

Welcome to Our 2016 MUSES Magazine!



In reflecting on my first year as Dean of the College of Arts & Letters, I am struck by the incredible positive impact a Michigan State University education rooted in the liberal arts endeavor can have on the world we share. From the engaged research our faculty undertake to enable interdisciplinary responses to global challenges, to the experiential learning opportunities that shape our students into the citizen leaders of tomorrow, the liberal arts education we advance in the College of Arts & Letters has never been more vibrant or essential.

Like the Red Cedar River runs through campus, the liberal arts endeavor runs through everything we do at Michigan State University. It empowers students to communicate with eloquence, embrace diversity with grace, perceive globally with imagination, and respond to complexity with nuance. This, in turn, enriches the world we share by engaging communities in ways that enable them to excel while helping provide a richer, more fulfilling human experience

These virtues of a liberal arts education animate our efforts to establish the College of Arts & Letters as an international leader in the arts and humanities. These efforts are grounded in three core priorities: to recruit and retain the very best, most diverse, and creative faculty; to educate the innovative faculty of

tomorrow through world-class graduate programs; and to cultivate the next generation of citizen leaders by providing transformative educational experiences for our undergraduates that will prepare them for meaningful careers.

I am pleased to report that we have made important progress on each of these priorities this year. We have just completed a record-breaking year of fundraising, led by gifts for three endowed faculty positions that will enable us to attract extraordinary faculty to the College.

We've invested significant resources into a signature graduate student recruitment program that has enabled us to recruit the very best of a new generation of teachers and scholars who will inspire our students and address pressing challenges through innovative, engaged scholarship. The newly proposed MSU Center for Interdisciplinarity will enhance graduate education across the University by advancing interdisciplinary research and pedagogy in multiple fields of study—from natural and social science to engineering and agriculture, from education to the arts and humanities.

We also introduced two new programs aimed at cultivating and enriching student and faculty experiential learning.

The **Citizen Scholars program** challenges students who wish to participate in the program to achieve a high level of academic excellence, rewards them for their achievement with financial support, and then encourages additional activities such as internships, study abroad or undergraduate research that will position them to be citizen leaders for the 21st century. Launched to begin in fall 2016, this program is already very popular with incoming students. The impact that support can have for this program will be dramatic and immediate for our students.

The **Media Arts Collaborative (MAC)** is designed to provide a coordinated way to facilitate collaborative projects across

colleges that enrich the undergraduate learning experience and provide faculty and students opportunities to work together on innovative media arts projects.

For more information, read the articles about Citizen Scholars on page 6 and on the Media Arts Collaborative on page 12.

As you thumb through this issue of MUSES, I hope you will take time to read about the people and programs that the College supports as well as those who, in turn, support us. From research, teaching, and scholarship to internships, study abroad, and post-graduation success, these are the stories of our faculty, students, alumni, and staff.

Each reflects the College's inclusive culture of academic excellence that remains rooted in the power of varied viewpoints and diverse backgrounds. By cultivating the capacities to think critically, imagine creatively, and respond ethically, we engage the world's most challenging social, cultural, and ethical questions in order to create a more just and better world.

Still, as we all know, maintaining and expanding our reach and influence is an expensive proposition. But, with your help, we will realize the challenging goals we've set for ourselves.

With new investment, we can sustain excellence and leverage opportunities that inspire the next generation of thinkers and leaders, enhance the arts, and support leading research.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris P. Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Christopher P. Long
Dean of the College of Arts & Letters