SELMA HOLLANDER, the College of Arts and Letters 2012 Distinguished Alumna, spoke to a rapt audience of new graduates at the Saturday, May 5, commencement ceremonies in the MSU Auditorium. Mrs. Hollander kicked off her comments noting that she was 95 years old, which nearly brought down the house with extended audience applause.

Mrs. Hollander spoke about her personal experiences growing up in New York City; getting a job where she was paid the same as the men she worked with, a huge accomplishment in the early 1900s; and how she met her husband, Stanley, on a golf course in the Poconos.

CAME TO MSU IN 1958
Selma and Stanley Hollander became members of the MSU community in 1958. Stanley, who died in 2004, was a University Distinguished professor in the Eli Broad College of Business, and Selma became an alumna of the College of Arts & Letters, earning two degrees. She later joined the Home Economics faculty, teaching weaving, crafts, and fabric design, and she exhibited regionally as an artist.

From day one, the Hollanders were heavy users of the libraries, and enthusiastic supporters of the arts. Over the years, they established numerous endowments to honor Professor Hollander’s devotion to the MSU Libraries and the couple’s dedication to literature, arts, and music.

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“We had an incredible life because we were involved with the arts,” Selma says. “Everybody works hard and you need a balance. We’ve got it all right here at MSU. The quality is second-to-none and it is all very affordable.”

In her closing remarks, Selma encouraged the College’s new graduates and all in attendance to become involved in the arts, literature and their community, and to give back, as she and her husband Stanley have done, “…so that even when you are gone, a legacy lives on that benefits others.”