



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

# INTERSECTIONS

A PUBLICATION OF THE CENTER FOR GENDER IN GLOBAL CONTEXT (GENCEN)

TWENTY

17

18

# ON THE COVER

To help illustrate the beauty of the intersecting identities, disciplines, and geographies in which we do our work, GenCen created a community-based art project. Faculty, staff, students, and campus visitors were invited to weave their choice of strings with those chosen by others, creating a bright, three-dimensional, abstract representation of intersections. The final piece resides in the Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen) office in the International Center.



**“The GenCen community art project really illustrated that, regardless of continent or ethnicity, women are a central component that weaves their communities together.”**

**-José Jackson-Maleta**



“ It was so much fun to discover another person’s path as you weaved your own; for instance, I noticed myself playing off of someone else’s pattern for a few moments before drifting back on my own again. From the variety of colors to the interplay of the thread, the art piece is a great representation of how the GenCen is at the heart of so many types of engagement, not just in one department, but throughout campus and the greater community.”

-Tali Snyder

# INTERSECTIONS

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MSUGenCen

A  
NOD  
TO THE PAST

A  
CELEBRATION  
OF THE PRESENT

AND A  
LOOK  
TO THE FUTURE

In this inaugural issue of *Intersections*, we are celebrating our ten-year anniversary. A lot has happened since GenCen was formed in 2007, and we are excited to share the growth and development of the center during its first ten years. There are many people over the last decade who have contributed to making the GenCen what it is today. It is our goal to use this magazine as a way to celebrate, thank, and engage past, present, and future GenCen supporters and contributors who are enabling GenCen to flourish.

Our first decade marks a turning point for us, and maybe for the rest of the world in ways that remind us of how important our work is. With the strength of anti-sexual harassment and assault movements like #MeToo, a surge in the number of women running for public office in the U.S., and increasing mobilizations of gender equity and social justice efforts around the world, we see our work as part of a larger effort to make the world a more just and equitable place where a variety of voices are heard. Our role at MSU is particularly important in this moment of re-evaluation of values, infrastructures, and processes. As a result of the public testimonials from many brave survivors, our campus is undergoing a period of undeniable transformation, led by faculty, staff, and students who want to make MSU fully realize the values to which we have long claimed to subscribe. The GenCen directors and staff have been actively engaged in planning sessions, creating space for dialogue, and strategizing on how to bring to life our dreams of a university where we all belong, are safe, and can be our authentic selves in a respectful, productive, and transparent community.

Throughout the history of feminism in the U.S., there have been strong voices that have dared to challenge the status quo and worked towards creating communities where diversity, equity and inclusion are valued. The GenCen is a result of this history and is committed to nurturing the emerging community that is listening to and supporting survivors of sexual assault.

We chose the title *Intersections* for our magazine because we felt it captured the essence of our center and our work. The first—and most obvious—reference is to the concept of “intersectionality,” originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw and developed largely through the work of women of color scholars. Intersectionality

is one of the most influential concepts to emerge from feminist theory in the last several decades. It is an approach to gender and sexuality scholarship that recognizes the interconnectedness of gender, race, class, sexual identity, and other social categories within intersecting systems of power and oppression, and centers women who are normally relegated to the margins of society. Second, GenCen is a global center working at intersections of cultures and countries. Finally, GenCen is an interdisciplinary center and our affiliated members come from disciplines as diverse as English, agricultural economics, and computer science. Our goal is to bring together these various perspectives on gender research and scholarship and explore what emerges from these intersections.

The last two years have been a transitional moment in the GenCen history with founding co-directors Anne Ferguson and Lisa Fine handing off leadership of the center to a new team. Stephanie Nawyn joined the GenCen as co-director of academic programs in August 2016. Meanwhile, her predecessor Lisa has returned to full time activities in the Department of History as chair. Amy Jamison, the assistant director of GenCen for six years, took on the role of interim co-director of international research following Anne's move into the ISP Dean's office in December 2016. These were big shoes for us to fill; Anne and Lisa built a center that embodies the best of Michigan State and our World Grant mission. What would otherwise have been intimidating has been made a genuine pleasure because of the support we have received from the GenCen staff; the associate provost and dean of International Studies and Programs, Steve Hanson, and his associates; and the affiliated faculty, staff, and students who make GenCen a remarkable hub of intellectual activity.

This past year has been quite a whirlwind of new projects, and we are so pleased with what we have accomplished. We finalized our 2017-2022 strategic plan and from this we've identified new opportunities for advancing our mission. In March 2017, we launched the Director's Challenge Campaign to raise scholarship money for students enrolled in Women's and Gender Studies education abroad programs, and we awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to students studying in London and Amsterdam. In May 2017, Stephanie attended her first graduation ceremony as



GenCen founding co-directors, Lisa Fine and Anne Ferguson.

GenCen co-director and had the honor of conferring degrees to six Women's and Gender Studies graduates. In spring 2017, we completed a successful search for a permanent co-director of international research with Wenda Bauchspies joining our team in January 2018 from the National Science Foundation.

Stephanie's major focus this past year was to solidify and strengthen the support for the GenCen curriculum. In the past, the GenCen has received money from different colleges to "buy out" faculty from teaching obligations in their home departments. This enabled faculty to teach GenCen courses. She has been working with colleges to redefine the funding agreements with a new system that would provide more stability for our courses, and more support for the faculty who dedicate their time and energy to our students.

After more than a year of negotiations, we were delighted to officially announce the GenCen Faculty Fellows Program in December 2017. This program, supported by the College of Arts and Letters, College of Social Science, and Department of Teacher Education, allows faculty from those colleges to apply for teaching fellowships. The GenCen Faculty Fellows Program entails multi-year commitments

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The GenCen team at the 2018 Center for Gender in Global Context annual reception. **Top row** (left to right): Naomi Kamitha, Rhys Sirna, Gregory Frens, Rebecca Cox, Olivia Vaden, Marisa Meyerson, Duncan Tarr, Kelly Birch-Maginot, Reese Haller. **Bottom row** (left to right): Rowenn Kalman, Stephanie Nawyn, Wenda Bauchspies, Amy Jamison, and Sara Bijani.

to our curriculum, and provides grants to support faculty research. The GenCen reviewed applications in February 2018 and the selected fellows began their terms in fall 2018.

