRIO SSS, a program at MSU is helping first-generation, low-income students and students with disabilities navigate college and succeed academically, The federally funded program provides academic advising, tutoring, peer mentoring, financial literacy guidance and graduate school preparations. TRIO SSS supports 600 students each year and also offers a summer bridge program and supplemental grant aid to support students facing financial or academic challenges.

LANSING SPARTAN SCHOLARS

A new partnership between Michigan State University and Lansing community is seeking to give local students the opportunity to attend MSU and support their journey. The Lansing Spartan Scholars program is open to incoming MSU students who qualify for the Lansing Promise.These scholars will have access to scholarships, academic advising, peer mentoring, career development opportunities, and service-learning experiences to support Lansing area.



5 GENDER EQUALITY



Campus Resources

- Employee Assistance Program
- First Generation College Student Initiative
- MSU Extension: Food & Health
- MSU Student Food Bank & Basic Needs Program
- Office of Financial Aid
- TRIO Student Support Services
- Center for Gender in Global Context
- Gender and Sexuality Campus Center
- Inclusion Excellence and Impact

SDG 5: Gender Equality



Program Spotlight: Highlights From MSU Women's History Month Events

MSU annually celebrates Women's History Month in March with a monthlong celebration that honors women's contributions to United States' history and highlights the pivotal roles women have played here at MSU. During the month, student organizations, offices and units hosted events, conferences, activities and more in celebration of women. The Women's Student Services held the second annual HEAL Sexual Health Conference. Another programs the 30th annual Dia de la Mujer Conference held by the Office of Multicultural Enrichment and Advocacy.



Researcher Spotlight: Researchers Take On Digital Media, Gender, and Achievement

Gabriel E. Hales and Keith N. Hampton professors of media and information at MSU are challenging the assumption that unstructured time spent on digital media is inherently harmful or unproductive. The study reveals an indirect positive relationship between digital media and academic achievement, measured through SAT scores. Hampton and Hales did find a small negative relationship between social media use and achievement for girls. Boys experience substantially larger benefits when considering the relationship between unstructured digital media use. The indirect benefit of digital skills has a larger benefit for boys in reading, writing, and math.



Student Spotlight: Advancing Gender Equity Through Research and Advocacy

Michigan State University students are contributing to gender equity through research, activism, and community engagement. Nupur Huria, a recent MSU graduate, was recognized in the Center for Gender in Global Context awards. Her work focused on sexual health advocacy, and she was a co-organizer of the HEAL Sexual Health conferences, where she brought together students and community members to address issues related to reproductive health and equity. Through her leadership and outreach efforts, Huria helped foster conversations around gender equity and expand access to education and resources for students across campus and beyond.

DID YOU KNOW?

Through its **Strategic Partnership Grant Program, MSU's Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen)** supports collaborative projects that advance gender equity across research, education, and community engagement. Fall 2025 awardees brought together faculty from multiple colleges and international partners to address issues including women's health, environmental justice, and global research capacity.

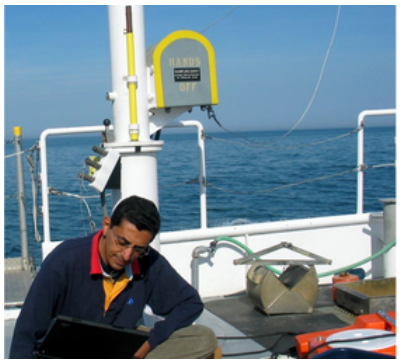
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Center for PFAS Research
- Institute of Public Utilities
- Institute of Water Research
- Kellogg Biological Station
- MSU Extension
- MSU Water
- MSU Water Alliance
- Water Bottle Filling Stations Map

SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation



Outreach Spotlight: Safeguarding Swimmers: Real-Time Beach Water Quality Monitoring

Phanikumar Mantha, a professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, is using science and technology to help make sure beaches don't make people sick. Professor Mantha is working to monitor beach water quality in real time using sensors and computer models, including machine learning, at beaches around the Great Lakes. These tools along the coastlines help generate recommendations on whether beaches should remain open or closed to protect swimmers at the beach. With changes in climate and population there is more pressure on our water resources, and these tools created are more important than ever.



