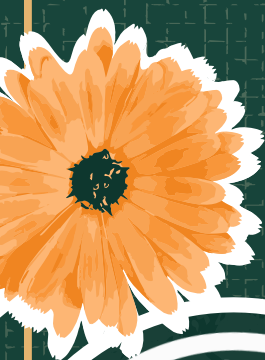


# 2021 *Class of*

You can do **virtually** anything.



# From our leaders...

"As the Dean of the College of Social Science, I would like to extend my congratulations on your degree. I certainly hope you take a few moments, pause and celebrate all that you have accomplished. As you move forward, I hope you remember the motto of our College; which is to be transformative and to be inspirational."



Dean Mary Finn



Associate Dean of DEI,  
Nwando Achebe

"Congratulations on this important moment in your lives. Moving forward, be intentional about building a just world. Adopt a service mindset. Find work that makes you proud. Sit with discomfort. Respectfully engage with people you disagree with. Read authors that write about worlds different than yours. Travel to places you wouldn't ordinary travel to. Accept positions that challenge you. The best careers are built by people who have disparate experiences to draw form. Celebrate every accomplishment. And last but not least, don't be afraid of getting older. With age comes wisdom."



# Meet Selva!

Selva Haidar is a Political Science graduate and the 2021 Student Commencement Speaker. Below is an excerpt her speech to the Social Science Class of 2021.

For me, like you, these past four years have been filled with great joy and excitement and, let's face it, have required great resilience and flexibility. But when times got tough, we, the graduating class of 2021, embraced the challenges we faced. And that is what Spartans do. Spartans Will!

When we faced challenges in in-person and virtual classrooms, challenges with our finances, challenges with our families at home, and challenges being away from each and this beautiful campus, we remembered that motto, Spartans Will!.

We, the Class of 2021, forged ahead accomplishing what we needed to accomplish to reach this point—graduation day. How very special it is to be celebrating together with our family and friends!

Going forward, we are the worlds next economists, psychologists, political scientists, historians, social workers, geographers, urban planners and so much more. At MSU, we gained a comprehensive understanding of the things we are most passionate about. We are, I am sure, ready to transform the human condition and inspire leaders.

Over the past four years, you have all inspired me. And I am sure, each of you has been inspired by someone—by many—sitting in the audience today.

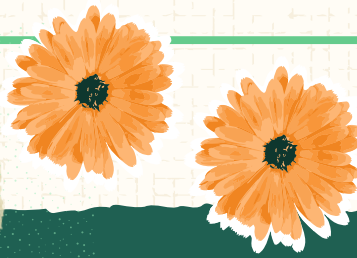
You all, the Class of 2021, showed me, the daughter of immigrants and a first generation student, that anything is possible if we support one another. And you showed me that we remain part of a wonderful, caring community when we are together live and in person and when we are forced by circumstances to be physically apart. So while this seems like the end of our time together, we all know that it is not. We are all leaving East Lansing, graduating, and moving forward. But we do so as a community of Spartans.

Congratulations Class of 2021 on your wonderful achievement, Thank you to my parents. And thank you all for being my inspiration. Go Green!





## 4.0 Students



Alison P. Ferer  
Ethan J. Loch  
Elisha M. Smith  
Madeline T. Smith  
Chloe J. Vansickle  
Maysa C. Sitar  
Erin E. Debono  
William D. Eckerle  
Nathan G. Jackson  
Annika L. Linzmeier  
Adeline G. Nelson

Danielle N. Petras  
Max D. Sandler  
Taylor M. Unrath  
Sophia S. Epstein  
Renee E. Rogowski  
Amanda J. Torno  
Olivia R. Mobley  
Jasmine N. Jordan  
Isabel P. Hershey  
Katlyn L. Hemp  
Olivia N. Dinkins



Lulu Nestor (ANP)  
Alexandra Gormely (CJ)  
Jack Mueller (EC)  
Ryan Snider (GEO)  
Eric M. Baylis (HST)  
Elisha Smith (HDFS)  
Lauren Moffitt (HRLR)  
Chloe VanSickle (IDS)  
Jasmine Jordan (PLS)  
Erynne Dixon (PSY)  
Erin Kramer (SW)  
Daisy Genson (SOC)  
Kelsie Stuber (URP)



## Outstanding seniors



# \* Favorite Memories \*

We asked seniors to share their favorite memories from their time at MSU. Here's what they said!

