

SPARTANS WILL  
**CELEBRATE  
DIVERSITY**





ALL-UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY  
**2019 RECOGNITION AND AWARDS**  
CONVOCATION AND RECEPTION

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**Thursday, February 14, 2019**  
**4 p.m.**

Big Ten A, Kellogg Center  
Michigan State University

**Moderator**

Paulette Granberry Russell  
*Senior Advisor to the President for Diversity*  
*Director, Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives*

**Welcome**

Satish Udpa  
*Acting President*

**Acknowledgments**

2018 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ESSAY COMPETITION  
Krista McCallum Beatty, *Director*,  
Office for International Students and Scholars

2019 RESEARCHING THE DREAM:  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ADVANCING INCLUSION THROUGH  
RESEARCH AWARD  
Bess German, *Assistant Dean*  
Honors College

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MULTICULTURAL HEROES HALL OF FAME-  
CASE COMPETITION  
Darrell King, *Senior Associate Director*  
Multicultural Business Programs, Eli Broad College of Business

2018 EDUCATION ABROAD ESSAY CONTEST  
Opal Leeman Bartzis, *Executive Director*  
Office for Education Abroad

**EIDA Award Recognition**

Paulette Granberry Russell

**Reception**

Big Ten A

## David Biedenbender

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

College of Music

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



Dr. David Biedenbender uses his teaching, creative work, and leadership to consider the role of the arts in confronting conversations around diversity, inclusion, and equity.

In his introductory course on Western music, he encourages non-music majors to consider how political and cultural responses to traditional pieces are shaped by race, gender, and power. In his courses for music majors, he centers his pedagogy on empathy and incorporates music from across cultures and styles to encourage students to embrace personal and social expression as well as musical mastery.

Dr. Biedenbender speaks openly about the social, political, and cultural influences upon which he draws in his compositions. According to one of his colleagues, this is a profound act for a composer, especially one who is a cisgender, white, heterosexual male, working in a field that often prioritizes the creation of “serious” music that focuses on technical mastery with little regard to social context. His recent work, *Shell and Wing*, was inspired by his sons, but after the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, Dr. Biedenbender re-envisioned the piece as a meditation on the challenge of protecting children from violence.

Dr. Biedenbender seeks out guest artists who confront social issues, intentionally highlighting underrepresented artists whose work is often marginalized in favor of the traditional canon. With colleague Lynn Goeringer, Dr. Biedenbender curated an exhibit in the College of Music called “Intersections” that featured the work of composers who identify as women. The series included a panel discussion about the LGBTQ+ experience in music with panelists such as transgender composer Alex Temple. Dr. Biedenbender’s next project invites mezzo soprano Lucy Dhegrae to MSU to present the *Brave Project*, an interdisciplinary production that explores her experiences as a survivor of sexual assault. This project connects audiences to music that explores the relationship between body and trauma and furthers discussions around sexual assault and abuse in the context of the #MeToo movement.

For his commitment to modeling and cultivating the important role artists play in confronting complex social issues, Dr. David Biedenbender is recognized with an Individual-Emerging Progress award. 🏆

## Obafemi Elegbede

DOCTORAL GRADUATE

Department of Community  
Sustainability

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



A recent graduate of the doctoral program in the Department of Community Sustainability, Dr. Obafemi Elegbede leaves a legacy of scholarship and service to his colleagues and discipline, which have benefitted from his mentoring and tireless commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

His dissertation explores the economic impact of solar energy in Sub-Saharan Africa, and he uses his expertise in social and economic development in Nigeria as a platform to expand the advancement of underrepresented minority students in agricultural economics and related fields.

Dr. Elegbede connects with students at all levels to share his own experiences as an immigrant and as a person of color working in fields where people “like him” are significantly underrepresented.

He served as Vice President of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), a national organization dedicated to supporting underrepresented minority students in colleges of agriculture, where less than 3% of graduate students come from underrepresented groups. In this role, he supported over 6,000 MANRRS members throughout the country.

