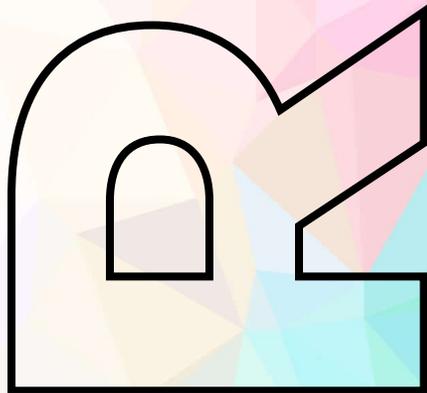
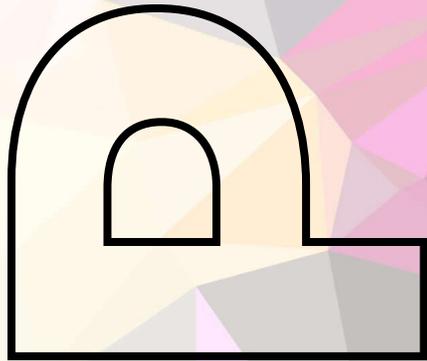
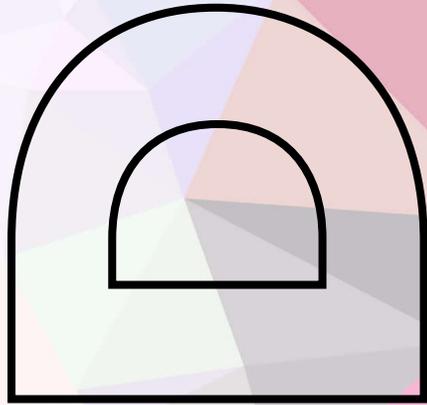


# Michigan State University Resource Center for Persons With Disabilities

**2019-2020  
Annual Newsletter**



# Advancing Success

## Dear Friends of the RCPD

Spring 2020 brings a milestone of 48 years of RCPD efforts Maximizing Ability and Opportunity. While this newsletter is intent on showcasing how your investments make a difference at MSU, it is also a message of appreciation for allowing us the resources needed to reach our highest potential advancing student success. All year long we centered efforts around key initiatives of health, wellness and resiliency. Who would have imagined that March 11, 2020 would be the beginning of a unique resiliency test for each of us. As the novel coronavirus reached East Lansing, MSU became the first University in the state to shift entirely to online learning. This monumental shift tested our resiliency in multiple ways. Thankfully we met the challenge as leaders—education continued and our students were not left out. Disabilities require creativity, persistence and compensatory skills to ensure significant challenges do not squelch dreams or inhibit our life work. The essentials in overcoming disabilities are similarly the ingredients of resiliency. We were ready for the challenges and the new reality before us. This was an exercise of “how” not “if”. We reaffirmed our ability-centered mindset, used technology to remain connected, and we remained resolute problem solvers in order to continue our educational mission. The tools you provided through signature programs, scholarships, and sense of community empowered us to continue our work with knowledge that we were not alone.

Problems are a part of life yet our collective efforts preparing tomorrow's leaders will prevail for the betterment of our community, state and nation. Thank you sincerely from each of us. We hope you enjoy the highlights with appreciation for your part in it. This was a year we will remember forever.



*Michael Hudson*

Michael Hudson  
Director, RCPD

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## RCPD Signature Programs

### Michael J. Hudson Emerging Opportunities Endowment

Developing technologies for campus navigation and augmented reality, and supporting student scholarship.

**Recent Impact:** Lifesaving Automated External Defibrillator installed in RCPD reception area.

### Autism Initiatives Endowment

Meeting unique student needs through mentoring and community engagement. **Recent Impact:** Advancing student certification in Autism.

### Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Fund

Building leadership skills, communicating student capacity, and creating community.

### Edith Moore Squires Endowment

Energizing student readiness through a freshman health, wellness and resilience course. **Recent Impact:** New endowment inspiring work in UGS 110.

### Harold & Phyllis Wochholz Endowment for Persons with Disabilities

Helping youth recognize college as possible and vital for their futures, and showcasing the power of higher education. **Recent Impact:** 20 students joined campus for a summer Project Venture experience.