Over the past year, Amy has focused on promoting GenCen’s international research and engagement to build on the success the center has forged over the past 10 years. As a result of her efforts, we supported three strategic partnerships—a mechanism through which GenCen promotes building interdisciplinary relationships between MSU faculty and partners at institutions abroad. One strategic partnership with institutions in France focused on the comparative experiences in Muslim women in the U.S. and France; another began to build a relationship with the Universidad Centroamericana de Nicaragua, which is in the process of building up its gender studies programs; and the third explored relationships with research institutions in southern Africa to examine gender and research policies on the African continent. In addition, GenCen was involved in several grant proposal projects over the last 12 months. Most notably, we successfully partnered with MSU’s Alliance for

African Partnership, the Center for Advanced Study of International Development (CASID), the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and partners in East Africa on a \$500,000 U.S. Department of State grant to design and implement a professional fellows program. This program links fellows from Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda with local Lansing organizations working on women’s empowerment in the agriculture sector. The goal of the program is to build fellows’ capacity and skills in agro-entrepreneurship and agri-food system innovation. Starting in May 2018, MSU hosted the first cohort of 11 East African fellows in East Lansing, Michigan for four weeks. This coming winter, we will be hosting a second cohort of up to 13 fellows. Representatives of local Michigan organizations will then have the opportunity to travel to East Africa and learn from colleagues there about local and regional approaches to supporting women’s advancement in the agricultural sector.

The past ten years have been more of a success than any of us could have imagined, and we look forward to the future building upon this strong foundation. ■

Stephanie Nawyn & Wenda Bauchspies  
Co-Directors

Amy Jamison  
Interim Co-Director, 2017 & Associate Director



GENCEN WELCOMES

# WENDA BAUCHSPIES

**In January 2018**, MSU's International Studies and Programs welcomed Wenda Bauchspies as the co-director for international research and engagement for the Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen). In this role, Wenda is responsible for providing intellectual and programmatic leadership in the area of research and engagement related to international gender studies, while working collaboratively with faculty and other key university stakeholders.

Wenda is an interdisciplinary and international social scientist whose expertise lies in the integration of gender, social justice, and culture with agricultural research and technological adaptation. Focusing on West Africa, her interdisciplinary work has supported the advancement

of agricultural policies and technologies that assist smallholder farmers in the region and addresses the global issue of food security. Prior to joining MSU, Bauchspies was the program director for Science, Technology & Society and Cultivating Cultures for Ethical STEM at the National Science Foundation (NSF), where she co-administered the infrastructure supporting research and education programs in science, technology, and society. She worked with scholars in the field of ethical STEM and facilitated NSF's mission to advance innovative activities in research and education that contribute to the nation's technological strength, security, and welfare. Wenda holds a PhD in science and technology studies from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. ■

## WE ASKED WENDA...

### What attracted you to the position at GenCen?

"When a MSU colleague shared the posting with me, it caught my attention because of the center's commitment to knowledge, diversity, and understanding. GenCen's mission resonates with my career of studying gender, science, and technology from a cultural context that begins with the everyday world to trace the social relations framing, defining, and molding it. I was instantly intrigued by the opportunity to join a center whose theoretical focus is practiced on a daily basis, as illustrated by the commitment to co-directorship."

### What do you hope to accomplish?

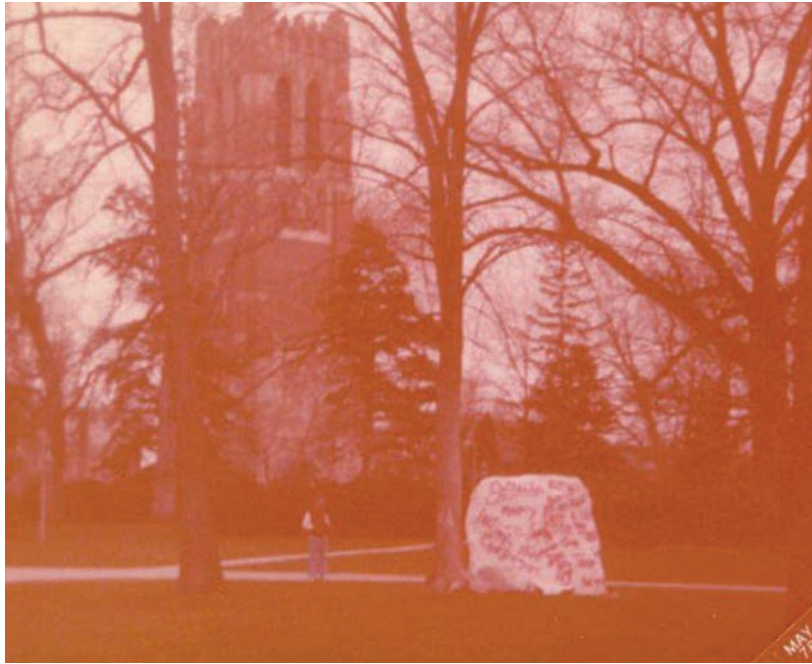
"As a scholar of gender from an interdisciplinary and international perspective, I am looking forward to building upon the feminist foundations of GenCen to maintain and expand MSU's leadership on women and gender in a global context. My goal is to promote and nurture research and networks at MSU and beyond that will benefit local communities both near and far; facilitate inclusive knowledge production from diverse perspectives; and contribute to equitable and just practices based upon the highest caliber of interdisciplinary and multicultural science."

# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

## OF GENDER IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

MSU's Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen) is a vibrant hub of gender education and scholarship with a global lens. With more than 275 affiliated faculty and academic staff; a growing number of students in our major, minors, and specializations; and research and outreach networks in 20 countries, the GenCen has become a critical node of inquiry, learning, and community around issues of women, gender, and sexuality at MSU.





The Rock—MSU’s community-painted billboard—in its original position near Beaumont Tower in 1978. The Rock can be painted by anyone, and is often used by students and the MSU community to express political, social justice, support and protest sentiments. *Photo courtesy: facebook.com/spartans.msu*

**Just 10 years ago**, the Women & International Development (WID) program—a small but vibrant initiative that supported graduate students and faculty doing gender and development work internationally—was merged with the revived Women’s Studies undergraduate program to give birth to the Center for Gender in Global Context, nicknamed the GenCen. Some people doubted that these two related but different programs with two separate faculty directors could function as a single unit. But, through an ethic of cooperation and an intellectual and political commitment to gender scholarship and the empowerment of women and girls, the GenCen now flourishes and is a model of cooperative administration among university centers.

