

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 31, 2025

President Guskiewicz called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 9:00 a.m.

Trustees present: Rebecca Bahar-Cook, Mike Balow, Dennis Denno, Renee Knake Jefferson, Sandy Pierce, Brianna Scott, Kelly Tebay, and Rema Vassar.

University officers present: President Guskiewicz, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President McIntyre; Senior Vice President Frace; Executive Vice President Gore; Vice President and General Counsel Quinn; Secretary Fletcher; Vice Presidents Beekman, Bollman, DeVooght, Gage, Guerrant, Hintz, Swain, and Tobin. Faculty liaisons present: John Aerni-Flessner, Justin St. Charles, and Angela Wilson. Student liaisons present: Sarah Fireberg, Kathryn Harding, Priyanka Kothari, and Lauren Pelon.

President Guskiewicz provided the following statement.

Welcome to the October 31, 2025, meeting of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees. I think it's appropriate to say Happy Halloween. And I hope that many of you had the opportunity to see the big Beaumont Tower Halloween show last evening at nine o'clock. Several of us were able to head over there; led by university carillonneur, John Lehrer, was a fantastic, wonderful show, one of many that happens there at Beaumont Tower by faculty and students of our incredible College of Music. I want to thank all of you for being here today, and I want to officially welcome our new provost, Dr. Laura Lee McIntyre and our new Athletics Director, J Batt to their first Board of Trustees meeting. Provost McIntyre and Athletics Director Batt began this summer, and have hit the ground running, doing a fantastic job getting to know the campus community, our faculty, our staff, our students, and we're grateful to have them as part of our leadership team. So, I'm going to officially call the meeting to order and going to turn to board secretary, Stefan Fletcher.

Secretary Fletcher provided the following statement.

Thank you very much, President Guskiewicz, and again, Happy Halloween, and welcome to the October 2025 Board of Trustees meeting. Today's agenda is filled with several significant action items of university business. There are also several speakers, including those who have come for public participation. As a framework, in the event of a disruption that prevents the Board from conducting business or the members of the public from hearing or observing the meeting, the meeting will be recessed or adjourned. If the meeting is recessed, the board will meet via zoom within 10 minutes of the recess occurring. Regrettably, there would be no opportunity for public comment at that stage.

Individuals found to be disrupting the meeting will be subject to applicable University ordinances and policies. Thank you.

All actions taken were by unanimous vote of the Trustees present, unless otherwise noted.

1. On a motion by Trustee Pierce, supported by Trustee Balow, the **BOARD VOTED to approve** the proposed agenda.
2. On a motion by Trustee Knake Jefferson, supported by Trustee Pierce, the **BOARD VOTED to approve** the minutes of the June 13, 2025, and August 15, 2025, Board of Trustees meetings.
3. President's Report

President Guskiewicz provided the following report to the Board.

So, I have just returned from the AAU Presidents Meeting in Washington, D.C. earlier this week, and this is a meeting of about 65 of the presidents of the leading research universities across the country. And I just want to start off by saying how proud I am of our incredible team, leadership team, our world class faculty and staff that helped to, in my opinion, really position Michigan State University to do the amazing things that we're able to do here in educating over 52,000 students, and conducting the groundbreaking research that we do, and I couldn't be more proud of how we have, in fact, positioned ourselves during some challenging times. We had a lot of conversations at that meeting, alongside, again, about 65 other presidents and a number of congressional leaders that we had an opportunity to talk to try to make a strong case for what we do in America's leading research universities. And so again, I want to just take that opportunity to thank all of you that help us to be the leading global public research university that we are and allow our faculty and our students to thrive as they do and allow all of us to continue making a difference in the world.

I want to also thank our Board of Trustees members and Provost McIntyre and all the others who were able to join us yesterday to cut the ribbon celebrating our Spartan One-Stop space just downstairs here. I know many of our students have been enjoying access to that space over the past several months since it opened. We had the official opening of it yesterday, a ribbon cutting ceremony, and the Spartan One-Stop is an important initiative in our Student Success Program, ensuring that all of our students have the tools and guidance they need to thrive and graduate from Michigan State University. It's a hub for those seeking information about enrollment or student accounts, including billing and financial aid. Talking with some of the students down there yesterday that have felt supported by this, they've had their parents in and others to help troubleshoot some of the financial challenges that they might have around financial aid, etc. So, it is truly a one stop shop that provides advising and help. CAPS often will intersect

and engage with our students there, and as I said, issues around financial aid and others. So, really pleased with what we're doing there. This is one of the ways that we're working to reduce barriers and other challenges, to offer a truly student-centered college experience here at Michigan State. And so, my thanks go out to Vice Provost Dave Weatherspoon and everyone on that team that's making this possible. Dave, thank you. A round of applause for you and your team. I want to offer up a shout out to the Spartan volleyball team. In that program, which, at last week's home game against Iowa, honored staff and volunteers from University Health and Wellbeing Center for Survivors and Safe Place, players and fans wore purple ribbons at the game to observe National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, something that's very important to us here. We're extremely proud of our people and programs supporting survivors of intimate partner violence and stalking. This includes Safe Place Shelter, which, in 1994 became the nation's first such program housed on a university campus, and we're proud of the important work that's conducted there. MSU Center for Survivors, additionally, is celebrating its 45th year. Advocates there help survivors navigate things like reporting options, academic accommodations, safety planning, and housing financial concerns. So, I just want to take the opportunity to thank all the staff there for everything that you do to support those that need those important resources. And also, while we're talking about congratulations and thank you's, our University Health and Wellbeing just yesterday was named Michigan's best and brightest in wellness by the National Association for Business Resources. I think that deserves a round of applause. They were also honored among the organization's 2025 Best of the Best for Large Organizations. These prestigious awards celebrate organizations that go above and beyond to foster a culture of health and wellbeing for their employees. So again, congratulations to University Health and Wellbeing and its Michigan State University partners.

Our focus on supporting the success and wellbeing of our campus community is one part of many that makes MSU a proudly public and leading global research university. And I love to talk about all the great things that we're doing to support our faculty, staff, and students, and Athletics Director J. Batt and I had a chance to sit in and cohost the Paul W. Smith WJR radio show in Detroit recently. And, I think Paul W. does not need to worry about losing his job anytime soon; it was a fun two hours there, but we did the best that we could. I had a lot of fun doing it, but it did, again, provide an opportunity to talk about the amazing things that happen here across a wide spectrum. It wasn't just about what's happening in intercollegiate athletics, but we had a chance to interview some of our world class faculty, some student athletes, and a few alums that are proud to wear the Spartan logo on a daily basis. And our reputation for excellence was validated once again in the latest Times Higher Education Global University Rankings. Michigan State is among the top five percent of the world's universities and headed upward, rising 17 spots globally, and four spots here in the U.S., just from last year. So again, I think well deserving sort of upward trajectory by a lot of the hard work that takes place among so many that are here today. A large part of that is based on our outstanding teaching, research, and innovation. So, it's a huge tribute to the

excellence of our faculty, academic staff, and support staff, so thank you. We also saw just last month, faculty excellence spotlighted in a recent New York Times article featuring Michigan State University Professor Bruno Basso and his innovations in satellite imaging and drone technology applied to farm conservation. The story was selected by the Times to represent Michigan in its "50 States, 50 Fixes" environmental series. I had a chance to visit earlier this summer, over at the Kellogg Biological Station, the amazing work that Dr. Basso and his colleagues are conducting there. This article also connected MSU biologist Nick Haddad and his work supporting conservation of natural areas for butterfly survival, demonstrating the breadth and impact of our environmental research. So again, congratulations to the important work by Dr. Basso and colleagues, and, as for the excellence of our dedicated MSU support staff, Michigan State's institutional social media has moved up to number two in the country in the National University Rankings, another example of the talent behind our work, fostering community and connection among Spartans. So, I think a round of applause is due to all of them.

Our standing as, I'd like to say, Michigan's State University, the choice of more in-state students than any other, was validated once again this semester with our second highest enrollment. Currently, we have 51,838 students enrolled at Michigan State University, and we're pleased that the state's budget finalized earlier this month appropriated \$333.7 million to MSU in base operating funding, which is a 2.1 percent increase for the year. That is a welcome bump, but it was already built into our planning, so it doesn't represent additional revenue above available to spend, as I look over at our VP for Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Lisa Frace, but Lisa built that into our models for this year. Additionally, we recognize that that increase is only for one year, which will add uncertainty to our budget planning for next year. I also just want to touch on the fact that I recognize the challenges that the budget reductions created this past year. We've been as transparent with our workforce as possible through the year with our financial situation, and, as I told Faculty Senate members in a message last month, together we can navigate through this phase and find ways to keep the University strong and moving forward, supporting both excellence and fiscal responsibility. And I provided a comprehensive update to our faculty and staff in last week's email message. I realize, again, as I've said, that this has been challenging for many in terms of the impacts of our budget reductions and been felt by everyone on campus. I just want to thank all of those that took part in an inclusive process to get us to this point. The decisions that we've collectively made affect individuals and teams in real ways, and we did not take that lightly. And, as I mentioned earlier, having just come from that AAU presidents' meeting, we are not alone, and, talking with several of our peer presidents at that meeting earlier this week, we are far from unique in having the need to put budget reductions in place over the past year, and so it was the right thing to do at the right time, and as I said last week at President's Council, I appreciate the role that many on our campus played in helping us to get here, and we are in a much more financially stable position as a result of that hard work. And it's also important to know that CFO Lisa Frace and Provost McIntyre are launching a budget model redesigned to support our financial

transformation. It will prioritize development of a model that emphasizes clear resource allocation methodologies, financial stewardship and sustainable operational practices. It's going to allow our senior leaders and department chairs to be able to forecast better. This is something that's been in the works for quite some time, but we're looking forward to getting this process to the next stage. They will keep us informed as the project moves forward, and I just want to thank them for taking on this important work. Alongside a steering committee of several of our community campus leaders. Our Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan is in front of the board today, as well as resolutions relating to plans for campus development. These plans illustrate another critical dimension of our work to provide students, faculty, and staff with facilities adequate to maintain our physical assets, push the frontiers of discovery and innovation, and prepare graduates for the challenges and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. So, as we look to facilities, we'll need to prepare Spartans to imagine, create, and lead the industries of tomorrow. We're asking you today to approve the start of construction planning for our Engineering and Digital Innovation Center, something we've been talking about for, even before I got here. This is an exciting new project. It's going to bring more than six or seven of our colleges and their faculty and staff and researchers together to do incredible work in preparing our, again, graduates for the careers of the future. Given the shakier federal and state funding environment we face, growing forward with the resulting necessity for new channels to fund needed programs and facilities, I'm grateful for the support that we're seeing from our generous donors as we pursue our ambitious \$4 billion-dollar comprehensive fundraising campaign, and it was an incredible year, the best fundraising year in the history of the University, raising over \$380 million in this year alone. But I'm thinking about alums like Mary and Mike Lamach, who's recent \$10 million gift is helping to kick start fundraising for our new Engineering and Digital Innovation Center, and I was pleased to honor the Lamachs as we celebrated their philanthropy and some of our most engaged alums at this year's Grand Award celebration just last week. It was a pleasure to meet and honor Spartans who've made a lasting impact through their work in areas like industry, innovation, the arts, science, and research.

I want to conclude today by thanking all of our faculty and staff who joined us for our nearly 1,100 mile Spartan Bus Tour through northern Michigan in the Upper Peninsula last week. And, many thanks to the Spartans and the partners who hosted us where they live and work, places many of our students and alums call home and where so many of us love to visit. We gained a fuller appreciation for the challenges facing such rural communities in healthcare, agriculture, education, and so much more. I know there are many in the room who had the chance to join us on that journey. This was our third Spartan Bus Tour, and I couldn't be happier with the impact that we're able to showcase as we touch down in these communities, again, across the state, and we gathered a lot of insight that we hope will foster new collaborations between ourselves and those communities, and so, again, thanks to all those who were able to join us, and I hope that if you haven't had a chance to join us on a Spartan Bus Tour, before you know it, the call for joining that Spring Bus Tour, which will be in early May, will soon be out. So please

pay attention to that and try to consider joining us in May. So, with that, I want to close by sharing this video summarizing the places and experiences of the Fall 2025 Spartan Bus Tour.

And if you thought you may have seen our legendary men's basketball coach Tom Izzo in one of those photos, you are correct. As you know, Coach Izzo is from Iron Mountain, that was one of our stops, and he wanted to be there to talk about growing up in the UP and talking about his hometown as we went into the Iron Mountain Iron Mine there, and so again, thanks to all those that helped make that possible. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Board Secretary Fletcher to talk about the consent agenda.

#### 4. Consent Agenda

Secretary Fletcher provided the following remarks.

A consent agenda is used to group routine items for consideration in one motion, increasing meeting efficiency and allowing more time for items that may require further discussion or attention. The following items are included on this meeting's consent agenda.

Budget and Finance Committee

- A. State of Michigan Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026 Capital Outlay Project Request and Five-year Capital Plan
- B. Material Change to Landscape-Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign
- C. Authorization to Plan-Library North Plaza Renovations
- D. Authorization to Plan-Transportation Services Garage
- E. Sale of Property-1611 River Terrace, East Lansing, Michigan State University

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

- F. Conflict of Interest

On a motion by Trustee Knake Jefferson, supported by Trustee Scott, the **BOARD VOTED to approve** the proposed consent agenda.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendations.

#### 5. Gift, Grant, and Contracts Report

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

Just before Vice President Gage takes the podium here, I woke up to a great email this morning, an update from Doug, saying that the month of September we broke a new record. And that was the, I think you said, 396 federally funded research grants submitted by our faculty in the month of September. I think the previous record you said was 370. We had 396, so, again, despite some of the challenges that we're facing in higher ed, our world class faculty researchers are continuing to do incredible work submitting grants. I know we'll secure many of those grants to continue to stay on this great trajectory and eventually top that \$1 billion in research expenditure. So, Doug, thank you.

Vice President Doug Gage presented the Gifts, Grants and Contracts Report for the period of May 20, 2025, through October 1, 2025. The report is a compilation of 972 Gifts, Grants and Contracts plus 61 Consignment/Non-Cash Gifts, with a total value of \$342,459,141.

Trustee Knake Jefferson **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Pierce.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

## 6. Research Presentation

Vice President Gage introduced Dr. Sue Rhee, Plant Resilience Institute, who gave a presentation on Securing Planet and People Resilience Through Innovative Plant Resilience Research. (Appendix A)

Following the presentation, President Guskiewicz made the following remarks

Any questions for Dr. Rhee, I have one or two maybe. One is that I know to be celebrated at the University speech that we gave a few weeks ago that apples, we know that we're the second leading Apple producer Michigan as you mentioned potatoes. I have curious as to where we sit in terms of potato production.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Twenty five percent of potato chip potatoes come from Michigan. And the two varieties that I told you about, I'm not going to reveal the names, but they are used in potato chip making today. Yeah, they're commercial varieties.

President Guskiewicz made the following remarks

And then, just as we learned when we were up near Traverse City for our board retreat in June, we had a chance to visit a vineyard, and we talked about how climate change is affecting the production of grapes and wine. How is it affecting?