### Angela Sebald Ability Access Fund

Advancing leadership in chronic health, autism, and accessible media. **Recent Impact:** Aiding students with early campus connectivity via BOND Program early move-in.

### Stern Tutoring and Alternative Techniques for Education (STATE) Program

Addressing learning challenges with seminars, mentoring, and tutoring. **Recent Impact:** 43 students successfully completed the program this year.

### Alex Powell Spartan Experience Leadership Endowment

Supporting students through an adverse cancer challenge with MSU care and kindness. **Recent Impact:** Meaningful touch points at critical diagnosis and treatment moments.

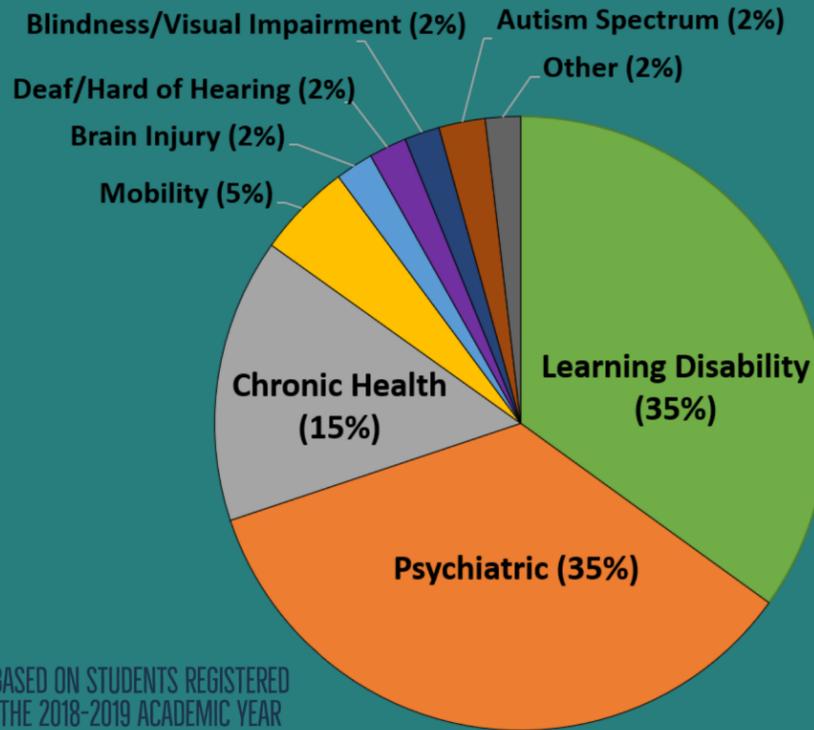
### Bosco MSU/MRS Careers Collaborative

Ensuring student academic successes become career successes. **Recent Impact:** 56 active participants; 31 entered careers this year.

### Carlson Accessible Media Program (CAMP)

Accelerating work in 3D printing, tactile graphics, and Braille availability. **Recent Impact:** New high-speed scanner creating accessible textbooks.

# RCPD REGISTERED STUDENTS BY CHALLENGE




**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**  
[RCPD.MSU.EDU](http://RCPD.MSU.EDU)



**RESOURCE CENTER  
 FOR PERSONS  
 WITH DISABILITIES**

\*DATA BASED ON STUDENTS REGISTERED DURING THE 2018-2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

## Technology Leadership

**Stephen Blosser**, Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist for the RCPD, has remained a pioneer at MSU for 41 years. As of December 31st, 2019, Stephen retired from his AT Specialist role, which had him working closely with assistive technology users on campus. Fortunately, he will not be gone completely and will continue working as a Consultant on various projects for the RCPD, starting with an **initiative for Accessible Mathematics** which he has been connected to for several years.



Stepping into AT leadership will be RCPD's own **Leslie Johnson**, transitioning from her former role as Ability Access Specialist for Psychiatric Disabilities to serve as the RCPD's new Assistant Director of Assistive Technology Innovation.

RCPD welcomes a new Ability Access Specialist for Psychiatric Disabilities during Spring 2020.

