Divisional Outcomes 2020–2021
The mission of the Division of Student Life is to facilitate student learning and the development of the whole student while cultivating a diverse and inclusive campus community. Through our programs, services, facilities, and partnerships, we provide opportunities for students’ transformation and enrich their education.

The 2020–2021 academic year was unlike any other in the history of the University of Michigan. From the COVID-19 pandemic to the growing national attention around systemic racism to the events surrounding the presidential election and the attack on the US Capitol, our students were challenged in ways they (and we) could never have imagined just a year ago.

The Division of Student Life carries out its mission by providing students with a residential experience that helps them engage and navigate sustainable and healthy relationships and connect with a diverse learning community. We prepare them for life beyond U-M by assisting them with resumes and job searches. And, we offer space and opportunity for them to create or lead student organizations and then to explore the many facets of their identities.

While our mission remained the same in 2020–2021, the work we did to accomplish it looked different. We installed plastic screens, enforced social distancing, engaged virtually with our students, packed meals in to-go containers, put up outdoor canopies, and wore U-M branded masks. There were many opportunities for us to innovate, and we seized them all. Our work also expanded to meet our new reality. We distributed hand sanitizer and masks across campus, housed and supported students in quarantine and isolation, administered COVID-19 tests, and later, supported the administration of vaccines.

We are sharing only a few examples of how Student Life carries out its mission. For each story told here, there are dozens of similar stories that remain untold.

This is Student Life—who we are, the work we do, and how that work affects our students.

Martino Harmon, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Life
The Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning is committed to supporting equitable partnerships between communities and U-M to advance social change for the public good. We connect community organizations with students, faculty, and staff that are invested in positive social change through programs, teaching, and research. We empower students through social justice education, leadership development, and meaningful engagement experiences.

The Fraternity and Sorority Life community consists of more than 5,000 students, 50 individual chapters, and the four governing councils: the Interfraternity Council, the Multicultural Greek Council, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Panhellenic Association. Our staff is committed to supporting the work of affiliated organizations and partners with the councils, chapter officers and advisors, national and international representatives, and other stakeholders to provide opportunities for students’ personal and leadership development, community building, and campus engagement.

The International Center assists international students, scholars, faculty, and staff, as well as American students seeking opportunities abroad. We serve the international population, facilitate intercultural and international education, and foster a global campus community. Our International Student and Scholars Services and Faculty Staff Immigration Services teams work on visa-related matters, and our Global Engagement and Education Abroad team organizes orientation, offers social and cultural events, and promotes overseas opportunities, including the Peace Corps.

Michigan Dining contributes to the education, health, and experience of our community, environment, and staff. We are comprised of cafes and markets, grilles, residential dining halls, a line of Blue to Go foods, catering, and a bakeshop. We enhance the on-campus experience for U-M students, educating about healthy eating, sustainable dining, and foods from global cultures. We strive to provide a respectful, inclusive, and developmental workplace for all employees, including students, giving them skills to take with them after their time at U-M.

Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs transforms the student experience by building inclusive spaces and equitable opportunities for all. We focus on affirming identities through the lens of race and ethnicity, promoting cross-collaboration, building intercultural and leadership skills, and empowering students to address social justice issues. Through our programs that create meaning and belonging for underrepresented students, we strive to achieve our vision of a diverse and vibrant campus community where all members are embraced, nurtured, and feel that they belong.

Who Is Student Life?

The Office of the Vice President for Student Life provides leadership and strategic direction to all units in Student Life. Our Organizational Development Group optimizes organizational and leadership effectiveness within Student Life, including coaching divisional leaders, providing process design, and offering a robust set of professional development resources. Our Office of the Ombuds provides students with a place to talk confidentially about any campus issue or concern. Together, we support all Student Life units in facilitating a positive Michigan experience for our students.

Counseling and Psychological Services provides services that foster psychological development and the emotional well-being of students. We help students take positive pathways to mental health through a combination of clinical and outreach services. We strive to create an optimal environment for students to access care, to receive high quality services, to engage thoughtfully as an active community member, and to help their fellow students.

The Dean of Students Office cares for students’ health, safety, and well-being; addresses immediate student needs; promotes an inclusive campus climate; and develops proactive initiatives to prepare for future needs of our diverse student population. Our office includes Critical Incident Response and Student Support, the Blavin Scholars Program, and the Michigan Debate Program. We also support programs such as Beyond the Diag, Parents and Family Weekend, Expect Respect, and leadership development and support for the Central Student Government.

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Michigan Housing creates and sustains diverse learning-centered residential communities for more than 9,500 undergraduates and 2,500 graduate students. Our Residence Education, Diversity and Inclusion, First-year Experience, and Housing Information Office teams provide opportunities for students and staff to learn from each other. Students learn and practice diversity, inclusion, and the responsibilities of being a community citizen in our spaces, and we allow graduate students to engage with peers and their families, grow outside of the classroom, and connect with the broader community.

