This snippet of a well known Robert Frost poem sums up well the sentiments of many of us as we look at our life’s journey and our intersection with MCSP. MCSP – the students, the faculty, the staff, the community partners, and the way we all have a common understanding that in reaching out to help others, we help ourselves. It is one of the “roads” that I think symbolizes the choices we make in life. You and I chose the MCSP road which diverges off the beaten path at times and may be less traveled, but it certainly has made all of the difference in many lives. A wise person once said, “It’s not the destination, it’s the journey”. They may have been talking about MCSP. Safe travels MCSP!

Wendy Woods
Dear MCSP Alums,

The MCSPers of 2012-13 would make you proud! In mid-February about 50 MCSPers joined our staff in the Irish Hills of Michigan, about an hour southwest of Ann Arbor, for a weekend retreat and conference. As one of our newest traditions, we braved the cold and snow to give the MCSP community a boost from the winter doldrums, reflect on the past year, and make plans for the coming year. We held a 3-hour workshop on sustainability with students leading small group discussions and meditation, a student/staff/faculty panel talked about the meaning of sustainability, and then we held an inspiring brainstorm of ideas for action on personal, East Quad, campus-wide, and MCSP-focused change in the coming year. After dinner we all participated in a simulation game on social inequalities that ended in a riot but was followed with an insightful discussion on race, class, and social change. Then everyone got goofy into the wee hours of the night.

We have a record number of students returning as peer leaders next year and they are making big plans for social justice, community service, and community building. This semester we are hosting three film screenings on race and social justice (hip-hop, incarceration of people of color, health care) at the Ann Arbor Public Library for university-community discussions, and are bringing in the director and producer of “Broken on All Sides” which highlights issues raised in Michelle Alexander’s The New Jim Crow. MCSP and the Residential College have received a Third-Century grant from the UM Provost for a new initiative, the Civic Engagement Corridor, to strengthen collaborations and learning between UM, MSU, and WSU in partnership with local communities.

We do love to hear from you, the alums, and I can’t tell you what a big smile it brings to my face. We’re excited to learn about new jobs, new locations, new weddings and babies, and the great success and happiness that many of you are having in your personal and professional lives as you continue to make a difference in the world. We greatly appreciate how many of you are making financial contributions to MCSP, large and small, and we are very excited about building an MCSP internship program with your help. Yet, as much as we look for your help, we also are as ready to be of assistance to you today as we were when you were living in the MCSP community, whether it was in Markley, Couzens, East Quad, or West Quad. Once an MCSPer, always and MCSPer and part of the MCSP family. Next year we move back to a renovated East Quad and with you, our alums, staying in close touch with the program, we look forward to our best year ever.

David Schoem
Are you interested in an MCSP student Intern?

MCSP is brainstorming new ways to connect with alumni, and enhance the experience of current students. One way to do this would be to connect current MCSP sophomores and juniors with alumni working in their field of interest. MCSP would love to hear from you if your organization or place of work would be interested in hosting an MCSP student intern in the future. Ideally, in the summer months if you are not local, and any academic term if you are local. It would be exciting to see a network of MCSP alums helping to mentor current MCSPers. If you are interested, or would like to know more please send an email to mcsprogram@umich.edu. We look forward to a pilot class of interns within the next year!

Sustainability Initiatives

With a dynamic Environmental Action Team this year, and much interest across the program in sustainability issues, MCSP began an initiative to implement themes of sustainability into our program and community work. A brainstorming session occurred at our February winter retreat. Ideas and visions for the future were broad-scaled from personal initiatives, MCSP, East Quad, to the larger community. Students made individual sustainability pledges which you may view here, committing themselves to making changes in their own habits. There was much talk of trayless dining, an East Quad community garden, zero waste events, and a focus on sustainability in the service activities we engage in as a community. MCSP is working to integrate sustainable practices in our community.

Our New Home... East Quad!

This August MCSP will move into the newly renovated East Quad. Highlights of the new design are newly refurbished bathrooms and student rooms, updated lounges, redesigned dining hall with seven different restaurant options, and a Java Blue café. Joining MCSP are the Residential Collage and new Gender-Inclusive Living Experience. MCSP is excited to move into this space at the end of the summer. We are looking forward to welcoming our new students, and saying welcome back to our students leaders!

Do you have sustainability or environmental initiatives for MCSP to consider? Are you working in the environmental field or integrating sustainability into your work? Let us know!
MCSP Freshman Class of 1999

Danny Lambouths III is a 2nd year masters’ graduate student in the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Michigan in 2003. His research interests focus on understanding the academic gender gap between African American males and females and how parent socialization and contextual influences contribute to this disparity. Danny recently completed applications for Ph.D. programs in psychology in order to further his studies post graduation.

Reverend Dr. Bernard Lafayette, Jr.

This past fall MCSP hosted Civil Rights leader Bernard Lafayette. Lafayette is an ordained minister, a long-time civil rights activist, organizer, and an authority on nonviolent social change. He co-founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960, and was a core leader of the civil rights movement in Nashville, TN, in 1960 and in Selma, AL, in 1965. He directed the Alabama Voter Registration Project in 1962, and he was appointed by Martin Luther King, Jr. to be national program administrator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and national coordinator of the 1968 Poor People’s Campaign.

We would love to hear from you!

And we know other MCSPers want to know what their former classmates are up to! What have you been doing since graduation from MCSP? What are you doing now, and how do you integrate social justice into your life post-college? Send us an update and we may highlight you in a future alumni newsletter!
MCSP Alumni News

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