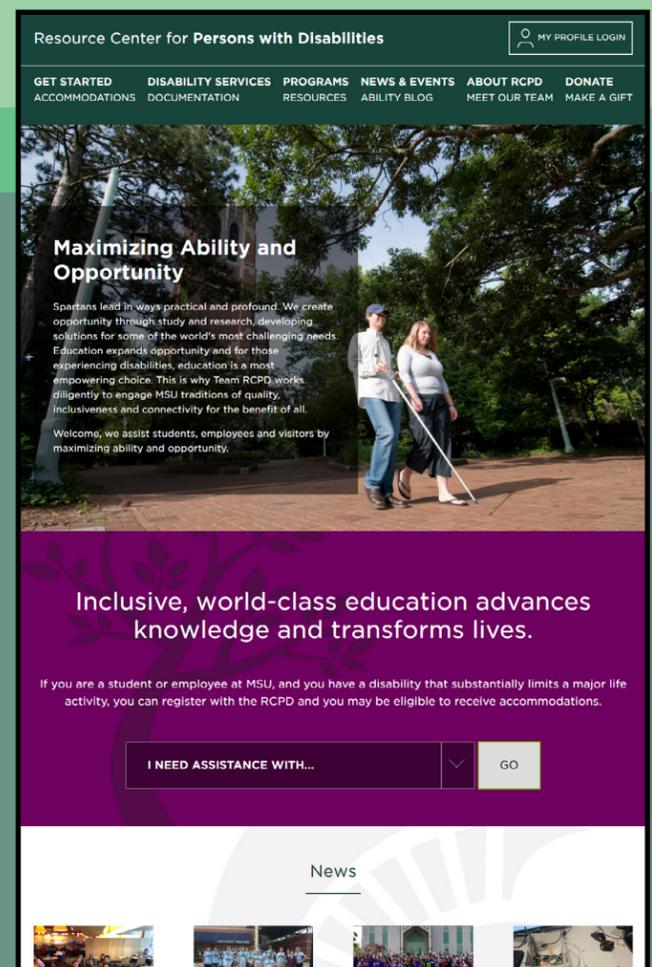
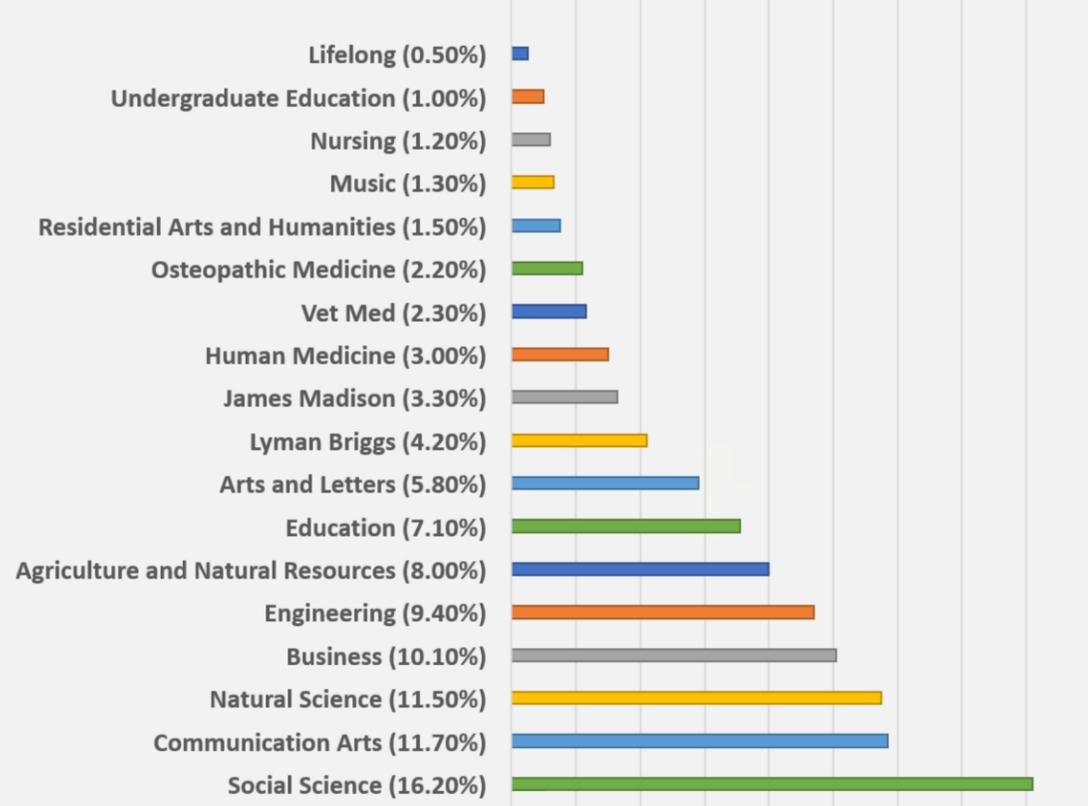
**2,441**  
REGISTERED STUDENTS  
AS OF 2018-2019

