The Great Lakes Leadership Academy

LEADERSHIP
for the Common Good

Tawas Bay Lighthouse

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
**Leadership Advancement Program 2011–12 participants**

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Besey</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Agriculture</td>
<td>Lansing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Clark</td>
<td>Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians</td>
<td>Sault Ste. Marie</td>
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<td>Michael McClellan</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Environmental Quality</td>
<td>Okemos</td>
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<td>Timothy Schreiner</td>
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<td>Meghan Bonfiglio</td>
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<td>Abbey Dorr</td>
<td>Cass County Conservation District</td>
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<td>Luke Meerman</td>
<td>Grassfields LLC</td>
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<td>Sarah Szurpicki</td>
<td>Great Lakes Urban Exchange</td>
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<td>Andrea Boughton</td>
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<td>Jeff Haarer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amna Osman</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Community Health</td>
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<td>Stacy Welling</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Natural Resources</td>
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<td>Lisa Brush</td>
<td>Stewardship Network</td>
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<td>Ritchie Harrison</td>
<td>Jefferson East Business Association</td>
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<td>Shannon Perry</td>
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<td>Sandra Yu</td>
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<td>David Carpenter</td>
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<td>Sonia Joseph Joshi</td>
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<td>Christopher Sadler</td>
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*Cover:* The lighthouse is the Great Lakes Leadership Academy’s symbol of leadership for the common good. Lighthouses have been fundamental to Michigan’s development as a state, helping shape not only its history, but also its economy. The Great Lakes State boasts more of these maritime beacons than any other state. Together, they mark Michigan’s coastline, having guided ships to safety and offering hope to lost sailors for decades. Today they are frequented by tourists and woven into art and poetry as symbols of strength, adventure and haven in the storm.
The value of people working together is greater than the sum of what they can accomplish alone. When power is shared and diverse voices are heard, solutions are more likely to benefit the community as a whole. This is known as leadership for the common good, and it is the aim of the Great Lakes Leadership Academy (GLLA).

“I can see and understand how walking in another’s shoes can help form a better perspective for me. Decisions made from a variety of perspectives are stronger and longer lasting.”

— Luke Meerman, Ottawa County farmer

The GLLA was developed by Michigan State University (MSU) faculty and staff members along with a broad constituency of stakeholders. The group concluded that there is a tremendous need for empowering and facilitative leaders who will propel Michigan forward toward economic and environmental vitality while addressing the needs of all Michigan residents. They designed GLLA to intentionally bring together leaders from diverse audiences and expose them to critical and persistent issues associated with Great Lakes communities along with innovative, equitable and inclusive approaches for addressing those issues. The GLLA Leadership Advancement Program (LAP) is designed for seasoned leaders seeking to enhance their impact on a Michigan that is economically, equitably and environmentally resilient.

Mission of the Great Lakes Leadership Academy:
To promote positive change, economic vitality and resource conservation, and to enhance the quality of life in Michigan by encouraging leadership for the common good.
Leadership Advancement Program

Many programs teach about leadership, but the Leadership Advancement Program goes beyond the theories of leadership. It teaches participants how to lead by giving them opportunities to practice their leadership skills to affect positive change. Individuals preparing for senior leadership roles learn about group problem-solving and collaborative decision making; dialogue and inclusive listening; leadership through crisis; framing and developing strategies to transform communities; servant leadership and stewardship of the public trust; and valuing diverse opinions, abilities and cultures. The program includes classroom and experiential learning, as well as in-state and international travel.

Digging Deep into the Issues

A key element of the LAP is the creation of Issues Teams that are formed to help students further their knowledge of selected issues while providing them with a place to practice the leadership theories and techniques presented throughout the program. Teams engage in difficult conversations about key issues in an effort to learn more about themselves, their leadership styles and how to work with others.

The 2011-12 class formed three work teams and each team selected a critical issue facing our state. Their in-depth research included meetings with a variety of Michigan leaders and an analysis of each issue’s impact on society. Each team presented the subject to the entire class using their newly acquired process and consensus-building tools.

Panel discussion with directors of Michigan state agencies. From left to right, Dan Wyant, Environmental Quality; Cynthia Kelly, Community Health; Keith Creagh, Agriculture and Rural Development; and Rodney Stokes, Natural Resources.
Youth Empowerment and Development Issues Team:
Preparing our youth today for a sustainable tomorrow

The youth empowerment and development issues team sought to expand the knowledge of the program attendees on the topic of youth as a factor in the sustainable future of Michigan. The team presented information related to advancing youth education, leadership development and retention through appreciation of Michigan’s agriculture, natural resources and the environment (ANR & E).

It was determined that in numerous instances, Michigan youth experience weak areas of competency as related to cross cultural preparation and connectivity, service and civic-minded responsibility, academic preparation, particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). They may have limited access to career advice or mentoring that would sustain the next generation of scientists, engineers, farmers, researchers, teachers and professionals in ANR & E fields.

The youth issues team intentionally located its session in Sault Ste. Marie to expand exposure to the Upper Peninsula and to learn from the Anishnabe tribe about the importance of helping youth to challenge their assumptions about individuals of differing backgrounds, ethnicities or religions. The session provided participants with the opportunity to reflect on career-shaping experiences in their own youth, learn about rural and urban youth perspectives and the importance of youth programs such as 4-H, ECOTEK Lab and STEM preparation.

