

# RISE |

RESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE  
ON THE STUDY OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2021-2022**





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### FEBRUARY 2022

We are pleased to offer this annual report amid the turmoil of a global pandemic. As we begin to navigate the third year of the pandemic, we are focused on how best to serve an **entire population dealing with trauma**. The effects of the pandemic on student development, academic success, interpersonal skills, sense of purpose, and help seeking behaviors are now impacting our daily lives as educators in a residential program. There are no guideposts to follow. **This is uncharted territory**. During fall semester 2021 we estimate that well over 25% of our week was spent advising students who were floundering, overwhelmed, or in crisis. This took the form of mental health referrals, dropping courses, leaving the university, hospitalization, and major changes. On many occasions I referred to our work in residence as **“front line” work without any training**.

Our ‘tools’ thus far continue to be found in hands-on experiential learning. In the following pages you will see that co-curricular experiences with bees, Bailey greenhouse, worms, and Land Grant Goods have helped sustain our community. We have chosen to highlight in this report **our alignment with the MSU Pillars** for student success. You will also find our plan for the **launch of MSU’s second-year required residency**.

We close out our annual report with the highlight of 2021 which was our **MSU Hub Studio Course**. Be sure to read about this extraordinary course. Students from 5 colleges caring for two gestating sows and their eventual piglets. Transformational learning with unexpected outcomes—it doesn’t get any better.

**Laurie Thorp, PhD**  
Director, RISE

**Jorhie Beadle**  
Assistant Director, RISE



# SECOND-YEAR PROGRAM

Research on the second-year college experience tells us that students who experience a “sophomore slump” are at risk to leave the institution. In identifying impactful practices to promote persistence, Schreiner (2012) identified characteristics found in students who thrive in college:

- High confidence in their academic ability,
- High engagement with their learning,
- Higher levels of hope to reach their goals,
- Sense of purpose or meaning in life,
- A growth mindset which frames intelligence as malleable over time through practice and work.

RISE will be offering our second-year students a newly developed seminar (NSC 292) based on the highly successful Stanford University course, **Design Your Life (DYL)**. This seminar will address challenges typically encountered by second-year students. The DYL course uses design thinking to address the question of how to design your life and career. DYL offers a framework, tools, and most importantly a place and community of peers where students work on these issues through readings, reflections and in-class activities.

## Fall 2022 Required 2nd-Year Live On

MSU will be instituting a second-year residential requirement FS22. As a residential program RISE is poised to provide robust second-year programming for student success.

Our partners in REHS will be offering the Spartan Navigator pilot program which will primarily utilize online engagement. This will compliment our in-person efforts especially for students not enrolled in the DYL seminar.

Stay tuned! We plan to collect data from our second-year students to better understand their needs and improve our SY programming for FS23.







*RISE student Shatha Alabbad prepares to give commencement address 2020*



*Alassane Sow, College of Natural Science, applies passion for mycology in Bonito Lab*



*Jorhie Beadle offers RISE students career advising*

## PURPOSE-FINDING THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Due to the pandemic, incoming RISE students presented with an increased need for advising and support focused on purpose-finding and career exploration. We know from the literature on purpose that for college age students, their purpose is a work in progress (Reilly & Mariano, 2021). A more fully formed purpose is one that includes the presence of meaningful goals, beyond their self intentions, and active engagement. Compared to their pre-pandemic peers, this cohort had an online high school senior year with fewer opportunities to engage in authentic purpose-finding experiences.

Knowing this, RISE took first-year students from their screen and connected them to campus laboratories, high-impact seminars, and co-curricular activities. These experiential learning opportunities aligned with the University's Strategic Plan. Students flourished in these highly hands-on spaces. In their Personal Purpose Statement, a final assessment in the RISE first-year seminar course (NSC 192), students articulated a deeper understanding of themselves and connection to their future goals because of these experiences.

