

Michigan State University Resource Center for Persons With Disabilities



**2018 - 2019
Annual Newsletter
Advancing Student
Success**

A Note from the Director



Disabilities of all types provide challenges that initially seem insurmountable. How we define ourselves, the actions we take, and who we meet along the way define what we become. Disability creates a difference that can either shut people down or stimulate growth and success.

Thousands of these success stories start here at MSU. We are a community of students, staff, donors and friends welcoming ambitious people with accessibility, scholarship, experiential learning, and ultimately career and life success. We grow possibility and redefine disability from inability to challenges that demand creativity and effort toward leadership. Approaching disabilities as challenges fuels creativity and innovation; these are the very skills needed by tomorrow's leaders and problem solvers.

In 2018 we used inspiration from the new Edith Squires Endowment to begin integrating many of our efforts toward a focus on health, wellness, and resiliency. When we help people redefine disabilities as manageable life challenges, share visions of what is possible, and provide the tools to help students grow, we are fostering vision and resiliency which ultimately helps people reach their highest potential.

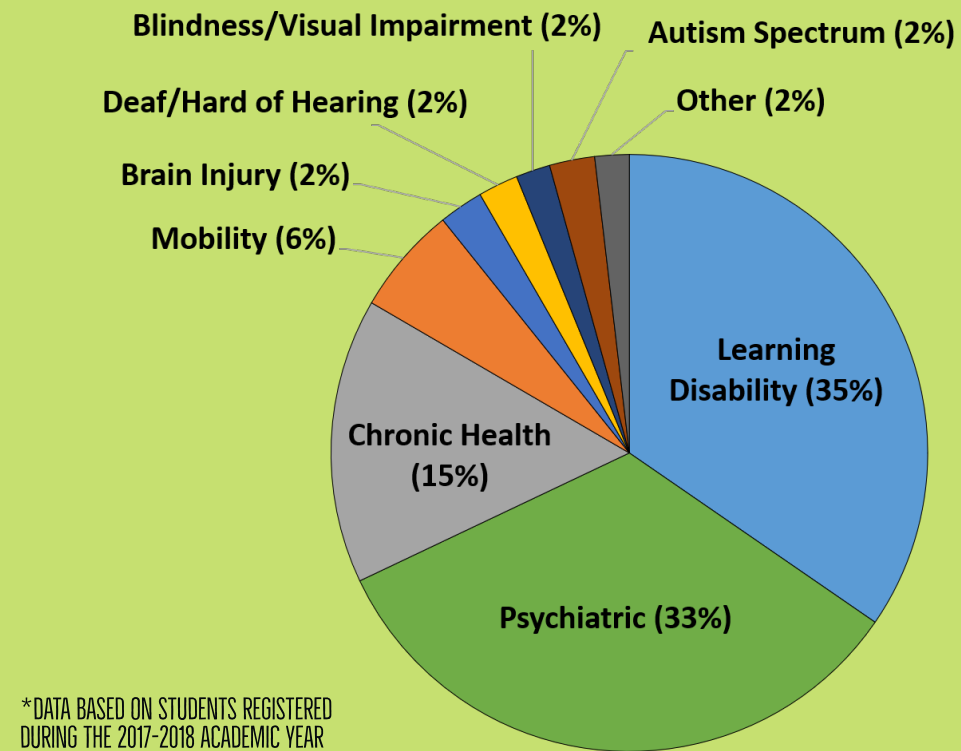
Working together, there is much to celebrate and we are thankful for you as a contributor to ability and opportunity. Indeed, great things happen every day at MSU because of the community we have built. Our collective effort helps people re-envision disability and ensure it represents a challenge and not a blockade to life success.

We have highlighted ongoing efforts in the following pages and seek your continued partnership into 2020 and beyond.