How does your research intersect with the climate change and creating more resiliency for crop growing?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Yeah, thank you for that. Actually, fungal pathogens are the number one pests of all of the types of pathogens around the world, including grapes. So, it's actually quite a devastating type of infection, because they affect not only the quantity of yield, but also, they produce these very bad toxins called mycotoxins that make the grapes or corn grains unusable. So, because they affect animals and humans and so it is really a bad problem. And the fact that we're starting out with finding novel fungicides, I think, is very meaningful, and the fact that they're actually not a lot of varieties of fungicides that are used commercially, and that they're all synthetic ones, the ones that we're trying to develop are natural products, and, like, hopefully biodegradable and environmentally safe. And, you know we may not be able to patent them, because if they're already like well-known or FDA approved already, but we care more about farmers being able to get access to these compounds right away. They could maybe go to CVS and then using them that season. So, you know, I didn't mention this, but the traditional way of trying to improve agriculture is breeding, and these more recently engineering. But these processes take decades. I think that if we're able to find some safe, environmentally safe and animal safe compounds that farmers can use, like, right away, we could help them next year and maybe temporary solution for that season that has, like, a major heat wave or drought spell, but we can still, like, help the farmers that year, you know, not, you know, lose 80 percent of their crop.

Trustee Knake Jefferson provided the following remarks

I have a quick question, if I can. So, one of the first things when, I guess, six years ago now, Chair Tebay and Vice Chair Scott and I saw were the greenhouses that did not look like a photo that we saw here. And it took a while. It took a number of years. We, I think all of us, visited at least twice in their former form and saw just how much you needed that investment and that improvement. And I really appreciate that you mentioned it now, but I wonder if you would just say a little bit more about what it has meant for the university to be able to invest in that infrastructure to support your research.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Yeah. I mean, these greenhouses are really life changing. I mean growth chambers too. Before I came here, we had to custom build these green houses and growth chambers to mimic conditions of the fields. And we are very interested in mimicking conditions of the future. Yeah. And, you know, Corinne Prado, that I mentioned, she literally babysat the growth chambers, like 12 hours a day. Okay? She came here. We got this amazing chambers. Thank you, Doug. And thank you everyone. She's literally told me, I quote, this was life changing, you know, and

because now she can actually do real work. Same thing with the greenhouses. We had geysers in the middle of the greenhouses before you probably saw that, and now, you know, we can control the conditions, and you know, they work beautifully, and we have space, and there's a lot more collaboration that can happen. The automated watering system that I told you about, I don't think we could have put that into the old greenhouses, because why would you want to set up a fancy auto automation when the rest of the conditions, like, you know, you know, not, not quite ready. So, yeah, it's really allowing us think about, okay, now we got really controllable conditions in the greenhouses. What else can we do? Like, how can we push ourselves and our science like now we're actually thinking about automation. We're talking about, like, digital twins, you know, we're going to get into AI high throughput phenotyping. We can start thinking about these things. So, I think that what you can do, we just basically on top of that synergize and it just kind of goes into kind of exponential mode of discovery, which is really exciting. Thank you.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

I'll go. Dr Gage, I just want to thank you. Every time you bring someone, we learn something, and I like to learn. So, thank you. I didn't know what pennycress was, I had to look it up. Yeah, I looked it up. So, you're using it, not to it's not edible, because I like food, and I had never heard of pennycress?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

I'm so glad you mentioned that, because I actually neglected to bring that up. It's an emerging cover crop. It used to be a noxious weed only about five years ago, but scientists, plant scientists, have actually domesticated using genetic engineering, and it's an oil seed crop that's winter hardy, so you can plant it in between your coin corn and soybean rotations. And so, you, after you harvest your corn or soybean, you plant pennycress and over winter it grows. And then early spring, farmers can harvest the seeds for oil. It makes like really nice oil for sustainable jet fuel. And it also covers the ground so that when it rains over winter, you don't have soil erosion, and you don't have nutrient bleaching. So, it's called, like a cash crop. That's cover crop is called Intermediate crop. So, pennycress is one of the exceptions of the seven crops that we're doing. It's not a world globally traded commodity; it's a cover crop. But we're really excited about pennycress. In fact, we just planted our first we started doing our first field study here at MSU this fall. We just planted the seeds in September. So actually, I have a, I have a picture. This is it. Actually, I wanted to show you this, but I didn't think I had time. So, in two weeks of like learning that we had some space available, we went to Mike Particka, who's the agronomy farm manager, and we and two weeks later, we were able to plant the seeds. This is my postdoc, Danielle Paige Smith who's a PRI germ plasm curator. An amazing grad student, Brianna Hashem, in biochemistry, the four of us just actually went out to the field, checked it out. Two weeks later, we had seeds on the ground.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

Okay, so don't eat.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

You can't eat the oil after extraction. But no, it's not. No.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

I love food.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

It is similar to arugula. So, you could try it.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

I'm not gonna try it. But thank you. Thank you, though I appreciate the invitation. So, the other thing you mentioned soy and corn, and I was looking at your afflictions, and they were like Sudden Death Syndrome for soy and ergot? Are those real? Or did you make those up?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

They are, they're real, real and they are epidemic. I mean, the names I didn't make it up that sudden death syndrome is actually one of the worst epidemics we're facing today in the US.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

Wow. For soy?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

For soybean, yes.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

And then my last question was back to that map. So, C-SPIRIT is, so you, these are the C-SPIRIT folks?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Oh, no, these are the C-SPIRIT folks, okay, only some of them. We have 110 people from five countries working on C-SPIRIT right now.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

Okay, so then the next one is the PRI folks.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Yeah, these are members of my lab. I have about 20 people in my lab, and then PRI admin team. There's about three or four of them, yeah.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

So, my question is, having visited Africa, maybe 12-13, times, why are, and literally, agriculture is everywhere. It's like a mash up of industry and industrial and agriculture like it. You walk down the street and there's goats with you, yes, right? But it's like in the middle of Addis Ababa, like in real life. Why are you not there? What's happening?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Yes, I'm glad you mentioned that, because when I was making this map, I saw it too, and I thought about like, "Oh, is it cool to highlight this?" And I thought, you know, yeah it is because I really want to go there, and I want to also go South America and Australia, the areas that are not covered. So, it tells me that, okay, we are very diverse in our group, but not diverse enough. So, I'm going to work on that.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks

Well, if you need help in Ghana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

I will, I'm going to, I'll email you.

Provost McIntyre provided the following remarks

Thank you, Professor Rhee. This is really incredible. I wonder if you could talk a little bit more, kind of piggybacking on what Trustee Vassar was saying about the importance of the global work to accelerating the impact of your discovery. So, you've, you're working across five different countries, talk a little bit about what that means and what those global partnerships mean to MSU.

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

Yeah, for me, it's been really an eye-opening experience. You know, I thought that it would be very, very challenging because of the differences in cultures and how

we operate in science. But, in fact, I think these differences actually have become such great opportunities and learning lessons, and we have different problems that we face in agriculture, in our economy, in policy. And so, it's really enriching us to, sort of, be more, I guess, open-minded and to look outwards, and I think our trainees are loving it. Okay, so we have already trained four scholars from Japan so far, and we have a constant flow of people coming. I'd like to actually try to do the reverse of sending our trainees to other countries as well through this project. But yeah, it's really been a huge learning experience, and I am, like, kind of swearing by it now. I think we should really be more and more global.

Trustee Pierce provided the following remarks

I just have one question. Thanks. Thank you. Dr Rhee, that was fascinating. If you look at the chart that you put up of all the plant science programs in the United States, as well as what you're doing with C-SPIRIT. How many are using the field to lab to field, and how many are using AI technology?

Dr. Sue Rhee provided the following response

A lot of people are trying to use AI. The field to lab to field is new. It's something that we are trying to do. There's scientists, Andrew Leakey at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, who has sort of done something like field to lab to field, but not in the way that we're envisioning, but he's actually more advanced than we are. He's got this amazing field research infrastructures like massive green rain out shelter that's from production, like companies that make, you know, these devices for farmers that do sensitive vegetables and cut flowers and things like that. He's got, like, a quarter of an acre size of these rain out shelters that can actually close and open within two minutes of rain, so you can really precisely control environments, and so we want to replicate that here at MSU, and we're trying very hard, and we would ultimately like to connect and maybe have these field research stations that are doing fundamental research. And I don't know if you know, but fundamental and translational research- NIH has funded 60 translational centers for medical research. I think they're called CTSAs, and for plants, there is zero. We have no translational research centers out in the fields, which is our equivalent to clinical trials. So, we are really excited to establish that, especially in the Midwest. I just recently learned that the Great Lakes megalopolis is the biggest region in North America, with 60 million people. The amount of, its second in terms of GDP, to the Boston, Washington area. But it's investment into this area is, of course, much, much, much lower than the Boston, D.C. area, and it's because that area gets a lot of money for medical research, right? I think we have an opportunity to bring in that investment for agriculture and really, like, you know, help the entire region which has got the most number of people.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks

Well, thank you so much. I'm just thrilled. I love potato chips. I'm just glad we're not going to run out here in Michigan anytime soon. And great, great presentation. Appreciate all that you're doing. Thank you.

## 8. Personnel Actions

Provost McIntyre presented the following personnel actions and other appointments.

1. Bryan L. Foster, Ph.D.—AN, Professor, Department of Plant Biology, with tenure, effective November 6, 2025.
2. Lihu Xu, Ph.D., AY—Associate Professor, Department of Statistics and Probability, with tenure, effective January 1, 2026.
3. Ruthie Angelovici, Ph.D.—AY, Associate Professor, Department of Plant Biology, with tenure, effective January 15, 2026.
4. Kurt F. Kipfmüller, Ph.D.—AY, 1855 Professor, Department of Forestry, with tenure, effective November 3, 2025.
5. Jeremy T. Bruskotter, Ph.D.—AY, Guyer Seavers Endowed Chair and Professor, Department of Community Sustainability, with tenure, effective January 3, 2026.
6. Christopher N. Topp, Ph.D.—AY, Professor, Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences, with tenure, effective January 1, 2026.
7. Phillip Rumrill, Ph.D.—AY, Professor, Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education, with tenure, effective October 31, 2025.

### Other Appointments

1. Supratik Rayamajhi, MD – AN, Professor Health Programs, Department of Medicine, for an additional appointment of Interim Dean, College of Human Medicine, effective October 1, 2025.

### Other Personnel Actions

2. It is recommended that the title of Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer be changed to Vice President and Chief Inclusion Officer, effective October 31, 2025, and that all applicable policy documents be revised to reflect this change. The custodians of board and University-level policy documents are authorized to update position title references in those policies, in alignment with this action and in consultations with the Office of the President.

- a. Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D.—AN, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer for a title change to Vice President and Chief Inclusion Officer, effective October 31, 2025.
- 3. Kevin M. Guskiewicz, Ph.D.—President, with an amended and restated contract. The Chair of the Board of Trustees is authorized to execute any documents necessary to effectuate this action.

Trustee Scott moved to approve the recommendations, with support from Trustee Knake Jefferson.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks.

I do have some discussion. Congratulations to all those who were promoted. I know it's a big feat, and title changes are a big deal. Congratulations, President Guskiewicz on your review and your raise as well. I do not, I can't vote yes for this because I do not agree that we should capitulate to pressure around language changes. I think Jabbar Bennett is awesome. I think he does a great job. He's amazing, and I'm not necessarily partial to titles in any other case, except this one, so my that's why I'm voting no. I just wanted to make sure I am congratulating everyone on the hard work that got them the promotions, and I'm congratulating Jabbar Bennett on the work that he continues to do. And I'm also ecstatic about our president, and I'm still going to vote no.

Trustee Denno provide the following remarks.

I agree with what Dr. Rema Vassar said. Just really tired of running away from the word diversity. I mean, I look in this room, I think we're incredibly diverse in many different respects, and so I'm probably just going to abstain because I, because I love the rest of it, but I don't agree with removing the word diversity from the title of Dr. Jabbar Bennett, who is doing a really good job.

Trustee Tebay provided the following remarks.

Yeah, I'd like to speak directly to the President's evaluation process as part of the broader personnel report offered this morning. The Board of Trustees is charged with conducting an annual performance evaluation of the Michigan State University president in accordance with Board of Trustee policy 202. This process is led by the Committee on Budget and Finance, and I want to thank my fellow trustees on the commitment for their work related to this process. For this past year, objectives were agreed to across five areas related to the President's responsibilities: strategic vision and planning, operational excellence, stakeholder engagement, governance and compliance, and organizational development and planning. Under President Guskiewicz, with stewardship, we have seen significant progress across each of these areas. Leadership qualities that he has demonstrated are welcomed

not only by the board, but also by the wider Spartan community. This is evident in comments from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other friends and university partners who have interacted with the President. Let me highlight just a few of the ways where the President has moved us forward using his strategic, bold, and student-focused philosophy. President Guskiewicz led his team efforts in refreshing the 2030 strategic plan, providing a renewed focus for the institution in several key areas, energizing talent development and retention efforts for the state. Building community through initiatives such as the first gen center and focusing on student success through launching the Williams scholarship, the Lansing Spartan Scholars Program, the Green and White Council, and the Native American tuition program, to name a few. Launching the public phase of a \$4 billion comprehensive fundraising campaign, the most ambitious in the university's history, to support the fresh vision contained in the strategic plan. Numbers here speak for themselves, a record-breaking fundraising year of over \$380 million highlighted the support the president has quickly built among our alumni and belief in his leadership, engaging trustees collaboratively, both individually and as a board to further the institution's governance in helping to continually move the university forward, as he has done in other areas. Bringing stability to this campus was a key message the board heard during the presidential search process. We applaud Dr. Guskiewicz, his approach and partnership and fostering that environment. Engagement is a reoccurring theme in various ways, such as the President's newly established Student Leadership Council; with various stakeholders and across various issues, the President has demonstrated leadership through direct ongoing engagement. The core components of the contractual amendments are as follows: an adjustment to the President's base salary in alignment with standard salary increases provided to other executive management positions this fiscal year, an adjustment to the President's deferred compensation and the designation of a Hannah Distinguished Professorship with all rights and responsibilities therein. In taking this action, the board has balanced recognizing the extraordinary leadership of the President and the institutional importance in retaining the president with the fiscal headwinds confronting the university. In closing, I'd like to express on behalf of the board our appreciation to the President for his leadership. The president has quickly embraced the Spartan community, and the Spartan community has in turn embraced him and his family. Kevin has also challenged us to look over our next set of horizons and evolve to meet the needs of both current and future Spartans. We are proud of what has been accomplished in a little over 18 months and are excited to see how this chapter of our institution's history will continue to unfold.

Trustee Scott provided the following remarks.

I just wanted to say having been on this board over six years now, I think Trustee Knake Jefferson, Tebay, and I have been through five presidents, and I have never been as confident in our leadership here at this university than I am at this time with Kevin Guskiewicz at the helm. I sincerely believe that we have the right leader for the right time. I'm appreciative of the time that he came in and a lot that the university was going through, and some of the very difficult decisions that he's had

to make, but it does help in making those decisions to have the confidence in our leadership. When we interviewed Kevin, it was very clear to those of us on the board at that time that we needed someone with a vision and someone that would not be afraid to verge into the unknown and to do things that we haven't done, to challenge us to be a trailblazer, and Kevin has been all of that, plus some. And, I have to say that the excitement is palpable throughout this community, our alum, our donors, our students, faculty and staff. You'd be hard pressed to find anyone that really has anything negative to say about Kevin. He's very accessible. He is a great listener, and I believe that he has done a phenomenal job. So, I was very proud to be able to be in support of this. And I just want to thank you for your leadership. And I look forward to, well, my term's coming up, but I'm looking forward to your continued leadership here, Kevin, so thank you for everything you've done.

Trustee Knake Jefferson provided the following remarks.