### Our History

For decades prior to the founding of GenCen, students and faculty wishing to pursue studies or research on women or gender had to navigate multiple academic units that did not coordinate with

one another, leading to a disconnected and uneven intellectual experience. As an effort to remedy this, the first women’s studies “thematic” was offered in 1976. While this was a promising start, the thematic was not explicitly global in focus.

By the early 1990s, the Women’s Studies program at MSU was robust and thriving. In the spring of 1990, the program hosted an international conference titled *Re-Visioning Knowledge and the Curriculum: Feminist Perspectives*, which attracted more than 850 participants and featured four esteemed keynote speakers: Bonnie Thornton Dill, Carol Gilligan, Ruth Hubbard, and Catherine Stimpson. Following up on this success, the first women’s studies major was offered at MSU in 1993.

Despite the program’s early success, in the early 2000s, institutional support for the program dried up. By 2005, the major was no longer offered and in its place, a specialization in “women, gender, and social justice” was offered. Women’s Studies at MSU was

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1976

The first Women’s Studies “thematic” was offered.

1978

WID founded.

History of Gender Studies at MSU

hanging on by a thread—underfunded, understaffed, and unworthy of a Big Ten university. Over a short period of time its budget was cut in half and its “office” resembled little more than a dressed-up closet.

**“The Center for Gender in Global Context was created to provide the intellectual home for all teaching, research, and service related to global, feminist activities on the MSU campus.”**  
 -Lisa Fine

The Women & International Development (WID) program, located in International Studies and Programs, focused on addressing women’s marginalization and exclusion from international development programs. Founded in 1978, WID was one of the longest standing programs of its kind in the U.S. It had a strong reputation for research and graduate education on challenges and contributions of women in international development. Together with MSU’s Center for Advanced Study of International



The Rock reflecting the desires of the MSU community to stop racism in 2011. Photo courtesy: [facebook.com/spartans.msu](https://www.facebook.com/spartans.msu/)

Development (CASID), WID was designated a U.S. Department of Education National Resource Center on international development. WID’s mandate largely centered on training leaders to address gender issues in international development through graduate education programs and undergraduate internship opportunities, as well as promoting research in this area through grant writing; collaborative research support; and publications, such as the WID Working Papers Series and the WID Bulletin.

In the early 2000s, the leadership of WID began to push for changes in the structure of the program’s work. The “Women in International Development” model had become outdated as scholars recognized that a focus on only women was not sufficient. To improve the intellectual foundation and sustainability of MSU’s gender programs, the work on gender and international development and other forms of feminist scholarship on campus needed to be in conversation with one another.



Transgender Day of Remembrance 2011. Photo courtesy: [facebook.com/spartans.msu](https://www.facebook.com/spartans.msu/)

It was around this time that dedicated faculty from across campus began advocating for something new, better, and more sustainable. As former MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon launched the “Bolder by Design” campaign, a planning committee convened to look at options for transforming the institutional support

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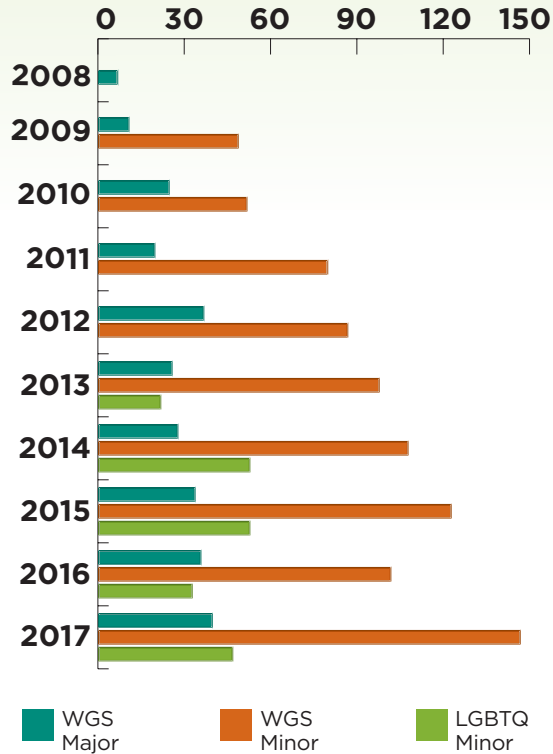
## 1990

WID hosts an international conference titled *Re-Visioning Knowledge and the Curriculum: Feminist Perspectives*. The conference attracted over 850 participants and featured four keynote speakers of high esteem.

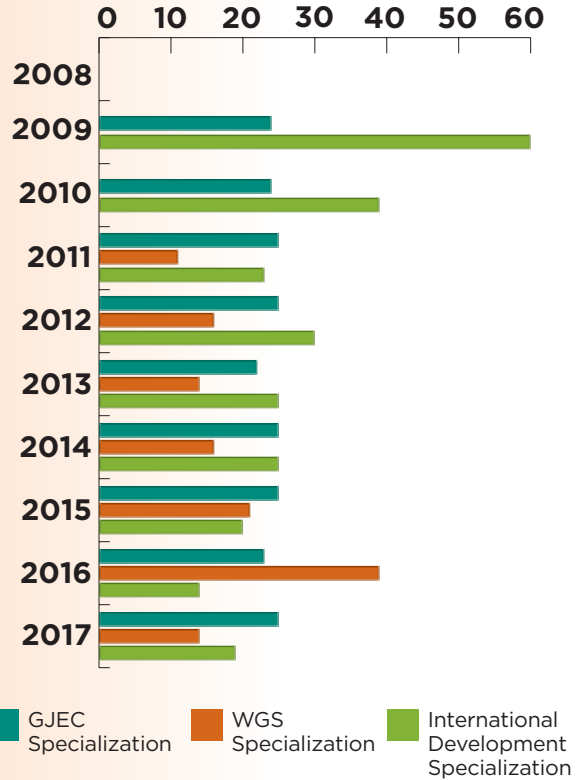
## 1993

First Women’s Studies major was offered at MSU.

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS



## GRADUATE STUDENTS



**“The minor has also been very practical, as I’ve applied what I’ve learned in the classroom to an internship, events I see in the news, and my own life every day. After adding the minor, I feel directed to work in the field of human rights, specifically the rights of women and girls in situations of violence. My educational and career goals are certainly not what they were when I graduated high school, but I couldn’t be happier with how they’ve turned out!”**

- Emma Repp, WGS minor

1994

First gifted endowment—the Abbott-Haskins endowment.