**50%**  
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A  
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.0 OR HIGHER

**27%**  
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A  
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.5 OR HIGHER

**14%**  
OF RCPD STUDENTS EARNED A  
CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.75 OR HIGHER

## RCPD STUDENTS BY AREA OF STUDY



## RCPD Unveils New Website

During Fall 2019, the RCPD was pleased to present a newly imagined version of our trusted departmental website, [www.rcpd.msu.edu](http://www.rcpd.msu.edu).

This new site, which replaces the previous version debuted in 2012, features a **sleek, modernized look**, and is streamlined to provide a global window serving the needs of students, employees, faculty, alumni, and prospective students. With a **fresh, intuitive design**, visitors easily navigate to important topics straight from the home page. Learning how to register, finding answers to common questions, and accessing resources has never been easier.

# HEALTH. WELLNESS. RESILIENCY.

These core concepts are crucial fuel for reaching life goals, with the power to give individuals a new center of capability and strength.

## UGS 110

Established in fall of 2018, this first-year seminar titled “**Maximize Ability and Resiliency at MSU**” is offered by Team RCPD as a special 11-week course. UGS 110 students draw upon the creativity and commitment of the MSU community to maximize their abilities and develop strategies and techniques for addressing their disabilities. The most recent UGS 110 class had 20 students enrolled, with topics ranging from meeting new people to discussions about nutrition and stress management.

## MUNCH [AT MSU]

A new app for Apple iOS, **Munch [at MSU]** was debuted in January 2020. Designed at the RCPD in partnership with **Residential Hospitality Services** and **Infrastructure Planning and Facilities**, this app makes dining at MSU simple. MUNCH can help you find food you want to eat, make informed decisions about what you eat, and connect with new friends along the way!

← or search for “Munch [at MSU]” in the App Store.



## DINING HALLS & THRIVE

Working closely with MSU’s **Culinary Services**, the RCPD is proud to support and encourage individuals with food allergies, as well as other dietary challenges, to eat on campus. Each of MSU’s dining halls can accommodate these needs, with menus posted at every point of service featuring a “contains” line listing potential diet restrictions. Each dining hall also includes a **designated allergen-conscious area**. Furthermore, Holmes Hall, Holden Hall, and the MSU Bakers are nut-conscious, meaning they do not contain peanuts or tree nuts.

With RCPD’s partnership, MSU received the **2020 Best Allergy Innovation Award**, acknowledging the work being done to make campus welcoming for those with dietary challenges. A key component of this initiative was a **revolutionary dining hall** launched in summer 2019, which has led the nation in allergen-aware dining. Created through the joint effort of Culinary Services, RCPD, and other campus partners, this unique hall, called **Thrive**, is certified free from the Big 8 allergens (egg, fish, milk, peanuts, shellfish, soy, tree nuts, and wheat) plus gluten. This location is also sesame-conscious and has continual testing to ensure the menu items remain free of the Big 8. Learn more about MSU dining at [www.eatatstate.msu.edu](http://www.eatatstate.msu.edu)



With so many exciting developments fueling safe dining options on campus, interest grew in finding out what it looked like to actually be someone who is utilizing these resources.

RCPD was pleased to help with the coordination of a “social media takeover” in partnership with the great team over at **Eat At State**, which saw an RCPD student, Marissa Burk, leading **Eat At State’s Story on Instagram**.



Marissa Burk

Throughout the day, Marissa shared her many experiences dining safely on campus with severe peanut and tree nut allergies. Her message debuted on January 23, 2020, and the stories are preserved on Instagram: just search **@eatatstate**, and look for the featured highlight at the top of their profile called “Takeover.”