I will just echo everything that Chair Tebay and Vice Chair Scott have said about you, Kevin. It's an honor to work with you. And then, since all of this is packaged together, I want to join my colleagues in congratulating everyone on their promotions, and with respect to the title change for Jabbar Bennett, I just want to say I certainly recognize the concerns that Trustee Vassar and Trustee Denno, have expressed and in balancing though, I also recognize that this is something that the administration has asked us to support and I trust under the leadership of this President, that the work we do will not change and the work will remain and that's why I will vote yes to support the title change, because the most important thing to me is who is leading and the work that will be done, and I have total confidence in that, both from our president and also from Jabbar Bennett.

Trustee Pierce provided the following remarks.

So, I agree with everything that's been said by both of you. Thank you. I just want to say that when we went through the presidential search 18 months ago, the selection committee did a great job bringing nominees to the board, and we don't always agree, the eight of us, on everything, and we have robust discussions during the work sessions and our calls, and we respect each other's opinions, but when we voted among ourselves to bring it to vote here on our next president, it was unanimous among all eight of us to select President Guskiewicz, so I join the others in how grateful we are that you joined us. Thank you.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

I just want to also congratulate all those who are being approved today for promotions. I want to also thank this board for the confidence that you have in me. I enjoy working with each of you in helping to move this great university forward. So, thank you for the confidence that you have.

**THE BOARD VOTED to approve the recommendations.**

Trustee Denno abstained.

Trustee Vassar voted no.

8. Committee on Budget and Finance

Trustee Pierce presented the Trustee Budget and Finance Committee Report and the following recommendations and resolutions.

Okay, I just want to remind everyone that from the Budget and Finance Committee items 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 have been moved for approval, as we saw earlier in the consent agenda. So, I've got, as I've got a few, but not too many.

A. Authorization to Proceed-Engineering and Digital Innovation Center

The Trustee Committee on Budget & Finance recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize the Administration to proceed with a new Engineering and Digital Innovation Center for teaching, learning, and laboratory research. This will prepare MSU students today for the careers of tomorrow and support research in emerging fields such as AI, space electronics, quantum computing and materials science.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby authorizes the Administration to proceed with the project titled, "Engineering and Digital Innovation Center," with a project budget of \$340,000,000.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Administration will maintain its ongoing coordination with the State of Michigan's capital planning and outlay processes, in alignment with the project being the University's capital outlay request for cost participation in State Fiscal Year 2027.

Trustee Pierce **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Tebay.

Trustee Ballow provided the following remarks.

Just realize what we're doing here, what you're seeing here. Like this is every building that's going up here is a part of our future for a really long time, right? This is one of the most incredible, impressive, impactful things that you're going to see, both in terms of it being value added, it being what it costs to do it, and what it's going to mean for successive generations of Spartans. For those of us of a certain age in this room, not you, our younger people, this thing will be around long after we're gone, right? And any innovation that we see here in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, that we do

here on campus is going to be done in this building once it's up. And so, it's a pretty, pretty ambitious and pretty exciting thing, and this is a good example in terms of how this has been planned for the risk management profile of doing something like this and doing it the right way with the right people. I'm sure it's going to be something we can all be proud of when we're done, and I think you should track it closely and follow the news and have input on it when you're asked for it. And it's going to be a really good thing for our campus. Thank you.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

You got it. Any, any other questions? And I agree with what Trustee Balow said, this is going to be an incredible opportunity for us to get out in front, ahead of others in this digital innovation space. And so, I'm grateful for all that's gone into this by so many people over many years. This was initiated before I got here, and, also to our Advancement team, as I look at Kim Tobin and others that have helped us raise coming up close to \$100 million of private philanthropy, and I do want to thank Dean Papapolymerou for that, because he's been by our side in raising a lot of those dollars, alongside Kim Tobin and others. So, thank you.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

**B. Authorization to Plan-Spartan Gateway Development—Athletic and Recreation District**

The Trustee Committee on Budget and Finance recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize the Administration to plan for the creation of a mixed-use development utilizing a Public Private Partnership (P3) delivery model. The goals of this planning process include: (1) creating a destination that draws visitors, inspires collaboration, and reinforces MSU's reputation for excellence; 2) activating campus life with new commercial and retail opportunities that strengthen existing assets and showcase the beauty of MSU; and 3) enhancing the student, fan, and alumni experience by building a year-round, multi-use community.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby authorizes the Administration to plan for the project titled, "Spartan Gateway Development—Athletic and Recreation District."

Trustee Pierce **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Bahar-Cook.

Trustee Denno provided the following remarks.

Thank you. So, I realize this is just an authorization to plan, not an authorization to proceed, but I am strongly, strongly, strongly opposed to even the concept of putting a hotel on Munn Field and/or where IM West is. I think we have way too many vehicles on campus as it is. I think our traffic pattern on campus is really confusing. I think it would lead to, again, obviously, more car exhaust and potentially having more pollution. I just think it makes absolutely no sense to put, even contemplate putting a hotel at those two locations, and that's why I'm voting no.

Trustee Balow provided the following remarks.

I have some of those same concerns. I'm actually going to support the planning of this. If you recall I was a no vote on the Gateway Project back where it was because I had some concerns about the cost and its impact on the general fund and so forth. What you're seeing here is a rethinking of that project, still including a hotel and perhaps some mixed use, some retail and some other service related things in the locations that Trustee Denno mentioned, but also, as we discussed yesterday, a real strong rethinking of the Kellogg Center in terms of a renovation or even perhaps a demolition and part or full into rebuild at that site. We don't yet know how it's going to turn out. The cost of this study is, there is a cost, but it's quite nominal compared to actually proceeding with the project. So, we have to get this right, and I want to see what the planners come up with, with concept and with dealing with some of these issues, and if it ultimately leads to a project that we think is going to be better for the campus, it'll come back with the authority to proceed or not. And it's also important to note that we've been told that the original Gateway site is still not off the table. It's still on the table, although perhaps in modified form we'll see. So, there's a lot more thinking that needs to go into this. But what I'm saying to you is because, as Trustee Denno said, both of those sites represent challenges in different ways, you know, so when we're looking at changing the campus in a meaningful way, you know, you can have an impact. You can study it, you can reach out, you can have a discussion and bring your concerns to it. For instance, the IM West site, if that comes down, will impact rec sports, and that's a separate parallel study we're doing right now. If that does come down, what do we need to invest in IM East to make sure we're not, even with the addition of the new Rec Center, which is exciting, to make sure that we're not shortchanging the campus. So, there's a lot of moving pieces here. It's very complex. And just know that we're trying to be very, very thoughtful about this. And so, for that reason, I will- I do want to support this study, but I have some pretty strong reservations coming in that will need to be solved in order for me to ultimately proceed on some of this stuff. Thank you.

Trustee Pierce provided the following remarks.

And this was something that got, as I said earlier, a lot of discussion at our work session. But when the RFP goes out, if they, one of the requirements of the RFP is, for whoever's interested in responding, that they look at lots of options, not just the ones that were mentioned just now. So, lots more work to do, and we'll certainly have a lot of conversation about it and come back to you before there's any vote to proceed on any project of this magnitude. And Dan Bollman is available, I can say his last name, if anybody would like have a comment or a question.

Trustee Balow provided the following remarks.

Sorry. One more thing, the other piece of this that wasn't mentioned is this affects sports, right, like so we had a tour yesterday of Jenison and Dem Hall and things like that, because without the arena piece, we have a great new athletic director that's taken a proactive look at investing in the Olympic and women's sports, both for practice and competition. So even though you're hearing that the arena right now is off the table, that thought of supporting those sports going forward is still very much on the table. Thank you.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

Really important points have been made. And I promised the Board, as we began these discussions, we would, part of this process is really getting answers to many of the questions that have been asked, very good questions, traffic studies, and whole lots of other information. And I trust that Dan Bollman and his team are going to do a great job in delivering on that.

Trustee Denno voted no.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

**C. Spartan Ventures**

The Trustee Committee on Budget and Finance recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize the President to enter into an Affiliation Agreement with a new non-profit, tax-exempt corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan to be known as Spartan Ventures and its subsidiary non-profit, tax-exempt corporation Spartan Athletics Foundation.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby authorizes the President to enter into an Affiliation Agreement with a new non-profit, tax-exempt corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan to be known as Spartan Ventures and its subsidiary non-profit,

tax-exempt corporation Spartan Athletics Foundation on such terms and conditions as the President determines to be in the best interest of Michigan State University.

Trustee Pierce **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Tebay.

J Batt provided the following remarks.

Just wanted to make brief remarks and appreciate the Board of Trustees for considering this action. This innovative structure will provide Michigan State Athletics a competitive advantage. Efficiency, innovation, and adaptability enable operations to occur in a more nimble manner. This shift in structure will benefit all university sports and all student athletes, operationalizing revenue generation flexibility while maintaining institutional alignment, which is essential in today's changing college athletics landscape. We truly appreciate the Board for your leadership, as well as President Guskiewicz for your support, and ask that you might consider this motion.

Trustee Vassar provided the following remarks.

You didn't catch me this time. You did a good job there last time, I was ready to vote. But I do want to say a couple things. One, coming into the trustee position from a faculty position as a lifelong educator, I had never been to a collegiate football game in my life, but I realized right away as a trustee that it was, particularly here at Michigan State University, that it was really important, that athletics actually does finance a lot of the work that faculty do in ways that I didn't anticipate, right, from this vantage point. So, I've been pushing for better leadership in athletics from the top down since I got on the Board, even though I really would like to write papers during the games, right? Like, literally, that's what I brought my computer to do. I recognize the importance and leadership matters. Leadership absolutely matters. That you are taking a creative, innovative stance and thinking about ways to remain competitive in this area is critical. I am grateful, and relieved because it's a long time coming, but grateful for your vision and your courage, because courage is in short supply a lot of times in leadership, and that you all are saying, you know, we're going to do something different, we're going to take a chance, and we want the Board to trust us in that. I'm grateful for that. Thank you. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for bringing my cookies back to me last night. I appreciate that, he's one of the most sincere and considerate and mannerable people that I've met ever. He's genuine, and you wouldn't think that he'd be this big of a risk taker when he says, you know ma'am to

you all the time, but he does say, ma'am, yes, ma'am. So, I'm grateful that you're here. Thank you for taking the position. Thank you for having the, I think you had sway in bringing him here, you used all your magic to bring him here, and I appreciate that you two have taken this on in a serious way to bring us boldly forward into the future

Trustee Balow provided the following remarks.

This is pretty, pretty exciting. I know it's kind of catching a lot of you, probably, by surprise, because this is the first time you're hearing about it. I'd like to echo the words of Trustee Vassar, we're very fortunate to have J and your wife, Leah, your better half, and your two little guys. They've been a great part of campus so far, and I know J's probably had a lot of sleepless nights catching up with Spartans all across the country to figure this out. And figure it out we will, you know, we are going to be leaders in this space, because we simply, it's changing every day. Like I get up and I check my phone, I'm like, Well, what's different in college sports from last night? You know? What the heck is going on? And J's trying to keep us on the forefront of that in ways that we haven't done before, but in ways that not a lot of people have done before, and in ways which are prudent. And I want to touch on this, like we're creating an entity within the Athletic Department to be entrepreneurial, to be forward, to be fast, to be nimble, to react and be proactive, but yet still be part of a college right like so there's checks and balances here, like the board that we're going to create to oversee this entity will have seven seats, one of which will be designated by this board, one of which will be designated by the Athletic Director himself, and one of which will be designated by the President, and then four other creative people who are going to help fundraise, who are going to help plan, who are going to help market, who are going to help raise all of our sports to good health and to ultimate success. And it's a pretty, pretty exciting thing, and it's in parallel with a lot of things that are going on at the conference level, the Big Ten and elsewhere, but realize what we're doing here is fairly unique to us. This is not something where there's equity investors coming into the Athletic Department. This is creating and wholly owned by us, entity that is going to be able to do the things in a faster manner that we know we need to do. And so, I compliment J on his creativeness and his team as well that he's building. And I think that you're gonna have a lot of questions about this that you should feel free to ask. And let's rock and roll with this. Let's go.

Trustee Pierce provided the following remarks.

And this is another moment I will tell you, over the last several weeks, we've had a lot of discussion to get to this point today. So, it is with full knowledge thus far that we have on the entity that we bring it to you.

Trustee Scott provided the following remarks.

I just want to, just gonna say in J, we trust.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

There we go. Great. I just want to add that that I want to thank the Board for considering this on such relatively short notice that we, this is, J came here four months ago. We asked, I asked him very clearly that to innovate and innovate quickly. And he got his sea legs under him and then began to put a plan in place. Also want to acknowledge and thank Brian Quinn, Harold Balk, others that have helped were by his side and helping us to get to this place. And I think great things are going to come from this. And Jen Smith was, Jen here? Jen is here. Thank you, Jen. Yes, sorry I couldn't see you back there. But again, I think the future is bright for Spartan athletics, and this is an important next step.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

The Committee received the Second Quarter Investment Report, the Annual Review of the Endowment Spending Rate and the Liquidity Pools Report for the quarter ended September 30, 2025. Let me just conclude with thanking the committee members so it is Chair Tebay, Trustee Vassar and Trustee Denno. Every trustee is invited to the Budget and Finance Committee meetings, even if they are not official members, and they're encouraged to come. I know Trustee Balow came the last time. It's very helpful. We're running a very big budget with under the, under the leadership of Lisa Frace and your great team. So, thank you for that, and that concludes my report.

9. Committee on Academic Affairs

Trustee Knake Jefferson presented the Trustee Academic Affairs Committee Report and the following recommendations and resolutions.

Excellent, thank you. I get to do something this morning that I don't think I've ever had the opportunity to do in my role as a trustee, and certainly not as the Chair of Academic Affairs, and that's to make a very special announcement and motion.

A. Approval of naming(s) under BOT 612, Building and Facilities—Naming

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve naming the auditorium and auditorium pre-function space within the Engineering and Digital Innovation Center the Mary and Mike Lamach Auditorium and the Mary and Mike Lamach Auditorium Lobby.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby approves the naming of the auditorium and auditorium pre-function space within the Engineering and Digital Innovation Center the Mary and Mike Lamach Auditorium and the Mary and Mike Lamach Auditorium Lobby.

Trustee Knake Jefferson **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Tebay.

Kim Tobin provided the following remarks.

So, Mike and Mary Lamach met here on campus. They are wonderful alumni and have been with us on this project some from the beginning, before we had drawings or anything else, they believed in Michigan State, from the day they met here and made a commitment, and when we came back, after we had drawings and our vision in place, agreed to double their gift. So, we thank them. They were honored last week with the Philanthropist of the Year Award, and I think it's a very worthy honor, and we look forward to bringing more people into the project and more news to come at future meetings. So, thank you.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

My only other news to share is that our committee received a presentation on the modernization of our General Education Program, a unionization update and an update on the RCAH-CAL Merger, and that concludes my report.

#### 10. Committee on Audit, Risk and Compliance

Vice Chairperson Scott presented the Trustee Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee Report and the following recommendations and resolutions.

I want to note that the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee Item Number Two was moved for approval via the consent agenda. So, our action item highlights are as follows.

##### A. Acceptance of the Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2025

The Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee met and reviewed with the MSU staff and the university's external auditors, Plante Moran the 2024-25

Audited Financial Statements were reviewed. The University received a clean opinion from the auditors, which indicates that MSU followed accounting rules appropriately, and that the financial reports are an accurate representation of MSU's financial position as of June 30, 2025. No significant changes were made to Plante Moran's audit approach, which was reviewed by the committee prior to the audit work commencing. There were no significant adjustments that were proposed during the audit, and no material weaknesses in internal controls or accounting policies and procedures were noted. Based upon this review and report, Board action is now recommended to make official the June 30, 2025, financial statements of the University.