“

RISE gave me a community and a mission. I felt supported here, and NSC 192 was the class I looked forward to the most because I felt like I was actively growing as an individual.

**BEN BRIDGE**

*Biosystems Engineering*

”

# RISE FIRST-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS

## **MAGGIE JONES**

*Plant Biology, College of Natural Science*  
Dr. Carolyn Malmstrom

## **SEAN WARD**

*Plant Biology, College of Natural Science*  
Dr. Lars Brudvig

## **ALASSANE SOW**

*Environmental Microbiology, College of Natural Science*  
Dr. Greg Bonito

## **CATHERINE MAUER**

*Biosystems Engineering, College of Engineering*  
Dr. Steven Safferman, Dream Sotthiyapai

## **BEN BRIDGES**

*Biosystems Engineering, College of Engineering*  
Dr. Steven Safferman

## **PHEOBE ZAGROBELNY**

*Packaging, College of Agriculture  
and Natural Resources*  
Dr. Rafael Auras

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### **RISE helps students find their purpose by...**

- connecting them to campus laboratories
- offering high-impact seminar courses
- creating hands-on cocurricular learning opportunities

“

RISE definitely helped me get my life on track and set my priorities straight. In a way, it lit a fire under me and forced me to get up and be active.

## **ANNIE DUDLEY**

*Environmental Studies and Sustainability*

”







*RISE students designing a wellness mandala.*

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

**President Soichiro Kurachi**  
*Japan Corn Starch Co., LTD*

**Doug and Maria Bayer**  
*MSU Alumni*

**for their generous gifts to RISE in 2021**



“

RISE was a mental and emotional wellness tool for me and has helped me feel like my personal hopes and dreams for the world weren't a lost cause.

**LOGAN FAIRCHILD**

*Environmental Economic Management*

”



*RISE students work to plant spinach at Bailey Greenhouse and Urban Farm*

## RISE HEALTH AND WELLNESS MATTERS

As a residential program we are frequently the ‘front line’ workers triaging students signaling academic distress. The number of students who come to us with high need in academic remediation, mental health issues, and career or major uncertainty has been increasing over the past five years. We have seen this demand dramatically increase due to the Covid pandemic.

In response to this mental health crisis, RISE has instituted weekly in-person coffee hours with our students to create a safe space for students to talk about all the daily stressors of college during Covid.

### Themes for our coffee hours have ranged from:

- Talking to parents about major changes
- Challenges of online learning
- Coping strategies for feeling “overwhelmed”
- Networking during Covid

National survey research indicates we are not alone; these are national trends. On December 8, 2021 **U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy issued an advisory calling for swift action to respond to a growing mental health crisis among youth that has worsened due to stressors related to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

According to the National College Health Assessment (2021), More than half of college students reported feeling overwhelming anxiety. 30% reported having been diagnosed by a mental health professional with chronic anxiety or panic disorder. Adding to this anxiety is the fact that Gen Z will be one of the most financially challenged cohorts to enroll in college. 60% of students surveyed by NCHA reported that Covid has made their financial situation more stressful. Stagnant wages for parents coupled with increases in tuition leave these students with greater debt load than any generation prior which adds to their academic distress.

RISE mental health wellness strategies has also taken the form of bread baking in the 3rd floor kitchen, ikebana (Japanese flower arranging), crochet workshop, and growing plants for your room. Our commitment to hands-on learning provides students a reprieve from too much time in their heads and in front of their computers!



*International student Alexandra Chen enjoying a community event.*



*RISE students take down tomato vines and harvest greens for a cooking workshop*



“

RISE gave me a sense of belonging because it helped make MSU seem a bit smaller.

I'm really grateful for the group of individuals that I've met through RISE. I've met some of my closest friends through this program, and I feel like I have a leg-up from other MSU students who don't have a living-learning community to fall back on.