The Office of Student Conflict Resolution supports students through conflict using a social justice lens and a restorative justice framework. Our mission is to build trust, promote justice, and teach peace. We foster healthy dialogue across differences, provide restorative pathways, and facilitate all accountability processes under the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, as well as sanctioning, educational intervention, and adaptable resolution pathways under the Student Sexual and Gender-based Misconduct Policy.

The Program on Intergroup Relations is a partnership between Student Life and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts that helps students pursue social justice through educational engagement, practice, and pedagogy. We blend theory and experiential learning to facilitate students’ learning about social group identity, social inequality, and intergroup relations. We prepare students to live and work in a diverse world and educate them about making choices that advance equity, justice, and peace.

Recreational Sports provides opportunities for well-being, engagement, and connection through recreation, fitness, wellness, sports, and adventure. We provide group exercise classes, personal and small group training, intramural sports, club sports, Esports, adventure leadership trips, team building, and instructional programs in multiple recreation facilities that offer drop-in and scheduled recreation opportunities. We annually employ more than 600 students as lifeguards, sports officials, membership assistants, facility supervisors, program supervisors, fitness instructors, trainers, and trip leaders.

Services for Students with Disabilities recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for disabled students. Our Adaptive Sports and Fitness Program provides equitable opportunities for physical health and wellness for individuals with disabilities and we partner with students, faculty, and staff to develop leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future.

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center offers prevention education for students, confidential support for survivors, and collaborates with others through trainings, programs, and innovative community engagement strategies to collectively create a campus free from violence. Students who wish to support our work may volunteer with us after attending an intensive training program that enables them to work with our Bystander Intervention and Community Engagement Program; Consent, Outreach, and Relationship Education Program; or Survivor Empowerment and Ally Support Program.

The Spectrum Center builds an inclusive campus climate through supporting queer connections, providing campus-wide education, and bridging LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty to resources and services. We provide support for issues such as finding inclusive housing, making friends, and navigating personal and academic challenges. We offer tips for getting involved in LGBTQ+ student organizations as well as community volunteer opportunities. We keep students up-to-date on campus events and programs so we can ensure they are able to connect to any resources they need.

Student Life Assessment and Research partners with Student Life units to determine the impact of their work on the student experience. We create an understanding of students’ lives through centralized research efforts and individual unit-based projects and studies. We serve as a resource for units in the development of assessment tools, data collection, and the analysis and dissemination of results. We tell the story of Student Life’s impact on student growth and development.

Student Life Budget and Finance is a centralized service that supports all Student Life units with their finances, budgets, internal controls, and financial analysis needs. We collaborate with units to provide timely and reliable financial information so they can make informed decisions to support their programmatic and strategic needs.

Student Life Communications, Marketing, and Design is a multi-disciplinary team that provides a broad portfolio of services focused on data-driven strategy, marketing, communications, creative, and brand development. Our work creates innovative and engaging customer experiences that bring the Student Life story to life with optimized results.

Student Life Facilities is responsible for the custodial, maintenance, repair, and capital renewal of the residential halls, apartments, and the University Unions. We create and maintain dynamic and functional spaces that enhance students’ quality of life and learning environments. Our team also works with all Student Life Units on annual capital renewal programs, renovations, and major construction initiatives to ensure project goals meet their staff and student program needs.

Student Life Human Resources provides employment life cycle services for Student Life’s 1200+ employees. With more than 3,000 additional student employees, Student Life is one of the largest employers of students on campus, and we support the student hiring process across the Division. We collaborate with Student Life units to provide guidance on full time and student employee matters, collaborate on solutions for organizational issues, and ensure our work is rooted in the Student Life mission and core values.

Student Legal Services is a full service law office that responds to the legal needs of students. Our professional staff have many years of experience in various areas of the law and are able to assist with issues in landlord/tenant law, family law, wills, consumer law and debt collection, and defense and criminal law. We are well acquainted with legal issues that students frequently encounter, and our attorney services are provided to students at no cost.

Student Life Technology Solutions works with Student Life and campus partners to provide innovative and creative solutions to technology needs. We are consultants and problem solvers for a huge range of services, and help our partners navigate IT services on campus. We help find, implement, and maintain software systems — enabling Student Life’s digital presence — as well as maintaining the infrastructure that allows for data-informed decision-making. Our services provide the technology that allows Student Life to focus on students.
The William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center’s work is to support mutual understanding within and across cultures and enhance multicultural awareness. We strive to create a supportive learning environment and to promote community resources. Our facility provides students with a place to be in community with each other through meeting spaces, student organization lockers, and access to on-site student support services. We also provide programming, including intercultural learning, interfaith, inclusive student leadership, How to Flourish workshops, and the Trotter Distinguished Leadership Series.

