



A PERSONAL NOTE FOR OUR

LSA COLLEGE CONNECTIONS ALUMNI AND FAMILIES

From LA to New York, and many places in between, we have loved getting to know each of you, learning from your experiences, and bringing your comments and suggestions back to Ann Arbor. In this update, we want to share what we've gathered from our conversations, as well as our plans for the future of the College Connections program.

The past year has been an eventful one for LSA. Professor Terrence J. McDonald completed his term as Dean of the College of LSA and transitioned to the role of director of the Bentley Historical Library. Under his leadership we accomplished some remarkable things. We have interviewed more than 3,700 LSA alumni and parents in five years. The feedback we have received during these conversations has informed the College's efforts in significant ways. Our alumni and parents want more outside-the-classroom advising and career preparation for students. The College has strengthened our partnership with the Career Center, and we have hired an LSA Internship Coordinator who works to secure internships for students in the United States and across the globe. We are in the second year of a professional mentorship program between our young alumni volunteers and LSA students taking internships. Alumni and parents want more interdisciplinary, applicable degrees. Colleges and departments have partnered to create the [Business](#) minor, the [Sustainability](#) minor, and the [Philosophy, Politics, and Economics \(PPE\)](#) major. As we reflect on the last five years, we wish to extend our gratitude to you for your thoughtful feedback and continued support of LSA and University of Michigan — you have played an instrumental role in ensuring the continued excellence of our College.

We also invite you to welcome Susan Gelman, the Heinz Werner Collegiate Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean of LSA. Professor Gelman is an extraordinary and distinguished scholar. She has served as a faculty member for three decades and is the author of more than 200 scholarly publications. Her role as both faculty member and associate dean provides foundational knowledge and experience from which to build a successful deanship. Professor Gelman is dedicated to the College Connections Program and the ways in which it enhances the alumni voice in the life of the College. We are confident that the program, the College, and the strength of the liberal arts will only continue to advance in this interim period.

MEET THE COLLEGE CONNECTIONS TEAM



ELLIE RECENTLY GRADUATED FROM LSA IN APRIL 2012 where she earned her B.A. in English and minor in Community Action and Social Change. Originally from Washington D.C., Ellie found a home away from home in Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan. As an undergraduate, she enjoyed tutoring students at the Sweetland Center for Writing and sharing her U-M spirit as a tour guide for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. She also took advantage of LSA experiential learning programs, which allowed her to facilitate a theater workshop with incarcerated youth and work as a teacher's assistant at a local elementary school. Her love for travel (and food) inspired her to spend a summer abroad in Florence, Italy where she studied Renaissance Art and Italian. As an English major, she believes in the power of storytelling and loves to hear U-M alumni share stories of their passions, pursuits and blunders along the way. In her spare time, Ellie enjoys reading, cooking and cheering on Michigan athletics.



MARK GRADUATED IN MAY WITH A B.A. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE and minors in Community Action and Social Change and Writing. Hailing from the Chicago area, Mark grew up in the backyard of another Big Ten school yet always aspired to go to the University of Michigan. He pursued his interest in politics by getting involved in LSA Student Government and working on the organization's communications efforts. He spent several summers introducing incoming students to campus (and walking them through the fountain!) as an orientation leader. As an undergraduate, Mark participated in Michigan in Washington (MIW), a program that gave him the opportunity to live, learn, and work in the nation's capital. Mark's interest for development grew during his time in the Development Summer Internship Program (D-SIP) while he built an online resource for student philanthropy initiatives. He's excited to be a part of the College Connections team and to build relationships with LSA alumni all over the world! Mark enjoys tutoring students at 826 Michigan, an Ann Arbor youth literacy center. You may also catch him obsessively following politics.



KATHLEEN IS A 2010 LSA GRADUATE and a former Phebe A.I. Howell LSA Scholarship recipient. She earned her Psychology B.S. in Brain, Behavior, and Cognitive Science. Although Kathleen grew up in Colorado, she dreamed of attending the University of Michigan for as far back as she can remember and would not trade her experience for anything in the world! Her interest in health and children drew her to join Dance Marathon, a student-run nonprofit organization that raises money for pediatric rehabilitation programs and improves the lives of children with disabilities. As a Development Summer Internship Program (D-SIP) participant, Kathleen worked in Neurology planning patient conferences. Her experiences with Dance Marathon and D-SIP combined with her love of the University sparked her interest in fundraising and alumni relations. She has been with the College Connections Program since July 2011 and now manages the LSA Dean's Young Alumni Council. She lives in Ann Arbor with her husband and college sweetheart, Tim, a U-M and LSA alumnus.






WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU THINK

As College Connections embarks on our sixth year, we are excited to bring you our reports and analysis. We have conducted detailed research and put together this executive summary of the most poignant results so far.

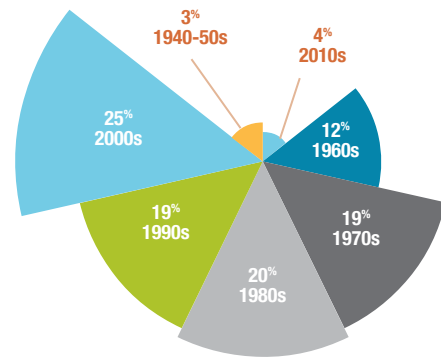
top five responses — how did lsa influence your life or career?

Ability to explore, gain exposure, and build a broad knowledge base	37%
Built a solid foundation for graduate school and/or career	28%
Developed ability to analyze, think critically, and problem solve	16%
Well-roundedness	16%
Became more tolerant, open minded, and/or experienced personal growth	14%

support for dean's priorities

INTERNSHIPS	42%	
GUIDANCE AND/OR ADVISING	36%	
SERVICE-BASED LEARNING	33%	
STUDY ABROAD	28%	
WRITING SKILLS	9%	

decades represented



top 10 industries represented

14%	LEGAL
13%	EDUCATION
13%	OTHER
11%	MEDICINE/HEALTH
5%	STUDENT
9%	FINANCE
4%	JOURNALISM/MEDIA
4%	MARKETING/ADVERTISING
4%	NONPROFIT
4%	MANAGEMENT

results from parent interviews

81% of LSA parents agreed with the statement, "I trust the quality of a U-M degree, and I am not concerned about the quality of instructors."

74% would recommend U-M to another parent and/or prospective student.

60% of LSA parents mentioned concerns regarding U-M housing.

preparation for students

57%	IMPROVED ADVISING
45%	CAREER PREPARATION/GUIDANCE
29%	INTERNSHIPS
26%	ADDITIONAL SOPHOMORE INITIATIVE PROGRAMS
24%	MORE ACCESS TO ALUMNI MENTORS

THE LIBERAL ARTS IN THE NEWS

It's no secret that the liberal arts have been at the forefront of the national debate on the state of higher education. We have all seen the headlines framing the humanities as teetering treacherously over the brink, and the liberal arts graduates among us are all too familiar with the phrase, "what are you going to do with a liberal arts degree?"

We have enjoyed engaging in lively conversation with each of you about the state of the liberal arts and sciences, and we wanted to continue the conversation by sharing some thought-provoking news articles and videos that touch on this topic.

[THE HEART OF THE MATTER: A VIDEO FROM THE COMMISSION ON THE HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES](#)

The Commission on the Humanities & Social Sciences was established to advance the national discourse on the importance of the humanities and social sciences in order to ensure a brighter future for our country. The Commission created this video, which puts forth a thoughtful, heartfelt defense of the humanities. For students worried that their liberal arts degree won't translate to employment post-graduation, [this video](#) delivers a powerful affirmation of the ways a humanities and social science background prepares students for a career and, more importantly, life.

[TED TALK: BENNINGTON COLLEGE'S PRESIDENT CALLS FOR A REINVENTION OF LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION](#)

Bennington College President, Liz Coleman, calls for a radical rethinking in the way universities teach the liberal arts during [this TED talk](#). Rather than encouraging increasing specialization in technical fields, she calls for a more commanding role of the traditional disciplines in the curriculum, coupled with an interdisciplinary approach.

["THE HIGHLY USEFUL CRISIS IN THE HUMANITIES"](#)

[This article](#) from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* explains how historically, during times of economic downturn, increasing numbers of students gravitate towards STEM majors. Rather than declare this shift a crisis, we should expect it as a predictable reaction to economic hardship.

[MICHIGAN RANKED AS "DREAM SCHOOL"](#)

The University of Michigan places in the top 10 for "dream schools" by both parents and students, as published in the *Princeton Review's* annual ["College Hopes and Worries Survey."](#) At the same time, the study reveals that student debt and the state of the economy are chief concerns, even if students are accepted into their dream school.

["THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR"](#)

The *New York Times* Editorial Board published [this interesting read](#) on the narrowing emphasis and technical specialization of the humanities — and the value and versatility of thought gained from studying literature.