**TESS BRADLEY**

*Environmental Studies and Sustainability*

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## BUILDING COMMUNITY AND BELONGING THROUGH HANDS-ON LEARNING

Knowing the unique set of challenges facing first-year students, RISE invested heavily into designing hands-on, co-curricular learning opportunities that took students off-screens and into highly collaborative spaces that allowed them to engage with their learning in tangible ways. In addition to bolstering students' academic resilience, RISE co-curriculars also offer them an opportunity to explore interdisciplinary solutions to the 'wicked problems' that they face as environmental leaders of the future and support their sense of purpose and belonging.

### RISE co-curriculars / community building activities:

Bailey Bees

Bailey Greenhouse and Urban Farm

Land Grant Goods

Vermicompost

Cooking & craft workshops

### Students got their hands dirty at Bailey Greenhouse and Urban Farm (BGUF)

RISE students often filled the greenhouse on Friday afternoons throughout fall semester eager to deliver greens to Brody Dining Hall, build compost, and prune tomatoes. We were even lucky enough to sort rutabagas with Provost Woodruff and harvest hops with President Stanely. For many students, the greenhouse offers a safe space to connect with peers and their campus ecosystem. The greenhouse creates opportunities for togetherness. Students discuss course challenges over weeding a bed of cilantro or building study circles while harvesting peppers; this creates true circles of care.



*Baking bread as a wellness activity*



*Provost Woodruff visits with Ben about sustainable food systems*



## RISE students suited up and cheered on the Bailey bees for a fall semester honey harvest

Bees are great guides to teaching undergraduates about pollinators, ecosystem health and sustainable food systems. Every RISE student participated in maintaining the health of our two hives located on the Bailey Hall green roof. In October, students harvested honey from our hives, which was jarred and sold through Land Grant Goods.

## Land Grant Goods (LGG) gave RISErs ways to explore entrepreneurship and innovation

In partnership with Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, RISE launched the Venture Kitchen, which is an incubator kitchen space for MSU students. Second-year RISE students used this newly founded space to guide their peers in workshops throughout the year to make lip balm, sugar scrubs, and herbal teas using products from Baily Greenhouse and Urban Farm and the campus community. LGG sold products to the MSU Surplus Store, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, and the Holiday Arts & Craft Show hosted by the MSU Union.

## Sharing the sustainability story through the RISE farmstand

Second-year RISE students managed the RISE farmstand, which was hosted by the MSU Recycling Center and the Broad Art Museum throughout the summer and fall semester.



*Dr. Thorp teaches Sarah about vermicomposting*



“

I owe the RISE program so much for making me the person I am. You are the reason I came to MSU, and I now carry the most unique and rewarding college experiences and memories a person could dream of.

**OLLIE AUTREY**

*College of Natural Science, Class of 2019*

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# SUPPORTING STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The pandemic required a constant flex between online and in-person learning for students. This presented a set of unique academic challenges for first-year undergraduates also maneuvering the stressors of starting college. Additionally, we know from our academic partners that this cohort of students was far less practiced in help-seeking behavior. There was a significant decrease in the number of students attending faculty office hours, accessing campus tutoring resources, and reaching out to instructors when in academic distress. The National College Health Assessment (NCHA) mirrored our observations. According to the NCHA's 2021 report, 56% of undergraduates self-reported struggling academically; students named stress, lack of sleep, anxiety and depression as contributing factors.

As an academic living-learning program based in a residence hall, RISE is uniquely situated to provide first-year students with easy access to academic support services through proactive, early interventions.

- RISE offers routine **in-hall academic advising**. There was an increased need to support students changing majors in addition to identifying campus experiences that allowed them to explore broad areas of interests (RSO's, co-curriculars, undergraduate research).
- Prompted by student feedback, RISE began offering **in-hall, peer tutoring** for general education MTH requirements. In a fall semester survey, students indicated they were more likely to take advantage of in-hall, peer tutoring services rather than broad campus services.
- Students participated in a **first-year RISE seminar course** (NSC 192). The course introduced them to campus resources, hosted guest speakers, organized field trips, and supported them as they developed a 4-year academic plan.
- **Weekly success workshops and programming** engaged students in hands-on learning and skill building for academic success including topics on time management strategies, healthy study habits, purpose-finding and mental health care.