The University Career Center supports all students in considering their next steps. We assist with career decision-making, developing career plans, and searching for jobs and internships using a broad range of innovative resources and services. We support students preparing for graduate and professional school through resources and programs designed to enable strong candidacy. We are also committed to working on career development of students from identity-based and marginalized groups and we foster active partnerships with related units and student organizations in order to fulfill this important component of our mission.

University Health Service is a comprehensive college health clinic and wellness resource that has been continuously accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) since 2003. Our work includes interventions across the spectrum of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and harm reduction. Through our major divisions—Clinical Services, Diagnostic Services, Administration, and Wolverine Wellness—we make an impact through clinical services, programs, and partnerships.

University Unions serves the campus through its three historic student union buildings (Michigan Union, Michigan League, Pierpont Commons), the Center for Campus Involvement (supporting over 1,400 student organizations and conducting hundreds of programs), and an academic meeting and dining facility (Palmer Commons). We offer programs, services, spaces, and student involvement opportunities that serve as a catalyst for connection and learning which cultivates community and belonging at U-M and beyond.

Student Life programming and resources are intended to encourage growth on six Divisional learning outcomes:

1. Collaborative: Across Differences
   - The ability to work with and learn from others, whose identities may differ from their own, to accomplish goals and solve problems.

2. Health and Wellness
   - The ability to understand how to promote personal health and well-being and manage life’s challenges.

3. Reflective and Relational Learner
   - The ability to reflect on personal expectations and the expectations of others for learning and growth.

4. Identity and Perspectives
   - The ability to explain how social identities and experiences shape meaning-making and ethical decision-making practices.

5. Demonstrate Knowledge
   - The ability to discuss learning, integrate new information, and apply learning across contexts.

6. Motivation and Purpose
   - The ability to identify and discuss values and beliefs that shape learning, behavior, and professional goals.

and to foster growth on three relationship outcomes:

- feeling of belonging to U-M
- feeling valued as an individual at U-M
- feeling a part of the U-M community.
Student Life is a partner in the educational mission of the University.

The societal events of 2020–2021 encouraged us to ask how we can work toward a just, inclusive, and fair democratic society. Student Life intentionally made space for students to drive civic change by facilitating engagement no matter where they were located or what limitations they faced, then provided opportunities for care and support when engagement challenged their mental and physical wellness.

Fall 2020 was designated U-M’s ‘Democracy and Debate’ semester, a university-wide collaboration supported by Student Life and drawing on expertise in The Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning. Despite our withdrawal as a Presidential Debate site due to the pandemic, students were still able to engage using resources like the online Debates Watch Toolkit, compiled by the University Unions, Center for Campus Involvement (CCI), and Trotter Multicultural Center, or in virtual watch parties and discussions hosted by Michigan Housing’s Diversity Peer Educators. Ginsberg’s student staff used a peer-to-peer model to register and educate voters and turn out the vote, and their professional staff created an educational campaign to explain how pandemic-related changes in voting methods would extend the tabulation period beyond usual expectations. And, Student Life’s Community Connections post-election resource guide provided staff and faculty with suggestions for focusing on their own well-being while engaging students in election-related discussions in a supportive manner.

Many U-M students were eager to respond to the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism, but some needed suggestions for ways to engage. Ginsberg demonstrated that everyone can do something important through innumerable ways to think about civic change, but recognized the limitations created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their Pathways to Civic Engagement tool allowed students to choose how they wanted to create positive change—through policy and governance, community organizing and direct service, community-engaged learning and research, philanthropy, or social entrepreneurship—and then provided specific options for engagement. Students wanting to find opportunities to serve locally used Connect2Community, an online partnership between Ginsberg, the Eastern Michigan University Vision Volunteer Center, and the Washtenaw County United Way. This resource was redesigned for Fall 2020 to focus on remote-service opportunities across dozens of community organizations. In addition, Ginsberg assisted instructors of community-engaged U-M courses in locating appropriate virtual engagement opportunities when their usual in-person opportunities became unavailable.

Each Student Life unit provided opportunities for students to decompress, process their feelings, and develop connections. Wolverine Wellness and Ginsberg hosted a well-being and civic engagement workshop series and the Spectrum Center provided a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community to share their election reactions. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offered students ways to take care of themselves, including a workshop series on holistic self-care for change-makers during challenging times; a website of specific tips for student activists, advocates, and allies; and opportunities for students to use expressive art as a means of processing feelings around the socio-political environment. Student organizations could request custom interactive workshops through The Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR)’s CommonGround program, which promotes social identity development and enhances group dynamics while building a supportive community of social justice advocates. And, several Student Life units joined to create ‘Gathering Together after One Year,’ a virtual event to honor loss and to reflect on lessons learned. Throughout the year, Student Life’s educational and support programs were critical resources for students engaged in civic change activity.