Researcher Spotlight: MSU Studies Pathogens and Water Safety with EPA Funding

MSU is researching the presence of harmful pathogens like Legionella and the byproducts of disinfection processes, with the help of critical federal funding from the Environmental Protection Agency. Every year in the U.S., more than 7 million cases of waterborne illnesses occur, causing more than 6,600 deaths. Jade Mitchell, the projects lead and associate chair and professor in the Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering, believes this research will help improve health risks to ensure safer drinking water for people across the country.



Student Spotlight: Students Expanding Access to Clean, Safe Water in Tanzania

Engineers Without Borders (EWB) Michigan State University Chapter, a registered student organization, is working with the community in a Tanzania village to create reliable, sustainable solution to provide drinking water for about 900 households. In rural village in the Iringa region of Tanzania, access to clean, safe water is a major concern due to limited resources and inadequate sanitation. A group of 6 members were sent to Tanzania for an assessment of the community. Once they returned to East Lansing the EWB completed an alternative analysis to determine the best solutions for the project.

RED CEDAR RIVER CLEANUPS

During the month of March Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities (IPF) invited students, staff, and volunteers to comb the Red Cedar River of debris. This year almost 975 pounds of debris were removed from the Red Cedar River and its banks to be recycled by the Surplus Store and Recycling Center. IPF crews regularly maintain these areas but twice a year they host larger clean up gatherings during the spring and fall. These are great opportunities for the Spartan community to contribute to MSU's award winning natural areas.



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



Campus Resources

- Center of Research Excellence in Complex Materials
- Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center
- Infrastructure Planning & Facilities
- MSU Extension
- MSU Industrial Training and Assessment Center

SDG 7: Affordable & Clean Energy



Program Spotlight: Campus Facilities Promotes Energy Savings Tips

MSU has created a list of six simple actions to help conserve energy at campus buildings. Setting the thermostats between 68-75 degrees Fahrenheit, turn off lights and equipment when not in use, and use daylight. Close unused room doors so cooling air is not wasted. Turn window AC units off or raise their temperature at night and close shades to reduce heat gain. Exercising thermostat control is one of the best ways that people can help the university reduce their energy cost as the seasons change. Applying control over your thermostat can save the university an estimated $425,000 annually.



Researcher Spotlight: MSU and Kansas Innovative Solar-Powered System

College of Natural Science Assistant Professor Anthony Kendall and College of Engineering Associate Professor Annick Anctil are part of an interdisciplinary team. Together, with Kansas Geological Survey and Kansas State University, they have created a system to increase groundwater and preserve aquifers by harnessing the power of solar panel arrays. They created a prototype that not only reduces water evaporation by absorbing the sun's energy and casting shadows but will also route water to underground reserves. The solar arrays placed on unproductive fields produce energy that farmers can sell to utilities and increaser their bottom line.



Student Spotlight: Student Innovation in EnergyTech Competition

A graduate student in the College of Natural Science Hydrogeology Lab, Jake Stid, is analyzing remote sensing and aerial imagery to study how fields have been used in California. Stid has found that farmers who used small percentage of their land for solar arrays were more financially secure per acre than those who didn't. His published research could provide help farmers struggling to pay their bills. Instead of farmers converting entire fields to solar arrays, Stid hopes this research will help more farmers decide to keep producing crops by strategically placing arrays on lower yield spots on their land.

BY THE NUMBERS

500	students toured IPF Power and Water facilities to support classroom learning objectives
40,000	solar panels cover parking spaces across 5 commuter lots on campus
$400K	saved in annual utility costs to help meet campus sustainability goals through new temperature set-point policy

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Campus Resources

- Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Center of Economic Analysis
- Human Resources
- Institute for Business Research
- International Business Center
- Office of Research and Innovation

SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth



Program Spotlight: Sustainability Shines in MSU's 2025 Innovation Celebration

The 2025 Innovation Celebration was hosted by MSU's Innovation Center, recognized groundbreaking research, entrepreneurship and technology development from faculty, students, and partners. The celebration was held at the Kellog Center featured 31 exhibits showcasing innovations such as AI-driven genomics, sustainable agriculture and advanced battery technology. The awards honored leaders in innovation, startups and technology.



Researcher Spotlight: MSU Researcher work to improve automative supply chain

Jason Miller, an Eli Broad Endowed Professor of Supply Chain Management at MSU, and his colleagues are working closely with automakers to improve efficiency and drive innovation in the field. Miller and his colleagues investigate product recalls by auto firms, assessing recall timing and determine how those recalls affect stock market events. Their research helps shape regulatory guidance by making cost neutral policy recommendations for the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration.