As an active participant in MSU's MANRRS chapter, Dr. Elegbede's leadership played a key role in recruiting and supporting MSU's Mastercard Foundation Scholars. He also served in the Department of Economics' Summer Institute for the American Economic Association, acting as a research associate and a program associate, where he worked closely with students to support, enrich, and inspire them to forge their own unique path to a doctorate in economics. This is particularly relevant work since economics is a field where faculty members from underrepresented minority groups have declined in the last ten years and diversity among the student body remains a challenge.

For his tireless mentoring of students and commitment to ensuring that his scholarly discipline and institutional home embrace and support scholars of all backgrounds, Dr. Obafemi Elegbede is awarded an Individual-Emerging Progress award. 🌱

## Patricia Jaimes

GRADUATE STUDENT

Department of Earth and  
Environmental Sciences

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



Ms. Patricia Jaimes is a graduate student in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences. Hers is a field with notoriously limited diversity, and she has taken on the challenge of addressing this issue. Her research introduces a framework to illustrate how scientists from underrepresented minority groups utilize positive experiences, resources, and assets to excel in their scientific careers. Her approach highlights resources that are not often valued by the scientific community but are critical to the success of marginalized scientists of color and women.

As vice president of MSU's chapter of the Society for the Advancement of Chicano/Hispanic and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and a peer mentor in MSU's Upward Bound program, Ms. Jaimes mentors graduate, undergraduate, and high school students and motivates students to see their own lives as resources upon which to draw for scholarly and professional success. For this work, was awarded the Disciplinary Leadership Award from the MSU Council of Graduate Students.

She has served as a consultant to the National Science Foundation, and she is currently working with senior Latinx colleagues to develop mechanisms by which Latinx scientists can better connect and succeed in the field of Earth and Environmental Sciences. Ms. Jaimes was named one of the nation's "Brightest and Most Driven Latino Students" and she earned a \$5,000 Café Bustelo Scholarship in recognition of her dedication and commitment to empowering the Latinx community.

She is a woman, a scientist of color, a mother to a child with a disability, a first-generation college student, and a first-generation American, and Ms. Jaimes has found a way to use these labels as a source of power for her own ambition and success.

For her groundbreaking scholarly work and research, and for her work to powerfully and positively impact the lives of other Chicano/Latinx scholars, Ms. Patricia Jaimes is awarded an Individual-Emerging Progress award. 🌱

## Sumaya Malas

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

James Madison College and  
College of Arts & Letters

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



Sumaya Malas is an MSU student leaving a local and global legacy, all while earning a triple major in comparative cultures and politics and international relations in James Madison College, and Arabic (plus a minor in Muslim studies) from the College of Arts & Letters.

Locally, Ms. Malas has served a mentor to refugees in the Lansing area, where she provides support and friendship to families adapting to a new culture. Globally, she served with the Syrian American Medical Society as a medical translator in Jordan, working for two summers in a refugee camp that is home to over 80,000 people. She interned at the United Nations in New York City, first as a Humanitarian and Fragile Contexts intern, and then with the United Nations Population Fund. Skilled at working directly with vulnerable and marginalized people, Ms. Malas is equally adept at shaping policies and systems that do harm to minority communities.

Her impact on MSU is equally impressive. At the MSU Main Library, she shared her deep knowledge of Arabic language, Islamic texts, and American Muslim Culture to improve the collection and how students use library resources. She advocated for rooms for prayer and reflection throughout campus, and worked closely with library staff to design such a space in the Main Library.

She co-founded United Madison Multicultural Association (UMMA), a student group that stimulates cross-cultural dialogues in James Madison College and worked with Project Nur, a group that confronts Islamophobia by hosting events that educate the public about Muslims, Islam, and community issues. These efforts complement her work as director of community outreach for the Muslim Students Association and on the board of the James Madison Student Senate.

Her outreach and service efforts, combined with her impressive academic record, earned her a position as a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship competition. When she leaves MSU, she will continue her public service to promote a safer and more inclusive global community.

