



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

RISE

RESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE
ON THE STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT





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Our Overview of 2013-2014

May 16, 2014

Transformational, Inspired, Community ... these are some of the words to describe the 2013-2014 academic year in RISE.

The RISE 2013-2014 annual report, designed for both an internal to MSU and external audience will help provide context to why we used the three words above to describe this year.

Those reading this report from inside MSU will know that RISE, or the Residential Initiative on the Study of the Environment (RISE) is a living-learning program focused on sustainability and environmental stewardship. The Program was established and supported by a consortium of six colleges and provides students at Michigan State University with the resources to successfully transition from high school to university academic life and a community of peers with shared values and interests.

In the end, it is our incredible students who made this year so unbelievably great. We hope you are as inspired as we are by the stories from 2013-2014.



Laurie Thorp, PhD
Director, RISE



Heather Shea Gasser
Assistant Director, RISE

Addition of RISE Assistant Director

The 2013-14 academic year was another year of extraordinary growth for RISE. In late August Heather Shea Gasser was hired as our new Assistant Program Director. Heather came to MSU from the University of Idaho where she served for five and half years as the Director of the Women's Center. She holds an M.S. in student affairs in higher education and a B.S. in marketing and a B.F.A. in graphic design. Heather is a perfect fit with RISE, coming to us with vast experience in student affairs, diversity education, and leadership development. As Assistant Program Director Heather now oversees learning outcomes assessment, recruitment and retention activities, and the development and implementation of our peer mentoring program. Her background and blend of skills has also allowed us to advance our marketing and social media presence, which has allowed us to more broadly cultivate our community of engaged scholars via technology. If you have not visited the RISE website (<http://rise.natsci.msu.edu>) recently be sure to do so and be sure to subscribe to our newsletter "What's On The RISE?" for weekly updates. This new position is made possible with funding from VP for Auxiliary Services Vennie Gore. I am deeply grateful for our partnership and continued support from RHS.



Find, Follow, Friend RISE



NEW WEBSITE!

<http://rise.natsci.msu.edu>



"What's On The RISE?" Weekly Newsletter

subscribe: <http://eepurl.com/FXZ69>



@msuRISE - 475 followers



facebook.com/MichiganStateU.RISE - 326 "likes"



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KoA9dUqxdM>

Establishment of the RISE Peer Mentoring Program

With the growth of RISE we recognized the need to expand our capacity to support the successful transition of a larger cohort of first year students. This year was our first year implementing the RISE peer mentoring program. At the close of the 2013 academic year twelve sophomores were identified as peer leaders to serve in this capacity. Prior to move-in these students received two days of mentor training. Incoming first year

students were then given the opportunity to select a mentor from this group. Mentors met regularly with their mentees throughout the fall semester providing 'after hours' guidance and resources. Our mentors have provided a critically important network of support for our first year students. We also view this as excellent leadership development for our mentors. Heather worked closely with Maddie Judge, RISE student assistant to expand the mentorship program for 2014-15 by instituting a more robust selection and training process as well as early mentor/mentee matching. As I write this our incoming cohort of first year students are selecting their mentors so that this relationship will be cultivated over the summer months in advance of their arrival to MSU.



2013-2014 Peer Mentors (l to r): Allison Montambean, Andy Bianculli, Elizabeth Vandembil, Nick Everett, Allison Stavara, Joanna Acosta, Charlie Nicoli, Caitlin O'Neill, Maddie Judge, and Alec Latta. (Not Pictured: Jesse Nagel, Alexis Hinson, and Elizabeth Brajevich)

Scholarships for RISE Student Leaders



Scholarship Recipients (l to r): Eamon Devlin, Sarah Snider, Karli Wilson, Jobrie Beadle, Alexis Hinson, Danielle Blumstein, Hannah Brenner, Kelsey Allan, Abdullah Mohammed, Jacob Brekke, Alec Manaia, and Jordyn Davis with Laurie and Heather on May 1.