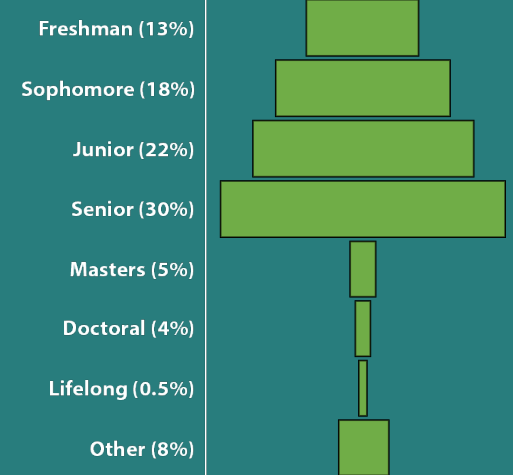
Sincerely,

Michael Hudson

RCPD REGISTERED STUDENTS BY CHALLENGE



1972 RCPD IS CREATED



RCPD STUDENTS BY DEGREE STATUS

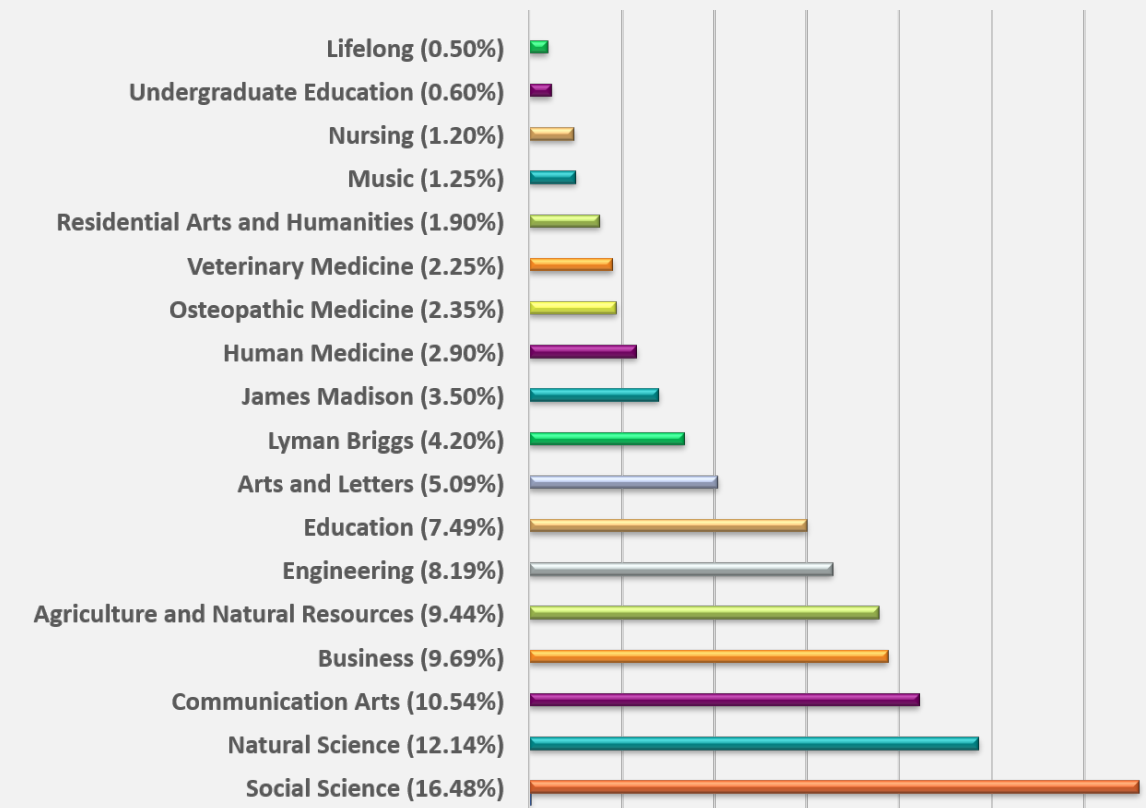
2,176
REGISTERED STUDENTS
AS OF 2017-2018

63%
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.0 OR HIGHER

34%
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.5 OR HIGHER

18%
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.75 OR HIGHER

RCPD STUDENTS BY AREA OF STUDY



Edith Moore Squires Endowment

Edith Moore Squires was a lifetime Spartan, special education teacher, and fierce advocate for students with disabilities. She strived to create accessibility that would allow students to build capacity and increase resilience. She embraced, celebrated, and promoted human adaptability. The **Edith Moore Squires Endowment** provides funding to expand and promote ability and help students envision their highest potential. Funding from this program and new staffing from the Gilbert family are leading new programming in the areas of health, wellness and resiliency including a new 1-credit course for first-year students intent on starting strong at MSU.

