

WORKFORCE ACTION COMMITTEE FOR SPARTAN STAFF ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR
2023-24



Workforce Action Committee
for Spartan Staff (WACSS)
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY





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EXECUTIVE LETTER

In 2023, the committee was renamed the Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff (WACSS) to improve campus alignment and promote inclusion, recognizing the necessity of evolving as the sole organization for support staff.

Established in 1976 by the Board of Trustees, WACSS has undergone several name changes:

- Women's Advisory Committee for Finance, Personnel and Operations (2004 - 2008)
- Women's Advisory Committee for Finance and Operations (2008 - 2014)
- Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff (2014 - 2022)
- Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff (2023 - Present)

While WACSS continues to focus on issues affecting women, it emphasizes creating a positive, inclusive work environment for all university community members. The committee's renaming and rebranding are critical steps towards broadening representation, participation and its mission to improve campus alignment and impact.

EXECUTIVE LETTER CONTINUED

Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D.

Vice President and
Chief Diversity Officer,
Office for Institutional
Diversity and Inclusion



Christina Brogdon

Vice President and Chief
Human Resources Officer,
Human Resources



Jaimie Hutchison

Associate Director,
Health Promotion,
Engagement, Accessibility
and Accommodation,
University Health and
Wellbeing



During the year, WACSS has expanded its outreach and impact. The committee has grown its social media following by maintaining an updated website and establishing a listserv, keeping the Spartan community informed and engaged through events like the annual Spring Forum and Summer Social.

Additionally, the successful continuation of the WACSS Book Club has fostered a sense of community with various in-person and virtual events. The on-campus partnership with Mission Menstruation supports well-being and has also raised awareness and provided menstruation product dispensers in women's and all-gender restrooms.

We are excited to report on these critical efforts for support staff, academic staff and executive management, and we look forward to deeper engagement and leveraging synergies in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D. ([he/him](#))

VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER,
[OFFICE FOR INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION](#)

Christina Brogdon ([she/her](#))

VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, [HUMAN RESOURCES](#)

Jaimie Hutchison ([she/her](#))

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, HEALTH PROMOTION, ENGAGEMENT, ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION,
[UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING](#)

CHAIR LETTER



Arianna Perrien
([she/her](#))

2023-2024 CHAIR,
WACSS
ADMINISTRATIVE
BUSINESS ANALYST
FOOD SCIENCE AND
HUMAN NUTRITION

T**HIS YEAR, WACSS** recognized the necessity for an opportunity to evolve and expand. The committee expanded representation, participation and mission that required a name change to improve campus alignment, promote inclusion, and expand impact. This broadened scope does not aim to replace or remove the focus on women issues but open avenues for additional areas of focus and elevate the voice of all staff. WACSS is now formally known as: **The Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff.**

WACSS continues to serve as a resource and live our values of advocacy, connectivity, engagement, and staff development to further and collectively advance equality, equity, engagement and inclusion by providing voice for our support staff at Michigan State University.

I am pleased to highlight the progress of our goals established at the beginning of the fiscal year. Promoting connectivity and engagement, we held our 23rd Annual Spring Forum, themed Mapping out MSUs Strategic Vision, providing a chance for Spartans to hear about how we are building on a culture of innovation and how they can be innovative in their roles. Building on this theme, we hosted our 3rd Annual Summer Social. Spartan Staff gathered in the MSU Perennial Gardens while enjoying

CHAIR LETTER CONTINUED

a strolling light lunch buffet, a photo opportunity with Sparty, and music provided by the MSU Jazz quartet. We also continued our third year of our book club entitled Beyond the Book, a club designed to increase networking opportunities, encourage discussion amongst staff and promote professional relationships.

To promote representation, growth and engagement, our committee established a bylaw training event, held in July of 2024, where committee members could get a better understanding of what bylaws should include and how to make them sustainable for the future WACSS members to come. We plan to create and implement a comprehensive bylaw revision in Fiscal Year 2025.