For her dedication to teaching across cultures and modeling the ideals of inclusion, Ms. Sumaya Malas is awarded this Individual-Emerging Progress award. 🌟

## David Rothstein

PROFESSOR  
DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
MSU Department of Forestry

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



For decades, “diversity” in the field of Forestry referred largely to flora and fauna: It is a field where over 80% of members the Society of American Foresters are white men. Prior to 2012, the demographic characteristics of the student body in MSU’s Department of Forestry were similarly homogeneous.

Then, Dr. David Rothstein, graduate studies director and professor of Forestry, took the lead in effecting change. He secured support from the Prospective Doctoral Recruitment and Retention program sponsored by the MSU Graduate School and the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives. Dr. Rothstein explicitly acknowledged his unit’s historic lack of systematic efforts to expand the diversity of their graduate program or expertise in this area, but vowed that he and his colleagues were “committed to making a sustained effort” to see the changes they sought.

Despite having virtually no efforts upon which to build, their work paid off. Domestic graduate students of color have increased from negligible to 35%. Undergraduate students of color have increased from negligible to 18%. And for the first time in the department’s 117-year history at MSU, the 2018 cohort of incoming students had more women than men. A colleague wrote that “it is hard to imagine how the department’s efforts in diversity, equality, and inclusion could have galvanized without Dr. Rothstein’s leadership.”

Dr. Rothstein and his colleagues recently hosted 7 students of color with the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) program; for a unit with only about 75 undergraduates, this was significant teaching effort that required unit-wide support. His efforts have galvanized support from professional groups and funding agencies, recently resulting in a USDA National Needs Fellowship and other significant awards for his unit.

For his collaborative leadership in changing the culture of the MSU Department of Forestry and for actively working to change the face of his field, Dr. David Rothstein is awarded an Individual – Emerging Progress award. 📌

## Arthur Ward

ACADEMIC SPECIALIST,  
Lyman Briggs College

*Individual Award:  
Emerging Progress*



Dr. Arthur Ward has played a pivotal role in creating a culture of diversity, inclusion, and equity in Lyman Briggs College.

His teaching responsibilities require relatively little service, but soon after joining the MSU faculty, Dr. Ward joined the Lyman Briggs College Committee for Inclusion (LBC Inc.). Assuming a leadership position, he and his colleagues committed to creating an environment where all students and faculty feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

Under his leadership, the LBC Inc. created an inclusion statement that explicitly affirms the values of Lyman Briggs College to “foster diversity in all of its forms” and to “celebrate different beliefs, practices, and lives.” This communicates to all who enter a LBC classroom: “You belong here.” A copy of this statement hangs alongside the college honor code in every learning space.

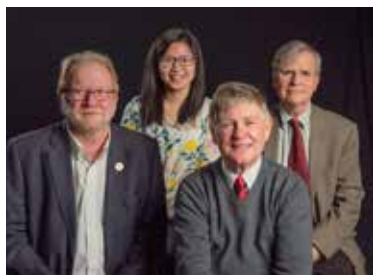
According to his nominators, Dr. Ward speaks openly about his privilege as a white, heterosexual, cisgendered man and leverages that privilege not to highlight his own efforts, but to amplify the advocacy and activism of others, especially his female colleagues and colleagues of color.

In service to the Lyman Briggs faculty, he convened a program on implicit bias that featured the work of MSU colleagues Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews, Dr. NiCole Buchanan, and Lynn Lammers. He followed this program with a workshop on bystander training and expanded the impact of these conversations by engaging Lyman Briggs Undergraduate Learning Assistants, recognizing the important role these students play in offering inclusive support in the classroom.

