May 2015

Dear Friend of Michigan State University:

Earlier this month we celebrated the accomplishments of nearly 5,000 undergraduate-degree recipients and more than 2,300 advanced-degree earners who are beginning the next phase of their journey as Spartans for life.

You might say they represent a gift to the world, first from their families and now from the greater Spartan family. It’s an impressive group, including:

- Anna Schaar, a new graduate of MSU’s College of Human Medicine, who was promoted to captain in the U.S. Air Force on graduation day. She was one of a record nine military grads from the college who earned their commissions from the Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- Senior class commencement speaker Mario McLean, who overcame tremendous adversity as he made his way from the foster care system to MSU. In his words, “As Spartans, the will and inner ability to conquer anything is built within us.” Well said, Mario.

Supporting future innovators

MSU’s ability to provide students with opportunities to excel is made possible with the support of generous and engaged alumni and friends.

- A recent $5 million bequest commitment will empower the MSU College of Engineering to better develop the next generation of innovation leaders. The Gary A. and Patricia A. Coffman Endowed Scholarship/Fellowship includes support for talented, qualified engineering students, as well as funds to strengthen the college. It is part of Empower Extraordinary, the $1.5 billion campaign for MSU.
- Another $5 million gift—to develop student talent at a much earlier stage—hails from a galaxy far, far away. Funded by a five-year grant from Lucas Education Research, a division of the George Lucas Educational Foundation, it will allow us to help create a project-based model for teaching elementary students science while promoting math, reading, and writing skills.

Preparing for a changing world

We can never forget that our faculty—world-class researchers and dedicated scholars—plays a critical role in preparing our graduates for a changing world. I’m thinking of people like Sheng-Yang He, University Distinguished Professor in the MSU-DOE Plant Research Laboratory, whose lab buzzes with undergraduate and graduate research assistants. He recently was elected to the National Academy of Sciences for his seminal contributions to the world’s understanding of how plants become susceptible to disease.

While making a real difference in their fields of expertise, each year faculty members guide and mentor students who go on to make their own mark on the world. Spartans Will.

Sincerely,

Lou Anna K. Simon, PhD
President, Michigan State University

Office of the President
Hannah Administration Building
426 Auditorium Road
Room 450
East Lansing, MI 48824

517-355-6560
Fax: 517-355-4670
president.msu.edu