The Student Life Sustainability Team within Student Life Facilities was a driving force in the creation of the Excellence in Sustainability Honors Cord in 2021. This multi-disciplinary approach to applying sustainability principles while studying at U-M recognizes students who participated in sustainability activities, programs, internships, jobs, or academic studies. Led by Student Life, major partners include the Stamps School of Art and Design, the Graham Sustainability Institute, the Sustainable Living Experience, and Program in The Environment. One hundred thirty-five graduates received the inaugural Honors Cord in May 2021. In keeping with the Cord’s emphasis on sustainability, the Cord was designed by Stamps faculty using only sustainable materials, colored with natural dyes by student residents of the Sustainable Living Experience themed housing community, and hand-braided by fifty volunteers from campus sustainability programs.

M-LEAD is a collective of Student Life educators who empower students to create change on campus and in their community. One area of M-LEAD’s focus is the Impact Initiative, which provides career development and leadership education for student employees in the Student Life Division. Student employees participate in four individualized coaching conversations with their supervisor over the course of the academic year, focusing on the specific M-LEAD leadership competency areas they have selected. These conversations provide dedicated time to discuss the ways in which their student employment experience prepares them for their future careers and how best to communicate their experience to potential employers. M-LEAD competency areas for example, adaptability, communication, building relationships, and resilience—became even more salient in the context of the pandemic given the need to reimagine and revise many work plans and processes. In addition, the ability for students to use their work time to focus on discussing their selected competencies supported their holistic goals and overall well-being.
They began by reading out loud the poetry of Audre Lorde, Maya Angelou, and Tino Villanueva, then they created “found poetry,” using words, phrases, or quotations that were rearranged from the common poems.

One student’s found poem:

Don’t hush, it is better to speak.

Remember well, when we are silent
we are still afraid of things unknown
but longed for still.

Tell how you were able to come
to this point, seeking a now that can breed
futures, waiting on a dawn of freedom.

serves as a reminder that in an uncommon year full of uncertainty and loss, a common experience with peers can create comfort and hope.

Finding and building your community can be challenging even in the best of circumstances. When the results of a Fall 2020 study indicated U-M students—particularly new first-year students—were having trouble connecting with each other, Student Life created a task force to coordinate and publicize engagement opportunities in the Winter 2021 semester. This multi-unit effort focused on communication, connection, and community-building. Campus events were highlighted through weekly ‘Things to Do’ emails, and the ‘Find Community’ website, which allowed students to choose how they wanted to engage—work, play, volunteer, as a leader—and provided detailed suggestions based upon their choices. Dozens of Student Life staff individually contacted thousands of first- and second-year students to help connect them with University resources and programs. And, because the study results indicated students wanted more connections within their academic programs, the task force partnered with U-M academic units to share tools and programs for the classroom. Finding their community will be easier for students in Fall 2021—based on the success of the Winter 2021 work, the task force is currently developing initiatives to create a vibrant and engaging Fall 2021 semester.

The pandemic created a particular challenge for the chapters of the Multicultural Greek Council. Their organizations have deep, historical commitments to hands-on community service, and local non-profits did not accept volunteers for much of the academic year. Prior to the pandemic, Fraternity and Sorority Life created the opportunity for their staff and members of all four Greek councils to work together to unload trucks and stock shelves at the Maize and Blue Cupboard (MBC). So, when the members of Sigma Lambda Beta were unable to serve at their usual off-campus locations, they reconnected with the MBC, which stayed open throughout the pandemic to ensure equitable access to healthy, nutritious, and nourishing food for U-M community members. As a result, the members of ΣλΒ served their own campus community by volunteering every two weeks at MBC’s Central Campus location and at the North Campus mobile food distribution, a project that originated through the COVID Campus Challenge sponsored by the College of Engineering and the Division of Student Life.

**Student Life helps students create and sustain community.**

Many universities have a common reading program—a shared experience that creates community by asking students from differing backgrounds to read, reflect on, and discuss the same work. For the past several years, the Diversity and Inclusion Team in Michigan Housing has taken an uncommon approach to their common read by focusing on artistic expression. Residents each read the same story or poem, but in addition to discussions, they created and presented an art project based on their reactions to the text. Annual themes such as unity in diversity and intersecting social identities supported the mission of Michigan Housing—to create and sustain diverse learning-centered residential communities that further the goals of the University.

The constraints and challenges of the past academic year suggested the need for broader outreach and a theme that reflected what residents were feeling. The program was offered to the entire U-M community through a virtual platform, and the theme was resiliency amongst uncertainty, conflict, and loss; chosen because resilience can foster hope, determination, confidence, and the ability to bounce back despite failures and setbacks. Students could engage in multiple ways (collectively on Zoom; individually by picking up bags with poems, instructions, and snacks; or through social media).
Student Life leads the University’s health and wellness efforts.