The youth issues team challenged all attendees to consider youth development and empowerment as a key component to a thriving Michigan.
The energy issues team focused on Michigan’s energy ecology. The group’s first meeting laid a foundation for a team that was willing to understand differences among its members and explore new ideas.

The team’s day-and-a-half session provided an opportunity for the cohort to explore Michigan’s energy production and needs. The energy issues team session included tours of the Delhi Township anaerobic digester, the Lansing Board of Water and Light’s solar array, the Michigan State University power plant and the Michigan Energy Options house.

The energy issues team’s project capstone was a community forum held on the MSU campus. The forum brought together more than 100 people and began with a brief overview of Michigan’s energy production and needs by John Sarver. David Bidwell, program manager for the Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments Center, facilitated the discussion. The panel consisted of David Gard, energy program director for the Michigan Environmental Council; Greg Moore, legislative director for State Sen. Mike Nofs; Keith Young, founder of ECOTEK; Rob Zeldenrust, Senior Manager with North Central Cooperative.
The water issues team focused on a mechanism to engage others with their connection to water, emphasizing the need for water conservation and, in particular, water stewardship. Michigan’s residents have the luxury of living near 20 percent of the world’s supply of fresh water. The goal of the water issues team was to stimulate thought and to create new practices within the participants towards their use and understanding of water.

Throughout their one and a half day session, with all LAP students, the team members used a mix of experts in the field and hands-on activities to teach and connect participants to water issues. Lake Superior State University researchers shared their research in the St. Mary’s River and Lake Superior, historic and current use of the St. Mary’s River to create electricity for local residents, projects taking place to eliminate sewage and other contaminants from entering the fresh water supplies around Michigan, and fish hatchery research. Additional topics addressed through discussion and hands-on activities included water as a commodity for sale outside of the Great Lakes watershed, Native American love and respect for water, how septic tanks work and the effects of various land use practices on groundwater.

The session closed with an Ojibwe Water Song to connect participants with a resource we depend on for survival.
Beyond Our Borders

The LAP capstone is a two-week international experience. It’s an opportunity for participants to explore issues from a global perspective; examine leadership in the context of differing political, cultural and social challenges; view resource management in an international economy; and experience a unique networking opportunity. The 2011-2012 LAP cohort experienced India through interactions with residents, professors, students and community leaders involved in agriculture, natural resources, economic development, education and health care. Participants traveled through urban and rural areas engaging in cultural, academic and civic activities and learned how local practitioners in agricultural development to early childhood education work together across sectorial, religious and socio-economic differences.

Each of us must be the change we want to see in the world.
— Mahatma Gandhi
The cohort continues its momentum after graduation by participating in an alumni network for communication and collaboration. GLLA Alumni share ideas and develop their professional skills using social networking sites, in addition to more conventional methods of telephone calls, conference calls and periodic face-to-face interaction. It's a perfect fit with the university’s commitment to lifelong learning and ongoing personal growth.
The Great Lakes Leadership Academy is conducted as a partnership of the Michigan State University College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch, in cooperation with many generous stakeholders.

The following organizations and businesses have contributed financial support toward development and operation of the 2011-2012 programs:

- Cherry Bay Orchards
- Corn Marketing Program of Michigan
- DTE Energy Foundation
- Edward Lowe Foundation
- Great Lakes Fishery Trust
- Great Lakes Packing Company
- GreenStone Farm Credit Services
- Michigan Agri-Business Association
- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Environmental Council
- Michigan Farm Bureau Family of Companies
- Michigan Horticultural Society
- Michigan Milk Producers Association
- Michigan Sea Grant
- MSU AgBioResearch
- MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- MSU Extension
- Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee
- Michigan Vegetable Council
- North Central Co-Operative
- Shoreline Fruit Growers
- Shoreline Fruit, LLC
- Stamp Farms, LLC
- Star of the West Milling Company
- Training Direct, LLC
- Zachary & Associates

The following organizations have provided instructors and other support to GLLA:

- American Leadership Forum
- Bristlecone Learning, Inc
- International Association of Programs for Agricultural Leadership
- MSU AgBioResearch
- MSU Extension
- MSU Sustainable Michigan Endowed Project
- Moementum, LLC
- Progress Associates, LLC
- Restorative Leadership Institute
- TAVA Full Circle
- Training Direct Inc.
- Wavelength Inc.

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The Great Lakes Leadership Academy transforms individual leaders into mechanisms of change and creates dynamic networks of progressive partners who are empowered to propel Michigan forward into an economically and environmentally sustainable place for the good of all.

We invite you to join us in building a stronger Michigan and supporting the Great Lakes Leadership Academy. If you are committed to strengthening leadership for the common good, please make an investment in Michigan’s future through a tax-deductible gift. Gifts offer the benefits of membership in major MSU donor recognition societies. To learn more, go online at www.GLLA.msu.edu/giving.html, or contact GLLA director Vicki Pontz at pontzv@msu.edu, (517) 432-8685.
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