Peer mathematics tutoring



Dr. Greg Bonito tours with students for high-impact NSC 192 course



# THE PIG PROJECT

## Hub Studio Course, NSC 292 Experiential Learning for Boundary Crossing:

Professor Dale Rozeboom and Laurie Thorp knew after 10 years of informally working with undergraduates and raising pigs at the MSU Student Organic Farm that significant transformational learning occurs in this context. They made the decision to apply as MSU Hub Faculty Fellows to carve out the time to formalize their teaching at the farm into a credit-bearing course. Being selected for a Hub Studio Course gave them the freedom to **push the pedagogical boundaries in their course design**. They knew that transformation occurred with giving students a high stakes context and high degree of responsibility.

The course far exceeded our expectations for student learning outcomes and pedagogical experimentation. For the course we experimented with:

- A team of **5 instructors from multiple disciplines**
- Novel assessment techniques including a **group oral final exam**
- Purposefully recruiting **students from 5 colleges** and a variety of backgrounds
- Weekly **student video reflections** on GORP (gravity, ownership, relationship, place) topics from class such as euthanization, slaughter, and farrowing
- **A fluid/dynamic syllabus**, we were not driven by the tyranny of the syllabus but rather the needs of the students AND instructors



*Professor Rozeboom instructing Ellie Vondette, CANR, in vaccination technique*

Although the stated learning outcomes were: boundary crossing, systems thinking, practical skills and food ethics. Preliminary analysis of the data indicates that collateral outcomes include:

- Ability to hold paradox
- Development of self-identity
- Respect for multiple perspectives and disciplines
- Communication skills (*especially in the context of Covid*)
- Thinking about life and death

**If you are interested in learning more about this course, our pedagogy and outcomes feel free to request a copy of our executive summary.**



*College of Social Science student, Nicole Carlson, bonding with piglets*

**Environmental and Sustainability Studies (ESS) minor brings students together...**

**CURRENT ESS MINOR ENROLLMENT: 489**

“

This minor really brought joy to my schedule throughout my years here, and made all of my business classes and requirements worth it. Not only was there so many good classes to choose from, but I learned so much valuable knowledge in each and every one that I am truly thankful for.

**RACHEL HAMILTON**

*Major, Supply Chain Management; minor, Environmental Studies and Sustainability*

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# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

We are especially grateful for our learning partners during this difficult time. Without these special relationships we couldn't accomplish all that we do.

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**Elenor Louson**, MSU Hub  
**Seven Mattes**, Center for Integrative Studies  
**Kevin Turner**, MSU Swine Farm  
**Dale Rozeboom**, Animal Science  
**Greg Bonito**, Plant Soil and Microbial Science  
**Vennie Gore**, Sr. VP MSU  
**Kurt Kwiatkowski**, MSU Culinary  
**Jason Strotheide**, Brody Dining  
**Chris Sell**, Spartan Innovations  
**Paul Jaques**, Burgess Institute  
**Ken Szymusiak**, Burgess Institute  
**Becky Jo Farrington**, CNS Development  
**Sarah Geurkink**, MSU Student Organic Farm  
**Suzette Babcock**, MSU Housing Assignments Office  
**Chris Stone-Sewalish**, MSU REHS Administration  
**Soichiro Kurachi**, Japan Cornstarch  
**Doug and Maria Bayer**, Alumni

...and our many friends at:

**MSU Surplus Store**  
**MSU Union**  
**Broad Art Museum**  
**Infrastructure Planning and Facilities**  
**Residential Education and Housing Services**  
**College of Natural Science**  
**College of Agriculture and Natural Resources**  
**College of Engineering**  
**College of Communication Arts and Sciences**  
**College of Social Science**  
**Eli Broad College of Business**

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