Much appreciation to WACSS ex-officios – Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D., vice president and chief diversity officer, Jaimie Hutchison Associate Director of Engagement, Health Promotion, Engagement, Accessibility and Accommodation, and Christina Brogdon, vice president and chief human resources officer – for their continued support in amplifying efforts, supporting the needs and requests of the committee and staff, and assisting toward the achievement of committee goals. In addition, I express gratitude for my outstanding WACSS executive committee team – Immediate Past Chairperson Tina Alonzo and Interim Immediate Past Chairperson Taren Storrs, Vice Chairperson Ashley Wilson, Secretary Taylor Unrath, and Treasurer Rati Walther – who have been instrumental in advancing our

collective goals and efforts and the true embodiment of teamwork; as well as the larger committee members.

We are looking forward to the continued service WACSS provides, empowering, collaborating with, advocating for and maximizing the involvement of university staff.

Arianna Perrien

2023-2024 CHAIR, WACSS

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS ANALYST

FOOD SCIENCE AND HUMAN NUTRITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff would like to highlight the activities and efforts put forth in the 2023-2024 year that reflect the strategic implementation of our mission and values. Here we highlight several achievements and milestones that help to advance advocacy, connectivity, engagement, and staff development.

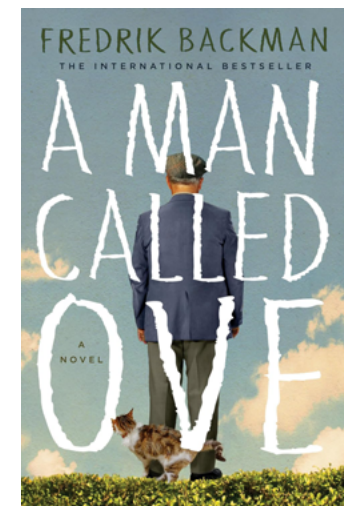
Social media employee engagement increased by more than 17% on Instagram and by 11% on LinkedIn.

Continued support of [Mission Menstruation](#) to provide menstrual hygiene products for MSU students

Presented [Mapping out MSU's Strategic Vision](#), the Annual Spring Forum, for more than 70 Spartans across the country joined us live and more have had access to the recordings.

Hosted the Third-Annual WACSS Summer Social, with over 100 Spartans in attendance at the MSU Perennial Gardens

Book Club – In 2023, the Events and Engagement subcommittee launched the inaugural book club Beyond the Book. This past year we have continued to grow the book club.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



CHAIR

Arianna Perrien

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS
ANALYST, FOOD SCIENCE
AND HUMAN NUTRITION



VICE-CHAIR

Ashley Wilson

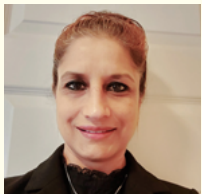
EVENT AND PROJECT
COORDINATOR, QUELLO
CENTER FOR MEDIA &
INFORMATION POLICY



SECRETARY

Taylor Unrath

HUMAN RESOURCES
ANALYST, HUMAN
RESOURCES



TREASURER

Rati Walther

OPB ASSISTANT
BUDGET OFFICER,
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL
PLANNING AND BUDGET



IMMEDIATE PAST-CHAIR

Tina Alonzo

EVPA DEI ADMINISTRATOR,
EVPA OFFICE OF DIVERSITY,
EQUITY, AND INCLUSION



IMMEDIATE PAST-CHAIR

Taren Storrs

DIRECTOR, ALUMNI
RELATIONS - WEST COAST

OUR COMMITMENT

Guided by our commitment to voice staff issues—particularly those that relate to women support staff—WACSS serves as a channel of communication. Sharing information directly with university leadership including our ex-officio members, the committee's work has resulted in the development of many [initiatives](#) and outcomes since its establishment in 1976.

MISSION STATEMENT: The Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff strives to amplify university staff voices to advance a culture of inclusion and equity and provide effective communications, learning and education, and workforce engagement.

OUR COMMITMENT IS DRIVEN BY OUR VALUES:

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Empower university staff in leading Michigan State University to a better, equitable environment.

ADVOCATE: Serve as a voice for university staff and partner with university leadership to influence key decisions that impact the workplace, wellbeing, and culture.

COLLABORATE: Communicate with university staff, university leadership, and community partners.

ENGAGEMENT: Maximize involvement of university staff in university activities and decisions.

