

## MSU, Southeast Michigan, and Community Engagement

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*For Immediate Release*

EAST LANSING, Mich. – **Statement from the Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement, Hiram E. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.:**

On October 1, 2009 Michigan State University's connections with Southeast Michigan will move to a new level of engagement when it opens its new a facility in midtown Detroit. Southeast Michigan's importance to MSU begins with its population. More than 21 percent of MSU's 460,000 living alumni reside in the three-county Southeast Michigan area. With this new facility MSU will not only be increasing its investment in the region, but more importantly will be expanding its commitment to its population. MSU's investment is guided by its three core principles of inclusion, connectivity and quality.



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Southeast Michigan is inclusive; it embraces the rich heritages of the world's diverse cultures. The innovation, economic enrichment, and creative expression that multicultural societies generate are essential ingredients in the recipe that can position Michigan to play a leadership role in crafting the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge economy. Creativity, quality of life, entrepreneurial activity, and business innovation are the new spark plugs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and MSU's investment in community partnerships is designed to help create the human and social capital that is necessary to assure transformational change. Numerous analyses, such as those provided by CEOs for Cities and the Brookings Institution, clearly indicate that all of the routes leading to sustainable transformational change in urban environments begin with education.

Located on Woodward just south of Mack Avenue, and not far from MSU's YouthVille–Detroit engagement research office, this new facility will ensure that MSU's strong Southeast Michigan community presence will ease access to the university on many levels. Students interested in enrolling at Michigan State University will have local access to representatives from MSU Admissions offices. Businesses interested in partnering with MSU programs will have local access to representatives of MSU's Government Relations offices. Alumni interested in investing in MSU will have opportunities to meet with representatives from MSU

Development. Students interested in pursuing graduate degrees will have opportunities to take courses in their own hometown, expanding the many community-campus partnerships will facilitate access to MSU's faculty and research partnership office in YouthVille Detroit.

We are particularly excited to announce that our new facility expanding "MSU Detroit" will be home to a Community Music School (CMS) operated by MSU's College of Music, an effort that is consistent with the college's commitment to outreach and engagement. The goal of MSU's Southeast Michigan Community Music School is to provide Detroit area children and youth with an in-depth, sequential music experience while also building vital life skills. The Southeast Michigan CMS will also offer MSU the opportunity to create new partnerships with area businesses and arts organizations that will afford CMS students opportunities to learn about the music industry in Detroit, form relationships with community cultural organizations and connect to potential employers. CMS will complement, not compete with, programs offered by other music and arts organizations in the area such as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Michigan Opera Company, and the Detroit School of the Arts. Collectively, such partnerships can expand Southeast Michigan's cultural and economic assets and stimulate the transformations needed to create the desirable and urban cultures that assure quality of life in successful metropolitan regions.

CMS activities and classes, scheduled to begin in Fall 2009, will include a jazz ensemble (in partnership with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra), early childhood music sessions, multi-media arts/digital media classes (in partnership with YouthVille Detroit), music therapy and the New Horizon Band (music making for adults with no experience or long absence from music). Studies from a broad range of scientific fields now provide support for the impact that early involvement with the performing and creative arts has on children's science and math skills. Creativity, foundational academic skills, and purpose are core elements for generating information technology and knowledge economy innovations.

On October 1, 2009 Michigan State University takes another step in advancing its outreach and engagement connections to Southeast Michigan, with facilities and programs that are scholarly, community-based, collaborative, responsive, and capacity building. We invite you to join us as we start to write a new chapter in the ever-evolving historical novel, *MSU-Southeast Michigan*.

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The Office of the Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement fosters MSU's land grant mission by connecting university knowledge with community knowledge in mutually beneficial ways. UOE provides resources to assist academic departments, centers and institutes, and MSU-Extension on priority issues of concern to society by encouraging, supporting, and collaborating with MSU faculty and academic staff to generate, apply, transmit, and preserve knowledge.