Anna Kace Marra and **Zhulieta Stoyanova** were recipients for the RISE Donald F. Koch and Barbara Sawyer-Koch Environmental Studies Spartan Scholarship, which provides students with a \$3,000 per year award for up to four years of study at MSU. Then, on May 1, 2014 ten sophomores and two juniors (pictured at left) were awarded RISE Emerging Leader scholarships ranging from \$500-\$1500. Students were awarded these merit scholarships based on essay applications and our observations of their engagement in the community throughout the year. These awards were implemented as a direct response to the identified need for greater support of our second year students coupled with the growth of this

cohort living-on for an additional year. The awards articulated that the scholarship is an investment in their continued involvement in the RISE community and lays our expectations for the fulfillment of this commitment.



Growth of Bailey GREENhouse and Urban Farm

The Bailey GREENhouse and Urban Farm (BGHUF) continues to be our exemplar of student entrepreneurship and innovation. Managed entirely by a team of RISE students led by senior **Charles Defever**, BGHUF generated revenue of \$7,674 through sale of fresh herbs, salad greens, and vegetables from the 30' x 72' hoophouse (1/20th acre!). With added production space outside and on the green roof outside the RISE offices, the farm will produce even more this coming year. The main products are fresh culinary herbs, salad mixes and summer fruits. A variety of herbs are grown for use in herbal teas, which are in the development phase and will be featured in the Kellogg State Room next fall. Consistent, structured volunteer sessions allowed students to garden and have fun learning

25% of the applicants to the RISE program specifically mentioned the Bailey GREENhouse and Urban Farm as an important factor in their consideration of the RISE program.

in an informal setting with their peers. We will continue to place emphasis on student engagement, especially as the next set of leaders live in Bailey Hall. Several developments have been made that will allow Bailey GREENhouse to be a self-sufficient site, including a transplant growing chamber and on-site composting for fertility management. One key objective of the project is to demonstrate for the university academic community the concept of urban farming, and the viability of using organic methods within that system.

University Recognition of RISE Student Leaders

This year RISE students garnered high level recognition for their unique blend of scholarship,



engagement and leadership. **Elizabeth Brajevich**, CANR, was selected as MSU's Morris K. Udall scholarship nominee. As only a sophomore, Liz's vermicomposting research has been covered by MSU

University Development, The State News, and Impact Radio. Of particular importance is the coverage she received by University Development who chose to feature Liz in their "Masters of Fate" story highlighting how MSU undergraduates are contributing to MSU's global commitment to sustainability. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources selected Liz to travel to Tokyo University this year to present her research to an international audience. As an Honors College student she received funding for her grant submitted to The Schoenl Family Undergraduate Grant for Dire Needs Overseas to pursue a project in Cambodia that aims to improve the quality of life for people in this country. For this project Liz is working with the Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia on the "Pass Swine On" project in which 16 farmers will be given two female pigs apiece. The farmers are asked to give one or two piglets back once those females have reproduced, as well as use new techniques for waste management and attend meetings where they can share their experiences with other farmers.



This year RISE welcomed two Master Card Foundation Scholars to our program. **Vincent Karenzi**, Rwanda and **John Tengtenga**, Malawi, identified RISE

as a living learning community at MSU who shared in their vision and ideals for a better world. John and

Vincent have been fully embraced by our community and have enriched our lives with their joy and thirst for learning. **Our understanding of the**



world's grand challenges of persistent poverty, deforestation, hunger and malnutrition have been greatly expanded by John and Vincent. We have also shared in

the cultural fabric that food provides by cooking African meals with John and Vincent in the Bailey Hall kitchen. We will welcome three new Master Card Foundation Scholars from Botswana, Ghana and Rwanda in August 2014.

RISE senior **Kevin Adams** was selected as one of ten students to represent MSU as a member



