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Vice President Kim Smith has resigned to take a position outside the bargaining unit, p. 2.



How we win
President Bittner reflects on our successes and how we keep our winning streak, p. 2.



Solidarity with the community
Here's a way to help needy students in the Greater Lansing area, p. 8.

CT news

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

August 2015

Membership Meeting

The 41 members attending the quarterly Membership Meeting on July 14 enjoyed some delicious cold treats, including ice cream from the MSU Dairy Store, while catching up with CTU colleagues and the news of our union.

Treasurer Jan Wallace presented our finances. [Jaime Cole]

President Deb Bittner reminded the

Meeting continued on p. 5



Nominations Notice:

Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

Nominations for the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, three (3) Directors and one (1) Audit Committee member will be accepted September 1 through 8, 2015.

The President, Treasurer and Directors will be elected to serve terms of approximately two (2) years, specifically, from their date of installation through the installation date of their replacements elected in the union's regularly scheduled election to be conducted in October 2017.

The Vice President will

be elected to complete the final year of a two-year term, until the regularly scheduled election to be conducted in October 2016.

One person elected to the Audit Committee will serve a term of approximately three (3) years, until the regularly scheduled election to be conducted in October 2018.

Written nominations will be accepted by the Election Committee or their designees, including CTU Organizational Manager Barb Harris, at the CTU office from September 1 through 8, 2015,

by 5 p.m.

A nominations meeting will be held on September 8, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. at the CTU office, 2990 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823. Nominations can also be made from the floor of the nominations meeting if the nominee is in attendance. The nomination period will close upon the conclusion of the nominations meeting at 6:30 p.m.

In order to make a nomination, a member must be in good standing. Nominees have to have completed their

probationary period and be in good standing at the close of the nominations period. Self-nominations are permitted; seconds are not required. No member shall be allowed to accept the nomination for more than one position.

Every nominee will be required to indicate in writing, no later than the conclusion of the nomination period, whether she/he accepts or declines a specific nomination. The names of nominees who fail to accept their nominations will not appear on the ballot.

CTnews

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union
of Michigan State University

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Organized and
independent
since 1974!

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Editorial Policy:

The CT News is the voice of our union. It is our vehicle for communicating, on a regular basis, the issues that confront us as workers. Through this newsletter we explain union policies, show how dues are spent, and explain the views and actions of the elected leadership for evaluation by the members.

The CT News is the voice of the membership. We welcome articles from members and stories about members.

While contributions are welcome, they should be constructive and contribute positively to the welfare of our union.

We will accept no attacks on any union leader or member. We will accept thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letters section, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the union and its policies.

Direct ideas, letters, questions and comments to Cheryllee Finney.

URdistricts

The following CTs were reappointed to UR positions in their districts:

▼ **District 7** (East and West Fee, Hannah Technology and Research Center): Reach **Stephanie Six** at 353-1998 or six@msu.edu.

▼ **District 24** (International Center, Wells, Central Services), **Lori Thomas** can be reached at 432-4347 or thoma657@msu.edu.

The following CTs have petitioned for appointment to UR positions. If no other CT in these districts comes forward by August 27, they will be appointed:

▼ **District 2** (Administration Bldg. [Floors 2, 3, 4]): **Stacey Patton**.

▼ **District 14** (Instructional Media Center, Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture, Audiology and Speech Science, Public Safety): **Jeniffer Robinson**.

District 31 (North and South Kedzie, Bessey, Computer Center): **Kathy Kirby** has resigned her UR position. We thank her for her service to the union and wish her the best.

CTclassifieds

Services:

▼ **Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners:** It is a great time to clean your carpets and upholstery to have your home and furniture summer time fresh! Sandy beaches and summer vacations can take a toll on your vehicles and campers too and we can help you before or after your summer vacation to get you ready or clean up after that fantastic trip! We are reasonably priced, owner operated, and will do a great cleaning job for you. Please give Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners a call to set up an appointment today at 517-694-0497.

Free:

▼ **CTU Conference Room:** Available free to members (with deposit). For non-members, \$25/hour plus deposit.

VP says goodbye to CTU



Kim Smith's 1984 campaign photo.

CTU Vice President Kim Smith has resigned her office as a result of taking an MSU job outside the bargaining unit.

Smith became a member of our union when she was hired at MSU in 1978 and has served as director, secretary, union representative and vice president.

We will miss her commitment, enthusiasm and experience, and we wish her the best in all of her future endeavors.

An email was sent on August 6 asking any members interested in filling the position on an interim basis to come forward so the executive board could appoint someone at their August 18 meeting to serve until our elections in October.