As chairperson of the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee, I move that the Board accept the audited financial statements for the year ending, June 30, 2025.

Trustee Scott **moved to approve** the recommendations, with support from Trustee Knake Jefferson.

**THE BOARD VOTED** to approve the recommendation.

Trustee Scott made the following remarks.

11. Committee on Student Life and Culture

Chairperson Tebay presented the Student Life and Culture Committee Report.

The Student Life and Culture Committee Received a presentation on the Care and Intervention Team discussed civil rights compliance and student representation.

12. Liaisons Report, Chairperson's Report, Trustees' Comments

Lauren Pelon, RHA Representative, provided the following report.

All right, hello. I hope the board is doing well. My name is Lauren Pelon, and I'm the president of the Residence Halls Association and the representative for our leadership team. When we last spoke, RHA was getting prepped for the year with training and event planning. After a week training both new and returning leadership team members, we hit the ground running with recruitment during Welcome Week. We participated in more than two weeks of events to help spread the word about our hall governments and RHA recognized caucuses. Our team also worked to boost our social media engagement and marketing for the session. Due to our active recruiting, we were able to hit quorum in our second, second general assembly meeting of the session. This is the fastest I've personally seen, and several other leadership team members said the same. Because of this recruitment, RHA has been able to pass a variety of bills. Along with that, RHA has

also had the opportunity to host a summit for our constituent groups each semester. Our fall summit happened at the end of September, with 80 people in attendance. This is the largest fall, largest fall attendance we have had. This summit allows us to spread awareness for all the opportunities our constituents have access to by being a part of RHA. We are hoping this number grows for spring. Now, RHA has currently been focused on updating our governing documents to comply with federal guidelines. We were able to pass an interim constitution, bylaws and, constitutional template for our hall governments and RHA recognized caucuses to use at our most recent general assembly meeting, and that is my report. Thank you.

Priyanka Kothari, COGS Representative, provided the following report.

Can you hear me? Okay, good morning. Chairman Tebay, President Guskiewicz, members of the Board, members of the MSU community. My name is Priyanka Kothari, and I'm here as the President of Council of Graduate Students, which represents the graduate and professional students here at MSU. I'm pleased to report that COGS has held three of its required four meetings for the fall semesters, and we have had robust full Council this year, and we are very optimistic with how things are looking up, despite everything that's going on. We at COGS, one of the most important things that we try to do is build community with graduate and professional students here at MSU, and for that, we try to do a lot of social events. Typically, our aim is to do something every week, and we try to take our events out across campuses and across East Lansing community. We started off the year strong with our annual Fall Welcome Celebration, which saw a participation of close to 700 graduate and professional students along with their friends and family. We have included multiple events, including two tailgates, various coffee and connections across campus, the Horticulture Garden, Foster's Coffee, Multicultural Center, Hooked Coffee shop, which is so beloved in East Lansing, the Auditorium Building, Theater Building, Holden Hall. We have, we have planned a tour of the FRIB facility, impact FMS, we had a paddling event at the Sailing Center, bonfire and game night. So, lots of fun things. And we have great upcoming events, which are always open to all a night at the Abrams Planetarium, and something that I'm most excited for, a laser cutting workshop at the Hollander Makerspace. With our social events, we aim to connect graduate and professional students to each other, but also to increase visibility of COGS, because a lot of graduate and professional students, unfortunately, just live in their own bubbles. We are always open to ideas and collaborations, and we would love to be invited to your space. So that's just a shout out here. Outside of these events, we also have taken various sponsorship opportunities to provide support to student organizations across campuses and student initiatives, which include funding for graduate and professional students to attend the right Winning Grants Workshop organized by the Office of Research and Innovation in partnership with the graduate school. Furthermore, we are one of the sponsors for the Heal Sexual Health Conference that's scheduled for January 2026, and we are also now live with a financial webinar for quarterly tax estimate workshops for graduate, graduate and professional students. We also

look forward to our 18<sup>th</sup> annual Graduate Academy Conference on February 21, 2026, at MSU union. We are now inviting abstracts until January 16. So please spread the word. Please tell your students or any graduate and professional students that you know. We are also looking for sponsorships, and we are reaching out across communities so look out for our emails, and this is just a great place for graduate students to present their own research in their own campus. I mean, it doesn't get easier than that, and we really spend a lot of time planning that. A big chunk of our budget goes to providing funding to graduate and professional students outside of these events on a regular basis. So, we have a GSO Support Award this year for the Department of Mechanical Engineering. We have supported nine GSO events so far, and we have funded 28 graduate and professional students to present their research at various conference, conferences, and also provided funding for about 21 professional students for various professional development activities. While these numbers are promising for the work that we do at COGS, they also, there's also an increase in the trends of COGS that we have seen, and more and more graduate and professional students are reaching out to us for these funding requests. We understand these are probably due to being aggravated by the Federal and MSU budget cuts that are happening at the college and department levels. Every graduate and professional student is experiencing the impact of the cuts differently. Faculty cuts and lack of funding options are making every graduate position more competitive. Several programs are in moratorium for accepting new students. These moratoriums are in place to protect graduate students that are already here, but they also come at a cost to existing graduate students, because they lose, lose entire cohorts that create barriers to collaboration among cohorts within the programs, and loss of graduate cultures. Much of graduate student learning is peer to peer and mentorship, especially between the master's and PhD student students, is highly valued and needed by the community. Additionally, course offerings for non-majors are impacted as departments prioritize funding requirements. This means that students have fewer opportunities to take necessary courses for their research that may have not been found in their own home departments. Last month, COGS was alerted to some essential bioinformatics training courses that were cut in the CMSE department, which made many graduate and professional students nervous who were dependent on these courses. To our latest information about students in 25 different departments take these courses, and they have no other way to access this opportunity. This brings another long-standing systemic issue at the forefront, which is that students do work across departments and sometimes across colleges to better leverage all the opportunities that MSU offer us, but it is difficult to navigate when we go from one department to another and when we don't have enough information or guidance, there is a clear communication gap sometimes that leads to that comes at the cost of graduate and professional students and oftentimes different stakeholders we have found to not have enough information to help the graduate students. So therefore, I would really urge to advocate for more transparency in communication, especially at the mid-levels, so that the day-to-day life becomes easier for graduate and professional students, we don't know what we don't know. So a clear

communication plan will greatly help improve the graduate and professional student experience here at MSU and the CSE course removal is like the perfect example for this situation, and furthermore, as various departments and units are rearranging themselves to align with their new realities, it is unfortunate that it also comes at a cost for graduate and professional students, because we have seen a cutting of resources that has been available for their professional development activities, including when they go out to various conferences across the world to present their research, which is an integral part which makes us most competitive in the job markets, and which helps us network to get the job in the first place. MSU is a R1 University, and our graduate and professional students at the, play a really huge role in the success as one. And COGS is saddened by these developments, but we are also determined to continue advocating for more opportunities, more funds and resources to be available to our constituents. But I do want to close by reinstating that this is nothing new. We have been in continued collaboration with different university administration, and I'm very happy to state that we feel seen, we feel heard, and we feel supported, or we feel that at least you're trying to support us. MSU's success lies with our success and vice versa. And we look forward to continuing working together to do the best that we can for graduate and professional students here at MSU. And with that, I conclude, thank you.

Kathryn Harding, ASMSU Representative, provided the following report.

Hello, everyone. My name is Kathryn, and I'm the President of the Associated Students of MSU. I'm here to report that the semester hasn't been easy for students. Our Council of Racial and Ethnic Students and Council for the Advocacy of Marginalized Students were notified that they will be losing their long-promised University dollars due to federal civil, civil rights compliance, and before that, were targeted and told they had to shift language in their governing documents. Other identity-based groups were targeted when asked to change language as well to comply with new federal directives and interpretations of civil rights law. Our CORES and CAMS groups who represent diverse communities of students and exist to support and advocate for these communities, have been facing a clear lack of support and funding that was once a given. Our student experience has been directly impacted by the lack of communication in this process and the burdens placed on student leaders that they are not fully equipped to solve. When we have known for months that department language was being shifted, students should not have been told weeks into the school year that this was going to affect them. Proactivity on the university's part to come up with solutions to both funding for CORES and CAMS groups and across the board language changes or anti-discrimination policy compliance before students even got to campus would have eliminated the stress and hurt that we have gone through. Once again, our experience as students and as student leaders have been severely impacted by these undue burdens in a very negative way. The university who claims to be supportive of diverse perspectives and student groups has a responsibility to actually be supportive in practice. We are all just students who want to have events and support our communities, and we have not been fully able to enjoy the student

experience in this way for the past month or so. ASMSU leadership has been working to support CORES and CAMS groups however we can, and we have finally reached a solution to our own funding structure with these groups that should have been that should be in place in a couple of weeks. While I understand that a solution with the University and Student Affairs is at the helm, the harm that took place this semester cannot be undone. Protected identity or not, CORES and CAMS groups are the ones who show consistent commitment and dedication to promote inclusivity and cultural understanding on our campus, and I'm very sad to say that the support and resources that they deserve were not provided this semester. Sorry one second, and then the next item I would like to report on is that last Thursday, ASMSU passed Resolution 6230 to support student, faculty and staff members right to organize protest and enjoy First Amendment right protections. This resolution directly references the pending University disciplinary charges against our peer, Eli Folts. Eli was singled out and targeted, which sets a dangerous precedent of silencing student voices. ASMSU advocates for the dropping of all charges against Eli Folts. Students, students should not be fearful of retaliation by the University, who should protect students' right to protest on campus. And then finally, I want to speak in support of the College Assistant Migrant Program, which will no longer have a clear avenue of funding at the end of next year. CAMP supports a numerous, a numerous amount of migrant workers who are individuals of various backgrounds. This program should be supported long term, and we hope that the University will find a route to do so, and then, just to share an upcoming event that ASMSU has on November 6, we are hosting an open forum on mental health from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. in the Multicultural Center to hear about student experiences with mental health and resources on campus. And I would like to invite anyone that's interested to attend, especially if you are a student. Your perspective matters, and ASMSU is here to advocate for your needs and wellbeing. And with that, I conclude my report. Thank you.

Sarah Fireberg, University Committee on Student Affairs Representative, provided the following report.

Hello everyone, and good morning. Thank you, Board members, President Guskiewicz, peers, and colleagues, for being here. This is awesome. So, my name is Sarah Fireberg, I have the privilege of serving as chair of University Committee on Student Affairs and the Student Liaison to the board. I want to begin by thanking you all for this opportunity to represent the student body in a space or in this space. It's an honor to share updates that reflect the voices, perspectives and experiences of Michigan State students. Since the start of the semester, the University Committee on Student Affairs has held two meetings. We've received updates on important campus initiatives and concerns. There's a lot of change currently going on. And I've heard concerns brought up the same, same concerns that Priyanka and Kathryn have brought up. So, I want to just make sure you all know that these are very important, and it's definitely impacting a lot of students on campus. Also CAMP, I'd also like to support CAMP. We it's been cut completely, and it's definitely something that we need to continue looking for funding and resources for. So,

since I'm, I'm new to this position, I'd like to go ahead and state some goals I have. My goals are to strengthen collaboration between students and university leadership, ensuring that student voices are not only heard but meaningfully integrated into policy and decision, in decision making, I also hope to continue building awareness and resources for mental health recovery and student wellbeing as that's a very important topic that I find valuable to campus. Yeah, with that being said, thank you for your time and your continued leadership and the time to just help support students and represent the student body. So yeah, thank you all.

President Guskiewicz provided the following remarks.

I just, I want to thank all of each of you for your report. Want to thank you for your leadership and I want to be clear that the funding for CAMP has not been cut entirely, but, and I want to also take the opportunity to acknowledge and welcome to as I realized here, it's also Vice President for Student Affairs, Jim Hintz, his first Board of Trustees Meeting, and we spent so much time together. I feel like you've been here for six, eight, ten months. But, I want to thank you for all that you've been doing and working with the student leaders to ensure that the support that our students need is in fact, there. There are different processes by which those funds will be accessed, as we talked about yesterday, but I want to be clear, we will support these student organizations and groups, and so I hope that, as we discussed yesterday, that you will carry that message back to the students of this campus, so and Jim, and VP Hintz, thanks for all that you're doing to assure that that will in fact happen. Thank you.

Angela Wilson, faculty liaison, provided the following report.

Great. Thank you. Good morning, everyone. I'm Angela Wilson. I'm chair of the Faculty Senate, so it's really hard to believe that we're already at the end of October this semester. Have at least for the faculty seems to have passed by very, very quickly. Yesterday, Faculty Senate leaders shared a number of items with the Board of Trustees. Among them were feedback on the board stakeholder Summit, a great opportunity for the community to engage with members of the board. We have encouraged, however, even greater engagement in the future. And look forward to that. We also discussed resolutions passed in the Faculty Senate. The one I want to highlight today is about the White House compact for higher education, along with many other universities and faculty senates across the country. The MSU Faculty Senate does not support the White House compact for higher education, while MSU is already doing much of what is already in the compact, not all parts of the Compact are agreeable. We do note that there is one university in the country, the new College of Florida, with 94 faculty and 770 students, indicates that they want to be the very first and the only university to sign on. Signing on to the compact promises significant federal resources. It will be interesting to say, see how this is realized. This Florida College is not a university that is focused on research, and this is often where significant federal dollars are

spent at universities advancing areas such as the work that Sue Rhee mentioned earlier today that impact food to fuels for our communities, nation, and world. The faculty liaisons to the board also indicated concerns about the loss of Title VI funding and the future of area studies programs and the loss of funding for migrant education programs, camps at MSU, as the student leaders have already indicated, these programs have such significant impact, and we appreciated the discussion that we had with the board yesterday and the shared concerns and commitments to our students. We also shared our concern about budget reductions. I understand the necessity, and we all feel for those who have lost positions or job titles. MSU is not alone in terms of structural budgets, as many universities are facing them. However, the reductions are just beginning to be understood. We are seeing moratoriums on graduate programs, including no admissions this year to the graduate program in College of Arts, in the College of Arts and Letters as well, very significant trims are occurring to some of our largest graduate programs at MSU. As these trims are made across the programs and university, we need to understand the impact of these trims on our teaching and research missions, our rankings and our research and research dollars. These are all vital downstream effects that are on the minds of many faculty. We also shared with the board of faculty survey proposed by members of the faculty senate taken about some of the ideas behind revisions, basically behind some of the revisions that are being discussed at MSU, basically the potential pillars of change being considered behind One Team One Health basically being, being created by the one team One Health Council and task forces. These include the formation of a one team One Health Research Network, greater connectivity between the College of Human Medicine, the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and the formation of a college of health with potential names being considered. No work is final. No final recommendations have been made. No decision has been made at this stage by the President. But also, areas of concern were brought to the board as well. A new survey has gone out from the One Team One Health Council this week, with more information that we've gathered, and we're reaching out for more feedback from the broad university community. That survey is open till November 14, and for community members that are listening, I hope that you will provide feedback to that, because all of this information is going to feed back to the recommendations that are made to the President. We appreciate all of the work that is being done and the insight that has been gathered. We appreciate the work that the faculty did in bringing together the survey and specifically the concerns and interest of the faculty in this, in this, in these initiatives, and look forward to seeing what comes forward in this. I also want to end by providing a couple of highlights of work by our amazing faculty. Of course, many thanks to Sue Rhee for our presentation today and her terrific global efforts. They will indeed have impact. We also want to congratulate a name that is familiar, I think, to all of us, Mona Hanna-Attisha, who continues to have such a significant impact. We wanted to recognize her for the support of Rx kids a \$270 million boost from the state budget to expand across the state. Basically, it's an initiative that she is leading along in partnership with Luke Schaefer from the University of Michigan, and the investment is basically going to provide health and opportunity to about a third of the babies born in Michigan over

the next three years, supporting expecting, new mothers and their children. And so, this is just another way that MSU faculty have tremendous impacts upon our state. We also wanted to acknowledge Bruno Basso, the precision agriculture work in the New York Times. Bruno does such amazing work and also Nick had its work was also highlighted in there, as indicated by the President, and I do finally also want to thank the board for their service and all they do for MSU. And on behalf of my Vice Chair of Faculty Senate, John Aerni-Flessner. John said what are you talking about? He wanted to make sure that I acknowledge the cross country team and wish them the best of luck, because they are an often unrecognized team at MSU, and we wanted to wish them the best in the competition this week at MSU, particularly with teams like right now, yeah, particularly competing against teams like Oregon and Washington State and others that are very notorious for amazing cross country teams. So, with that, I turn it back to the President and the board, thanks.