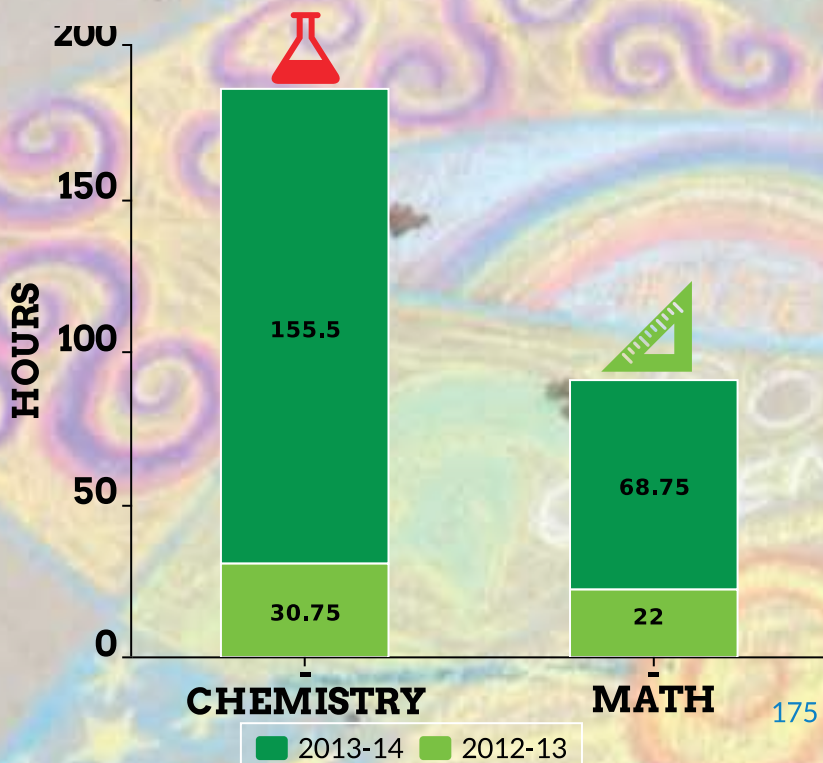
of the Homecoming Court 2014. The court is comprised of students who exemplify the qualities of leadership, spirit, integrity and achievement through their contributions and

involvement at MSU and serve as exceptional role models and ambassadors.