"We are involved in far too many issues and projects to go without a VP for two months," said CTU President Deb Bittner.

Membership Meetings

The final CTU Membership Meetings of 2015 will be held Wednesday, October 28. All meetings are held at 5:20 p.m. in 252 Erickson. Membership meetings are for making decisions about the Union, asking questions and receiving updates about Union activities.

Executive Board Meetings

1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 5:15

CTU Office

Members welcome!

Contact the CTU office at 355-1903 for questions, reservations, etc.

▼ **Advertise** to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Contact Cheryllee Finney at Cheryl@ctumsu.org. The *CT News* accepts ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members. See advertising guidelines at <http://www.ctumsu.org/news/ct-classifieds>.

President's corner

How we win

President Deb Bittner

The fall always causes me to reflect, so I thought I would share some of the factors that have landed us in our current situation and thoughts about how we can continue our success into the future.

Strong evolving contract

As an independent labor union in a state openly hostile to organized labor, the CTU has held its own and even made headway. [Debra Wright]

We are proud to have one of the best contracts out there, but it's all just words if we don't defend, enforce and use it. In the 41 years since our union was founded, we have been vigilant in defending the protections and rights outlined in our collective bargaining agreement with our employer. We allocate dues money for our defense and we stand up for ourselves in the workplace rather than submit to intimidation. We have made sure our contract is strong and viable.

Recognizing that times change, we have always been prepared to draw on our resources and experiences in order to keep our contract relevant. Our new classifications are a good example. After hearing from members in the survey that classifications were the number one issue of concern, we introduced a very creative solution in bargaining. Ultimately, we won five higher-level CT positions and

the ability to establish more. We are now in the position of monitoring the implementation of these new positions and fighting to make sure units utilize them.

This is proving to be as time-consuming, as difficult and as complicated as we expected. Some managers are proving to be very resistant to change. Going forward, we will continue to use all of the tools at our disposal to make sure that our employer implements our mutual agreement.

Still another example illustrates how we have used our contract as a base from which to secure greater benefits. CTU was instrumental in creating the Coalition of Labor Organizations at MSU (CLO) and shrewd enough to see the advantage of negotiating health care benefits with the other campus unions. By partnering with management in the Joint Health Care Committee, the unions have worked to keep health care costs down and quality up rather than simply accepting the increased costs and allowing them to be passed on to workers. The CTU played a huge part in establishing this committee.

We do spend a lot of time and other resources in our continuous, ongoing efforts to create new ways of saving dollars and thus ensuring affordable, high quality health care. But the hits just keep coming as far as health care costs. However, our uniquely collaborative approach and ability to "think outside the box" as we move forward continue to make the effort worthwhile.

Participatory democracy

Our founders didn't focus only on establishing a great contract. They also established a constitution, a set of procedures and a culture that celebrated the fact that members *are* the union. We elect representatives, directors and officers, and we hire a staff to carry out specific tasks, but we—democratically and collectively—are solely responsible for this organization.



We set the priorities and the path, and our elected leaders continue to be members and share our concerns. As a result, there is little chance that our elected officials will "lose touch" with us as members.

In addition, our culture of accessibility, which includes regular meetings, town hall meetings, elections, surveys, calls, emails and an excellent system of communications, is also part of our strength. I can't imagine any leader in our organization being successful without this kind of ownership on the part of members.

In a democracy, of course, not everyone agrees all of the time. So we commit ourselves to *the process*, not our ability to always get our way.

Even when it comes to our constitution we celebrate our resiliency. Members have gone to the polls and amended our constitution 19 times in order to address changing conditions and issues not considered or anticipated when we first adopted it on February 25, 1975. And we will be looking at doing this again next year.

Our electoral process is the most important way to have input in this organization. I encourage everyone to consider becoming a UR, director or officer. We have an election coming in October. Consider running. Volunteer to help. Email or call with your concerns.

Meeting continued on p. 5





Board actions

April through June 2015

Board meetings are regularly scheduled twice a month, on the first and third Tuesday, and members are welcome to attend starting at 5:15. The CTU constitution requires the Executive Board to meet at least once a month.

The following Board actions took place April through June 2015. All expenditure decisions are included, but the list does not represent meetings in their entirety. Members can receive copies of complete minutes through the mail or email by contacting the CTU office at 355-1903.

April 6

Accepted the proposed 2015 budget, as presented, and agreed to present it to the membership at the April Membership Meeting.

Agreed to renew \$263.76 annual *Detroit Free Press* subscription.

Donated \$100 to co-sponsor the Successful Black Women of MSU Peace Summit at the request of a member.

Agreed to donate a low-cost gift for this year's Take Your Child to Work Day if an appropriate one can be found.