No single unit—however innovative or influential—can foster personal and community well-being alone. Student Life leads this work at U-M through the Health and Wellness Collective Impact (HWCI), an initiative that brings units together in a structured way to achieve social change, and the Student Life Well-being Network, which emphasizes the intersection between wellness and justice. Their programs and resources address the multiple facets of health and wellness holistically and with the recognition that personal well-being and community well-being are intertwined. All are intended to help students grow in their ability to integrate health and wellness as part of success, build resilience, and make thoughtful choices that reduce harm and promote well-being.

The twin pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism created new well-being and mental health demand throughout our campus community in the 20-21 academic year. Working with leaders across campus, the HWCI coordinated responses to emerging COVID-19 needs including the implementation of a required online course for all students, distribution of Safety KItS, and supporting the development of the Culture of Care commitment. It also developed an expanded Syllabus Statement for Student Well-being that integrates resources for faculty to include in course syllabi. Broadly endorsed by U-M academic units, its core message is that ‘seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you,’ and it provides information about a broad set of resources for concerns related to relationships, alcohol or other drugs, identity, finances, food insecurity, and other challenges.

In an effort to bring together the large number of well-being tools in use across Student Life, the Well-being Network launched the Well-being Toolkit for staff, students, and faculty. Users can access a variety of interactive, customizable, and adaptable tools that promote a holistic and inclusive understanding of well-being. The content is broad—with topics such as ‘Self-love for Activists’, ‘40 Money Management Tips’, ‘Talking across Difference’, and ‘Getting Ready for the World of Work’—and is designed for use by individual students or within mentoring and advising sessions, classes, or trainings.

One campus-wide well-being initiative that began in Winter 2021 is intended to explore and recommend holistic, innovative approaches to addressing student mental health and well-being. The Student Mental Health Innovative Approaches Review Committee, charged by the Vice President for Student Life and the Provost, is examining current resources at U-M and has provided recommendations on how they can be improved and expanded beginning in Fall 2021.

In a year of constantly evolving needs, HWCI and Well-being Network programs and initiatives remained grounded by their core values in support of Student Life’s work to enable students to learn and practice immediate and lifelong behaviors that promote positive physical, emotional, social, intellectual, environmental, financial, occupational, mental, and spiritual health.

The International Center (IC) represented concerns about international student wellness across the academic year. By serving on campus-wide and school-based COVID committees and advocating for campus policies from housing to vaccinations, they ensured recognition and consideration of the unique challenges faced by international students. And, as travel restrictions and new regulations constantly changed during the pandemic, the IC, University Health Service, and the Provost’s Global Engagement Team provided the campus community with up-to-date travel information and health and safety guidance. The often complex and country-specific content was organized into an easy-to-navigate framework of webinars, health consultations, and online resources focused on maintaining an individual’s health and well-being before, during, and after travel abroad. By offering preparation to meet potential challenges, these services and resources provided reassurance and reduced uncertainty for U-M community members who needed to travel throughout the pandemic.

Public health-informed practices for gyms, fitness centers, and sports were an ongoing challenge to U-M’s ability to provide opportunities for physical activity, individual workouts, and organized programs. Recreational Sports (Rec Sports) adapted to the changing conditions by offering a range of virtual programming, including Group-X classes, personal training, team building, and Esports.

Once facilities were permitted to reopen, participants experienced socially distanced cardio and strength equipment arranged on basketball courts and jogging tracks. Capacity limits, facility access, and contactless entry were managed through reservations using the Rec Sports app. Rec Sports also shifted focus to outdoor activities such as ‘Bike and Hikes’ and ‘Sip and Strolls,’ with conversations facilitated by Adventure Leadership staff and hot chocolate provided by MDining.

In a year in which providing opportunities to improve physical and mental health and to relieve stress were more critical than ever, Rec Sports worked to support community health and engage participants in safe, fun, and innovative ways.

Student Life supports and advocates for students.

Disability is rarely centered in diversity, equity and inclusion discussions; and despite the 30 years since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), disability can still be stigmatized and not well understood. All students should have access to an exceptional U-M experience but systemic and structural barriers can limit full participation by students in our disability community. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), which exists to support and advocate for students with any type of disability, underwent immense change and growth during the past year. Disabled Student Life supports and advocates for students.

Vice President for Student Life and the Provost, is examining current resources at U-M and has provided recommendations on how they can be improved and expanded beginning in Fall 2021.

Activists, 40 Money Management Tips, Talking across Difference, and Getting Ready for the World of Work—and is designed for use by individual students or within mentoring and advising sessions, classes, or trainings.