RISE BY THE NUMBERS

2013-2014 INFOGRAPHIC

TUTORING



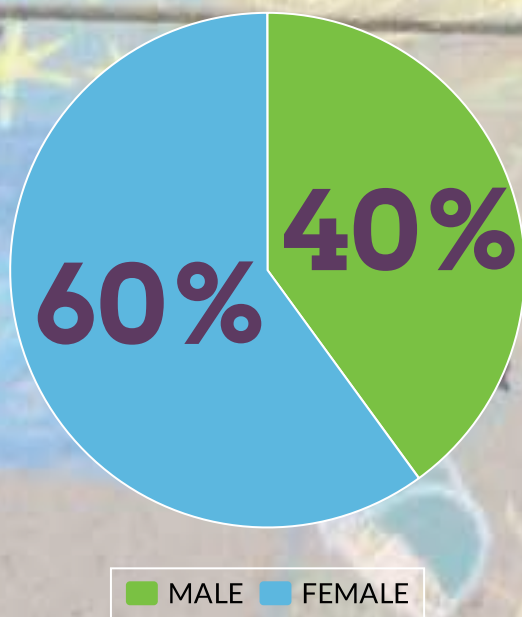
RISE GPA

3.41 FALL 2013

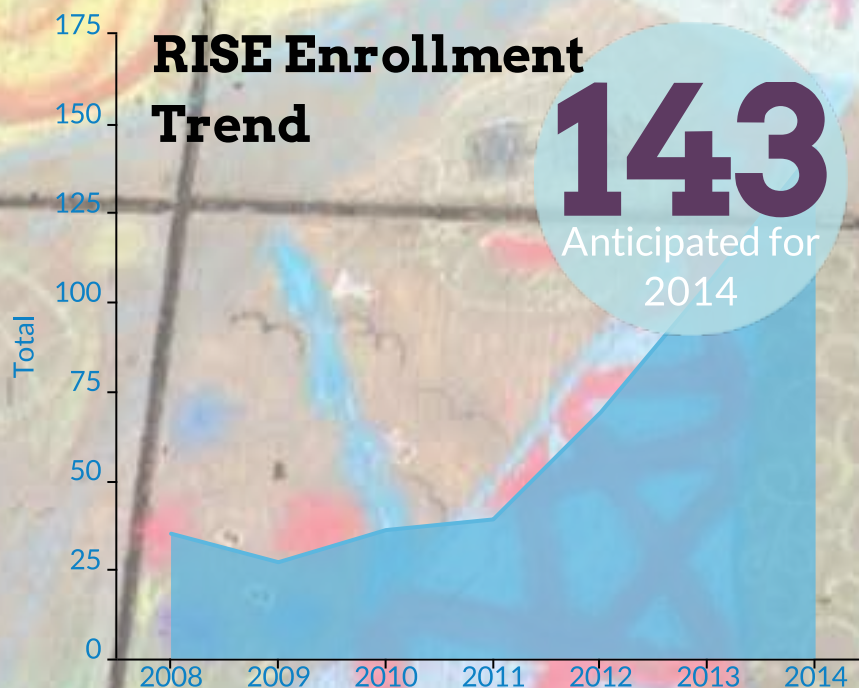
ALL MSU GPA

2.93 FALL 2013

GENDER



RISE Enrollment Trend

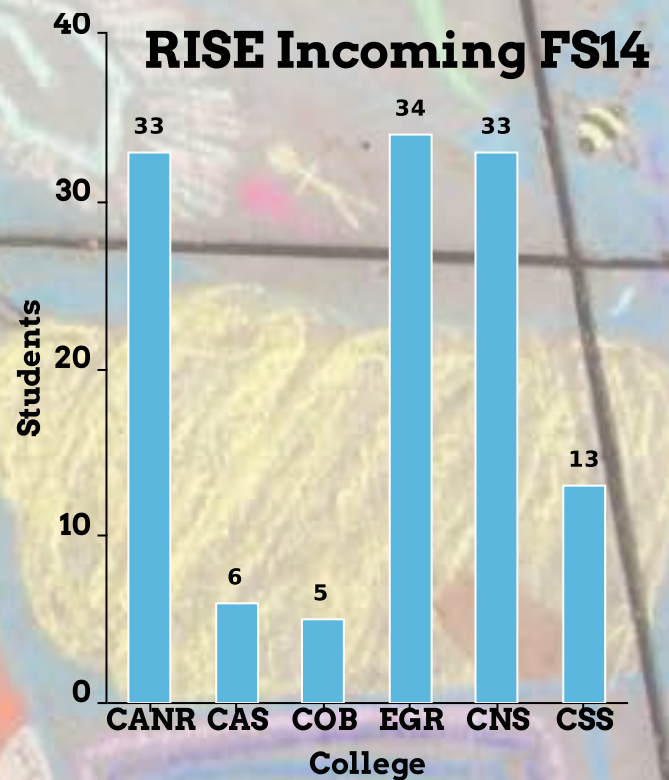
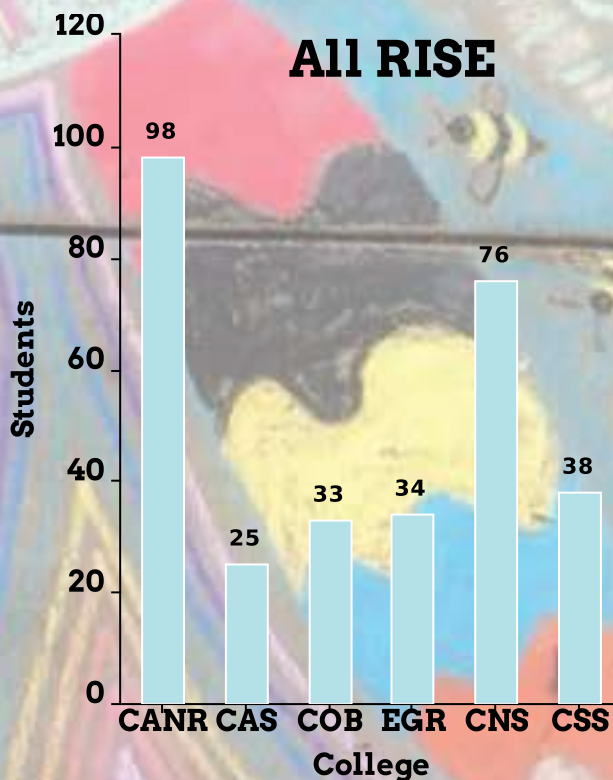


TOTAL ENROLLMENT

270 STUDENTS
(In State)

30 STUDENTS
(Out-of-State)

11 STUDENTS
(International)



RISE Courses for Credit

NSC 192, RISE Environmental Issues Seminar, provided an opportunity for incoming RISE students study environmental issues in an integrated and multidisciplinary approach so that they may gain an appreciation for the

“One of the most important things I learned from this class is a **sense of belonging** and the opportunities presented by MSU.”