Received president's report, including options for addressing the union's broken shredder and the Joint Health Care Committee's development of a well-being survey.

Received report from CTU's AUTTC (All University Traffic and Transportation Committee) representative that there is a push to eliminate free retiree parking.

April 20

Purchased a \$100 brick on the Women's Walk at the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame. The purchase supports the organization and

places CTU's name on permanent display. See the picture on page 7.

Agreed to send up to six people to the 14th Annual Capital Area United Way's Women's Leadership Council Lighting the Path Luncheon at \$20 per person. This event supports educational programs for girls locally.

Received president's report that the president and financial manager were invited to attend a course on administering the contract offered through MSU's School of Human Resources and Labor Relations.

Announced that the Executive Board will forgo appointing a new director at this time. If there is no quorum at the April Membership Meeting, the Board will appoint someone at its first May meeting.

Received report from CTU's AUTTC representative that the retiree parking issue has been tabled until September.

May 4

Appointed Sierra VanDenHeuvel to be a director on the Executive Board.

Renewed annual membership in the Michigan's Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame for \$75. Discussed how this great local resource might make a good location for union training.

Agreed to pay the remainder of our \$750 donation pledge to MSU's Summer Circle Theatre. This donation will get CTU's name on the donor support wall.

Tabled a donation request from the Tri-County office on aging.

Received president's report that the shredder was able to be repaired at a shop in Grand Rapids for \$176.

Received Tobacco Free Update from the president.

Received report from our representative to the Presidential Advisory Committee on Disability Issues. The focus for the upcoming year will be making technology accessible.

Reported that four Board members will attend the United Way Women's Leadership Council luncheon.

May 19 (cancelled)

June 2

Donated \$50 to Dapper Dads fundraiser for Women Working Wonders (W3). Proceeds support women's health in Lansing.

Donated \$50 to Ingham County Animal Control "Adopt-A-Fest" to help make animal adoptions more affordable. The donation strengthens community relations and could help members who wish to adopt.

Donated \$100 to the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) 3rd Annual Scholarship Program for high school students.

Agreed to send up to two people to the LCLAA breakfast at \$10 per person.

Renewed the annual subscription to the *Labor Notes* publication for \$30.

Agreed to purchase letterhead/stationery reprints and envelopes for \$730 from a union shop.

Decided to send two people to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame Special Event for \$25/ticket.

Received reports from representatives to AUTTC, PACDI, EAP.

Received report on the "Empty Plate" Greater Lansing Food Bank Fundraiser.

Agreed to request a transfer of funds to cover bargaining costs at the July membership meeting for 2014 and 2015.

Received report on increasing prescription drug costs and the efforts of the Joint Health Care Committee to keep costs down.

Received report that nine CTs have stopped paying dues as a result of right to work. [Karen Moser]

June 16 (cancelled to allow time for picnic preparation)

Win continued from p. 3

Come out to vote. Everyone wins when individuals are involved.

A good reputation

Our reputation is one of strength and commitment.

Not only are we an important part of the CLO, but our work with other labor organizations is acknowledged and respected. We participate in activities and support labor in our state. And other unions show up for us when we need them. This is solidarity.

Certainly, we have been strong stewards of the union's resources. Even after some pretty horrific economic times, we have a strong financial portfolio that helps secure our image of strength. While money is crucial to our work, we don't "win" by hoarding our resources, be they financial or otherwise. Instead,

we use them to defend the contract and individuals on the job. We also invest in our interests in the community. At both MSU and in the larger community, we volunteer for special events and sit on various committees and boards in order to represent labor's concerns. In addition, we donate resources and time for causes that help our members, improve the community and give us name recognition as labor partners.

CTU believes we are part of the campus and regional community, and we put our beliefs into action. We have won a reputation of strength by adding value to our community.

Facing the future

We will need to put all of our strengths to work if we are to remain successful.

It's no secret that CTU opposed

passage of right-to-work laws in 2012. We believe they are anti-union and anti-worker. And they were passed in a cowardly, undemocratic fashion. More anti-worker laws have been passed and still others are in the works. Such laws are meant to be destructive and divisive, and they do have an impact on us.

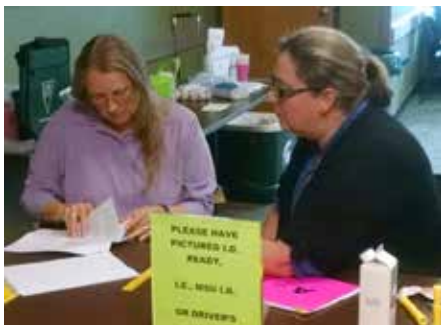
As we expected, however, CTU continues to do well even under the right-to-work laws. True, the laws ensure that non-members get the benefits, wages and representation for which the rest of us work and sacrifice. However, very few have stopped paying dues—a testament to our collaborative efforts.