UGS 110: Maximize Ability and Resiliency at MSU

Ashley Maloff and Leslie Johnson of RCPD created a brand-new Health and Wellness course in the already well-known UGS department. **UGS 110** was held for the first time in the fall of 2018. There were 19 students in the class making it the largest UGS section, and it also achieved high rates of attendance and participation. The course was 80 minutes per session and was 11 weeks long.

“This course welcomes new students with vital skills for increased resilience; ultimately expanding ability which is a core objective in our mission,” said Michael Hudson, director of the RCPD.

This course was designed to help give freshman a good, solid start and increase the number of students who continue on to their sophomore year. The health and wellness course focused on Dr. Bill Hettler’s **six dimensions of wellness: physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, environmental and social**. Maloff and Johnson wanted to make sure that the students would learn life lessons that focused on their environment and what they could change about it. The course itself is designed to be extremely interactive and help new students make peer connections.

“As a freshman in college, lots of people worry about finding the right group of friends at the beginning of the year, including me,” said Jacob, a UGS 110 student. “By starting off this class learning and talking about friendships, it made it very effective because I was able to relate to this topic at that very moment. One of my biggest takeaways from this class was that almost every freshman goes through the stress of finding their “group”.”

Finances, nutrition and emotions are a few of the most vital areas of learning within the UGS course. This is especially important because it builds a foundation for students living away from home for the first time, and better equips them to manage the complexities and spontaneity of life.

Alex’s Great State Race

Five years have passed since the first **Alex’s Great State Race**, and the event is still running strong. It all started with a student diagnosed with cancer and turned into a bond between two rival colleges coming together in his memory to make a profound difference for students with disabilities.

University of Michigan’s Children’s Hospital helped Alex Powell with his cancer treatments before his fall semester in 2010 and his spring semester in 2011, while MSU worked to give him the college experience every freshman deserves. After Alex’s unfortunate passing, the ROTC and disability services offices of the two universities came together with his family and friends to find a way to memorialize him.

Eventually, they came up with another tradition for the **rival football game between MSU and U-M**. The decision was made to run the game ball from the visitor’s stadium to the stadium where the game would be played.

On the fifth anniversary event on October 19, 2018, the runners included ROTC members of both schools, then-Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley and Michigan Supreme Court Justice Richard Bernstein. Calley and Bernstein are alumni from MSU and U-M respectively.

Because of the planning and determination of the Race Committee, MSU and U-M ROTC, RCPD staff and U-M’s Services for Students with Disabilities staff, as well as everyone who provided emotional and monetary support, the Race grows in size and visibility each year. In 2019 the run will be from MSU to The Big House in Ann Arbor.

Looking ahead, AGSR Committee co-chair Caleb Sandoval said, “This event has earned a permanent and honored place within the gameday fanfare and tradition. It exemplifies and champions all the good we can do when we work together toward a common goal, no matter the obstacles set in our way.”