For his ongoing efforts to foster a culture in Lyman Briggs College that communicates to everyone that they belong and are valued members of the community, Dr. Arthur Ward is awarded an Individual-Emerging Progress award. 🌱

## C-RAIND

Center for Research in Autism,  
Intellectual, and other  
Neurodevelopmental Disabilities  
(C-RAIND)



*Unit Award: Excellent Progress  
toward Advancing Diversity  
within Community*

The Center for Research in Autism, Intellectual, and other Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (C-RAIND) has contributed to an inclusive campus culture where people with intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities are valued for their unique contributions to the world.

The Celebrating the Spectrum Festival welcomes pre-college musicians on the autism spectrum to sample college life as they learn and collaborate with MSU faculty and students. The program rejects the remedial approaches that many students on the autism spectrum experience; instead, the curriculum is artistic, to honor the musical vision, ability, and communication of the artists.

C-RAIND's annual Autism conference is similarly person-centric, with a unique lifespan approach to sharing research and services in three areas: medical, research, and individual/family. The conference includes contributions from scholars, medical and behavioral health practitioners, teachers, families and individuals and is open, accessible, and free for all participants.

As a member of the international Project SEARCH Community, C-RAIND offers work-based learning and job coaching throughout the community and helps combat negative stereotypes about persons with developmental disabilities. C-RAIND seeks to build on the success of this program by launching BRIDGES, a two-year program that will offer students with intellectual disabilities a post-secondary experience that promotes inclusion, vocational preparation, independence, and self-determination.

For its commitment to creating programs and changing culture to affirm the ways in which individuals with disabilities possess the talents, passion, and determination to lead successful lives in their communities, the Center for Research in Autism, Intellectual, and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities is honored with a Unit—Excellent Progress toward Advancing Diversity within Community award. 📌

## Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities (IPF)

*Unit Award:  
Excellent Progress toward  
Diversity Collaboration*



Infrastructure Planning and Facilities (IPF) is one of the largest units on campus: their work supports every facet of MSU's mission in teaching, research, and outreach. And yet, leaders within the organization recognized they could do more to empower their team to ensure that the unit was a place that actively sought diverse experiences and where all employees feel valued for their contributions.

In 2016, IPF leaders embarked on a path of critical self-reflection, specifically to examine its effectiveness in creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. With input from internal stakeholders, an external review team, and fair bit of courage, the IPF leadership team examined every policy and practice that governs their work. They worked to improve the culture in the unit with changes that impacted leadership, engagement practices, supplier and partner diversity, and the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of staff. Every aspect of the operation was scrutinized. This resulted in a Strategic Framework that serves as a guiding document to convey IPF's values and identify opportunities for individuals to connect with goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The results from IPF's visioning have been widespread: policy changes have been communicated to all employees and emphasize transparency in human resource practices. IPF employees provide mentoring to new employees through an "Employee Buddy System," and actively seek out a diverse new generation of people excited to build upon the work of IPF. These efforts evidence an ongoing commitment to hiring, training, retaining, and promoting from within, a generation of IPF leaders who embrace and promote best practices in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

IPF leaders also recognize the need for leadership to model these values. The leaders use data from a recently deployed workforce engagement survey to inform their practices, offer training in areas such as implicit bias, and empower the unit's diversity and workforce engagement committees. These strategies are only a few ways in which IPF is changing its culture from within by embracing the challenges laid out for them in the Strategic Framework.

For its innovations in using data, internal and external review, and inclusive practices at all levels to meaningfully change the culture, Infrastructure Planning and Facilities is awarded a Unit—Excellent Progress toward Diversity Collaboration award. 🌱

## Robert Brown

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Center for Community and  
Economic Development  
University Outreach and Engagement



### *Individual – Lifetime Achievement Award:*

Robert Brown is a connector: he is committed to empowering marginalized groups and tackling systems of inequity by bringing together people, resources, and community will. And he does this by emphasizing how communities already have powerful tools they can use to serve people and solve problems.

Mr. Brown is Associate Director in the Office of University Outreach and Engagement at MSU, and a longtime community leader in Flint, Michigan. He has dedicated his life to supporting and empowering marginalized populations, especially of persons of color, elderly citizens, and economically disadvantaged persons.