2005

Women’s Studies major dropped and replaced with Women, Gender, and Social Justice specialization.

for gender scholarship. The decision was made to combine the Women's Studies program and the WID program into a single center that would be housed in International Studies and Programs, and in 2007 the Center for Gender in Global Context was born.



On April 23, 2012, the Rock was painted with a message that still needs to be heard today. Photo courtesy: [facebook.com/spartans.msu](https://www.facebook.com/spartans.msu)

## Thinking Global

The decision to combine the two programs did not emerge from the simple convenience of consolidating two gender-related programs. Women's and Gender Studies at MSU, for all its accomplishments, still faced the curricular problems of many early women's studies programs: it was all-too-often white, and all-too-often focused on using a Western feminist lens. And WID, while excelling at supporting gender scholarship on women in developing countries, was neither truly global nor inclusive. Therefore, the decision to create a single center that combined the WID program with Women's and Gender Studies meant that a truly global approach was built into the very foundation of GenCen. Faculty used this foundation to conceptualize a new type of center that would bring together teaching and research, and create a global focus by merging local and international perspectives. Founding faculty and staff deliberately chose to use the term "global" in the center's name, defining "global" as distinct from "international"

because it includes local, national, international, and transnational spaces. This approach framed the GenCen as a space that would—in the words of Chandra Mohanty in her 2003 book *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*—"democratize rather than colonize the experiences of different spatially and temporally located communities" (p.244).

The merger of WID and Women's and Gender Studies also paved the way for a far more interdisciplinary approach to thinking about gender in the world. The WID program, by its nature, already incorporated many faculty that were from departments not normally densely populated with faculty interested in gender research. The integration of WID faculty into GenCen meant that the new center had professors and researchers from departments such as Community Sustainability, Geography, Forestry, and Fisheries and Wildlife. This commitment to representation of faculty from very diverse departments continues today. Currently the GenCen has affiliated faculty in 68 departments as disparate as English, Entomology, and Educational Administration.

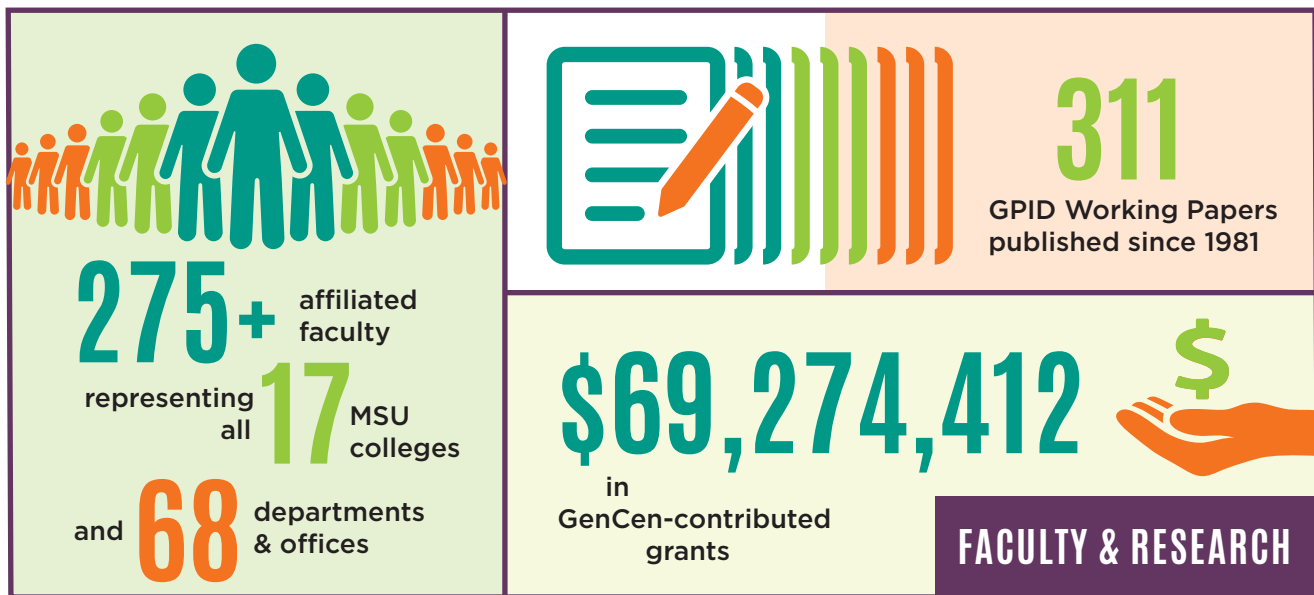
**“ Innovation typically occurs in the margins—borderlands where different worldviews and values intersect in an environment that enables the emergence of new ideas and dialogues. By being a space where colleagues can engage across, through, and with different disciplines, we support dialogues that inspire, research that understands power, and solutions that embrace complexity. ”**  
-Wenda Bauchspies

2007

CENTER FOR GENDER IN  
GLOBAL CONTEXT FOUNDED.

2008

Women's and Gender Studies major  
becomes available.



This deliberate cross-pollination ensures that GenCen will continue to be dedicated to research and teaching that is interdisciplinary and transnational. GenCen’s current activities include those deeply embedded in core feminist studies, but also span a far broader range than a typical women’s and gender studies center might include. For example, in recent years, the GenCen co-organized a poetry reading by the well-known writer and Detroit native Marge Piercy; funded a strategic partnership between MSU and faculty at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania to support work on gender and food security; and organized a conference on human trafficking that involved a collaboration with local and national non-governmental organizations, including a presentation by Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow.

Just as importantly, the GenCen is committed to work that is intersectional. Intersectionality—originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw and largely developed by women of color scholars—approaches gender and sexuality scholarship through the recognition of different lived experiences caused by intersecting inequalities. Women are not a monolith, and whether it is the

experiences of African American women organizing for safe drinking water in Flint, Michigan, or Malawian women working for equitable access to water in Zomba, it is critical to recognize the disparities in experiences that emerge from systems of power inequalities.

### A Focus on Faculty & Support for Students

With these commitments in mind, the GenCen strives to support gender and sexuality research and teaching that is diverse, multidisciplinary, and innovative. Our MSU colleagues are often involved in large multi-investigator grants, and depend upon the center to bring a critical gender expertise to their projects. Recently, GenCen, along with several collaborators across campus, received a U.S. Department of State grant to run a program titled “Advancing Young Women Agribusiness Entrepreneurs and Innovators: A Tanzania-Kenya-Uganda-U.S. Partnership.” Other recent grant collaborations include development of a program for youth empowerment and employment opportunities in the agricultural sector in Nigeria and Tanzania, as well as a USAID proposal collaborating with an existing NGO focused on countering human trafficking in Asia.