To find out more about Alex’s Great State Race or see how you can become a part of this great tradition, visit <http://alexsgreatstaterace.org/>



Endowment Innovation

Robert Decker
and Benjamin Muns
Friendship Memorial
Scholarship

Awarded
4 Scholarships

Total: \$20,000

Edith Moore Squires
Endowment
Energizing student readiness
through a freshman health,
wellness and resilience course

Tower Guard
Scholarship

Awarded
8 Scholarships

Total: \$2,600

Angela Sebald Ability
Access Fund
New staffing transforming
focus on ability

Alex Powell Spartan Experience
Leadership Endowment
Supporting a student through an
adverse cancer challenge with MSU
care and kindness

Anita Giampalmi
Scholarship
Awarded 1 Scholarship
Total: \$3,600

Wochholz Endowment for
Persons with Disabilities
Helping youth recognize college as
possible and vital for their futures,
and showcasing the power of
higher education

Katrina Tagget
Memorial Fellowship

Awarded 1 Scholarship

Total: \$4,000

Stern Tutoring and Alternative
Techniques for Education (STATE)
Addressing learning challenges with
seminars, mentoring and tutoring

Victor Troubalos
Scholarship

Awarded
2 Scholarships

Total: \$3,000

Bosco MSU/MRS
Careers Collaborative
Ensuring student academic
successes become career
successes

Samaritan
Scholarship

Awarded 5
Scholarships

Total: \$20,000

Michael J. Hudson Emerging
Opportunities Endowment
Developing technologies for campus
navigation and augmented reality
and supporting student scholarship

Shawn M. Koch
Memorial Scholarship

Awarded 1 Scholarship

Total: \$2,000

Persons with Disabilities
Empowerment Fund
Building leadership skills,
communicating student capacity
and creating community

Carlson Accessible Media
Program (CAMP)
Accelerating work in 3D
printing, tactile graphics and
Braille availability

Education
Abroad Scholarship

Awarded
2 Scholarships

Total: \$4,000

Autism Initiatives: Building Opportunities
for Networking and Discovery (BOND)
Meeting unique student needs through
mentoring and community engagement



Careers Collaborative

The **MSU/MRS Careers Collaborative** has been building partnerships with students and employers since its inception in the fall of 2014. Thanks to private gifts from the Bosco family, matched with state and federal funds secured by Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), the Collaborative helps RCPD's students gain access to specialized guidance about career options as well as providing a full-time on-campus vocational rehabilitation counselor. Having this support builds resiliency and connectivity within our students' lives. The Collaborative assists by connecting academics with real-life job experiences which leads students to more immersive experiences while readying them for their professional futures.

The **Careers Collaborative** accepts students beginning in their sophomore year and helps them grow through individualized assistance tailored to their unique needs. By deepening connectivity earlier during their time at MSU, students approach career decisions with greater skill, confidence and a sense of wellness.

"Sometimes the prospect of finding jobs and internships can be daunting and resources difficult to navigate," said Lindsay Hill, ability access specialist. "By offering individualized assistance, students can focus on the skills and talents they have to offer an employer rather than on the often-inevitable anxiety surrounding the search."

"Through the Careers Collaborative, students can find a renewed sense of excitement and hope that the effort they are making towards career readiness will be met with enthusiasm and confidence from employers rather than apprehension because of their disability."

Tower Guard



Founded in 1934, Tower Guard is one of the oldest active student organizations on campus and is comprised of high achievers selected from the top of their freshman class. Tower Guard members spend their sophomore year working closely with the RCPD to help read and scribe for exams, create more accessible textbooks, hold one-on-one tutoring, and build a more inclusive environment for all Spartans. The **Carlson Accessible Media Program (CAMP)** is a steadfast support, providing essential technological resources accelerating the work of Tower Guard. In the 2017-2018 school year, Tower Guard members volunteered a total of 6,220 hours.

Pysarchik Endowment



Trent Pysarchik arrived at MSU as a freshman in 2004. Passionate about sports but cognizant of the physical challenges before him, Trent recognized his pursuit of an athletics career might be optimally developed as a writer rather than as an athlete himself, and pursued an education in journalism. Though Trent passed away in 2011, he is remembered as a loving, caring, and determined individual.

In celebration of his life and his positive outlook throughout the challenges he faced, the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities is honored to join the family and friends of Trent Pysarchik in establishing the **Trent Pysarchik Internship Endowment**. In Trent's honor, we apply private gifts through this endowment to help students with disabilities gain meaningful internship and other professional development which allows them to gain real-world experiences that culminate in rewarding careers.