Photo taken prior to public health guidelines.
Disability is sometimes viewed as inability, which can contribute to a negative climate around educational accommodations. The need for accommodations does not mean a student just needs to work harder, or a particular course is not the right fit, or reasonable accommodations would lower the bar of academic rigor. In fact, our year of remote learning demonstrated the University could make significant changes in how it provides course content and still deliver on our academic mission. SSD is now leading a shift in the understanding of disability from the medical model in which the disability is seen as the problem, to a social model in which the structure of the system is understood to be the actual barrier. A tangible step in removing barriers was the installation of an information management system that streamlines the process of connecting with and receiving services from SSD. Through support from the Provost’s Office and in collaboration with Student Life Technology Services, SSD began connecting with students through this system in Summer 2021.

Recognizing that a U-M experience is not limited to the academic environment, collaborations with Recreational Sports and University Health Services paved the way for a rapidly expanding Adaptive Sports and Fitness Program to provide equitable opportunities for physical health and wellness for individuals with disabilities. This program already boasts a wheelchair tennis team that finished second at the 2021 Collegiate National Championships and a number of Paralympic hopefuls as well. SSD has supported the development of a wheelchair tennis program that has already garnered recognition and may even make the Paralympics in the future.

When campus closed due to COVID–19 in Winter 2020, student leaders reached out to help. They desperately wanted to make meaningful contributions to ensuring the safety and well-being of the campus community as U-M prepared for the 2020–2021 academic year. Together, these student leaders, and staff from the Dean of Students Office, Wolverine Wellness, and the Office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR) gathered input from faculty, staff, and student organizations to develop the Wolverine Culture of Care: a set of guiding principles designed to keep the community as healthy and safe as possible. These principles emphasized the necessity for all campus members to practice safe and healthy behaviors and to hold themselves and others accountable in order to prevent the spread of disease throughout the community. Once established, student leaders enthusiastically shared the Wolverine Culture of Care with their constituencies and agreed to abide by its principles, allowing them to express their collective values and advance institutional goals for community health and safety.

Winter 2021 saw the launch of the Survivor Care Team, a Student Life collaboration designed to better address the needs of sexual misconduct survivors by combining the advocacy of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center (SAPAC) with the therapy offered through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). The Care Team model is grounded in a holistic healing approach that may include therapy, advocacy, a support group, or any combination of those. Student Life Communication, Marketing, and Design partnered with the Care Team to design a website and introductory video in an effort to make resources visible and accessible. Potential clients are encouraged to ask for help in whatever way works for them and they can expect empathy, validation, support, and a plan that feels right for their specific healing journey. “We support you and we are here to help” is both the slogan of the Survivor Care Team and a reflection of the commitment of all those involved.

Student Life is committed to cultivating a diverse and inclusive campus community.

For many students, their university years are the first time they grapple with the religious identity they established while growing up. If they come from communities where they rarely interacted with people who believe or worship differently than them, they may never have considered how other students’ religious beliefs influence the ways they eat, gather, pray, date, and dress.

The Center for Campus Involvement (CCI) and the Trotter Multicultural Center work together to address student needs through the U-M Interfaith Program. The focus of the Interfaith Program is to bring people together to find a greater sense of belonging within the U-M community and to help students understand it is normal to explore and express their religious, spiritual, and secular identities. The program draws on CCI’s expertise in helping students discover meaningful ways to get involved and cultivate community and Trotter’s expertise in fostering intercultural engagement, connection with community, and identity exploration.

As part of its commitment to ensure religiously diverse student voices are heard, the Interfaith Program created an inclusive video series in which students—Muslim and Jewish, multi-faith and no faith, converts and cradle Catholics—welcomed the U-M community into their homes virtually and shared an intimate look into what gives meaning to their lives. They described what it’s like to request an excused absence to observe a religious holiday, how religious beliefs drive them towards activism and influence how they vote, the spiritual practices and rituals that uphold them during turbulent times, and the beauty that comes from friendships forged across diverse worldviews.

In the face of the past year’s heightened tension, division, and expressions of hate around the world, the Interfaith Program demonstrated how faith, spiritual, and secular communities could serve as stewards of resilience and collective courage through programming like Meals of Meaning. Students picked up a to-go meal and then met online to share their stories and struggles through topics like where they draw inspiration from during unprecedented times, expressing what they hold sacred, common misconceptions about their community, and spiritual practices that give them strength. It is through programs like Meals of Meaning that the Interfaith Program supports opportunities for students to explore their own religious, spiritual, and secular identities, and at the same time, make transformative connections with peers of diverse identities.
The societal events of 2020 left many campus community members considering how they could practice anti-racism in their personal and professional lives. MESA’s Peer Inclusive Educator Team of U-M students— which had been engaging for several years on anti-racism and coalition building—stepped up to fill the need. They facilitated interactive ‘teach-in’ workshops that took the audience through a journey of reflection to better understand how systemic racism came to be; helped them consider the ways in which racism manifests in interpersonal, cultural, and institutional contexts; and supported them in identifying strategies to confront and dismantle oppression at all levels. The student facilitators also shared personal stories of their realities while focusing on creating a safe space to find shared meaning and understanding. As a result, both participants and facilitators were able to learn and grow by reflecting on the ways they may take part in solving the complex problem of racism.