Chairperson Tebay provided the following report.

Alright, I'll be brief. I'd like to start by acknowledging the rivalry game last weekend. It may not have ended the way that we all hoped, but I'm proud of the positive atmosphere on campus. Our students and fans showed real sportsmanship, and the event remains safe and respectful throughout. My sincere thanks go to Police Chief Yankowski and MSU Police Department of and Police and Public Safety for their excellent coordination and professionalism. I also want to recognize homecoming weekend earlier this month, which also captures the heart of what it means to be a Spartan. The campus was filled with energy, tradition and pride. It was wonderful seeing alumni families and students celebrating together. And finally, I would like to congratulate the 12 graduates from the past summer who accomplished an inevitable and enviable feat throughout their time at MSU, earning a perfect GPA. These students are recipients of the Board of Trustee Award, which recognizes and honors their achievement of the highest collective scholastic average, one can receive a four-point GPA. Let's give a big round of applause for these students. That's it from me.

Vice Chairperson Scott provided the following report.

Thank you. I'll also try to be brief. I want to echo the sentiments that the chair just made concerning homecoming, and I agree, although the outcome was not what we would have hoped. I did appreciate the Spartan spirit that was in full effect and the camaraderie that all of the Spartans shared. I am deeply grateful to MSU Police, East Lansing Police, and the many staff who worked around the clock to ensure that we had a safe weekend last weekend, and to our IPF team for their care of our campus. It's always amazing how quickly they can turn our campus from a tailgating center back into a pristine, beautiful campus. I want to recognize the recent Spartan Bus Tour that took faculty and administrators across 15 communities in Northern Michigan and in the UP. It's a great example of how MSU continues to strengthen our partnerships and share our expertise with communities

across the state. I'd also like to acknowledge that MSU was named one of Michigan's Best and Brightest in Wellness for 2025 by the National Association for Business Resources and received the 2025 Elite Best of the Best for a large company of distinction, which is a first for MSU and this award was bestowed upon us yesterday in Detroit. And so, I wanted to acknowledge we have, I think I don't know if she's still here. Dr, there she is. Okay. So, look at what I have. Stand up please. On behalf of the Health and Wellness, I asked her if she would bring your whole team, anyone that's here from health and wellness. Thank you all. I wanted to kind of display. I asked to see these. You didn't tell me how heavy these were. They are like you can lift weights with these, but this is one of two that they received. I'm going to set them in front of Trustee Pierce, hopefully she doesn't try to take them with her, kidding. But one of two awards that they received yesterday, and I think that we need to give them a round of applause, Dr. Travis and your team, we really appreciate all of the work that you all are doing in the health and wellness space. I don't know if these are going to be put up in your office, but we are very proud of this. And I think when we talked yesterday, you mentioned that you were not expecting to receive the award, and then, as they described the institution, you started to think, oh, this sounds like MSU and realized that it was us that were being bestowed these wonderful awards. So again, thank you all for everything that you do in that space for the university, it's a well acknowledged reward. So, thank you. And I also wanted to say that I'd love one of the water bottles Dr. Travis that you gave Trustee Tebay, the president, tried to take it when he sat down this morning. And I also admired it. So, if you'd like to give any others out from the Health and Wellness Center, I think some of the other board members would love to have it. Lastly, I don't know if this was in anyone else's comments, but I had the opportunity to go to the ribbon cutting for Campbell Hall, and it was a remarkable renovation space. I don't know how many of you had been there but just wanted to thank the Porteous families and the other distinguished donors that gave of their money to help us with this renovation. It is indeed a beautiful space. I would encourage any of you, if you have not been in Campbell Hall, to go and visit it. It's absolutely fabulous. And lastly, I just wanted to acknowledge our faculty and our students. We hear you, we understand with the budget cuts that have happened, that it has really had a down river, if you will, impact on our faculty, and we don't take any of that lightly. I am happy that we are having these discussions so that we can try to thwart some of the impact that you all are feeling. So, I just appreciate that you continue to keep us aware of the things that we need to look to and for our students as well. I think this is a learning lesson for us. You know, none of us could have envisioned what we're going through on the federal level and some of the mandates that have come down from that, and the changes that have significantly impacted some of the funding for our students. But I think we did learn, and we heard from the President today that while the mechanisms of the funding may have changed, we are still funding our student organizations and so bear with us. We're trying to work through this to make sure that you all are adequately supported in your spaces, and I appreciate again, that you all continue to bring these things to our attention as a board. And, I just wish everyone a wonderful and spooky Halloween weekend. Trustee Tebay didn't think about

having us all come in and costume. We thought about it this morning. That would have been really fun for the board to come in as various different characters. But we wish you all a wonderful and safe holiday, Halloween weekend and Go Green.

Trustee Balow provided the following report.

So good to be here again this morning and a privilege to speak to such an esteemed group. You know, it's, it's Halloween. Have a lot of fun tonight. Be safe. Snickers, Milky Way, Twix, top three. No debate. It's always, it's always a fun holiday, but it makes me think about what's to come, right? Like we're on the verge of Thanksgiving, family, Christmas soon after. But don't forget about November 11, right? November 11, which we call Veterans Day, now, used to be called Armistice Day, right? It was, it was used it was, it was a day to mark the end of the war, to end all wars, which we now call World War One. How far we've come since then. How far we've not come since then. It makes me be very grateful for the sacrifices of the veterans that have come before us and that are serving today. And I'd like to recognize that a point of pride for me personally, I know the whole board and the president, is that Michigan State University has once again been recognized by the Michigan Veterans Affairs agency with gold level status for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. What this means is that institutions that go above and beyond in supporting their student veterans and military affiliated students, those spouses and family members of veterans, are well taken care of here. That means we have dedicated resources, programming in a strong community, serving over 400 student veterans and 200 military affiliated students. Sincere thanks to our center for veterans and military affiliate students. It's Patrick Forystek and his very capable team. We're doing a great job to make sure that those people on campus are taken care of, whether it's VA benefits or other things, and there's been some snafus and getting payments and things like that over this semester and those things are being worked on thanks to that center. I'd also like to highlight last Friday's event, Alex's Great State Race, which was a really wonderful partnership that brings purpose to MSU and U of M's rivalry. We had ROTC cadets from MSU and the U of M crossing the finish line together, that for a race that raised money, that got scholarships and benefits for students with disabilities, and that says everything about who we are as Spartans, and thanks to the President and the athletic director, who were in far better shape than me for joining the group as they ran across the finish line. And now, you know, I mentioned November 11, you know, so 108 years ago, there were Spartans that lost their life fighting for freedom, and there were Spartans that fought in the wars, both before that and after. There's a memorial over at the Grove and West Circle that, if you happen to wander by, take a gander at it. It's important. I want to say that, you know, I think often about the times that we're in, and how the times that we're in are not exactly like the times that are past, but oftentimes they rhyme. And I read a lot of history, and I take comfort in knowing that some of the experiences that people that are long gone had, but that they've written down for us can be instructive. And I wanted to share one story with you that I hope you take something from. And it's a story that came to me from a dear friend that passed away long ago, that was a veteran from the

Second World War. And this story was it was a recollection of event that happened, probably about 1968 during the Vietnam War and all the unrest that happened in this country. And the daughter of this person told me that her father, who was a World War II veteran, was pretty decorated, many medals earned during the Second World War, many friends lost, but he made it back. But nobody ever really makes it back, right? Because you're changed. And one afternoon she observed him, he was never someone to have his medals out for display. They were in a drawer, and she saw him take those out and put them on the bed and stare at them for probably 10 minutes, not like stare at them, to count them, but to stare at them, to ponder them and what they meant. And then she saw him put those away, and he didn't really take them out again. And I asked her years later, what do you think that meant? And she told me that she thought he was wondering, like, was it worth it? Like, was it, was it worth the sacrifice that so many have paid to be in a country at a certain time where you're like, the damn thing's coming apart. Like, it things, people are shouting at each other. People don't understand each other. People are shooting each other. And I think that's a question that is for me, the answer is yes. As hard as it is, it's always worth it, because our experiment in democracy is never finished. I've often told people, you know, when they're slamming on the press and things like that, I said, don't forget, democracy dies in the dark. Um, this room is not the dark. You know, the as hard as it gets in here, sometimes it's not the dark, the darker the places on our planet where people will disappear in the night for having a different opinion, or be poisoned mysteriously, or end up in prison with no due process for the rest of their lives. So as difficult as things get here, I really appreciate the freedom of speech. The academic freedom is a corollary to that that we celebrate here on campus, and the ability to hear each other and talk about things that are uncomfortable but that need to be talked about. And I want to say that we're all stakeholders in that, and that we should all be proud of that, again, as difficult as it as it is. And I'll kind of close by saying I'm looking forward to hearing all the people that are here to speak to us today. This is a good place for that. I think the boundaries are push and pull of what does free speech mean to many? And people have different opinions of that. But clearly this is a place that is very, very appropriate as we try to figure this out. And you know, I just want to close by saying, let's all turn the temperature down a little bit across the country and be examples for our peers. You know, we're in another place in our country where people are getting shot at. You know, politicians are having attempts on their lives. Young activists are being assassinated both you know, certainly, the left and the right. I myself attended a candlelight vigil here for the young conservative activist Charlie Kirk. A lot of people take issue with his opinions, but I attended to be supportive of free speech and in the fact that we need to stand against political violence of all sorts, whatever their party, whatever their affiliation, I would stand in support of people that stand against that. And I think that as we go forward here at Michigan State, in this semester and in the year, we all need to look at each other and find the 80 or 90 percent in common that we have, because it was the great poet, I think, Maya Angelou, who said we are much more alike than we are unlike, and I'd like to keep that in mind as we go forward. I so

appreciate all of you in the room here today, and I look forward to hearing everything that you have to say. Thank you.

Trustee Knake Jefferson provided the following report.

Thank you. I'll be very brief. I just want to again, extend a welcome to our new provost, Laura Lee, thank you for being here. J Batt is obviously off already taking care of things. We said he was hitting the ground running and, but I am grateful to have him join us and Jim Hintz, thank you for joining our one team, and I am so grateful to you, our president, Kevin, for bringing them on. I think they're all here because of you. We're all here because of you. And I look forward and I'm very grateful to all of my colleagues on this board to our continued work together under your leadership.

Trustee Vassar provided the following report.

Good morning. Three staff writers at the State News were named the 2024 Student Journalism winner by the National Education Writers Association MSU journalism seniors, Alex Walters, Owen McCarthy, is Siri talking to me? What's she saying? Do I need to pay attention? Okay? You good? Okay. Theo Scheer. I was wondering if she had something else you, okay? I don't know where Siri is, but I'm good. Okay. Oh, now Siri messed me up. Okay? Inside their project was honored. Inside the Nassar documents. The judges said the reporters created the fullest account to date, of Michigan State University's response to the Larry Nassar scandal. He said, "my hat is off to these students for quickly organizing an effort to comb through a huge trove of documents that were released in a way that officials would hope would make it so hard to search and read that it would stay out of public view, and the reporters worked quickly, amid their usual classes and other work, to get a series of impactful articles out." This is the second time; the second year the association is named a college winner. The State News also won the first year's award, as Walters won for his coverage of Title IX at MSU. I'm grateful. Sometimes journalism can be lazy that I've learned. Not necessarily trying to ferret out the truth, taking one source stories and running with them. This was hard work, having gone through those documents myself. It was very difficult, arduous work, and I'm grateful because I personally wanted those documents released and took a lot of time and hits to get that done. So, I'm grateful that someone actually went through them with journalistic integrity and that Michigan State and State News are honored for that. So, thank you, you three. Appreciate this. Inside the Nassar documents also earned first place in a regional Society of Professional Journalist contest and first place for news writing in a quarterly associated collegial, collegiate press competition. I would just like to give them a round of applause. I don't even know if they're still here. Theo are you are, Owen, and you don't want to stand. Alex, no, no, standing. Okay. Okay. And I also want to highlight how Michigan State University observed Disability Pride Month, recognizing the achievements, experiences and contributions of people with disabilities. The university shifted the observance to October so more students and staff could engage in offered events

like a virtual disability summit and adapted sports day and accessibility focused workshops. I also want to acknowledge the efforts of the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, University Health and Wellbeing, Accessibilities, and other partners for creating a more inclusive campus environment where disability identity is visible and valued. I also want to commend the launch of MSU use new office of for Civil Rights Data Dashboard, a first of its kind tool in higher education. It offers transparent, accessible insights into how the university addresses discrimination, accessibility and prevention efforts. I do know that the BSA called for this for the last three years, and so I want to say that I thank VP Rugless, who continues to impress me. She's just demonstrates consummate integrity, exemplary transparency and unwavering accountability. Accountability is not popular, and so I admire you and your leadership. I think she's still here. I can't see okay. I get you know these glasses, thank you. Thank you for your continuous improvement in civil rights. Today I was trying to choose between which earrings my dad or my mom. My dad is a veteran, and he looks very handsome in his earring that has him in full uniform, but I told my mom, my dad was a soldier, but my mother was a warrior. And sometimes my mother would explain to me that it's not always popular to hold people accountable, certainly not always popular to go against the grain, but she demonstrated that to me. She didn't tell me all the time. She showed it in her life. And I've been told by a previous president that, you know, oh, Rema, if you would just smile more and if you would just give more compliments, and you would be, you know, better received. And I thought, you know, I, I wasn't a cheerleader in school. I play ball, kickball, flag football, sometimes touch. I didn't cheerlead. I wasn't a mascot. I don't that's not who I am. I do like to have fun. I like to celebrate, but I'm not always going to be the person who brings the good tidings of joy and happiness. I'm just not that person, and I know that that makes me unpopular sometimes, but in the spirit of my mother, I was raised this way. I woke up this morning this way. It's going to be the same way tomorrow. So, I don't apologize. I don't apologize. I want to tell you on Tuesday, I had the privilege of witnessing something powerful. Middle and high school students from Detroit presented education policy recommendations directly to mayoral, city council, gubernatorial candidates, elected officials. The policy summit, people like DeLorean, Brandon, Hayden, Alexis, Payton, they didn't just complain about the policies that were affecting their lives. They conducted research, analyzed data and proposed alternatives. They did this work over six weeks, and they did it with someone from here. Jordan Roebuck, was a BSA leader a couple of years ago. He's now at Michigan. Oh. He said, D.C., I want to make sure I get his title correct, Development Associate and Advocate for CBCF, and he's a JMC alumnus. He flew every week for six weeks from D.C. Need to work with these kids. This is what MSU can produce when you have people who are checked in doing the hard work of community engagement. These students understood what we sometimes forget. You can't say our students, our children, are the future if you won't let it write, you won't let us write it for ourselves. That was one of the quotes that they said, which brings me to what I've witnessed over the past year. In February, federal courts blocked enforcement of executive orders targeting diversity programs. Yet we have continued dismantling our equity

infrastructure as if those orders carried legal force. But what troubles me most, we began this work before the orders could possibly be enforced. In October 2024 before the election, we stripped CORES of its departmental status, removed office space and advising support from an organization fought for this for since 1990 we've told students these changes are required by state and federal anti-discrimination laws, yet we cannot cite which statutes require us to ban phrases like underrepresented or historically marginalized. We presented policy choices as legal requirements and the timing, the timing, even as we dismantle support systems, our students face escalating racial violence. The Black Students Alliance had to launch 'Hate has a Home Here' because our initiative rang hollow CORES groups that once accessed \$100,000 now compete for \$4,500. Those Detroit students on Tuesday showed what shared governance actually looks like. They weren't asking for permission to have opinions. They were demanding their rightful place and decisions that affect their lives. Perhaps we should have done more of the same here. I heard the students yesterday talk about how this came like a rug being pulled from underneath them. They just had no idea. Well, if you are inviting students into the process of policy making, then there's no surprises. You arrive to the conclusions together. We should have asked, what do you need? How can we navigate this political moment together? What would genuine partnership look like? Instead, we made decisions about them, for them, but not with them. The question before us isn't whether we'll face federal enforcement. Courts have answered that. The question is whether we believe in shared governance, or whether we only extend that principle to those who already hold power, or whose opinions you believe in. Our students are watching. Now they know exactly where we stand. We owe them and ourselves better than this. Go Green.