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**2009**

Women’s and Gender Studies minor becomes available.

**2010**

GenCen Community Board created.

## GJEC ALUMNI ARE WORKING

in fields ranging from practicing attorneys to directing global nonprofits to tenured professor positions.

-  **PhD Candidate**, King's College London (WGS Specialization Alum, 2012 EPA Marshall Scholar)
-  **Missionary**, Human Trafficking Ministry, Dominican Republic (WGS Major Alum)
-  **Chargée de recherche**, French National Institute for Agricultural Research (GJEC Alum, Tenured Associate Research Professor Equivalent)
-  **Assistant Professor (tenure-track)**, Department of Geography & Planning, University of Toronto (GJEC Alum)
-  **Foundation Relations Manager**, Plan International USA, (Office Intern Alum)
-  **Senior Policy Advisor**, Global Climate Change Initiative, US Agency for International Development (GJEC Alum)
-  **Family Intervention Specialist**, Youth Villages (WGS Major Alum)



“GJEC has been instrumental in shaping my approach to stakeholder outreach and environmental science translation. While planning workshops, developing communications materials, and developing partnerships with new organizations and institutes, the skills and knowledge I obtained from GJEC have helped me develop award-winning, sustainable programs to meet stakeholder needs.”

- Sonia Joseph Joshi, GJEC Alumna

2011

Strategic partnership with University of Malawi results in \$1.1 million grant from USAID and Higher Education for Development for a two-year (2011-13) capacity building project.

2012

LGBTQ/Sexuality Education Abroad in Amsterdam program begins.

GenCen’s teaching and learning opportunities continue to grow and evolve. The enrollment in GenCen academic programs increases an average of 14 percent each year. Currently, there are more than 40 students enrolled in the Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS) major, nearly 150 minoring in the WGS minor, and almost 50 students in the LGBTQ and Sexuality minor. The LGBTQ minor, just launched in 2013, has grown by nearly twenty percent annually.



Three MSU students painted the Rock on January 25, 2018, to thank the survivors of Larry Nassar for coming forward. *Photo courtesy: ftw.usatoday.com/2018/01/michigan-state-students-paint-rock-larry-nassar-survivors-names-gymnastics*

**“Because of my internship with GenCen and my WGS courses, I feel well equipped when discussing topics like gender equality, intersectional feminism, and sexuality casually with friends or formally with colleagues.”**  
**-Olivia Vaden**

GenCen also administers two graduate specializations, both with cross-college collaborations. The Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS) specialization is a collaboration of the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Social Science, and Education. The Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change (GJEC) specialization involves a collaboration of the Colleges of Social Science and Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The center also reaches beyond the boundaries of the MSU campus into the greater Lansing community. In Fall 2010, GenCen created a community board to strengthen the connections between the university and the community around issues relating to women and families in the region, the state, and internationally. Since then, our community board has helped to deepen relationships between academia and the activist community, including partnering on internships and student engagement activities. The community board also provides GenCen with advice about programs and activities on campus and participates in the development of outreach and community-based activities and partnerships.

### What’s Next for GenCen

Looking to the future, GenCen has ambitious plans for expanding the curriculum and research support. In the 2018–2019 academic year, GenCen will launch the GenCen Faculty Fellows Program, a collaboration with the College of Arts and Letters, College of Social Science, and Department of Teacher Education to provide multi-year commitments for faculty to teach WGS courses. The program also includes research support for the period of the fellowships, and represents a significant increase in the support that the colleges have committed to GenCen.

GenCen also continues to expand course offerings, including a new course in queer studies (targeted for availability in spring 2019) and building an improved Gender, Sex, and Feminism in the UK education abroad program. Plans are also underway to expand the number of education abroad scholarships and small research grants for faculty. “All of these expansions could not happen without the commitment of our faculty, staff, and administrators, the energy of our students, and the support we receive from our external stakeholders,” says Stephanie Nawyn. “We thank all of our supporters for their contributions to building this unique gender center; we cannot wait to see what the next ten years hold!” ■

### 2012

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) and Sexuality Studies specialization offered.

### 2015

LGBTQ and Sexuality Studies specialization becomes offered minor.

# SUPPORTING GENDER RESEARCH

**The Center for Gender in Global Context** is committed to supporting and promoting the impactful and diverse gender research of our 275+ affiliated faculty members. Both here in Michigan and across the globe, MSU scholars are undertaking research that raises awareness about gender and related social issues, pushes the boundaries of gender scholarship, and makes a difference in lives and communities around the world. The following are a few of many examples of current gender-related faculty research at MSU. Three of the research activities highlighted are sponsored through GenCen's Strategic Partnership initiative, which funds initial research collaborations to build robust and productive long-term partnerships.



## The Detroit Sexual Assault Kit Action Research Project

Rebecca Campbell, Department of Psychology

When sexual assault victims turn to their communities for assistance after the assault, most are advised to have a medical forensic exam, including the collection of a sexual assault kit (SAK) in order to preserve forensic evidence of the crime. A SAK (also termed a “rape kit”) contains biological evidence collected from victims’ bodies after the assault (e.g., semen, blood, saliva) that can be analyzed for DNA, which can be instrumental in solving crimes, prosecuting rapists, and preventing future attacks. The rape exam and SAK collection is an invasive and re-traumatizing experience for rape survivors, but one they endure in hope that the evidence will be used by police and prosecutors to hold perpetrators accountable.

Unfortunately, police frequently do not submit SAKs for forensic testing. Instead, kits are shelved in police property, unprocessed and ignored for years. Detroit exemplifies this trend: in an audit of the Detroit Police Department, officials discovered approximately 11,000 rape kits in a remote police property facility. In response, MSU’s Rebecca Campbell developed the Detroit SAK Action Research Project: a multidisciplinary partnership among prosecution, law enforcement, forensic sciences, medicine, nursing, victim advocacy, and research. The collaborative team sought to determine why Detroit had accumulated so many untested rape kits, and to develop a plan for testing kits and providing victims with support services.

“I have been doing research and social justice advocacy on the criminal justice response to sexual violence for decades,” said Campbell. “The discovery of thousands of untested rape kits in Detroit—and throughout the country—demanded immediate action. Action research can be a vital tool for creating empirically-informed social policy.”