When Student Life wants to tell a story about its interactions with students, it usually begins by gathering individual student stories through a survey. The story is incomplete, though, if students cannot describe themselves in the way they identify, or cannot describe themselves at all because they are unable to access the survey. This past year Student Life Assessment and Research (SL Research) created an ‘equitable survey-taking experience’ initiative. They first tapped the expertise of the Spectrum Center, MESA, the Interfaith Program, and SSD to redesign survey questions that ask about gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, faith and religious identity, and disability status. As a result, students may now select from a greatly expanded set of responses for each question, as well as the opportunity to write in ‘one not listed here.’ SL Research next worked with U-M Information Technology Services to design and test survey formats for students who are unable to access the survey. This past year Student Life Assessment and Research (SL Research) created an ‘equitable survey-taking experience’ initiative. They first tapped the expertise of the Spectrum Center, MESA, the Interfaith Program, and SSD to redesign survey questions that ask about gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, faith and religious identity, and disability status. As a result, students may now select from a greatly expanded set of responses for each question, as well as the opportunity to write in ‘one not listed here.’ SL Research next worked with U-M Information Technology Services to design and test survey formats for students who are unable to access the survey. This past year Student Life Assessment and Research (SL Research) created an ‘equitable survey-taking experience’ initiative. They first tapped the expertise of the Spectrum Center, MESA, the Interfaith Program, and SSD to redesign survey questions that ask about gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, faith and religious identity, and disability status. As a result, students may now select from a greatly expanded set of responses for each question, as well as the opportunity to write in ‘one not listed here.’ SL Research next worked with U-M Information Technology Services to design and test survey formats for students who are unable to access the survey. This past year Student Life Assessment and Research (SL Research) created an ‘equitable survey-taking experience’ initiative. They first tapped the expertise of the Spectrum Center, MESA, the Interfaith Program, and SSD to redesign survey questions that ask about gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, faith and religious identity, and disability status. As a result, students may now select from a greatly expanded set of responses for each question, as well as the opportunity to write in ‘one not listed here.’ SL Research next worked with U-M Information Technology Services to design and test survey formats for students who are unable to access the survey. This past year Student Life Assessment and Research (SL Research) created an ‘equitable survey-taking experience’ initiative. They first tapped the expertise of the Spectrum Center, MESA, the Interfaith Program, and SSD to redesign survey questions that ask about gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, faith and religious identity, and disability status. As a result, students may now select from a greatly expanded set of responses for each question, as well as the opportunity to write in ‘one not listed here.’ SL Research next worked with U-M Information Technology Services to design and test survey formats for students who are unable to access the survey.

Student Life provides food and shelter in a values-driven manner.

Centering students in the work is a fundamental part of the collaboration between Student Life Sustainability and MDining. Sustainability is both a mindset and a framework for ensuring that current and future generations have equitable access to resources needed for a full and vibrant life without exploiting people, society, or the environment. Whether addressing food insecurity, purchasing vegetables from the campus farm, or tracking the carbon footprint of food served on campus, the student experience and opportunity for education is never missed.

During the summer of 2020, Student Life and the College of Engineering sponsored a COVID-19 Campus Challenge, in which MDining and SL Sustainability staff worked with student teams to identify nearly 30 potential solutions to food accessibility, focusing on issues exacerbated by the pandemic. Two of the many solutions implemented were a food distribution on North Campus and a new Farm Stand. The bi-weekly North Campus distribution served students who needed access to free groceries but had difficulty visiting the Central Campus Maize and Blue Cupboard, and the Farm Stand served students who needed more affordable produce options. As a collaboration between the Campus Farm and the U-M Sustainable Food Program, the Farm Stand offered students an opportunity to run a small business, educate others on sustainable food, and increase affordable access to fresh produce grown by fellow students.

The SL Sustainability and MDining collaboration provides students with opportunities to develop leadership skills, hone their education in food systems, and research sustainability best practices. For example, in U-M’s closed loop model of sustainable food production, produced grow by students at the Campus Farm at Matthaei Botanical Gardens is purchased by MDining and used in meals. Resulting food scraps are composted, turning them into food for new plants. The composting program was also bolstered by the use of compostable containers for the to-go meals required by public health-informed practices and the addition of compost bins to residence hall waste closets, a collaboration with the Office of Campus Sustainability. Students from several U-M academic programs are also involved in research to track the carbon impact of food served by MDining, a project that is a leader in the multi-billion-dollar university food service industry. As the result of a $300,000 multi-year grant by the Graham Sustainability Institute, with partners in the School of Public Health and the Taubman School of Architecture and Urban Planning, an understanding of the carbon footprint of food will be used to create strategies to encourage consumers to shift their choices from high-impact items to more sustainable food options.