Student Spotlight: 105 Engineering Students Named Michigander Scholars

105 College of Engineering students were selected as Michigander Scholars for summer 2025. This is MSU's third cohort of Michigander Scholars, an initiative led by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to retain top talent and strengthen Michigan's workforce in critical fields. Students will receive a scholarship incentive of $5000 for completing internships or co-ops and up to $10000 for accepting full-time positions in Michigan and committing to live and work in Michigan postgraduation.

SUPPORTING MICHIGAN ECONOMY

Researchers at MSU are enhancing Michigan's economy by partnering with businesses, communities, and government agencies. Their work supports agriculture, manufacturing, and the transition to electric vehicles. MSU initiatives promote entrepreneurship, workforce development, and local investment, while also focusing on improving workplace inclusion for people with disabilities, fostering innovation, and driving economic growth across the state.



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Campus Resources

- Facility for Rare Isotope Beams
- Industrial Training and Assessment Center
- Infrastructure Planning & Facilities
- MSU Extension
- National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory
- Spartan Innovations
- Mass Timber at MSU

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure



Program Spotlight: Inspiring the Next Generation of Innovators

Each summer, high school students from across Michigan come to MSU's campus for Entrepreneurship Leadership Camp hosted by the MSU's Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and Multicultural Business Programs. Tamira Chapman, an MSU alumna, is at the center of this effort, committing to three years of sponsoring and supporting this program for future generations. The program is designed to be hands-on, fast paced and immersive to real-world scenarios. Students work closely with teammates to explore business ideas, build business plans, and begin to see themselves as future founders.



Researcher Spotlight: Investing into our Industrial Assessment Center

The Michigan State University Industrial Assessment Center has received another $5 million in their work to make manufacturing and commercial operations more sustainable throughout Michigan and the broader United States. MSU IAC will be leading efforts that work with community colleges, trade schools, union training programs throughout the country to build their IAC programs, supporting growth in energy, manufacturing workforce development, while also supporting advancement in manufacturing decarbonization.



Student Spotlight: MSU Designathon Unites 130+ Students for Innovative Solutions

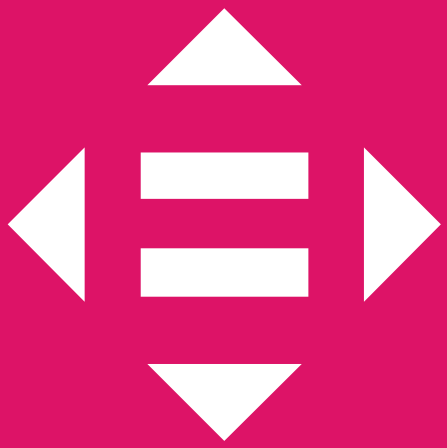
A group of MSU architecture students organized the first ever MSU Designathon. The MSU Designathon was held March 22-23, which had more than 130 students in attendance from 10 universities. Students from all majors and skill levels transformed creative ideas into real-world solutions. Students worked together using skills such as user experience, product design, branding and problem solving to build innovative, user centered solutions. The group of Experience Architecture (XA) students who organized the Designathon, received the Emerging Student Organization Award at the 24th Annual Student Leadership Excellence Awards Reception.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation** equips Spartans with the mentorship, resources, and experiences needed to transform ideas into ventures. Ranked No. 11 nationwide among undergraduate entrepreneurship programs, Burgess supports students from 150 undergraduate majors and helps develop solutions with lasting economic and social impact.

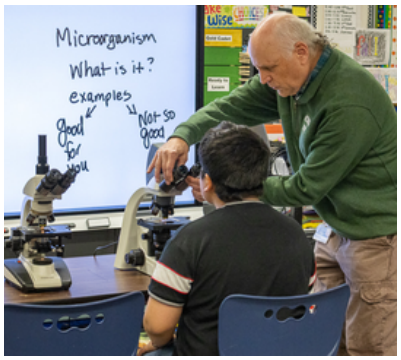
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Campus Resources

- Center for Gender in Global Context
- Gender and Sexuality Campus Center
- Inclusive Excellence and Impact
- Migrant Student Services
- Mosaic: The Multicultural Unity Center
- Multi-Racial Unity Living Experience
- Office of Multicultural Enrichment and Advocacy
- Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance
- Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities



Outreach Spotlight: Expanding Science Education Through Hands-On Learning

An MSU-led outreach initiative is expanding access to science education through hands-on learning opportunities for middle school students. In a sixth-grade classroom in Flint, university faculty and students led interactive microbiology activities, allowing students to explore concepts like microorganisms through direct observation and experimentation. By fostering curiosity and providing early exposure to science, this outreach effort helps reduce educational inequalities and inspires the next generation.