Because stakeholders did not agree about what should be done with the rape kits, the research team framed empirical questions to understand why SAKs had not been submitted for testing and to evaluate different testing prioritization strategies. The plan



Contents of the sexual assault kit (SAK) used in order to preserve forensic evidence of the crime.

included qualitative interviews, ethnographic observations, and archival record reviews of nearly 1,500 documents. Across these data sources, there was clear and compelling evidence that the police held negative, victim-blaming beliefs about sexual assault victims, which was a fundamental reason they decided not to submit rape kits for DNA testing. Because of prejudiced views towards the race, gender, and social class standing of victims, violence committed against African American women and girls was most often ignored. The findings also revealed that because the police lacked training on trauma, they often misinterpreted symptoms of trauma (e.g., a victim’s fragmented memory) as evidence that the victim was lying.

The results of this project contributed to a major culture shift within all of the participating organizations regarding the utility of DNA evidence and the importance of believing victims and treating them with respect. A number of significant practice, policy, and legislative changes resulted from this project, including testing all remaining Detroit SAKs and passing new state-wide legislation that requires all SAKs released to law enforcement agencies must be submitted for DNA testing.

“My colleagues in Detroit continue to review each and every case and to prosecute as many as possible. I am working at the national level now to provide training and technical assistance to other jurisdictions that have large numbers of untested rape kits,” said Campbell. ■

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## New Tools for African Farmers: A Human-Centered Design Approach for East Africa

Jennifer Olson and Susan Wyche, College of  
Communication Arts and Sciences

Over the past 15 years, East African countries have experienced rapid economic growth that has not improved farmer livelihoods—where crop yields are low and production practices are tedious and labor-intensive. Most farm work is done with the traditional handheld hoe that is used while bending over. As a result of the limited economic opportunities in agriculture, youth and men are leaving the farm in search of other livelihoods. Those that are left are often older, and many are women who complain of the impact of the hand-hoe on their backs and shoulders; often they can work only a few hours before the pain gets too severe. The hand-hoe is ubiquitous because it is a local technology that is available and affordable.



In October 2017, design workshop participants worked in groups to design their ideal farming tools.

GenCen-affiliated faculty members Jennifer Olson and Susan Wyche, along with colleagues in the College of Engineering, have partnered with Rural Outreach Africa (Kenya) and Enda Tech (Tanzania) to improve the design of farm tools and to train and develop local metal workers to manufacture the new designs. The team is using a human-centered design approach that prioritizes farmers' voices in the design process. Farmers participated in design workshops and tested old and new tools from the U.S. The results are guiding the



The prototype tools developed from the design workshop are tested in the field in October 2017.

design of new and reengineered tools that metal workers manufacture. The outcome has created tremendous excitement and buy-in by farmers and metal workers.

“This summer, we held a workshop bringing health researchers to the team to map out the research questions and methods needed to compare the health impacts of the hand-hoe with the newer tools. Next, we will work towards conducting this research, and use the results to incorporate ergonomic principles into tool design and the training of farmers in their use,” said Olson.



East Kenyan metalworkers created prototype tools from the workshop's resulting designs.

Moving forward, the team plans to conduct research comparing the health, labor efficiency, and financial, socioeconomic, and technical viability of the technologies. The long-term impacts of new, efficient, and affordable tools on farmer income and health, agricultural production, and local employment are potentially enormous. ■

## American and French Muslim Women's Ethical Labor in a Post-Election Climate

Chantal Tetreault, Department of Anthropology and Farha Abbasi, Department of Psychiatry

Over the last several decades, Muslim Americans have been the focus of increased scrutiny and surveillance that reflect current geopolitical issues. More recently, however, the period since and leading up to the 2016 American presidential election shows 1) anti-Muslim hate crimes are on the rise—according to FBI data—and 2) anti-Muslim public discourse and everyday aggression are coalescing against Muslim women, and especially hijabis or women wearing headscarves. Meanwhile, in France, a similar pattern has emerged in the public targeting of Muslims, and especially hijabi women. As noted in the *New York Times*\*, “80 percent of the anti-Muslim acts involving violence and assault [in France between 2013 and 2015] were directed at women, most of them veiled.”

“We began our collaborative research to better understand how Muslim women in France and the United States are coping with the rise of right-wing nationalist movements in comparative perspective,” said Tetreault.

Chantal Tetreault and Farha Abbasi received a GenCen strategic partnership grant, conducted in summer of 2017, to investigate how Muslim women in the United States and France are responding comparatively to an apparent rise in gendered Islamophobia in each context. This research was urgent because women's responses to anti-Muslim sentiment in a post-election moment constitute ephemeral data.

Among other outcomes, Tetreault and Abbasi document women's self-conscious but fraught choice to remain true to oneself and one's religion, despite becoming a target for racist or Islamophobic violence. They also sought to understand how intersecting identities such as ethnicity, race, immigrant status, age, and other factors play a role in how individual Muslim women are experiencing these shifts in French and U.S. political climates.



Chantal Tetreault and graduate research assistant, Sara Tahir, after presenting research at an American Anthropological Association meeting in fall 2017.

During their two-week stay in Paris, France, Tetreault and Abbasi began to develop a long-term international strategic partnership with Sciences Politiques, particularly migration expert Catherine Wihtol de Wenden. They were also able to partner with French practitioner and social worker, Sanhadja Akrouf, who helped them recruit survey respondents for the French portion of their research, to complement and complete their current research among Muslim women in Michigan.

To date, Tetreault and Abbasi have collected 35 surveys and conducted one focus group in the U.S. population. On that portion of the research, they have presented at two conferences, submitted an article manuscript to the *Journal of Muslim Mental Health*, and are preparing a second article manuscript. In the French portion of the research (funded by the GenCen Strategic Partnership grant), Tetreault and Abbasi have conducted two preliminary interviews.