## SPARTAN TIES

Established in 2018, Spartan Ties was created by the RCPD in order to help students **make friends and try out new dining halls on campus**. Multiple times a month, students who might otherwise eat alone gather with their peers to share a meal. This is a student-to-student program, with RCPD coordinating behind the scenes and the actual gatherings being run by student volunteers from the Tower Guard Honor Society. As of 2020, Spartan Ties is also linked directly to the **Munch [at MSU] app**, so students using the app to seek dining options can find out if there is a Spartan Ties event happening close to them.



## BOND PROGRAM EARLY MOVE-IN

Building Opportunities for Networking and Discovery (BOND) is an RCPD program designed for students who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This program offers them **structured opportunities for social and communication development** all through the academic year. During Fall 2019, BOND offered a new opportunity for fostering success by welcoming students to campus a few days early, allowing them a chance to get settled in before the demands of move-in week. In addition to their early move-in, these BOND students experienced the dining halls, toured campus, and received orientation to MSU programs and student life, all of which helped them feel comfortable as they embarked upon their new journey.



## EDITH SQUIRES ENDOWMENT

Edith Moore Squires was a supportive educator who believed in the power of inner strength and education to overcome challenges. In honor of her memory, the Edith Moore Squires Vision and Resilience Endowment was established in 2018. This fund is intended to be used by RCPD to **enrich the lives of its student population**, through sharing inspirational messages, educational activities, and programming to inspire others to reach their goals.

## 2019 RCPD SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

**Robert Decker & Benjamin Muns Friendship Memorial Scholarship**  
Awarded 3 Scholarships  
Total: \$16,000

**Victor Troubalos Scholarship**  
Awarded 1 Scholarship  
Total: \$1,500

**Anita Giampalmi Scholarship**  
Awarded 1 Scholarship  
Total: \$4,950

**Katrina Tagget Memorial Fellowship**  
Awarded 1 Scholarship  
Total: \$4,000

**Shawn M. Koch Memorial Scholarship**  
Awarded 1 Scholarship  
Total: \$2,000

**Trent Pysarchik Internship Endowment**  
First Scholarship awarded in 2020  
Total: \$2,000

**Education Abroad Scholarship**  
Awarded 3 scholarships  
Total: \$7,000

**Samaritan Scholarship**  
Awarded 5 Scholarships  
Total: \$20,000

**Tower Guard Scholarship**  
Awarded 3 Scholarships  
Total: \$2,500

## Closing the Gap for Learning Differences

The Runge family knows firsthand how learning differences affect the way people engage in education. Newly established in 2019, the **Runge Family Endowment for Students with Learning Differences** recognizes the role RCPD plays in welcoming students, reassuring families, and advancing successes for students growing through challenges. This endowment will assist students with learning differences through the funding of important programming aimed at providing structure, learning strategies, and academic tutoring. One such program already in place is the **Stern Tutoring and Alternative Techniques for Education (STATE) Program**. Generously funded by Mickey and Debbie Stern, STATE began providing innovative and important assistance for MSU students with learning differences in 2004, offering seminars on learning strategies as well as peer-to-peer mentoring. Learning about the STATE Program and seeing the good work it was doing inspired the Runge family to fund their own endowment, which will build on and increase the reach of STATE.

## Bosco Careers Collaborative

Thanks to private gifts from MSU alumni **Michael and Kathy Bosco**, matched with state and federal funds secured by **Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)**, the Careers Collaborative has created partnerships with students and employers since 2014. Building on the MSU Federal Credit Union's Professional Prep/Dining Etiquette series, the Collaborative is focused on **career transition for students with disabilities**. They provide ongoing workshops covering topics such as resume building, disclosure of disability in the workplace, and career fair prep. In 2019 the Collaborative **placed thirty-one students successfully in employment**. Working closely with vocational rehabilitation is a primary objective for the RCPD. Along with the essential success of getting students integrated at MSU and graduating, RCPD wants to ensure that the momentum doesn't stop there.

In 2019 the RCPD welcomed **Mallory Godin** as the new lead Careers Collaborative Counselor.



## Accessible Media Supporting STEM

Over the past decade there has been increasing demand for **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)** degrees in the job market, and the RCPD strives to ensure that MSU students of every ability receive equal access to STEM curriculum.