Researcher Spotlight: Examining Inequalities in Math Education

Michigan State University researchers are examining inequalities in mathematics education, finding that socioeconomic status plays a significant role in student performance at the school and district levels, while race has a more direct impact on individual student outcomes within schools. By analyzing multiple national data sets, the study highlights how differences in resources and academic priorities can contribute to unequal outcomes across communities. These findings provide insights into how education systems can better address disparities and promote more equitable opportunities for all students.



Student Spotlight: Celebrating First Generation Graduates

Michigan State University held its inaugural first-generation stole ceremony, honoring graduating Spartans whose parents did not complete a four-year degree with a special stole to recognize their achievement. While there are many challenges that all incoming undergraduates can expect to face, first-gen students often encounter additional barriers. Over 600 stoles were given to students graduating in 2025, and donors Mike and Michele Alston helped fund the initiative. The event celebrated community, resilience, and the unique challenges first-gen students face navigating higher education.

MULTICULTURAL CENTER OPENING

Michigan State University Council of Racial and Ethnic Students (CORES) have spent decades advocating for a dedicated multicultural space, and they are now celebrating the completion of the university's first free-standing Multicultural Center. The building now serves as a space for students to study, gather, and build community, specifically for students from marginalized and minoritized backgrounds. Its completion marks a milestone in student-led efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable campus environment.



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Campus Resources

- Center for Community and Economic Development
- MSU Bikes Service Center
- MSU Broad Art Museum
- MSU Extension
- MSU Museum
- MSU Extension - Center for Local Government Finance & Policy
- MSU Facilities and Land Use Plan
- University Outreach & Engagement
- Wharton Center

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities



Outreach Spotlight: Students Envision New Michigan Trails

MSU students, under the direction of Instructor Bob Wilson, are collaborating with communities across Michigan to improve access and maintenance of local trails, parks and waterways. During the past four years, students in the Trail Building Law and Policy course in the Department of Community Sustainability have been designing a trail plan specific to the needs of communities in Michigan. Students have been able to work directly with community leaders to create a vision for trails, parks and water access and then learn the process of trail during the semester.



Researcher Spotlight: Spartans Striving to Enhance Road Safety

More than 50 faculty across MSU Mobility and the College of Engineering, Spartan researchers are tackling transportation challenges, including safer roads, stronger vehicles, smarter infrastructure and secure autonomous systems. MSU researchers partner with federal agencies and industry to deliver real world solutions that protect drivers in Michigan, across the nation and around the world. Peter Savolainen, MSU Research Foundation Professor, has been leading efforts to reduce traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities by studying ways to encourage drivers to slow down.



Student Spotlight: Spartan Day of Service

Every fall at MSU students come together for Spartan Day of Service, a campuswide initiative that encourages students to give back to communities across Michigan. In the weeks leading up to the even the Intercultural Aides (ICAs), actively encourage their residents to participate. Through conversations in residence halls, they help students understand the purpose of the service and how their involvement can make a difference. The ICAs peer to peer recruitment helps create a welcoming and inclusive environment where students feel supported and inspired to join.



DID YOU KNOW?

The MSU Broad Art Museum advances sustainability through art and public programming. In 2025, exhibitions including Farmland: Food, Justice, and Sovereignty and Mekong Voices: Transnational River Justice in Mainland Southeast Asia explored food systems, environmental justice, and cultural heritage. The museum's Deep-Rooted Series partnership with Beal Botanical Garden connected art, plants, and sustainability through collaborative tours.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Campus Resources

- Center for Community and Economic Development
- Anaerobic Digestion Research and Education Center
- MSU Extension
- MSU Recycling Center
- MSU Surplus Store
- School of Packaging

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption & Production



Program Spotlight: Tackling MSU Dining Food Waste With Innovative Technology

MSU is partnering with Raccoon Eyes, an artificial intelligence enhanced technology that is promoting food sustainability in MSU dining halls. The firm's technology is snapping pictures of uneaten food at two dining halls to gain insight into the causes of food waste. Raccoon Eyes works to identify larger trends in what and how much students throw away, which helps MSU to learn to better portion meals and change recipes to reduce food waste. Interactive kiosks have been installed in the dining halls to gain student insights by asking question about food ordered that day.