“Our next steps include submitting an external grant this fall to Wenner Gren. We are also preparing a survey for the French context and plan to conduct this portion of our research in summer 2019,” noted Tetreault. ■

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\* [www.nytimes.com/2015/05/27/world/europe/muslim-frenchwomen-struggle-with-discrimination-as-bans-on-veils-expand.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/27/world/europe/muslim-frenchwomen-struggle-with-discrimination-as-bans-on-veils-expand.html)

## Interventions against Domestic Violence by Grassroots Women

Soma Chaudhuri, Department of Sociology

Soma Chaudhuri received a two-year National Science Foundation award for her research linking the impact of empowerment programs on interventions against domestic violence among grassroots women. The project compares alternative program models that seek to empower women and looks at how women work at a grassroots level against gender inequality through their everyday interventions in response to domestic violence. Specifically, the project investigates how former participants from various empowerment programs take their leadership training back to their communities and help women survivors of domestic violence achieve justice. As not all participants are trained to intervene against domestic violence, the women often develop independent innovative strategies to navigate the complicated local patriarchal caste and religious



Local women leaders in Kutchch, Gujarat in 2013.

structures that support such abuse. The research is being conducted in Gujarat, a state in India where violence against women remains high, but it is also a region that has a reputation for pioneering women's organizations.

This project emerged from collaborations built by Chaudhuri and Merry Morash (co-author of the project) through GenCen, the Center for Advanced Study of International Development (CASID), and the Asian Studies Center. These three centers, along with contributions from the departments of Sociology and Criminal Justice, funded one of several exploratory trips to the research site to create partnerships with

organizations who train women to assist domestic violence victims. Following the success of the initial trip, GenCen funded the first half of a pilot study for the project in 2013.

“What is the meaning of empowerment in communities where gender inequality is deeply ingrained in local customs?” asked Chaudhuri. “I have been intrigued by questions that explore how women in grassroots communities are able to develop empowerment in their own lives and in the lives of other women in the community. In doing so, how do these women go against their own community customs and institutions of caste, marriage, and religion, the very institutions that ensure gender inequality for generations?”



A local woman leader with her husband. Taken in Rapar, Gujarat in 2013.

Chaudhuri also received grant-writing assistance from the GenCen assistant director at the time, Amy Jamison, on one of the initial NSF proposal drafts. A follow up to the pilot was conducted in 2015 with financial support from the Asian Studies Center. Findings from the two pilots led to the successful NSF-funded

project that began in fall 2017. Chaudhuri and her team will interview 200 women in two empowerment programs and examine what makes their interventions successful. Chaudhuri and Morash have also co-authored an article titled “Building Empowerment, Resisting Patriarchy: Understanding Intervention Against Domestic Violence Among Grassroots Women in Gujarat, India,” forthcoming in *Sociology of Development*, which focuses on the findings of this research. ■

# PERRY HOLMES

Graduate with a double major in Women's and Gender Studies and Music

**"I came into MSU** with this dream of being a music teacher but soon became burnt out as many students do. At some point, we all begin to question ourselves, our identity, and our purpose. I was lost in school and in my life. I decided to alter my degree track after two years AND summer semesters. It just felt right even though I was hesitant and afraid to do so.

After changing from music education to Bachelor of Arts in music, I took an ethnomusicology course called Music, Gender, and Sexuality. My eyes were opened and passion flowed out of everything I did because of this amazing professor and mentor, Dr. Marcie Ray.



She suggested I look into a Women's Studies minor. Little did I know, the first appointment I had with Sara Bijani, undergraduate advisor, would change my life forever. She convinced me to do the double major instead and got me really excited about it! Sara treated me as more than just a student

number, and encouraged me to study gender and sexual politics in the Netherlands, guided me through year-long research projects, and helped find my final internship at the MSU Community Music School.

So what am I doing after graduation and today? I am the program manager, trumpet instructor, and jazz coordinator at the MSU Community Music School in Detroit. I have so many music professors, advisors, and loved ones to thank for helping me get here, but without the encouragement and care of Sara and the GenGen, I wouldn't be where I am today." ■

# CAITLIN DUBAY

WGS minor and participant in Gender, Sex, and Feminism in the UK education abroad program

**"Studying abroad in London** was such a great experience and I am forever grateful. During my month in London, I was exposed to a new culture, new experiences, and new educational concepts. On my study abroad, I chose to study Women's Studies 202 as well as an independent study with a London-based researcher. I would have not been able to experience all of this without my scholarship from the Center for Gender in Global Context as well as my scholarship from Gilman. My advice to students considering studying abroad but lacking the financial means to do so, such as myself, is this: Go. Apply for the scholarships, the money is out there and it's an experience of a life time." ■



# JON HOADLEY

BA, double major in Women's Studies and Social Relations, James Madison College (2006)



Jon Hoadley

**Michigan State Representative** for the 60th District, Jon Hoadley, had very personal reasons for pursuing a degree in Women's Studies from MSU. He was in the process of watching his mother face discrimination at her job. She was passed over for a promotion in favor of an inexperienced male friend of her boss, even though the search committee had recommended her for the position. To add insult to injury, her boss asked her to find the resources to pay the new hire at an even higher salary rate than what had been discussed for her.

Hoadley's mother's experience was a policy-relevant reminder that brought home all the statistics. Further, as a gay man, Hoadley wanted to examine systems of power and privilege, questioning how his own white privilege interacted with these systems. As a result, he felt very drawn to pursue the degree.

"The biggest conversations that we keep circling back to nationally have gender at the center; equal pay for equal work, bodily integrity, sexual assault and harassment. If we're not thinking about the unique ways that gender and the experiences of women impact the economy, law, and public policy, we are not doing the work policymakers are supposed to be doing," emphasizes Hoadley. "We need more policymakers who have thought deeply about these issues. Technical expertise on a topic is important, but so is the framework we use to approach these issues, which is something women's studies provides. Both are equally important, and we need people with both skill sets."



Representative Jon Hoadley accompanied by his parents at his 2006 graduation from MSU.

After graduation, Hoadley returned to his home state of South Dakota and started working on political campaigns. His first experience was running the 2006 state-wide campaign against an anti-gay marriage amendment. Many political allies were dismissive towards the campaign as a lost cause given the conservative political climate of South Dakota. But Hoadley had a different attitude.

“I knew we couldn’t let our stereotypes of populations get in the way of trying to make a difference. Our campaign was about making small changes, even using humor to show the ridiculousness of the proposal,” says Hoadley.

The amendment to limit marriage passed by a small margin, but Hoadley considers the campaign successful in that it broadened the conversation and paved the way for South Dakota’s eventual acceptance of marriage equality. In the years since, Hoadley continued to work on nondiscrimination policy changes, eventually moving to Kalamazoo, Mich., and winning the office of state representative in 2014. He’s currently working

on fighting for nonpartisan redistricting, raising wages for working people, increasing funding for education, ending discrimination, and other initiatives.

“The Women’s Studies curriculum really shone a light on how privileges and positional powers operate, and it gave me the language to articulate the unseen systems of power that I was dealing with in the political realm,” says Hoadley.