REPRESENTING YOUR VOICE TO THE COLLEGE

LSA alumni and parents have shared their desire to see more opportunities for internships and career preparation for our students. [Let's take a look at what LSA is doing, thanks to your feedback:](#)

We are making sure all students can afford life-changing professional experiences through the [LSA Internship Priority](#). Thanks to generous donations from alumni, including many of you, the College of LSA was able to award more than \$86,000 in stipends for students taking unpaid or low-wage internships this past summer. We are committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of financial circumstances, can take advantage of a valuable internship opportunity.

We created the [LSA International Internship Program](#) that connects students with exciting internships in countries across the world (Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, to name a few). Students are placed in meaningful, life-changing work environments, from assisting at an orphanage in Nicaragua to teaching English in Morocco. Follow the LSA International Internship student [blog here](#).

We're continuing to expand our [Michigan in Washington \(MIW\)](#) program. MIW students live in Washington, D.C., and intern at places as diverse and prestigious as the Department of Justice, the French Embassy, and the Earth Day Foundation — all while working with a mentor who is a U-M alum, and producing meaningful research in a topic of their interest. Check out the newest MIW video, [here](#).

[Semester in Detroit \(SID\)](#) was created with the same experiential learning theme in mind. SID students live in bustling Midtown Detroit while interning at non-profit organizations and taking a full load of urban studies classes. We believe that “live, work, study” is the perfect combination for innovative learning and professional development.

We're also [granting academic credit for internship experience](#) and [offering an internship preparation course](#) that teaches students how to translate the durable skills they've learned in the classroom to the workplace. In this course, students learn concrete skills associated with representation of self, including resume writing and interviewing, and they explore subjects such as the economics of paid/unpaid internships and the psychology of professional identity.



(top) History students at the historic Fort Wayne in Detroit, Michigan.

(bottom) Students pose with President Obama during their semester in D.C. for the Michigan in Washington Program.

AN UPDATE ON OUR YOUNG ALUMNI

In the past two years, our young alumni have been working together to create and grow the [LSA Dean's Young Alumni Council](#), or DYAC, which now boasts nearly 250 Council Members and 16 Executive Team Members.

Members of the DYAC serve as LSA ambassadors and promote the value of a liberal arts education in their communities and social media networks. Our tech-savvy DYAC members have been writing and sharing blog posts, pictures and more on the popular social media site, Tumblr. Their blog entries cover topics that range from how to get out of the post-college [literary slump](#) to the value of a liberal arts education in the [business world](#). We encourage you to stay up to date with our recent graduates' thoughts as they navigate the professional world. Check out the full DYAC Tumblr [here](#). Additionally, these recent graduate volunteers are

working to ensure that current students continue to have access to world-class experiential learning opportunities. They've made this passion a reality by raising money for the LSA Fund for Student Internships. In the last year, recent graduates raised more than \$27,000 for the College of LSA, including nearly \$9,000 to support internship scholarships.

Young alumni are also staying engaged with the College by serving as mentors to current LSA students. This past summer, nearly 80 young alumni and students participated in the DYAC mentorship program. Mentors and mentees were paired in Chicago, New York, Washington, D.C., throughout the state of Michigan, and across the globe. The mentorship program allowed current students and alumni to develop their professional and social networks in their respective cities.

If you would like more information about the DYAC or are interested in becoming a member, please contact Kathleen (lsa.youngalumni@umich.edu).

WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Interested in: [Hiring a student?](#) [Sharing your story?](#) [Supporting the LSA Fund for Student Internships?](#) Referring fellow LSA alumni for an interview?

Whether you want to share your experience with students, utilize the amazing resource that is our student body, or post a job or internship opportunity, we have avenues to stay engaged. [Send us an email](#) and we will gladly connect you with the right place on campus. Also, please feel free to refer any LSA friends who you think would be interested in participating in College Connections—whether they are in Michigan or elsewhere.

STAY IN TOUCH

We have had a wonderful time visiting you and hearing your stories. We are glad that LSA and U-M are part of your life today, and we are grateful for the time you took to speak with us. We would love to stay in touch. [Send us an email](#) with your thoughts, feedback, and suggestions for the College Connections Program.

We also welcome you to [update your contact information](#), if necessary, to ensure you don't miss out on future communications from LSA and U-M.

[Thank you again, and as always, Go Blue!](#)

**Ellie Chessen, Mark Chou,
and Kathleen Hinkley**
LSA College Connections Team