Researcher Spotlight: Evaluating and Informing on Sustainable Packaging Options

An assessment by researchers, including Rafael Auras from MSU School of Packing, sought to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of replacing polyethylene (PE) packaging. The findings reveal that PE packaging can have an average life cycle global warming potential. Auras believes that as new and better data emerge stakeholders and policymakers can make decisions that help deliver more sustainable outcomes across different stages of a product's life cycle, including disposal and recycling. Researchers anticipate that the findings will inform ongoing policy discussion, related to managing plastic waste.



Student Spotlight: Surplus Store Hosts Student Thrift Day

The MSU Surplus Store and Recycling Center held is second Student Thrift Day. The Surplus Store utilized clothes that had been left for donation during student residence hall move-outs the previous semester. Thrift Day allows students to sort through dozens of bins of clothes for $2 a pound. The event is a way for students to learn about the Surplus Store and show students where they can find affordable essentials right on campus.

BY THE NUMBERS

96%	of 6 million pounds of recycling collected on campus was sent to Michigan companies
450,000	lbs of material were recovered from the Spartan Stadium renovations
14,000	campus and community members participated in Surplus Store & Recycling Center outreach events, tours, and more

13 CLIMATE ACTION



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Center for Global Change & Earth Observations
- Center for Regenerative Agriculture
- Center for Regional Food Systems
- Forest Carbon Climate Program
- Kellogg Biological Station
- MSU Extension
- Plant Resilience Institute

SDG 13: Climate Action

Program Spotlight: Boosting Climate Change Awareness Through Theatre

The biannual play festival Climate Change Theatre Action celebrates its 10th year of performances worldwide. Environmental activism and performing arts unite at Beal Botanical Garden and Corey Marsh Ecological Research Center for nine, five-minute plays revolving around the ongoing fight against climate change. Various community organizations gave presentations advocating for the climate movement and celebrating environmental strides being made in the East Lansing area. The play festival works to communicate complicated environmental topic through the performing arts.



Researcher Spotlight: Adapting Forests to Climate Change

Michigan State University researcher Jeremy Johnson is leading a long-term effort to help forests adapt to climate change by identifying tree species and genetic traits that can withstand warmer temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns. Supported by a $500K grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the project will test thousands of trees across Michigan to determine which species are best suited for future climate conditions. By improving forest resilience, the research aims to protect ecosystems, support carbon storage, and sustain the environmental and economic benefits forests provide.



Student Spotlight: From Political Science to Climate-Focused Forestry

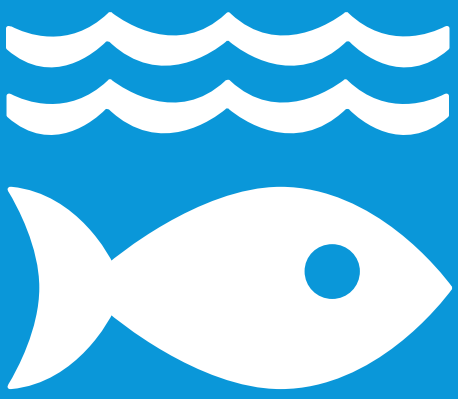
Jake Fitzharris, an MSU forestry graduate student, has a unique path from political science to climate-focused forestry work. His MSU experience deepened his understanding of forest ecosystems, carbon management and climate related policy through hands-on fieldwork and specialized coursework, including Forest Carbon Management and Measurement and Modeling of Forest Carbon. His research on illegal logging and wood origin verification highlights the importance of protecting forests.

OUTREACH INITATIVE

The **MSU Forest Carbon and Climate Program (FCCP)** held a carbon market workshop series in New Hampshire. Bringing together landowners, forestry professionals, and educators to learn about opportunities to engage in the carbon economy and further incorporate climate change considerations in their land management planning. The entire workshop series increased awareness of resources available to landowners and professionals related to carbon markets.