As an expert in “Strategic Doing,” Mr. Brown trains community groups to address “wicked” problems. His approach affirms that individuals working together have the collective wisdom, diverse perspectives, and commitment that are the path to solving social problems.

Mr. Brown has served in a number of leadership roles as a volunteer in community organizations, including a neighborhood food bank, interim president and CEO for United Way Services, co-founder of Neighbors without Borders, and other groups dedicated to social change. He helped launch a successful speaker series, Tendaji Talks, which offer monthly dialogues and community events to discuss power and privilege and African American history throughout Flint. In response to the Flint water crisis, he convened a Flint Research Summit and the MSU Engagers Network to bring together people with the right technical expertise to coordinate, cooperate, and share information among the various agencies offering assistance. As a Flint community member and parent who unknowingly had been serving his son Kool-Aid made with contaminated Flint water, he offered to decision makers the perspective of scholar, community leader, and parent affected by the water crisis.

For his lifelong commitment to outreach and engagement, especially with the community of Flint, and for his tireless efforts to empower underserved populations to use the power of their collective experiences, Mr. Robert Brown is awarded a Lifetime Achievement award. 🌱

## 2018 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ESSAY CONTEST

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### First Place

**Natalie Lyric Kagole** (Uganda)

Sophomore, Psychology

*"To Be a Spartan. To Be Empowered."*

### Second Place

**Erik Jose Amezquita Morataya** (Guatemala)

Doctoral Student, Computational Mathematics, Science  
and Engineering

*"Observe. Adapt. Repeat."*

### Third Place

**Asif Iftekhar** (Bangladesh)

Junior, Computer Science

*"Becoming Whole Again"*

## 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH MULTICULTURAL HEROES HALL OF FAME CASE COMPETITION

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### Hero:

**Hero: Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

### WBSA

**Megan Mowid**, Junior, Accounting

**Katelyn Ratzlaff**, Freshman, Business preference

**Victoria Zehner**, Sophomore, Business admitted

## **2019 RESEARCHING THE DREAM: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ADVANCING INCLUSION THROUGH RESEARCH AWARD**

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*The Martin Luther King, Jr. Advancing Inclusion through Research Award builds the body of work authored by students that support the ideals of inclusive excellence through topics on inclusion, diversity, and marginalized populations.*

### **First Place**

**Katarina Huss** - Senior, Honors College and James Madison College Comparative Cultures & Politics and Social Relations & Policy  
*"Exploring the Secondary Migration of Resettled Refugees"*

### **Second Place**

**Arzelia Williams** - Senior, James Madison College Social Relations & Policy and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities  
*"Black Mental Health and the Prison System"*

### **Third Place**

**Jonathan Walkotten** - Senior, Honors College and James Madison College Social Relations & Policy and Women's and Gender Studies  
*"The Expansion of PrEP and HIV-Prevention Measures"*

### **Honorable Mention**

**Alex Barshaw** - Senior, Honors College and James Madison College Social Relations & Policy  
*"Noncitizen Voting in School Board Elections"*

## 2018 EDUCATION ABROAD ESSAY CONTEST

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### First Place

**Rhett Pimentel** – Majors: Mechanical Engineering and  
Computer Science

*"Chinatown, an Amazing Experience, and a Flaw  
in My High School Education"*

### Second Place

**Emma Bignall** – Major: Anthropology

*"Experiencing Racial Differences in Ecuador at a Time  
of Global Change"*

### Third Place

**Jaclyn Rey** – Major: Kinesiology

*"One-Love"*

ALL-UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY  
**2019 RECOGNITION AND AWARDS**  
SELECTION COMMITTEE

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**Selection Team Facilitator:**

**Audrey D. Bentley,**  
Sr. Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Office for Inclusion

John Beck

Craig Gunn

Sandra Kilbourn

Kevin Leonard

Judi Brown Clarke

Hilda Mejia Abreu



**Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives**

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