THE Gilbert Gift

Three new Ability Access Specialist
positions drive innovation

Lindsay Hill



Lindsay builds relationships between students and employers, while also working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and brain injuries.

One of her biggest projects is the **BOND (Building Opportunities for Networking and Discovery)** program which is geared toward students with ASD. This program involves connecting students with their peers and resources that can help them gain new life skills. Because of this position, she has been able to grow the ASD program and provide weekly seminars on subjects ranging from cooking a meal to raising mental health awareness.

Lindsay's goal for the future is to make an early entry program for BOND with freshman students meeting Resident Assistants and touring campus early in their admission process. Coordination with the Bosco MSU/MRS Careers Collaborative will serve to make it a well-rounded and innovative program.



Lina Wu



Lina focuses on media access for students of the RCPD. Some examples of services she provides are: tactile graphics, audio files and electronic text (e-text).

Lina, along with RCPD Assistive Technology Specialist Stephen Blosser, is currently working on a grant to provide **a more accessible version of math** for RCPD students who are blind or visually impaired. With complicated math equations like those in calculus, a program is needed for translation which can be easily used by a person with or without sight.

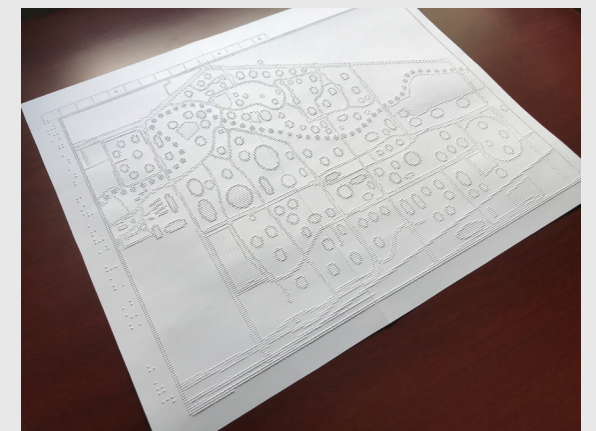
Her overall goal is to finalize the math accessibility project and make it easier for professors and students to save time and effort to complete and grade math homework.

Ashley Maloff



Ashley is an Ability Access Specialist with a focus in chronic health. Her 2018 was focused on the UGS 110 class with Leslie Johnson which taught students about **health, wellness and resiliency** (for more details see page 5).

Her next goal is to incorporate a peer coaching program which would expand into the theme of the UGS course. This would also promote new partnerships on campus. For example, in coordination with housing, the RCPD has built allergy friendly spaces where people with similar needs find community. Ashley wants to build and encourage more peer connections while keeping health, wellness and resiliency as the goal.



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Alternative Testing Coordinator

Wendy Hilliker
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Documentation Coordinator

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Public Relations Coordinator

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Denise Hartman

Susie Hoffmann

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Ryan Griffin
Braille Assistant Manager,
Technology Trainer

Kyle Silva
E-text Assistant Manager,
Technology Trainer

Katelyn Smiles
Alternative Format Production

Ability Access Specialists

Stephen Blosser
Assistive Technology

Cherelyn Dunlap
Office of Employee Relations,
Accommodations Specialist

Kelsey Foote
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

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Autism Spectrum, Brain Injury, and
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

Leslie Johnson
Psychiatric Disabilities

Ashley Maloff
Chronic Health Disabilities

Virginia Martz
Deaf/Hard of Hearing,
Mobilities Disabilities

Jennifer Montague
Psychiatric Disabilities

John Pedraza
Psychiatric Disabilities, Disability Resource
Coordinator for Employees

Virginia Rutan
Learning Disabilities/ADHD
Student-Athlete Liaison

Caleb Sandoval
Chronic Health Disabilities

Angela Sebald
Blindness/Visual Impairment, Media Access

Darryl Steele
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

Grace (Boyang) Tong
Psychiatric Disabilities

Lina Wu
Media Access



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