

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

November 15, 2013

Dear Friend of Michigan State University:

Campus hues have faded into the ambers of late autumn, and twilight shades the horizon a little earlier every day, reminding us that we are Spartans for all seasons.

At Michigan State, we've always embraced a way of working that balances competing tensions and finds harmony, intersecting liberal and applied studies; pursuing the theoretical and the practical in the service of instruction, research, and outreach; and celebrating the arts and the sciences.

Our approach also manifests itself in how we partner with people across the state and around the globe, leveraging the advantage of multiple perspectives to answer the tough questions that confront us in our own backyard and beyond.

Recently, a fast-growing international research partnership took me to Dublin, Ireland, to meet colleagues focused on autism and other intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities. The Daughters of Charity Technology and Research for Intellectual Disability (DOCTRID) program harnesses the interdisciplinary knowledge assets of Michigan State University, eight Irish universities, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and the Daughters of Charity Service and its fundraising arm, RESPECT.

We've identified more than three dozen MSU faculty members whose research expertise can be applied to autism and other intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities—from pediatrics, neuroscience, genetics, and psychology to biomechanics, interactive media, computer engineering, and music. They are being integrated into a new research initiative addressing the entire age continuum and functional spectrum and will work with Irish counterparts through DOCTRID.

Closer to home, a new MSU institute focused on value chain creation will be located in Midland, thanks to the philanthropic and corporate support of the Dow Chemical Company, Dow Corning, and several Midland-based foundations. Michigan State's undergraduate and graduate programs in supply chain management rank first and second in the nation, respectively, and our experts will work closely with outstanding regional, national, and international collaborators to address "grand challenge" value chain problems through world-class research.

In Grand Rapids, we recently initiated a study of the Medical Mile neighborhood of the Secchia Center, home to MSU's College of Human Medicine. The study, which will involve the work of our students, will help us plan for a new medical research facility on land the university owns near the center.

Here on campus, we're doing our part to make mid-Michigan a vital piece of the state's cultural landscape. The award-winning Broad Art Museum recorded its 100,000th visitor last summer, less than a year after its opening. And MSU's Wharton Center continues to be one of the Midwest's top performing arts venues.



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The aging Morrill Hall was razed last summer after it was determined that restoration and reconstruction was not economically feasible, and in August its name was appended to Agriculture Hall, now known as Justin S. Morrill Hall of Agriculture. The newly landscaped green space on which Morrill Hall stood will be dedicated as Morrill Plaza on February 11, 2014—MSU's Founders' Day.

Those who attended MSU in its early years would be astonished by the university's enrollment this year: 49,300 students, a record number that is an indication of the continued strong demand for an MSU degree. This fall's entering class, including transfers, numbers around 9,400 students, 74 percent of whom are Michigan residents, and total undergraduate enrollment is about 38,000, with 79 percent of those students from Michigan. These numbers reflect our continued efforts to help ensure that qualified Michigan residents have an opportunity to benefit from the exceptional educational experience MSU offers.

One of the ways we can do that is by increasing the amount of money available for student financial aid, and there, too, we've reached a milestone. The MSU Office of Financial Aid is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Today, the office administers more than \$600 million to more than 36,000 students annually. Michigan State's own institutional support for student financial aid now totals \$115 million, half again as much as five years ago. About 66 percent of MSU students receive some form of financial aid, and we help as many as possible find the right combination of grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and loans.

Some 45 percent of students graduate from MSU with debt, which is 17 percent better than the national average. We are working diligently to do even better by increasing private support for scholarship endowments. And because the quality of students' experiences is highly influenced by the quality of their instructors and mentors, we also are approaching the building of our faculty endowments through private support with the same determination.

Despite recent budget turmoil in Washington, the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB) project is moving ahead, with the U.S. Department of Energy's latest milestone endorsement August 1 formally establishing FRIB's \$730 million cost and construction schedule. Slated for completion by 2022, FRIB will allow scientists to journey into uncharted territory at the limits of nuclear stability, revolutionizing understanding of the structure of nuclei and the origin of the elements and fueling breakthrough applications for medicine, the environment, and national security.

Michigan State already is involved in a variety of efforts to keep our nation secure from threat while also preparing our students to compete in a global economy. Higher education must be part of discussions on balancing the need for security with the need for intellectual freedom and openness. In September, MSU hosted an FBI conference on the subject, and I serve as chairperson of the National Higher Education Security Advisory Board, a group of university presidents and chancellors consulting with national agencies responsible for security, intelligence, and law enforcement.

MSU also is a leader in security-related technologies, including laser-based detection of explosives and body-marking and facial-recognition software. And last year, MSU joined a pilot program to test campus security measures in stadium areas in collaboration with the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security.

Ultimately, global security is bolstered by the kind of work in which Spartans are engaged every day both on campus and around the world—research and innovation that result in safe and plentiful food and water supplies, clean and affordable energy, and quality education and health care.

The many ways Spartans make a difference will be part of a special MSU video documentary that will debut in January 2014. Titled 360.24, the documentary will capture one day in the life of Spartans, featuring video and photos shot by MSU faculty, staff, students, and alumni near and far on November 6. Watch for this inspiring confirmation that Spartans Will.

I also invite you to continue to view—and share—stories of Spartan impact that you'll find every day at msutoday.msu.edu. It's one of the many ways you show your pride in Michigan State University, and I thank you for championing MSU.

Sincerely,



Lou Anna K. Simon, PhD
President