### Carlson Accessible Media Program (CAMP)

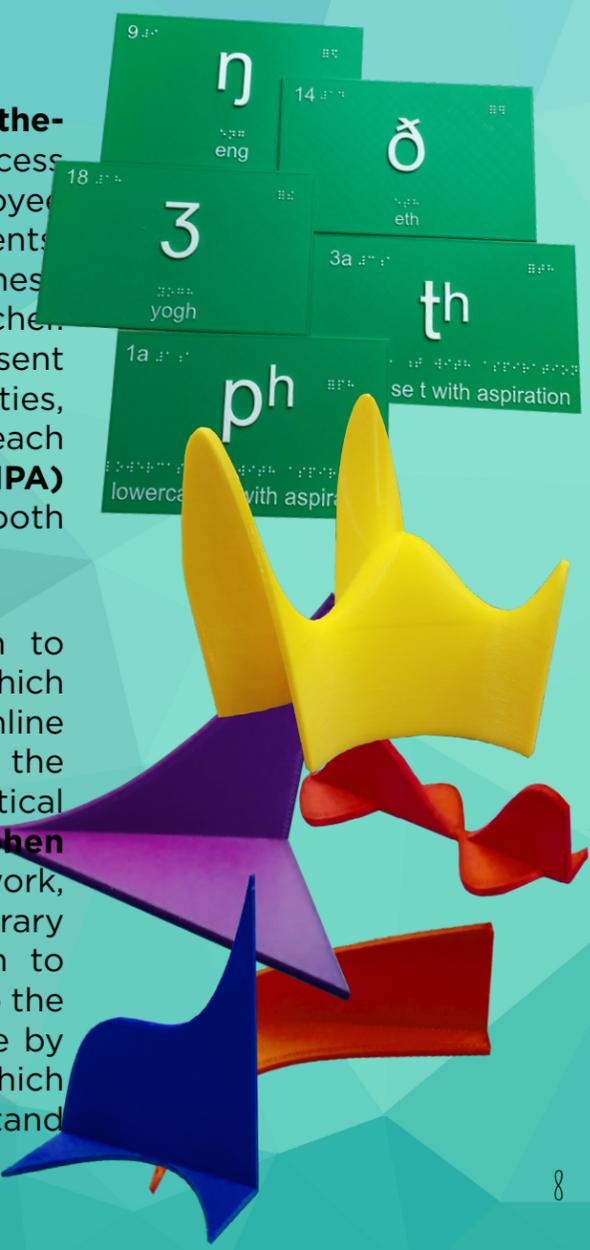


**Richard and Kathleen Carlson** established this endowment in 2008, and it is helping to increase information accessibility through a range of technologies and a close working partnership with the **Tower Guard** sophomore honor organization. This endowment has also graciously furnished the RCPD with a new scanner for e-text production as well as crucial supplies for creating tactile maps and Braille format materials. These great **advancements in educational media** have reaffirmed MSU leadership in accessible media production.

### 3D Printing and Accessible Mathematics

A recent addition to the RCPD has been a **state-of-the-art 3D printer**, which is engaged by RCPD Media Access Specialists in close partnership with student employee Peter Jansen to enhance accessibility for STEM students. One such student, Maritza M., is benefiting from these innovations both as a student herself and as a teacher. Maritza works with students in Colombia who represent a mixture of both sighted and visually impaired abilities, and with the help of RCPD she has been able to teach her students the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)** by utilizing helpful 3D printed cards which have both print and Braille phonetics on them.

**Peter Jansen** is also devoting special attention to the ongoing issue of **accessible mathematics**, which tackles the challenges presented by inaccessible online homework sites used in STEM studies coupled with the inability of screen readers to interpret mathematical equations. **Front-lined by RCPD Specialist Stephen Blosser**, who secured grant funding to continue this work, Peter helps to close the gap between contemporary technology and assistive technology. In addition to Stephen's innovations reaching toward a solution to the screen reader problem, Peter adds to the initiative by creating **tactile graphics and 3D printed media** which help students with visual impairments understand mathematic graphs, formulas, and theories.