While picking up a to-go meal or dropping a container in a compost bin may seem transactional, those opportunities are built on an approach that combines learning, leadership development, and research, with the ultimate goal of making people and the planet whole.
In addition to the work Student Life did to carry out our mission, we also supported the COVID-related needs of the campus community. We housed and fed students in a public health-informed manner, educated them on how to safely engage with others, created protocols to keep the entire community safe, managed compliance with those protocols, answered questions from the U-M community, made COVID-19 tests available, and cared for the quarantined and isolated, all while staying within the values we embrace across the Division. Here’s how we did it . . .

298,101 COVID-19 tests administered to students

2,446 Quarantine and Isolation Housing residents received 1,469 supply deliveries made 1,967 calls to the Q/I Coordination Center received 7,411 follow-up contacts from Dean of Students staff and Q/I Coordination Center staff

36,114 questions answered by the Community Information Center

140 new student organizations started and supported

8,557 virtual events listed on Happening@Michigan

1,263 hours of staff time for education and discussions with housing residents about safe behavior in a public-health context

41,506 outdoor canopy users

1 set of COVID-19 guidelines for student organizations revised 12 times in response to changing local, state, and federal guidelines

$182,025 in emergency funding to 289 students for food, short-term housing, and other critical needs

2,308 first- and second-year students received a personal invitation from a Student Life staff member to a resource navigation meeting

1,250 hours of public-health informed food-handling training completed by MDining staff

220,274 times residence hall restrooms were cleaned

1.23 million to-go meal containers purchased

1,215 hand sanitizer stations and paper towel dispensers installed in residential facilities and the Unions

213,267 interactions between U-M students and the Division of Student Life in 2020-2021

107,720 interactions were advocacy, counseling, health care, support for food insecurity, and quarantine and isolation housing

105,547 interactions were participation in educational and social experiences

Of the educational and social experiences, many programs are designed for multiple purposes, so these do not total 100%.
How Student Life created impact from interactions.

Student Life is able to determine how its work affects students through analysis of students’ participation and their self-reported ability levels. These are two examples from Fall 2020 and Winter 2021.

These Student Life units created social justice programming each semester:
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Ginsberg Center
- International Center
- Program on Intergroup Relations
- Multi Ethnic Student Affairs
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center
- Student Life Sustainability
- Spectrum Center
- Trotter Multicultural Center
- University Career Center
- University Unions/Center for Campus Involvement

There were 7,300+ student interactions with social justice programs like these:
- 2020 Reflections: A Story of Democracy
- A History of Native American Activism and Policy
- Advocacy and Activism Film Discussion Series
- Blacklives: Know Better, Do Better
- Civic Engagement and the power of Speechwriting
- Diversity and Teaching Seminar
- Food Justice in AA&PI Communities
- Founders and Entrepreneurs: Black Women who are Redefining the Mold
- Health and the Border
- Indigenous Environmental Justice
- Latinidad Magazine Poetry Workshop
- Meals of Meaning
- MLK 101: Dr. King and International Community at U-M
- Pronouns 101 with English as a Second Language
- Skilled and Savvy: Contribute to a Diverse Workplace
- The Intersections of Black LGBTQ+ Identity and Mentorship Conversation
- U-M Sustainable Food Program Leadership Team
- Women’s History Month Events

Students who participated in social justice programming demonstrated growth across the academic year in abilities related to:
- Collaboration across differences
- Demonstrating knowledge
- Identity and perspectives

These Student Life units created leadership education programming each semester:
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Dean of Students
- Michigan Dining
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- First year Experience
- Ginsberg Center
- International Center
- Program on Intergroup Relations
- Multi Ethnic Student Affairs
- M-LEAD
- Office of Student Conflict Resolution
- Recreational Sports
- Student Life Sustainability
- Spectrum Center
- Trotter Multicultural Center
- University Health Services/Wolverine Wellness
- University Unions/Center for Campus Involvement
- Office of the Vice President for Student Life

There were 9,400+ student interactions with leadership education programs like these:
- The Art of Emotional Resilience
- CommonGround
- Conflict Card
- Impact Training
- Inclusive Student Leadership Program
- Intercultural Leadership Seminar
- M-LEAD Academy
- Student Advisory Boards
- Trotter Distinguished Leadership Series

Students who participated in leadership education programming increased these feelings across the academic year:
- Being valued as an individual at U-M
- Being a part of the U-M community