Trustee Denno provided the following report.

Thanks. So, I'd first like to give a shout out to radio station WKAR for winning eight regional Emmys. Great accomplishment by a great radio station, and I'm sorry for everything the radio stations had to go through with these cuts. I want to recognize the, I guess, pain, for lack of a better word, pain that BSA, CORES and CAMS is going through right now. I've tried to study the history of students of color here at MSU, and I next, next book up is Dean Pero Dagbovie's book. So, I have really been trying to figure it out and I know it's, I assume it's been very difficult, what you're going through. You know, our students of color have fought to be recognized by this university. Our students of color have fought to have a safe place on this campus, you know, and you fought to get your funding, which is a really big deal, and I assume you feel that it's all being completely taken away from you, and you're back to square one. And so, I'm just sorry about that. I'm sorry for everything you're going through. I'd like to try to work with you and hear from you. I always try to be available and accessible to our students. And then finally, I just, you know again, would like to thank law enforcement for all you do in our communities every day. Thanks.

Trustee Bahar-Cook provided the following report.

I want to acknowledge the recent investiture and State of the University, where we celebrated our amazing faculty, and where President Guskiewicz highlighted the incredible progress happening across MSU, it was inspiring to see our shared work and research student success and community partnership and how it's shaping a bold future for the university. Um, thanks to the team that organized the event, which was flawless and we're now preparing for our upcoming Winter and Spring commencements. Their thoughtful planning helps create moments that truly reflect the pride and spirit of Michigan State University and early congrats to those graduates who are, will be walking across the stage in December. I also wanted to take a moment to congratulate this year, this year's winners of the MSU Grand Awards that President Guskiewicz referenced in his remarks earlier. These are these are our alumni who represent the very best of Spartan achievement and impact. Among them are Darius Adamczyk, Dean Falk, Linda Hubbard, Nancy Colley-Brandsetter, Todd Penegor, who are all honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award. And then Essence Wilson, who, it turns out my husband knows her husband from Flint. So, you know the world's small Rex and Sue Smith. They were all three of them recipients of the Alumni Service Award. Jeremy Orr and Lucas VanEtten recognized with the Young Alumni Award, and has been mentioned earlier, Mike and Mary Lamach, who received the Philanthropist Award, and whose generosity is that \$10 million gift to the EDI Center. We heard a quote in the video of the Spartan tour, how important an MSU graduate is. These 10 people really, really represent that in the ways that they have been given back to their community. So, kudos to them. I also wanted just to take a moment with the looming food insecurity. I think many of our folks on campus will be feeling with the temporary loss of SNAP benefits. I want to thank the State News, our Student Affairs, the University Health and Wellness being in the Spartan Food Security Council, for the efforts they have been making to let folks know if they are facing food insecurity. There are resources on campus. We do not want students dropping out of school because they can't access food, and so that's been taken care of. If you need to learn more, please contact University Health and Wellbeing or read that article on the State News. Thank you.

13. Public Participation on Items Not Germane to the Agenda

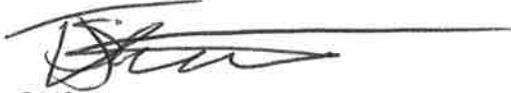
1. Nicashia Phillips – BSA finance allocations, and DEI language redactions
2. Daniel Bresee (via Zoom) – Secondary application fees to College of Osteopathic Medicine
3. Alissa Hakim – Student and alumni experience
4. Carrie Grishaber – MSU Extension contract
5. Peyton Squires – Tariq Thabet
6. Zeinab Zorkot – Sustainable investment
7. Adrian Slear – Free speech
8. Josie Callendar – MSU involvement in ecocide
9. Marija Nestorovic – MSU's political allegiance
10. Dylan Robrahn – Sustainable investment

11. Marceline Jones – Protecting students
12. Sarai Calderon – Protecting students
13. Kade Limoges – Eli Folts
14. Vincent Delgado – Mike Balow's attendance at Charlie Kirk vigil
15. Finni Padgett – James Madison College Student Senate
16. Tiffany Stevens – MSU Extension contract
17. Craig Smith (via Zoom) – MSU's repression of political speech and activism on campus
18. Eli Folts – Free speech on campus
19. Amy Childers – Extension united contract negotiations
20. Victor Rodriguez-Pereira – Trump's Compact and higher ed
21. Waseem El-Rayes – Disciplinary action against Eli Folts
22. Savitri Anatharaman – Campus compliance
23. Daniel Ahlquist – Charges against Eli Folts
24. Brenda Tracy – RVSM case
25. Jenna Aly – Free speech
26. Anna Wildman – Divestment
27. Anna Pegler-Gordon (via Zoom) – Academic freedom and free speech
28. Nasim Saed – Constructive activism
29. David Hogan – Campus climate
30. Tyler Augst – Extension's first union contract
31. Joe Garza – Budget
32. Caleb Xiang – History of divestment
33. Sophia Zuber – Medical topics
34. Aesha Zakaria – Lack of student support

14. Request to Adjourn

On a motion by Trustee Tebay, supported by Trustee Scott, **THE BOARD VOTED to adjourn at 1:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Stefan Fletcher  
Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Board of Trustees



# Securing Planet and People Resilience through Innovative Plant Resilience Research

Sue Rhee

MSU Research Foundation Professor  
MSU Plant Resilience Institute

Depts of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Plant Biology, and Plant, Soil & Microbial Sciences

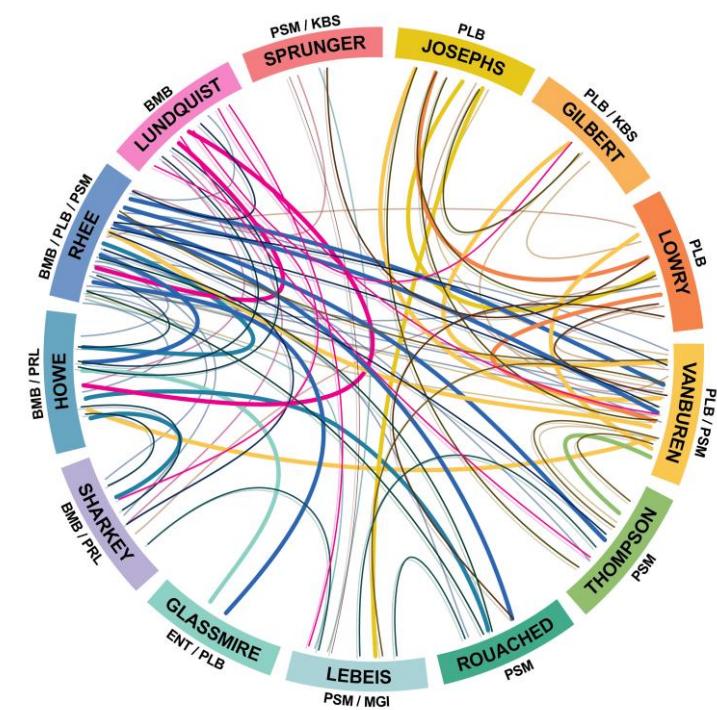
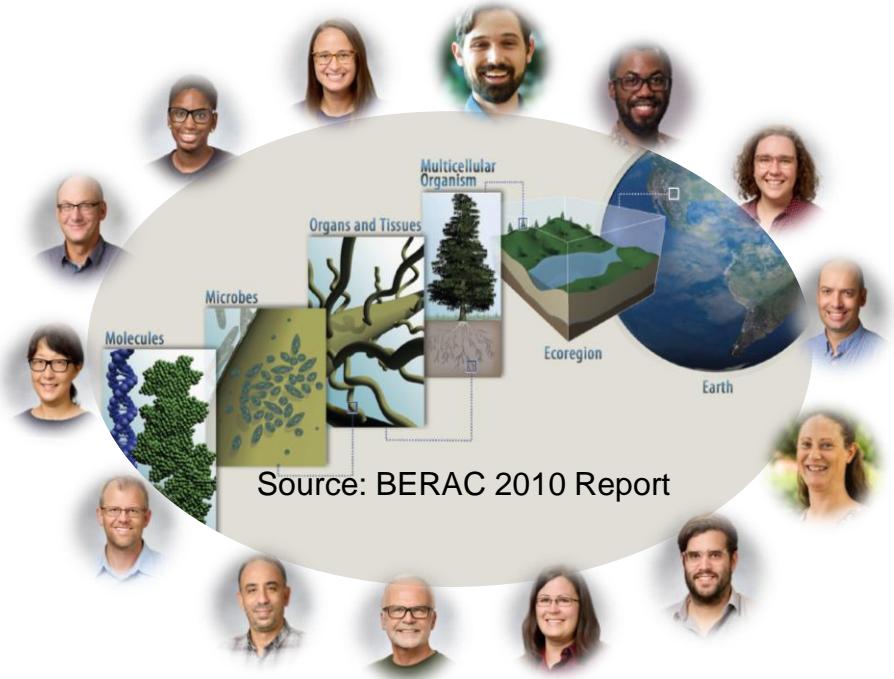
College of Natural Science, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, and AgBioResearch



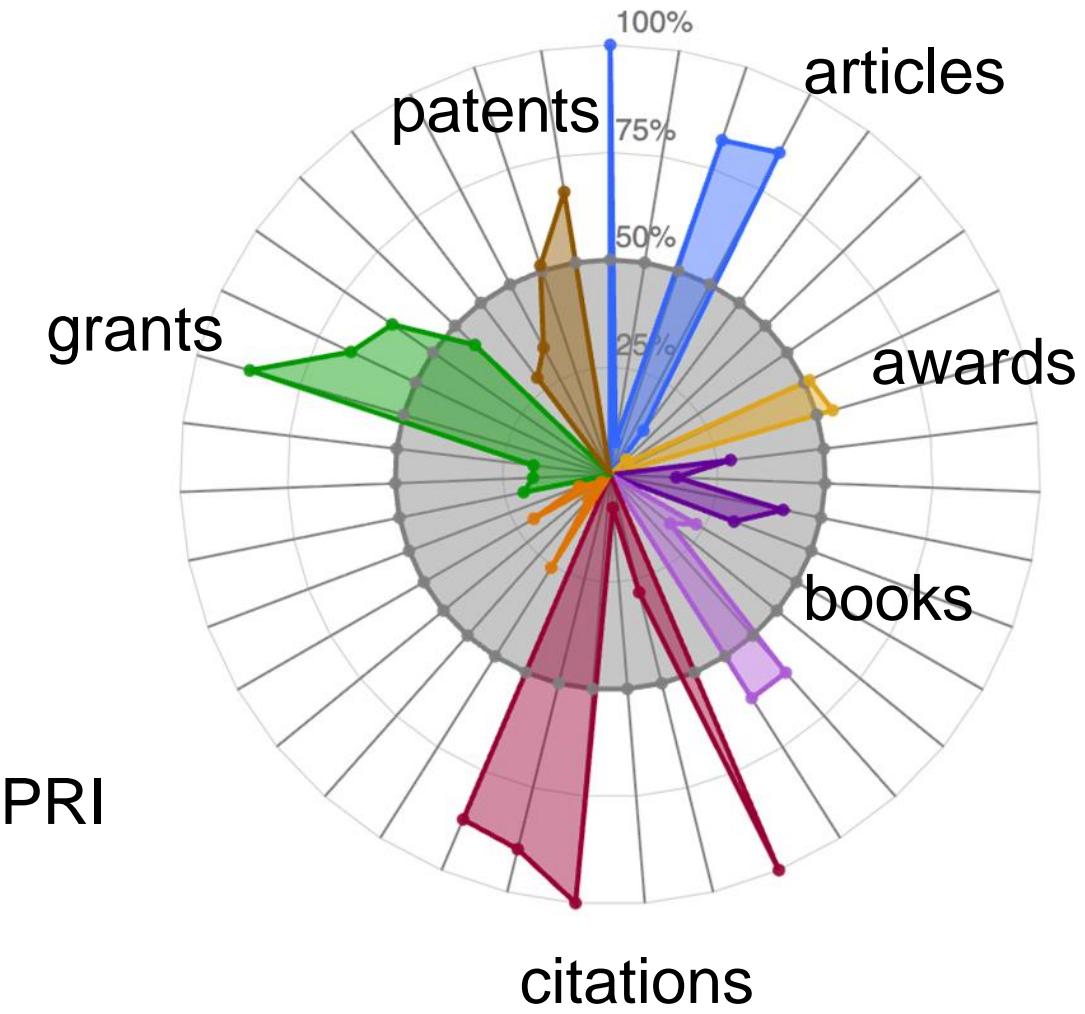
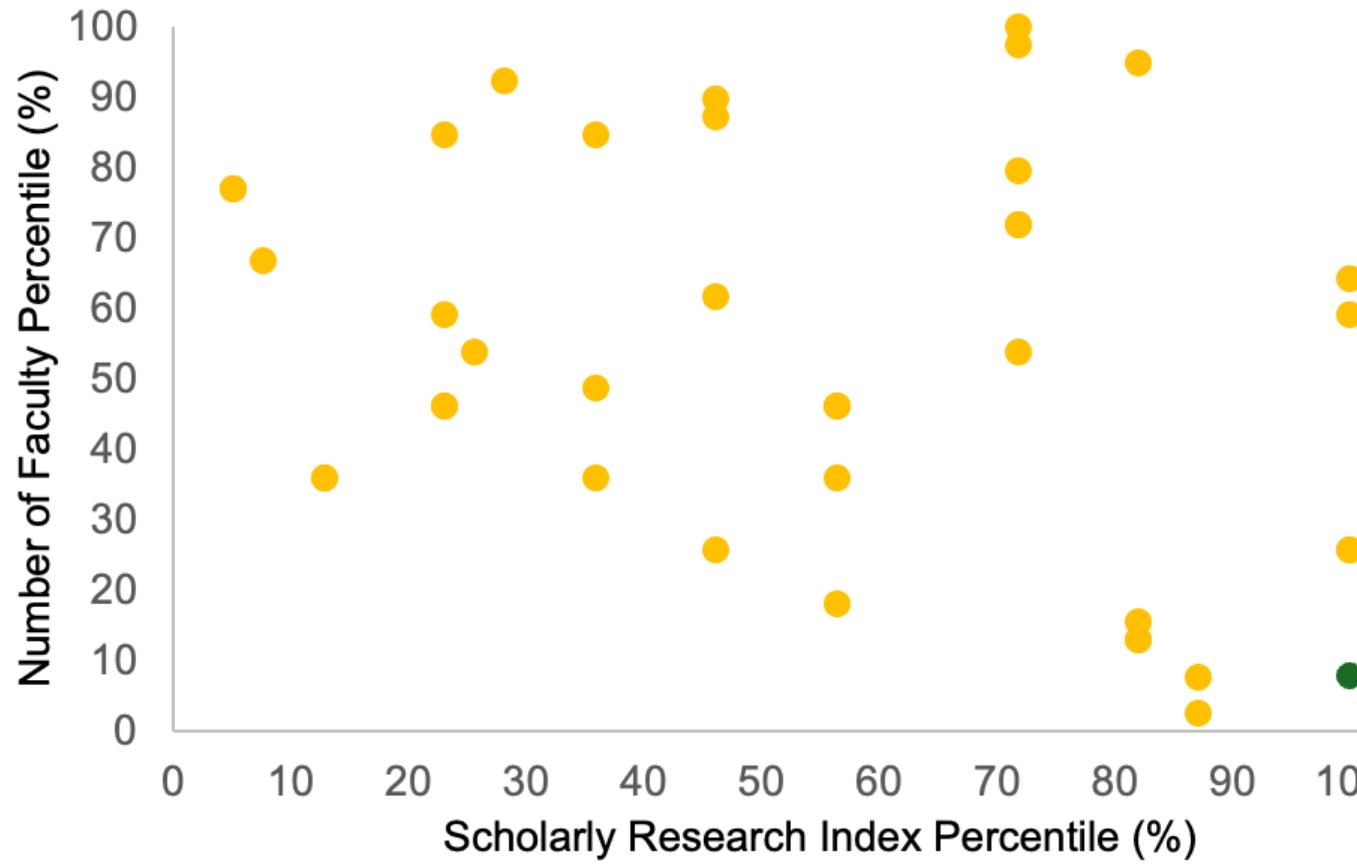
# MSU Plant Resilience Institute (PRI)