# Bessey Hall Gathering Space

Wishing to create a welcoming environment for students making MSU home, as well as receiving visitors and summer camp participants, RCPD is partnering with **Infrastructure Planning and Facilities** to create **an inviting seating area** outside the west entrance of Bessey Hall. In honor of the RCPD community, there will be an inscription **commemorating students, alumni, and friends** of the program. The project is expected to be completed during Summer 2020.



# Tower Guard

Established in 1934, Tower Guard is one of the oldest active student volunteer organizations on campus and is comprised of high academic achievers selected from the top of their freshman class. Tower Guard members **spend their sophomore year in service**, working closely with the RCPD to be of assistance to students with disabilities, working toward a more inclusive environment for all Spartans. Tower Guard members are also involved in rewarding activities both on and off campus. Each fall they create a float for the Homecoming parade, and each spring they host the Shamrock 5K Run-Walk-Roll. In December 2019 they were involved in **Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams**, a month-long event put on by Beaumont Children's Pediatric Family Advisory Council, where members of the community stand outside Beaumont Hospital shining lights up at the windows of pediatric patients, who shine them back. With the support of MSU Federal Credit Union and the MSU College of Nursing, Tower Guard volunteers were well stocked with flashlights and good will.



# Crystal Award: Lifetime Achievement

In February 2020, the RCPD received the **Lifetime Achievement Award**, recognizing a collaborative, ability-centered approach to diversity at MSU. Launched in 1990, the **MSU Excellence in Diversity Awards** is a nationally recognized program celebrating individuals, teams, units, and organizations that have performed above and beyond while demonstrating leadership in the area of diversity.



RCPD staff with President Stanley and Interim Provost Sullivan

# The Gilbert Gift

The Gilbert family is among the many Spartans going one step further to ensure MSU's leadership. Thanks to **Dan and Jennifer Gilbert's generous investment** in 2016, the RCPD created three new staffing positions which drive innovation throughout the department. Ashley Maloff, Chronic Health Specialist, instructs the RCPD's impactful **UGS 110** course; Lindsay Hill, ASD and Brain Injury Specialist, leads Autism Initiatives and is responsible for the highly successful **BOND Early Move-in** program; and Lina Wu, Media Access Specialist, is involved in the creation of accessible media which provides **STEM access** to students of every ability.



# RCPD Staff

## Project Leadership

**Michael Hudson**  
Director

**Beverly Stehlik**  
Budget/Personnel,  
Assistant to the Director

**Liz Fuller**  
Operations Coordinator/  
Alternative Testing Coordinator

**Mallory Godin**  
Careers Collaborative Counselor

**George Morrison**  
Documentation Coordinator

**Aditya Mathew**  
Special Projects Coordinator

## Real-Time Captioners

**Denise Hartman**

**Susie Hoffmann**

**Shelly Martinez**

**Special thank you to our  
student employees and  
volunteers!**



**MSU Resource Center for  
Persons with Disabilities**



**@MSU\_RCPD**



**@MSURCPD**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**RCPD's 49th Annual Awards  
and Appreciation Reception**  
**April 9, 2021**

## Ability Access Specialists

**Stephen Blosser**  
Assistive Technology

**Cherelyn Dunlap**  
Office of Employee Relations,  
Accommodations Specialist

**Kelsey Foote**  
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

**Lindsay Hill**  
Autism Spectrum, Brain Injury, and  
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

**Leslie Johnson**  
Assistant Director of Assistive Technology  
Innovation, Psychiatric Disabilities

**Ashley Maloff**  
Chronic Health Disabilities

**Virginia Martz**  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing,  
Mobility Disabilities

**Jennifer Montague**  
Psychiatric Disabilities

**John Pedraza**  
Psychiatric Disabilities, Disability Resource  
Coordinator for Employees

**Virginia Rutan**  
Learning Disabilities/ADHD  
Student-Athlete Liaison

**Caleb Sandoval**  
Chronic Health Disabilities

**Angela Sebald**  
Blindness/Visual Impairment, Media Access

**Darryl Steele**  
Learning Disabilities/ADHD

**Grace (Boyang) Tong**  
Psychiatric Disabilities

**Lina Wu**  
Media Access

MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities  
434 Farm Lane, #120 Bessey, East Lansing MI 48824  
517-884-7273 (RCPD), [www.rcpd.msu.edu](http://www.rcpd.msu.edu)