Hoadley credits his Women’s Studies degree for his ability to write incisively and to critically interrogate the assumptions underlying the oppositional campaigns. “My degrees also helped build a framework to tell the story of why the work we were doing was important, and why the equality of LGBTQ people impacted all of us,” says Hoadley. “When you use the written and spoken word to challenge the status quo, description and precision has to go above and beyond. You are trying to show people a different way of seeing the world. I developed my communications skills through Women’s Studies.” ■

# ALLISON LOCONTO

PhD, Sociology, with a specialization in Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change (2010)



Allison Loconto

Photo courtesy: [www.versailles-grignon.inra.fr/en/All-the-news/201508-Allison-Loconto-FAO](http://www.versailles-grignon.inra.fr/en/All-the-news/201508-Allison-Loconto-FAO)

**Completed in 2010,** Allison Loconto's dissertation focused on the production of certified tea (Ethical, Fairtrade, Organic, and Rainforest Alliance) and on how the values of sustainability, responsibility, and gender equity were performed differently along the value chain. Today, the feminist theory and participatory methodologies she learned through the Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change (GJEC) specialization continue to influence the way she carries out research and how she approaches questions of power.

"Feminist approaches to discussions of power guides us to look for different forms of power, not just the categories of dominant and oppressed," asserts Loconto.

After graduation, Loconto held a postdoctoral research position at the French Institute for Research, Innovation and Society, where she investigated the performance of responsibility in meta standards for sustainable agriculture. After two years, she was recruited by the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) as a full-time researcher. Her research program focuses on the governance of transitions to sustainable food systems. She continues to work on understanding the power of standards and values within programs that seek to increase agricultural sustainability in specific "territories"—localized spaces defined by a common cultural-ecological system.

In 2013, she was selected to lead a participatory research project with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) looking at institutional innovations in the creation of local





Loconto runs a focus group in Côte d'Ivoire (2017) to investigate how the fair-trade premium is used by the community.

food systems in developing countries. Her team has been working with actors across 15 countries to identify the innovative methods that help producers and consumers create local food systems using organic or agro-ecological production practices. A network of 20-25 innovators formed as a result, and since 2015 her team has been holding yearly researcher-practitioner workshops. From these workshops, the team collectively wrote a book in 2016—*Innovative markets for sustainable agriculture: How innovations in market institutions encourage sustainable agriculture in developing countries*—which analyzes several unique initiatives and how they are making changes in local food systems.

In 2016, the team also began drafting a guidebook for innovators of local food systems. This second collaborative book project continues into 2018 as the team tests the advice and experiences in India and Senegal, and potentially Colombia and Peru.

The guidebook will also support FAO's work on the development of gender-sensitive value chains and will be adapted to contribute to field projects that assist farmers' cooperatives. The book will offer a set of tools and experiences to guide practitioners in helping farmer groups, consumers, or other trainees navigate systemic challenges and implement organizational innovations. Currently, Loconto and her team are carrying out qualitative research in Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Kenya, and Peru on fair-trade practices and policies related to cacao production.

Loconto's gender training has allowed her to speak in nuanced ways about the progress made around gender and inequalities in the context of cacao production, which is associated with controversial traditional practices. Loconto's approach to analyzing how cacao production affects a community recognizes different and intersecting power relations among people including gender, age, and other kinds of social status, showing that under the right conditions, cacao farming can increase democratization, gender equity, and community resilience.

"GJEC helped prepare me to deal with these types of scenarios and to ask more questions, digging deeper into social relations, categories, and topics," says Loconto. "If I hadn't had gender training in participatory methods, political ecology, and feminist critiques of science, I probably would not be recognizing these aspects of the topic. I wouldn't be able to discuss the kind of progress being made in a system that is heavily critiqued and very much in the public eye."

Loconto is currently a visiting fellow in Harvard's Science, Technology and Society program, where she is working on a book manuscript analyzing the past five years of participatory research. Her goal is to better theorize the governance of food systems drawing upon economic sociology and the sociology of knowledge. The book will also discuss the participatory methods she uses in her research, which are influenced by her GJEC methods training. ■

# GENCEN

## IN THE COMMUNITY

**GenCen** would not be the thriving center it is today without partnerships with our community board members. It is through collaboration with many local organizations and nonprofits that we are able to provide internships and other experiential opportunities for our undergraduate students. Additionally, the community board members have provided important feedback on GenCen projects, making those projects and the overall direction of GenCen more community-oriented.

The Women's and Gender Studies major is one of the few undergraduate degrees at MSU that requires experiential learning for graduation (although many departments and colleges will soon be following our lead). GenCen's internship program is at the core of our students' experiential learning, and is highly respected and well-known across campus because of the close relationships we maintain with community organizations and the hands-on management by our undergraduate advisor.



The first cohort of the Advancing Young Women Professional Fellows Program.

Our community partnerships have also made it possible to collaborate on multiple U.S. Department of State Professional Fellows Programs over the past 10 years. Recently, GenCen, in partnership with MSU's Alliance for African Partnership and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, received funding to implement the most recent Department of State Fellows Program entitled "Advancing Young Women Agribusiness Entrepreneurs and Innovators: A Tanzania-Kenya-Uganda-U.S. Partnership". This grant pairs young professionals from East Africa with local Lansing organizations for short-term internships focused on women's empowerment in the agriculture sector. The program also allows leaders from Michigan-based organizations to travel to East Africa and learn from organizations there who are addressing similar issues in promoting women in agribusiness. ■

# GENCEN

## COMMUNITY BOARD

GenCen would like to thank our Community Board. The board is a valuable part of GenCen's mission and we are excited to continue our collaboration moving into the future.

Alternatives for Girls

CARE (Capital Area Response Effort)

Capital Area Sexual Assault Response Team (CASART)

Child and Family Charities

Equality Michigan

Firecracker Foundation

GLUNA (Greater Lansing Chapter of the United Nations Association of the USA)

Ingham County Women's Commission

Lansing Area AIDS Network

Michigan Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence (MCEDSV)

Michigan Women's Commission (MI Department of Civil Rights)

Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame

MSU Safe Place

NorthWest Initiative

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan

SIREN/Eaton Shelter (Charlotte, MI)

South Lansing Community Development Association

Women's Center of Greater Lansing





Save the Date:  
MSU Give Green Day is  
**Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018**  
[givingday.msu.edu](http://givingday.msu.edu)