## Center of Excellence for Innovative Plant Resilience Research

interdisciplinary, cross-scale, highly collaborative

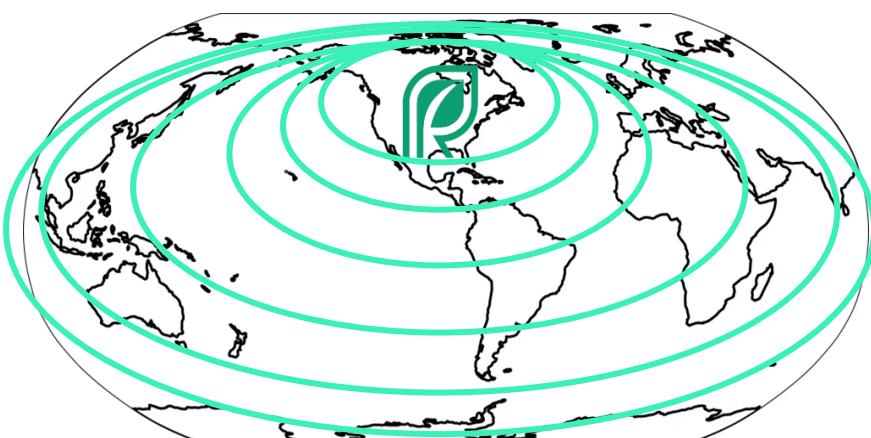


# PRI is ranked highly among plant science programs in the US

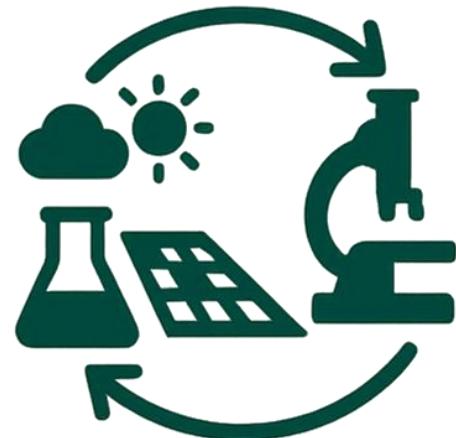


# What do we want to be known for?

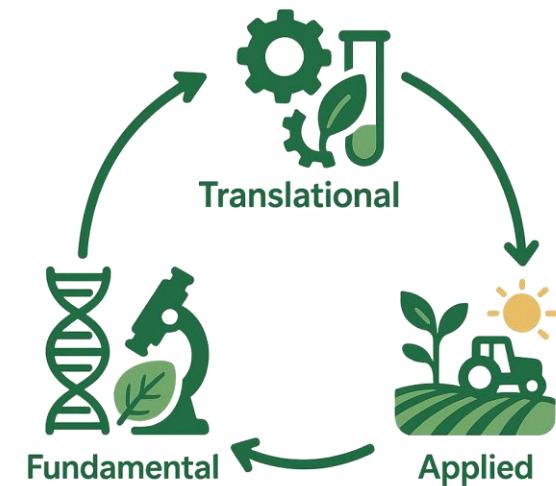
## Team Science at the Global Scale



## Field to Lab to Field Paradigm



## Fundamental-Translational-Applied Cycle



Rhee et al (2024) Trends in Plant Science; Marks et al (2025) Nature Communications; Prado et al (2025) Journal of Experimental Botany (Darwin Review)

# PRI convened scientists around the Great Lakes & the world

2024

## 1st Plant Resilience Summit

- East Lansing, MI
- 215 registrants
- 23 institutions
- 22 talks
- 39 posters



2025

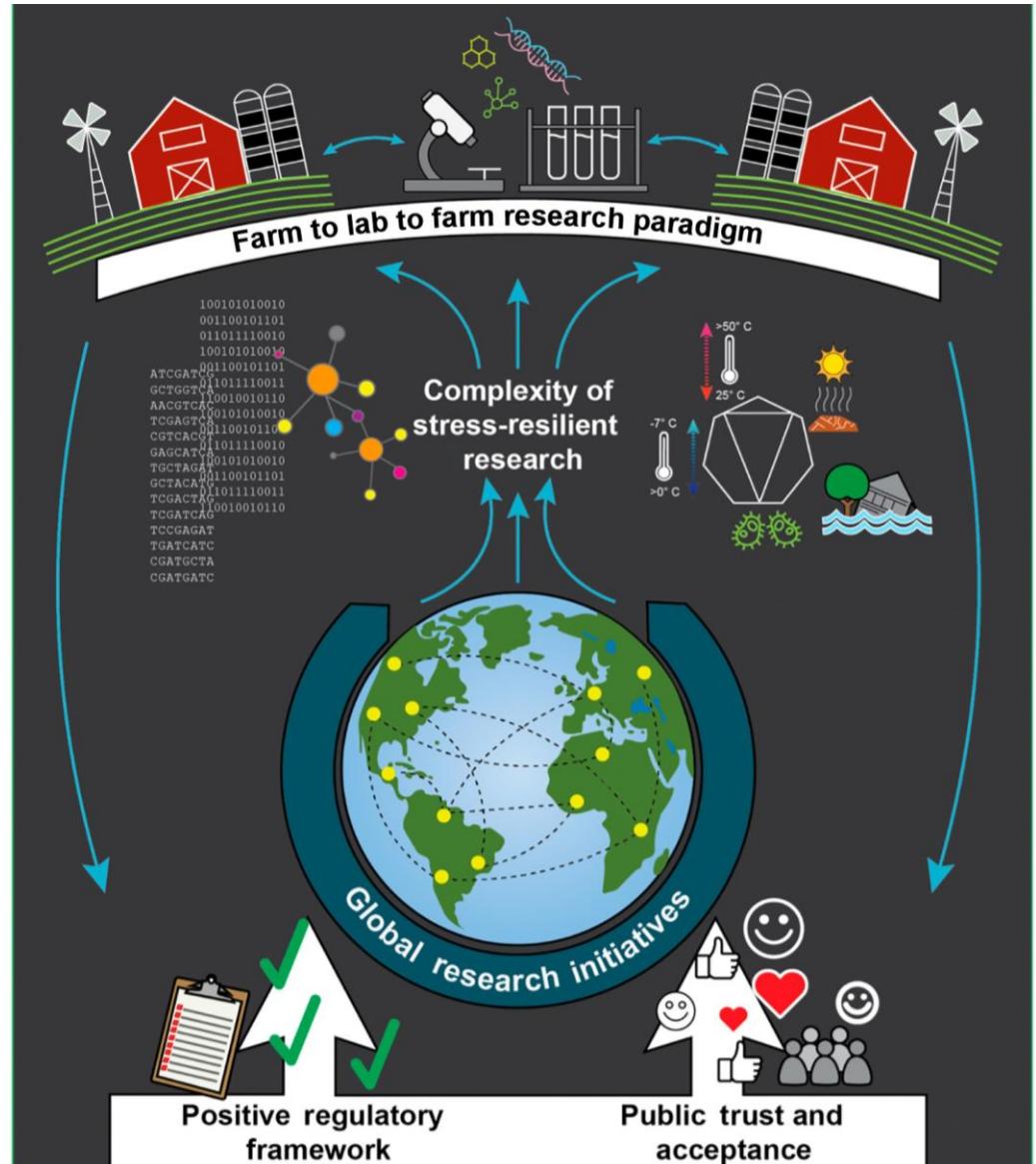
## 1st Great Lakes Plant Science Conference

- Lansing, MI
- 416 registrants
- 55 institutions
- 28 talks
- 212 posters



# A framework to accelerate discoveries and solutions for future proofing through resilient plants

- 1) Field to lab to field paradigm
- 2) Embracing complexity of stress-resilience research
- 3) Global team science
- 4) Stakeholder trust and acceptance
- 5) Positive regulatory framework





# Center for Sustainable Plant Innovation and Resilience Through International Teamwork

C-SPIRIT aims to develop sustainable farming solutions that use natural products from plants and microbes to improve soil and plant health, boost crop resilience, and mitigate food security