"My favorite memory from my time here at MSU was being a part of the dating auction to raise money and help out in the Flint water crisis."

"Attending events like Spartan Remix and Sparticipation every year!"

"Meeting my fiancé through my friend group in South Neighborhood!"

"Taking my dad to see his first college basketball game in the Breslin (it was the last game played there with fans before COVID!)"

"My first year at MSU, I took part in the Washington D.C. study away class for two weeks. I met some of my best college friends there and I continued to reflect on my time there throughout my undergrad. The class set the pace for my time at MSU and continues to be beneficial in so many ways."

"My favorite memory was my first week on campus I met a baby squirrel who came up to me because it needed help. Not only did it show how friendly the squirrels are, I was able to find the baby the proper care it needs!"

"My favorite memory has been my time as a Spartan Dischord. I love to sing and crack jokes, and Spartan Dischords acapella has allowed me to do both. Shoutout to my fellow DFDs!"

"Tailgating for the Spartans! GO GREEN!"

"Meeting up with my friends for lunch by the river in between my classes."

"My favorite memory from my time at MSU has to be when I was living in the dorms, and my RA would do floor game nights! We would all just get together and play fun games, which made us closer as floor mates and friends. I always had so much fun at these events and I will always be grateful for the people I have met during my time at MSU."

"When MSU beat Duke for the Final 4, I loved watching the game go down in the Wilson study lounge!"

"Driving around campus before school started in the fall, and am seeing all of the eager faces to be on campus!"

I met some of my best friends here on campus. Never did I think I would connect with anyone the way I did through the disability center. As I type this, I'm reflecting back on these crazy years and packing to move out of state to begin my journey and life, say my goodbyes, and hug my two best friends that I am so grateful to know and have in my life.





# ALUMNI ADVICE



Keep your head down and trust the process. This is one of those situations where you can put in hours of work without seeing any results, and that can be really frustrating. Believe in the law of large numbers, be patient, and in time opportunities will come your way. Leverage your relationships as much as possible, because knowing someone is the easiest way into an organization. At first, it seems like you're putting in all of that work for nothing - but in time activity will start to percolate... and job offers always come in pairs!

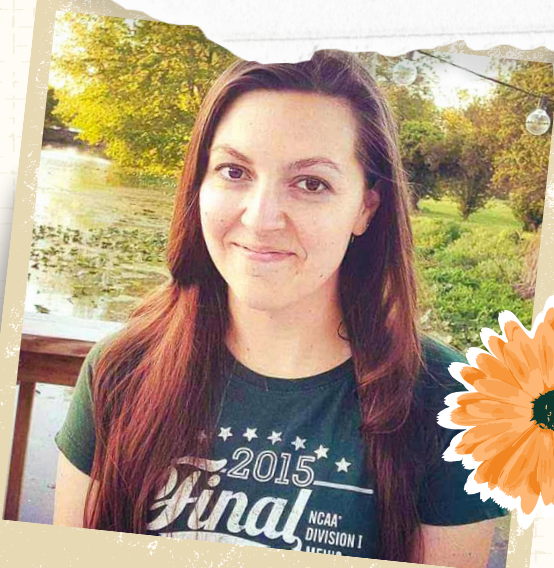
--Manny, PLS, '18

Attend as many networking events as you can. I know that right now with the COVID-19 situation, networking events might all be online. Attend them anyway! Career Fairs are also recommended, but in my experience, networking events have been so helpful! Be open to unexpected options that come your way. You might get offers for jobs you think you might not like or believe you're qualified for. Check it out anyway. You'll never know until you try!

--Dulce, PSY, '12



When looking for a job, don't feel like you have to take the first job you are offered, are remember that company culture matters as much as the pay you are being offered.



Don't be too hard on yourself if you are applying to a lot of places and only get a few interviews. It helps to practice interviewing! Also, try to print out the job description and make notes for your interview about how your experience aligns with what they are looking for beforehand.

--Mary, PLS, '10



# ALUMNI ADVICE

Be confident in who you are and what you stand for. Understand that while you might not be the perfect candidate for a job, as long as you are willing to learn and excited to be there, people will want to work with you.