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

The Workforce Action Committee for Spartan Staff (WACSS) has four [subcommittees](#) that support efforts involving communications, marketing, recruitment, signature events, championing university initiatives, policy, community partnerships, and programs. The following are summaries and progress of actions taken to advance advocacy, connectivity, engagement, and development of staff.

The committee welcomes [ongoing input](#) from all support staff. Its role is to provide a wide range of views on issues that staff members face at MSU. You may also [contact any member](#) of the committee to represent this concern for you. If you have any questions, please contact wacss@msu.edu.

FOUR SUBCOMMITTEES OPERATE WITHIN THE COMMITTEE

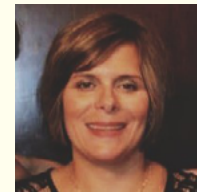


COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING (CM)

CHAIR

Meghan Loughlin-Krusky

TRAINING PROGRAM DEVELOPER III,
EXTENSION COMMUNITY FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)

CHAIR

Harmony Van Valkenberg

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS MANAGER/S,
OBSTETRICS GYNECOLOGY & REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY



EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT (EE)

CHAIR

Amber Wise

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE COORDINATOR,
STATEWIDE CAMPUS SYSTEM



RECRUITMENT AND MEMBERSHIP (RM)

CHAIR

Mary Keyes

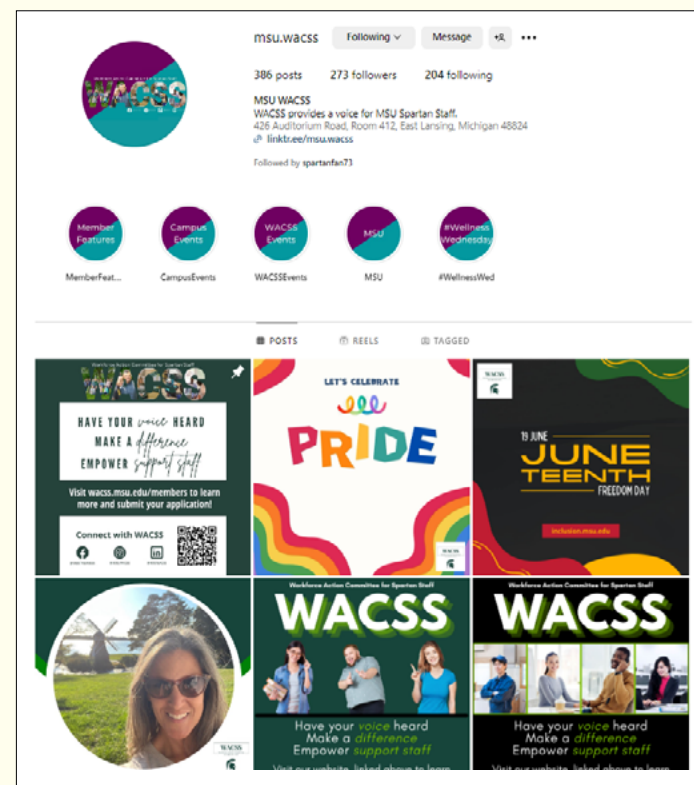
HUMAN RESOURCES GENERALIST,
MSU HUMAN RESOURCES

Membership

To achieve committee goals on behalf of our support staff constituency, WACSS is comprised of seventeen members representing various units, roles, and unions from across the university. The Recruitment and Membership subcommittee is responsible for recruiting applicants on a rolling basis and filling open committee positions. Through partnership with WACSS's Executive Committee and Communications and Marketing subcommittee, new applicants were added to the committee's pool of candidates. The Recruitment and Membership subcommittee interviewed candidates throughout the year to backfill two open Labor representative positions (terms started November 1, 2023), as well as to fill two end-of-term positions (terms starting July 1, 2023).

Engagement and Awareness

In the spirit of the overall 23/24 WACSS theme Strategic Vision, the WACSS communications subcommittee collaborated with and featured over 20 other Spartan groups and 43 campus events in our social media spaces. We also placed greater focus on amplifying WACSS online brand through the creation of Instagram story highlights, social media post templates, and updates to the WACSS website. To promote WACSS engagement and support other WACSS subcommittees, we created #TeamTuesday highlighting a WACSS committee member each week to provide insight to the benefits of WACSS committee membership. The Communications and Marketing team also provided support through the development of marketing materials for the Annual Spring Forum and the Summer Social events throughout the year.



SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM	JUNE 2023	JUNE 2024
Facebook	594	591
LinkedIn	268	298
Instagram	231	272

CONNECT WITH US!

Facebook: facebook.com/groups/msuwacss/

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/msuwacss

Instagram: instagram.com/msu.wacss/

Annual Spring Forum 2024

The 2024 Spring Forum, entitled Mapping Out MSU's Strategic Vision, was hosted virtually and focused on an over-arching theme of building connections.

The event consisted of remarks from university leadership: President Dr. Kevin M. Guskiewicz and Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Thomas Jeitschko. Following these remarks, our keynote speaker, Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation Katherine (Kay) Connelly spoke on how we are building a culture of innovation, and how everyone can be innovative no matter what their role. In her talk titled: Discovery, Creativity and Innovation for Excellence and Global Impact.



This year, the break-out panel discussions will be organized in the following sessions:

Breaking New Ground with, John LeFevre -
Director of Planning, Design and Construction

Next Level for Health & Wellness with, Dr. Alexis
Travis - Assistant Provost/Executive Director of
Health and Wellbeing

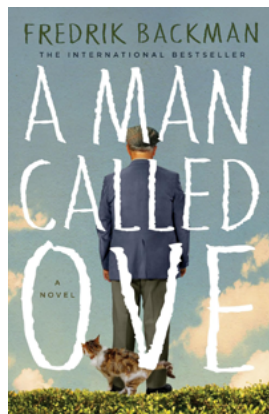
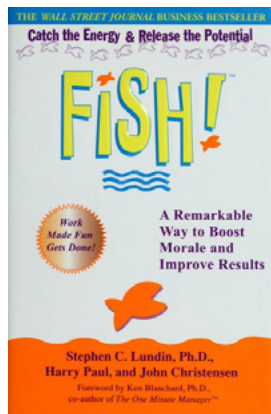
Spartan Art Initiative with, Liz Ivkovich - Senior
Director of Advancement, Cultural Arts

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION CONTINUED

Building Community Insight Series


BOOK CLUB

In Fall 2023, the Events and Engagement Committee continued its book club Beyond the Book. The year was broken up into two sessions: Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. During Fall, 14 Spartans participated in discussing *Fish! A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, by Stephen C. Lundin, Ph.D.. We saw a 35% increase in participation in Spring when we read *A Man Called Ove*, by Fredrick Backman. Meetings took place in multiple modalities, alternating between in-person and virtual settings. During the in-person meetings, participants got to know each other over lunch provided by WACSS.



WACSS PRESENTS


BEYOND THE BOOK



BOOK CLUB

Launch Party &
Informational Session
February 26th
from 12:00 to 12:30

[Register Today](#)



STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION CONTINUED

WACSS SUMMER SOCIAL

In addition to the 2024 Annual Spring Forum, the committee planned our 3rd annual Summer Social. A follow-up event at MSU Gardens, the event provided photo opportunity with Sparty, a strolling light lunch buffet, music by the MSU Jazz quartet, and opportunity to network with over 100 Spartans in person.



Summer Social

Join us for an unforgettable afternoon of light culinary delights, live music, and interactive fun!

June 5th, 2024
1 to 3 p.m.
MSU Perennial Gardens
1066 Bogue St.,
East Lansing

Logos: Sparty, MSU Dairy Store, WACSS

MOVING FORWARD

Change in Strategic Direction

In Fall of 2024 WACSS started to roll out our new change in strategic direction, as it currently stands, is the only committee dedicated specifically to support staff. MSU staff

are often generally underrepresented across the university in decision making processes, including university committees.

The committee recognizes the need for and has explored the opportunity to expand our representation and participation.

The scope of this expansion required a name change to improve clarity on campus alignment,

promote inclusion, and expand impact. Our new scope continues to focus on women's issues but has also opened avenues for additional areas of focus and to elevate the voice of all staff members.

The 2023-24 WACSS executive committee has worked extensively to develop a change in our Bylaws to reflect the Change in Strategic Direction Plan. We hope that these accomplishments help to strengthen the way we can give a greater voice to all Spartan Staff.





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wacss.msu.edu