“I liked how we were challenged to work in groups and **use our strengths** and weaknesses alongside others.”

interconnectedness and complexity of our environment. Set up as a first-year seminar, the course also helped students develop skills for academic success including skills in teamwork, effective communication and collaborative learning. With the increased class size, we expanded to 3 sections, taught by Laurie Thorp, Matt Raven and Heather Shea Gasser, with a total enrollment 102 (up 50% from 2012). With the

addition of Heather to our team we were able to more clearly refine our anticipated learning outcomes. Outcomes assessed included students identifying MSU resources, developing a 4-year career development plan and successfully working in a team. Once again our first year cohort wrote sustainability grants and created a legacy project for Bailey Hall. New this year was use of the Strengths Quest inventory to help students identify themes of their individual skills and strengths and how to apply these to their daily lives and career paths. upon their career track for the next 4 years



NSC 292, Applications in Environmental Studies, was co-taught by Laurie Thorp and Heather Shea Gasser, with a total enrollment of 50 (up 60% from 2013). Primarily designed for second and third year RISE students, the learning objectives for this course include students demonstrating the ability to think critically about the food system and advocate for change. The course is designed with a constructivist philosophy to teaching and learning coupled with weekly guided inquiry. This year's highlight was visit by internationally recognized animal welfare expert Dr. Temple Grandin.

NSC 390, Special Topics in Voluntary Simplicity and Sustainability was offered to twelve RISE students as a 5 week intensive reading and reflection course. The course was co-taught by Robbie Richardson (CSUS) and Laurie Thorp. Students came together every Friday for two hours in the Bailey Hall commons to discuss readings from the Northwest Earth Institute short course curriculum.

Approval of Minor

On January 16, 2014 program changes for the Environmental Studies Specialization were approved by the University Committee on Curriculum. Effective FS15 RISE will offer a minor in Environmental and Sustainability Studies. This interdisciplinary minor was a collaborative effort among the RISE consortium of colleges to offer students a set of courses that represent the biological, physical, and socio-political dimensions of environmental and sustainability studies.

“This class overcomes one of the biggest flaws of [the field of] Engineering in my mind, that is not having a **larger perspective** of the world.”

“This class did a fantastic job of presenting information in a hands on approach and avoiding ‘academic bulemia’ -- the simple swallowing of facts and regurgitating onto tests.”

“The most important thing I learned this semester is that **people are allowed to change their mind** on anything at any time with no penalty. People are entitled to have their own opinion and changing it means that they’re learning more.”



Commitment to Campus Sustainability

Over the past five years RISE has purposefully formed partnerships that bridge the academic and operations divide to leverage the campus as a “living laboratory” ripe for undergraduate experimentation and innovation. RISE students work alongside faculty, campus planners, procurement officers, chefs, landscape services staff, and engineers to improve sustainable practices and witness how large-scale change is implemented make the RISE Program unique among its peers. In a climate where increasingly the relevance of bricks and mortar higher education is called into question, RISE recognizes the value of the “hidden curriculum” of our campus facilities and has created mutually beneficial opportunities that foster college student learning and development. Further, the existence of RISE, together with both the Bailey GREENhouse and Urban Farm, and the Student Organic Farm, informs policies, practices and programs throughout the campus around sustainability.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Piloted “Curbside” Recycling Project in conjunction with ESA 200
- Expanding Organic “no spray” zone to include 2400 square feet of Native Michigan wildlife habitat adjacent to Red Cedar River
- Piloted MSU’s first CFL bulb recycling program
- Converted Green Roof to raised bed for urban agriculture production demonstration site
- Piloted a “Freecycling” program in Bailey Hall
- Piloted in-room composting, collecting 41 bags from Feb 3-April 14, and 25 lbs of compostable material (n=16 students)
- Piloted in-room vermicomposting worm bins (n=12 students)
- Diverted ~1,500 lbs preconsumer food waste from Brody Square for worm bins in Bailey GREENhouse
- Equivalent of 1,645 plastic water bottles saved from use of refilling station in Bailey Hall
- Collected 150 lbs pounds of donated food to distribute to area food pantry



Monthly Community Building Workshops

Quoting RISE student Jorhie Beadle, **“We are doing community!”** Repeatedly we have heard this sentiment regarding the value of RISE to our students. Our students recognize the importance of community for both their personal wellbeing or development as well as contributing to the greater good of society. In the spirit of these twin goals we have purposefully offered monthly community building workshops in Bailey Hall as part of RISE. Sophomore **Maddie Judge** received CANR undergraduate research funding to study the impact of



these events as it relates to food and community. Her study revealed five key themes that contributed to sense of community: shared values, opportunities for experiential learning, ethic of care, service to the larger community, informal networking. Workshops ranged from cooking with Bailey herbs, international cuisine, learning to crochet, and making natural beeswax cosmetics.