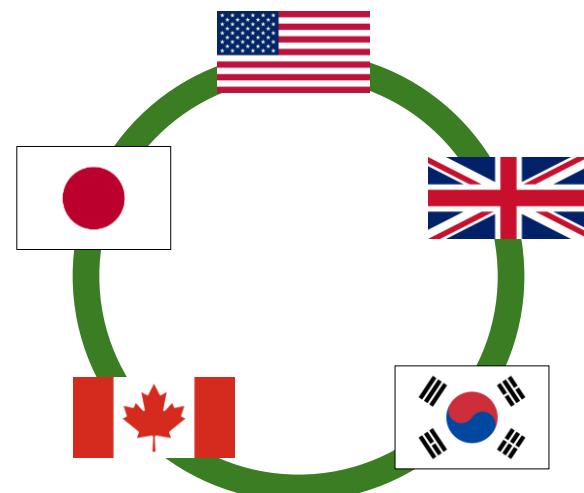
## Target Crops



MAIZE    TOMATO    POTATO    RICE



CASSAVA    PENNYCRESS    SOYBEAN



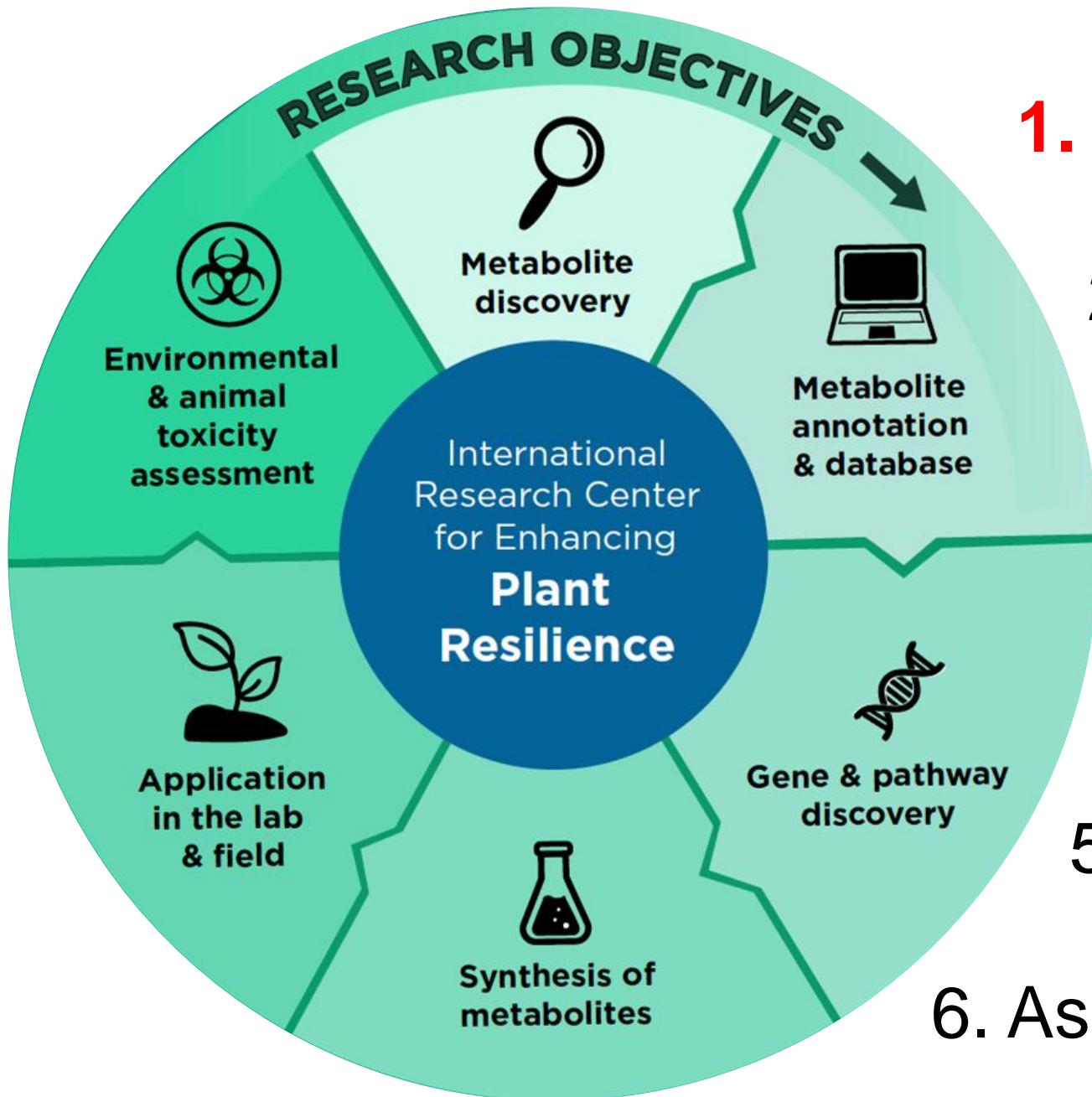
## Target Stresses



DROUGHT    HEAT    SALINITY



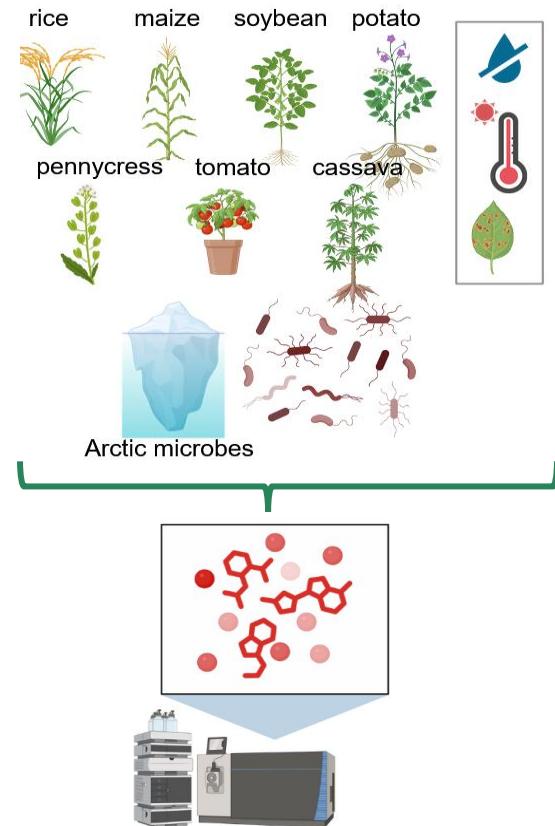
FUNGI    NEMATODES



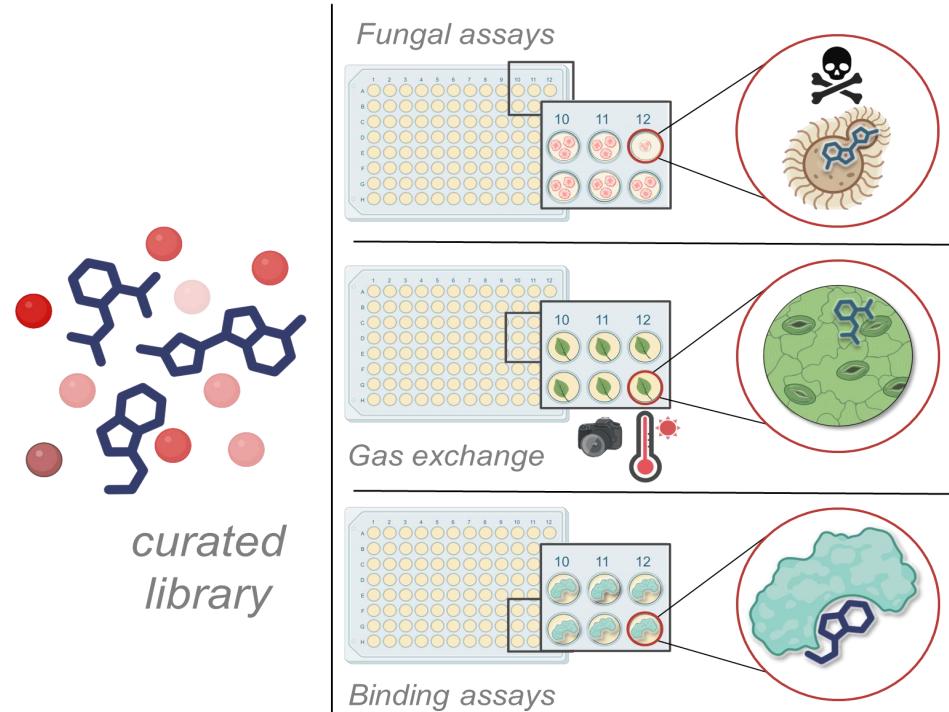
- 1. Discover metabolites**
- 2. Describe metabolites**
- 3. Discover pathways**
- 4. Synthesize metabolites**
- 5. Test metabolites in the field**
- 6. Assess toxicity of the metabolites**

# We use two strategies to discover regulatory metabolites

**Strategy 1.** Identify bioactive compounds via metabolomics of stress-exposed plants and microbes



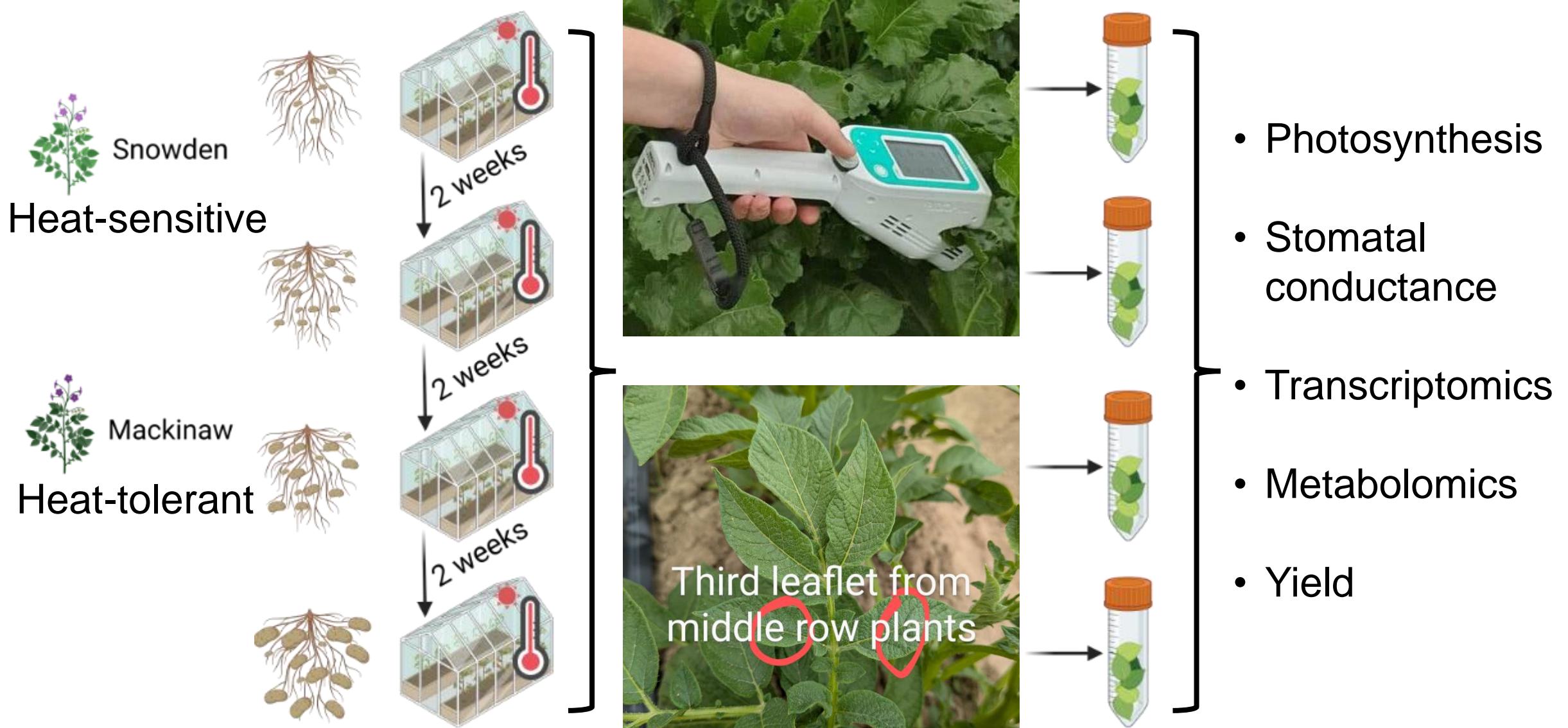
**Strategy 2.** Perform high throughput assays on curated natural product libraries to identify novel bioactivities



# How do heat-tolerant and sensitive potato varieties respond to heat in the field?



# Potato heat trial experimental design



# Following up the field-based discovery in the lab in the fall & winter

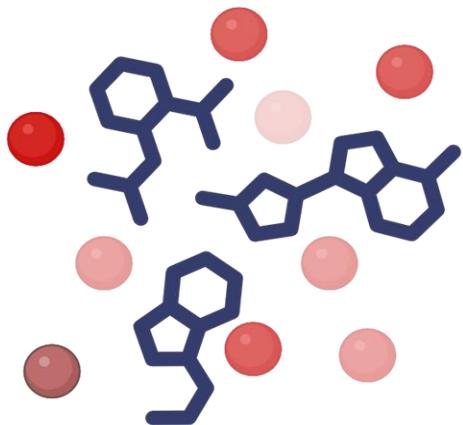
- Does stomatal opening in heat-sensitive variety help with heat stress?
- Does manipulating stomatal conductance under heat affect yield?
- What signaling and metabolic pathways are different between the two varieties?
- Are there compounds that are unique or increased in heat-tolerant varieties?



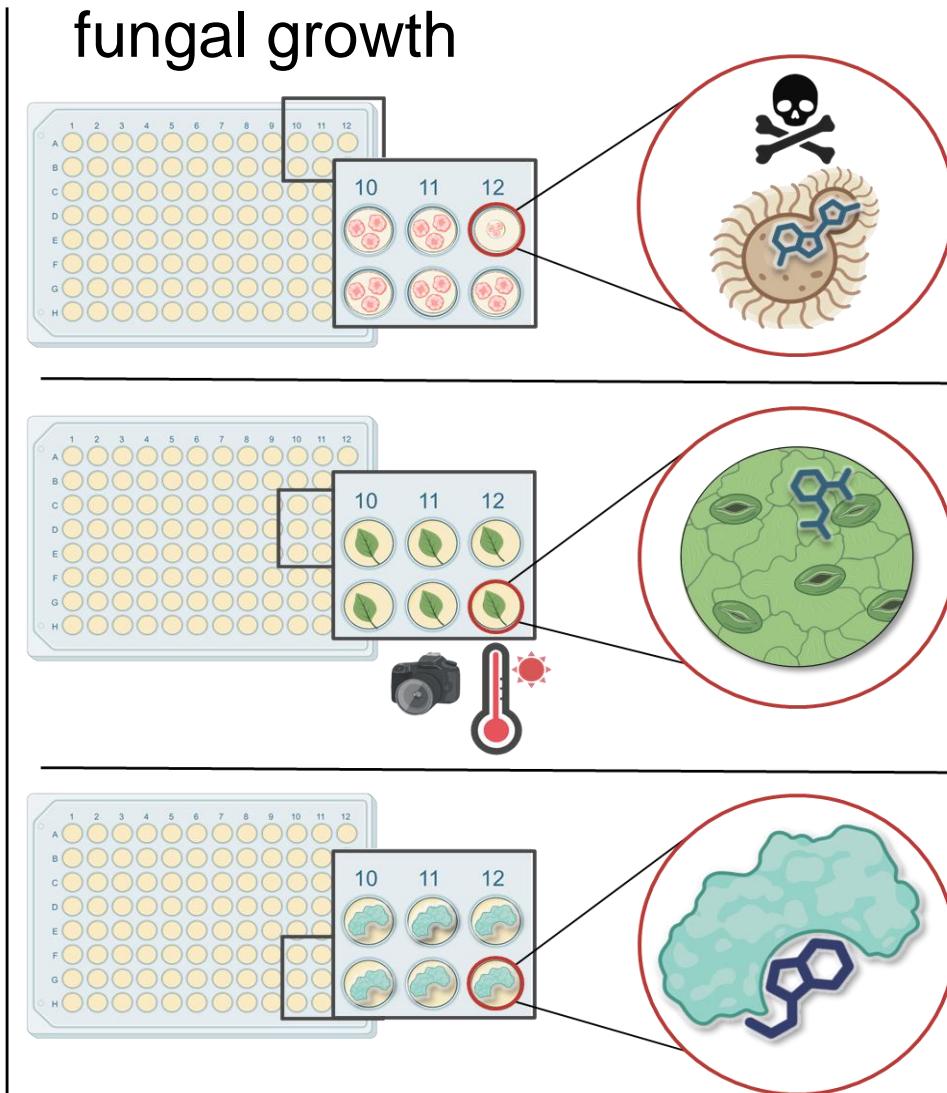
Berkeley Walker, PRL



# Strategy 2. Identify novel bioactives using high-throughput assays on natural product libraries



Curated  
Chemical  
Libraries



- gas exchange
- leaf temperature
- stomatal aperture
- protein-molecule binding assays

# Fusarium species reduce billions of dollars of crop loss

Both quantity and quality of many grains, fruits, and vegetables



dry rot in potato



sudden death  
syndrome in  
soybean

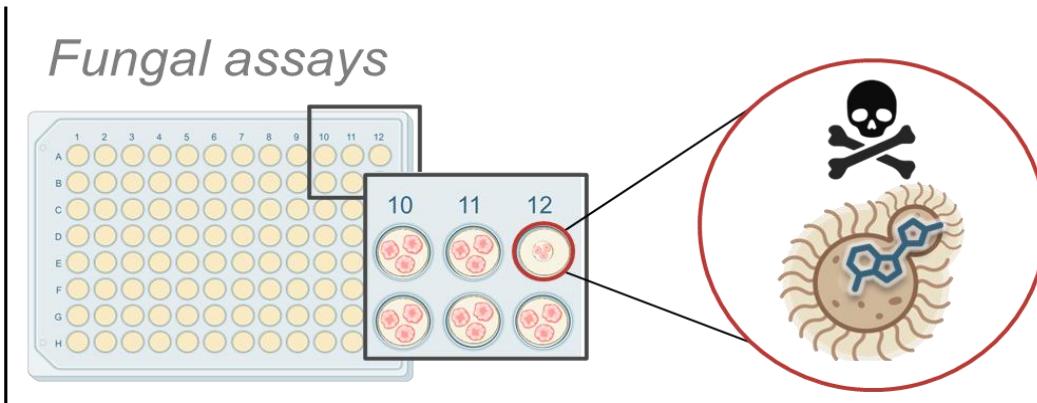
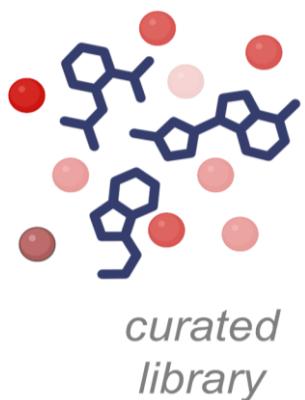


wilt in tomato



Ear rot in maize

# High-throughput screening for new anti-fungal natural products



*F. oxysporum* *F. virguliforme*



Erika Lisabeth, MSU Drug Discovery Core



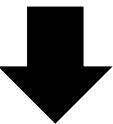
Kathe Rivera-Zuluaga  
MSU



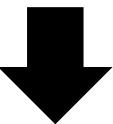
Linda Hanson  
MSU

# Next steps: Hits validation

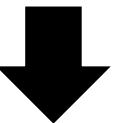
Hits validation



EC50 & EC90 validation  
in liquid and agar

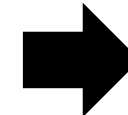
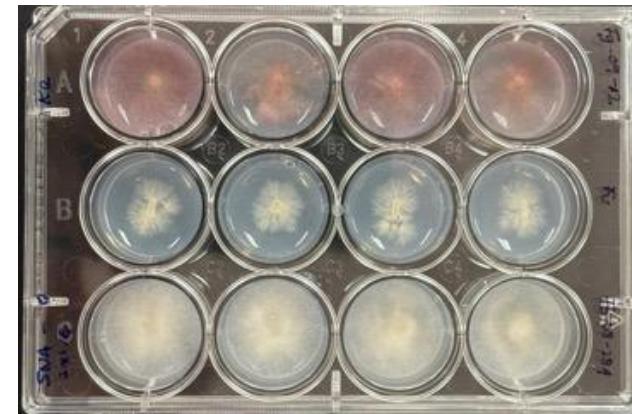


Candidates for  
toxicology screen



Candidates for  
*in-planta* validation

- What stage of fungi growth is the compound affecting?
- What is the EC50 or EC90 of the compound?





# Thank you: Rhee Lab and PRI Admin Team



