Ask any of the attendees at the College of Arts and Letters’ 50th Anniversary Gala, and they will tell you, “It was the place to be; the perfect evening; the event of the 50th year. The menu was exceptional, the food divine; the music lively; the company outstanding; and the program and videos more than memorable!”

Held April 16, 2013, in the appropriately-named Heritage Room of the University Club, the College of Arts and Letters 50th Anniversary Gala saw nearly 200 alumni, faculty, staff, friends and family of the College turn out for a high-energy evening of communication, celebration and recognition. Created to celebrate the College’s past, present, and future, this event recognized key alumni who have made an impact in our world today with their unique visions and determination. It allowed us to reflect on our past and present, and, more importantly, to share the College of Arts and Letters’ vision for the future.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the four distinguished alumni awards and the recipients’ remarks, concluding with a student’s view of the “state of the College” delivered by then-CAL student and 2013 graduate Paige Fouty.

Department of Theatre standouts, Chair and Professor of Scene Design Kirk Domer, and Professor and Head of Acting and Directing Rob Roznowski, served as the Gala’s masters of ceremonies and utilized a back-and-forth dialogue of scripted patter to keep the festivities moving. Kirk’s remarks set the mood and scene of the various decades when the four alumni were students and graduated from MSU, i.e., the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, after which Rob zeroed in on some of their major accomplishments and introduced a short video about each honoree.

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS FOR 2013 INCLUDED:**

**Michael Price – 1960s**

Michael Price is Executive Director of Goodspeed Musicals. He is also the founder of The League of Historic Theatres and served as its first president. Goodspeed Musicals, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of musical theater and the creation of new works, was formed in 1959 to restore the Goodspeed Opera House, located in East Haddam, Connecticut, to its original Victorian appearance.

The Goodspeed reopened in 1963. Under the direction of Michael Price since 1968, Goodspeed Musicals is internationally recognized for its dedication to the advancement and preservation of the American musical. For Goodspeed, Mr. Price has produced more than 200 classic and forgotten musicals, 75 new musicals, and transferred 19 shows to Broadway (including “Man of La Mancha,” “Annie,” and “Shenandoah”). Goodspeed productions have garnered 13 Tony Awards and 33 Tony nominations, and Goodspeed itself was honored with two special Tony Awards. Mr. Price is a founding member of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, treasurer of the American Theatre Wing and is a member of the Tony Awards Management Committee. In addition to his bachelor’s degree from MSU, Michael also holds an M.A. from Minnesota, and an M.F.A. from Yale.

Mr. Price is the recipient of honorary doctorates in fine arts, honoris causa, from Connecticut College and the University of Hartford. He is also a recipient of the State of Connecticut
Left page, clockwise from left: Justin Kuxhaus, Kristin Clark Taylor, Michael Price, CAL 2013 graduate Paige Fouty, and Kelly Willis. This page, right and then clockwise below: Dean Karin Wurst and Kristin Clark Taylor; Kelly Willis (center) with family and friends; CAL 2012 Distinguished Alumna Selma Hollander; CAL 2013 graduate Paige Fouty and Michael Price; and Department of Theatre emcees Kirk Domer (left) and Rob Roznowski (right) with Gala attendees Joyce Banish and Don Freed.
Kelly is responsible for shaping and expanding the foundation’s capacity-building programs in Africa. She works with corporate and foundation partners to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative programs that improve the quality of life in Africa by strengthening the health workforce. Prior to working for Accordia, Kelly was senior manager for economic policy at Pfizer, where she became a Pfizer global health fellow. In 2005, she moved on to the Academic Alliance Foundation, the precursor to the Accordia Global Health Foundation, and then to Accordia in 2008. While at the Academic Alliance Foundation and then Accordia, Kelly worked at building the grants management office of the Infectious Diseases Institute in Uganda.

Justin Kuxhaus – 1990s
Justin Kuxhaus had classes with College of Arts and Letters Dean Karin Wurst as part of his German major. Justin is currently a contracts specialist for The Boeing Company. He authors, negotiates, and administers contractual agreements with external business partners of the company, which is the world’s leading aerospace company and the largest U.S. exporter. Justin began his Boeing career in 2005, immediately after graduation from MSU, as a procurement agent. To date, he has combined experience with business partners in the Europe region and has conducted business in Korea, Germany, Australia, the UK, Turkey, and in the USA. He is also the recipient of a team-based Corporate Diversity Change Agent Award. While at MSU, Justin was an intern for the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Germany, and earned credentials in Phi Beta Kappa as well as Delta Phi Alpha recognition. Justin lived on campus while studying at MSU and worked for the Department of Residence Life. He now resides in Seattle, Washington, and is a member of the local chapter of the National Contract Management Association, a local Boeing-employee affinity group, and a local church.

Paige Fouty – Graduating Senior
Paige Fouty’s story is one of how a College of Arts & Letters student has embraced every opportunity that came her way here at MSU. She is unique, dynamic, and driven. She graduated in May 2013, and is embarking on a teaching internship in metro Detroit along with taking grad classes toward a master’s degree. Her passion is to teach tomorrow’s next generation of students (and quite possibly maybe even here at the College of Arts & Letters).

“Tonight, we celebrate 50 years of building cultural change and innovation with our students and in the community,” said Dean Karin Wurst. “College of Arts and Letters alumni are known to be best-in-class critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, experts in technological know-how, and exceptional communicators across a variety of institutions and industries. These significant attributes are what makes CAL alumni so extraordinary in the world today.”

DEAN WURST COMMENTS
Noting that for 50 years, College of Arts and Letters alumni, students, faculty and staff have played an integral part of enriching lives and transforming knowledge into action, Dean Wurst added that the event allowed the College to recognize key alumni who have made an impact in our world today with their unique visions and determination.

“Tonight, we honor outstanding alumni whose diverse accomplishments highlight the value of an arts and letters education,” Dean Wurst said. “Their successes show how CAL has positively influenced their lives and the lives of others, and we are excited for the next 50 years and the future of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University!”