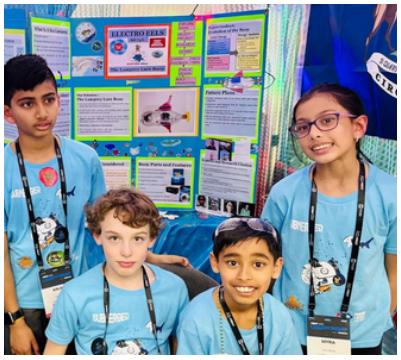
14 LIFE BELOW WATER



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
- Institute of Water Research
- History of the Red Cedar River
- Kellogg Biological Station
- MSU Extension
- MSU Water Alliance
- Quantitative Fisheries Center

SDG 14: Life Below Water



Outreach Spotlight: Student Innovators Protect the Great Lakes

A group of fourth and fifth graders from Wass and Hill Elementary Schools have designed a buoy to help protect the Great Lakes from the sea lamprey which is a long-standing threat to the region's ecosystem. The Electro Eels team are a rookie FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) LEGO League Challenge team from Troy, Michigan. The team created a Lamprey Lure Buoy, with the assistance of MSU Associate Professor Michael Wagner, who studies how sea lamprey makes decisions and uses that knowledge to manipulate their behavior, guiding them into traps.



Researcher Spotlight: Coral Resilience Breakthrough

Through a collaboration between Michigan State University, Duke University and the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, a team of researchers have found that some corals are surviving warming ocean temperature by passing heat resisting abilities to their offspring. Coral reefs are habitats for lots of marine life and protect coastlines from storms and erosion and support the livelihoods of millions of people around the world. This research is crucial in the race to better conserve and restore threatened reefs across the globe.



Student Spotlight: Student Group Partners with Michigan DNR to Restock Red Cedar

The MSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club partnered with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to host a steelhead stocking event on campus. The initiative sought to boost the local steelhead population while also spreading environmental awareness and hands on conservation education. The MSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club, works to provide a community for all students to explore career paths in conservation, develop skills outdoors, build social and professional networks. The DNR believes that collaborating with student organizations is a valuable way to bridge education with practice.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2025, MSU launched a $12 million performance-based **conservation program to improve water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin**. Led by the Institute of Water Research and Center for Regenerative Agriculture, the initiative partners with farmers to reduce nutrient runoff, helping protect freshwater ecosystems and combat harmful algal blooms.



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Center for Regenerative Agriculture
- Corey Marsh Ecological Research Center
- Forest Carbon Climate Program
- Infrastructure Planning & Facilities
- Forest Carbon Climate Program
- Kellogg Biological Station
- MSU Extension
- WJ Beal Botanical Garden
- MSU Herbarium
- Pollinator Initiative

SDG 15: Life on Land



Program Spotlight: Transforming Turf Into Pollinator Friendly Habitat

Through a collaboration between MSU's Infrastructure Planning and Facilities and the Department of Entomology 30 acres of campus land is being transformed into pollinator friendly habitat. Previously mowed turf grass will be converted into native plantings that provide essential nectar, pollen, and habitat resources for pollinators. By enhancing biodiversity on campus while reducing landscape maintenance needs, the initiative demonstrates how campus operations can support ecosystem health and promote more sustainable land management practices.



Researcher Spotlight: New Methods for Biodiversity Protection

Michael Belitz, a Michigan State University postdoctoral researcher in the Zipkin Quantitative Ecology Lab, and his colleagues are advocating for the protection of multiple species at the same time. This group believes that conservation targeting groups of related species is an effective way to quantify predict and manage multiple species. After Belitz studied species-level conservation, he coined the term, assemblage-level conservation, for his work. Interdisciplinary collaboration between biology, modeling and natural resource management has opened the door to studying the many complex challenges related to biodiversity loss.



Student Spotlight: Learning Indigenous Perspectives on Ecology

Olivia Schaefer, a James Madison College student majoring in Social Relations and Policy, was enrolled in Professor Daniel Ahlquist section of MC 338 where she was able to further her ecological education. During the class Schaefer completed a research project on "Reversing Settler Colonial Power: How the Horse Enforces Strategies of Resistance and Survival for Indigenous People." Schaefer research dug deep into the ecological dominations between people and nature. From MC 338, she learned to take on the responsibility to pass on the true history of the land, of the horses, to others.