*Top: RISE Students paint the vermicomposting “worm bin” as a community art project.
Middle: Students participate in a RISE Cooking workshop on a Friday afternoon.
Bottom: RISE students learn to knit and crochet scarves.*

Undergraduate Grants and Research

Maddie Judge, sophomore in CANR received \$2000 funding for her Feeding the Future research project with **Dr. Matt Raven** to explore how various experiential learning workshops offered throughout the year may impact student sense of community and increased knowledge related to sustainable food production.

Hannah Brenner, Zhulieta Stoyanova, Jorhie Beadle, first year students in CNS and CANR received \$2500 funding from RHS for their proposal to develop and enhance wildlife habitat along the Red Cedar River adjacent to Bailey Hall. This is a collaboration with Infrastructure Planning and Facilities staff, RHES staff and RISE. The identified area will be planted with native Michigan plants that are known to attract pollinators and wildlife. Site preparations will begin this summer. First year CNS students **Ian Zabak** and **Katy Frey** received \$800 in funding for outreach into the East Lansing community to provide a series of

sustainability workshops in order to educate the general public on simple sustainability practices such as composting, recycling, and water conservation.

Funding and research continues on several grants that were received last year. The Worm Team, led by **Liz Brajevich** conducted a survey of Brody residents regarding their knowledge of composting and soils. In addition they continue to provide the Lansing schools with worm bins for K-5 education. Our CFL bulb recycling pilot project, led by **Alec Latta** and **Maia DeVgood** conducted survey research coupled with energy education this year to all Bailey Hall residents. The edible green roof research project continues to expand with the addition of 6 raised beds for food production. Under the guidance of **Dr. John Biernbaum** students will study the best compost mix and vegetable crops for an urban rooftop setting.



May 2014 RISE Environmental Studies Specialization Graduates

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Andrew Brummitt - Packaging
Neil Chaffin - Natural Resources Recreation & Tourism
Menali Dalian - Packaging
Brian Glover - Entomology
Shannon Gianino - Environmental Economics & Policy
Andrea Lollo - Environmental Economics & Policy
Brianna Patrick - Animal Science
Eva Sabolcik - Environmental Economics & Policy
Karri Tomich-Baylis - Horticulture

College of Natural Science

Neha Rao - Genomics & Molecular Genetics
Collin Rumsey - Environmental Geosciences
Sarah Scott - Zoology
Nikole Vannest - Environment Biology/Plant Biology
Benjamin Wolf - Plant Biology

College of Communication Arts and Sciences

Hilary Podgers - Media Information
Angela Vaszily - Communication

College of Social Science

Ian Duncanson - Psychology
Ashley Hockin - Integrative Studies Social Science
Zak Shafer - Economics
Thomas Taylor - Interdisciplinary Studies

College of Business

Molly Bond - Marketing

College of Engineering

Benjamin Bennetts - Mechanical Engineering



In collaboration with MSU Museum, we installed a display about the Hall's namesake, Liberty Hyde Bailey on the first floor of the building.



Future R4, Sara Snider, meets with students at the RISE Open House in February. Over 100 individuals (students and parents) attended to learn about RISE.



NSC 192 Legacy Project: A "Free Tiny Library" was constructed in Bailey Hall.



Sara Snider, first-year Packaging Major, said: “As a RISE student, I have been exposed to an amazing community. Not only do I have my own mentor and tutors, but I also have the privilege to live with other students that share similar environmental interests. The residential program offers it’s students multiple opportunities to expand their education, create lasting relationships, and explore the possibilities in sustainability. Joining this program has made a massive university into a small loving community. We have our own greenhouse, play with piggies, and learn how to make yummy food! I can’t imagine MSU without RISE.”

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