It is also important to remember that you are graduating into an extremely challenging situation, and give yourself grace if things aren't moving as quickly as you want them to. Put in the work and you will get there!

--Liz, PLS, '19



Take your time. There's no rush for most things. Even if it feels like you may be standing still, you're not--you can always do something where you are, even if it's just research, job application and interview practice, and self-care and growth. Don't rush into something just because you feel like it's "time" to do the next thing, whether that be grad school or a new job (or a relationship). Congratulations and good luck, and never forget where you came from!

--Madge, CJ, '18

Mentorship is very important! Building a support system is very important! I say support system because everyone's support system looks different. It may be friends, families, mentors, employers, just find them because the journey is one that will have highs and lows. Finding the right mentor and people to support you along your journey is helpful and life changing. I could not have made it this far without either mentors or those who helped support me in various ways.

--Algeria, MSW, '19





# From your advisors...

We asked department advisors to share their words of wisdom for the Class of 2021. Here's what they said:

"The class of 2021 stayed the course in the face of incredible challenges. Show the world how strength, determination, and advocacy for one another is the path to a better tomorrow. Work hard, use your voice for good, be kind, and persevere."

--Carey Elder, ECON

"Despite this pandemic, you have persevered and completed your undergraduate education. You will bring a wisdom from this time with you into your future endeavors and you will be stronger because of these experiences."

--Deon Claiborne, ANT

"Keep putting your best foot forward, and good things will happen."

--Matt Hahnenberg, HRLR

"Take time to slow down, congratulate yourself, and celebrate your accomplishment! You have not only made it to graduation, but you also persisted through a global pandemic."

--Meagan Rau, HDFS

"I hope you see challenges as opportunities for learning and growth. I hope you recognize your accomplishments and those of the people around you. I hope you advocate and empathize for others to broaden your impact. I hope you never stop exploring and learning."

--Nicole Gekeler, ECON

"You are a generation of students that has gone through something that no other generation has gone through. See it as an asset, not a curse; as a tool of resilience, as the proud online class of 2021."

--Nicolas Gisholt, ISS/GIS

"Keep a positive attitude and be ready to adapt to a constantly changing environment!"

--Regan Kania, ISS/SOC/GIS





# What's next?

We asked our seniors what they will be up to after graduating.  
Here's what they said!

"I will be pursuing my PhD in Cognitive Neuropsychology."

"I plan to take a gap year and then pursue an MA in criminal psychology at the University of Manchester in England."

"After graduation, I will be working in an immigration law firm in Chicago."

"I will be working as a Junior Correspondent for The Organization for World Peace!"

"After graduation, I will be attending medical school at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine."

"I will be working for Oracle in Austin, TX at their headquarters."

"I'll actually be staying at MSU post-graduation! I will be starting the MSW program with a clinical focus this fall."

"I will be working for Amazon in Seattle."

"I will be attending Grand Valley State University for the College Student Affairs Leadership graduate program."

"After graduating, I will start an internship with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and starting my Masters Program in Social Work at Wayne State University."

"I plan on attending the University of Toledo Law School."

"After attending graduate, Attending graduate school here at MSU's Advanced Standing Clinical Social Work Program."


"I plan to work in local/state politics, and might return to school for a Master's degree in Political Science."

"Looking for a job during my gap year so that I can gain some experience before applying to grad school next year!"





See you soon!

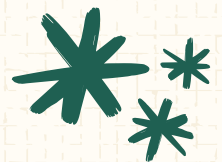


Don't think of this as a goodbye, but instead, a see-you-later! Stay in touch with the College of Social Science by following us on social media!

Also, check out the volunteer and engagement opportunities available to alumni on our website.



From all of us at the  
College of Social Science...



Our motto at the College of Social Science is that we transform the human experience and inspire leaders. You have each personified this message, persevering through one of the most challenging periods of modern history and coming out on the other side with a Social Science degree.

With that degree, you will change the world. You already have. You've proven that you can do virtually anything, and now it is your turn to use what you've learned to go forth and confidently continue to transform the human experience - whatever direction you decide to go.

Just remember as you take the next steps in your journey that the College of Social Science is behind you. All of us - from faculty to support staff to alumni - are here for you, and rooting for you to succeed. We are so proud of what you have accomplished so far.