BY THE NUMBERS

$100K	awarded to Infrastructure Planning and Facilities for the development of native plantings and pollinator habitat along the Red Cedar River
900+	tree species are represented in MSU's Campus Arboretum, supporting biodiversity and hands-on learning.
$5.1M	invested in Agricultural Resiliency Program grants supporting resilient agriculture and climate adaptation research.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Campus Resources

- Governmental Relations
- Indigenous Law and Policy Center
- Institute for Public Policy and Social Research
- Kelley Institute of Ethics and the Legal Profession
- McLellan Online Free Speech Library
- MSU Extension
- Office of the General Counsel
- MSU Ethics Institute

SDG 16: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions



Outreach Spotlight: Prevent 2 Protect in Building Safer School Communities

Prevent 2 Protect is an MSU initiative focusing on preventing students at high risk of targeted violence. It is supporting the community through schools in Ingham County and will soon expand to Wayne County. Prevent 2 Protect is a groundbreaking program that helps assess and manage students who have been identified as high risk through behavioral threat assessment. The initiative aims to connect high risk students to their community and enable them to develop a sense of belonging.



Researcher Spotlight: Advancing Justice Through Sexual Assualt Kit Initiative

Karen Holt, an assistant professor in the School of Criminal Justice has centered her research around understanding whether offenders of cold case sex crimes ultimately face justice and/or prevented from perpetrating more crimes. Her work includes the process of testing backlogged rape kits across the state of Michigan as part of the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. Holt's work is important for demonstrating what happens when individuals are not held accountable for their crimes and to bring change and reform to the criminal justice system.



Student Spotlight: Law Students Expanding Access to Justice

The MSU College of Law has opened a new Public Defenders Clinic focusing on an underserved aspect of the criminal legal process: pre-conviction appeals. Pre-conviction appeals are filed by a defendant before a case goes to trial. MSU's Law Clinic offers six enrolled students, along with interim director of the clinic Bradely Hall, the opportunity to work on real cases and represent clients in court, allowing them to learn outside the classroom. For the first time MSU College of Law students have an opportunity to represent clients facing criminal charges.

CAMPUS EVENT HIGHLIGHT

In November, the Ethics Institute, Office of Sustainability, and others hosted **the Sustainability and Ethics Symposium** to explore the intersection of ethics, sustainability, and governance. The symposium convened campus and community leaders to discuss how policy, public participation, and institutional decision-making influence environmental and social outcomes. By encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and ethical leadership, the event promoted more inclusive and accountable approaches to addressing sustainability challenges.



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Campus Resources

- AgBioResearch
- Center for Interdisciplinarity
- Center for Systems Integration and Sustainability
- Governmental Relations
- MSU Extension
- Toolbox Dialogue Initiative
- University Outreach and Engagement
- Office of Sustainability

SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals



Campus Spotlight: MSU and ADASTEC Advance Autonomous Transit

SpartanXpress, is MSU's new autonomous and electric bus on campus for students, faculty, staff and visitors to get around campus for free. Through a three-year partnership with ADASTEC, a leading software company that specializes in automated driving solutions, the 21-seat bus travels 5.12 miles around campus. The bus serves as a living laboratory that helps prove advanced technology can safely operate on open public roads, through every season. The research done on MSU's campus in adverse weather conditions translates to better technology used around the world.



Researcher Spotlight: Global Partnerships for Climate-Smart Agriculture

MSU has been working on a program titled "Managing Water Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia," sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Scientific Exchange Program. The program brough eight fellows from five countries in South Asia to MSU with the goal of developing the fellows; research capacity in climate smart agriculture. The fellows were partnered with six MSU faculty mentors to conduct research related to the program topic.



Student Spotlight: A Global Approach to Student Safety

Raymond Musiima, is a second year MBA student at MSU's Broad College of Business, fighting against relationship violence and sexual misconduct (RVSM). Musiima is working to imagine how MSU's RVSM prevention and response models could inform global approaches to student safety. Laura Rugless, vice president of MSU's Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance, helped bring together a team from MSU with Musiima's help to design a multiday workshop series to be delivered on the ground at Makerere University in Uganda.

CONSUMERS & MSU PARTNERSHIP

Consumers Energy has partnered with Michigan State University **with a $250,000 financial support** that is empowering the next generation of college graduates to stay and work in Michigan. Consumers Energy supports students through the College of Engineering Cornerstone and Residential Experience (CoRe) program. The CoRe program is an integrated first year engineering academic program and living learning community with support activities, such as presentations and seminars, corporate tours, tutoring, academic advising and social events.





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