I also believe you remain committed to your union because you want to pay your fair share for representation and that you recognize you have greater strength when you join your voice to the voices of many others. You understand that our collective strength is diminished each time someone opts out of paying their fair share for the protection and dignity the union provides. You know that letting ourselves be divided is the best way to lose.

So, to sum up, right now we are winning, even the face of some formidable attacks. I believe we will continue to win if we hold true to our democratic principals and continue our vigilance, resilience, creativity and shrewd ability to see and take advantage of opportunities. If we keep these characteristics—if we celebrate and cultivate them—I believe we are poised on the brink of even greater success.

But to remain in the top tier of success, we cannot rest. To quote MSU's twentieth president, Lou Anna K. Simon, "Let's get bolder by design." It's high performance time! And time for you to be a part of our design.

Meeting continued from p. 1



URs Judy Redding and Amanda VanKoeveering registered CTs attending the July Membership Meeting.

group that we traditionally transfer money for negotiating expenses from the contingency fund to operations. Because there was not a quorum, she said, that action would need to be postponed.

Members primarily focused on our newly bargained classifications at the 10 and 11 levels and how the improvements were being implemented.

"We expected some glitches," said Bitner, "and we are addressing the issues with the university as they arise."

"We need members to contact us if they believe their work matches one of the new classifications," she added.

"And we also need members to contact us if they are doing work they think is at a higher level but there is no higher CTU job classification description that matches it," she said, "and that includes technical workers and others that are not covered by the five new positions."

Vice President Kim Smith said the district lunch meetings generally have been well attended and encouraged members to contact their local union representative to set one up in their area. Those without a UR can contact the CTU office at 355-1903. [Rosario Garcia]

"I just want to say thank you to the CTU and to the CTs who volunteered at the June 9 gala in support of the Summer Circle Theatre," said CT Jean Lepard. Lepard is on the boards of the MSU Friends of Theatre and the gala committee.

Door prizes went to Kelli Kolasa and Melinda McEwan (\$50 each), Rosie Garcia (CTU laptop bag), Louis Villafranca (coffee mugs), and Ninfa Callouitte (coffee).

The next Membership Meeting will be held Wednesday, October 28.



Leadership duties

The terms of our president, treasurer, three directors and one Audit Committee member are scheduled to end this October.

The recent resignation of our vice president upon accepting a job out of the bargaining unit creates an unexpected vacancy for the VP position, so it will also be on the ballot this October.

To help us decide who to support, or whether or not to run, it's important to know the duties of the positions.

The duties of officers on the Executive Board are laid out in Article V of our Constitution (www.ctumsu.org/about-the-ctu/constitution-of-the-ctu/ or call the office at 355-1903 if you don't have internet access).

In order to fulfill those duties, elected officials are expected to take on many responsibilities. The expectations of officers and directors are detailed on this page.

The expectations of Audit Committee members are listed on page 7.

Vice president

The Vice President of the CTU is expected to fulfill all of the responsibilities listed for directors and officers.

In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Vice President also is expected to:

- serve as the Executive Board liaison to the Union Representatives and the Union Representative Coordinating Committee;
- substitute for the President, as necessary;
- chair the Grievance Appeals and Trials Committee;
- serve as authorized signatory of the Union;
- use 25% released time from MSU position in order to fulfill duties.

Directors and officers

In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of any position on the CTU Executive Board, those elected are expected to:

- carry out and honor the oath of office;
- commit the time required to serve the Union including some day, evening or weekend hours;
- support unionism;
- uphold the Union mission and direction as set by the Executive Board and the CTU Constitution;
- make decisions and create policy;
- use input/data from membership, experts, and staff when time permits;

- serve on either the Grievance, Appeals and Trials or Finance Committee;
- represent the CTU at all times;
- attend some labor functions as a CTU representative;
- attend Board meetings, UR meetings, regular and special membership meetings (attendance mandatory);
- when possible, work in conjunction with URs on membership issues;
- keep URs informed and in the loop;
- be able to work as part of a group of people;
- honor issues of confidentiality;
- control rumors/misperceptions.

Treasurer

The Treasurer of the CTU is expected to fulfill all of the responsibilities listed for directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the Treasurer also is expected to:

- oversee fiduciary responsibilities, pay bills, cooperate with the auditor, research community solicitations,

report on the financial impact of decisions;

- chair the Finance Committee;
- prepare the budget with the Finance Committee;
- make quarterly reports to the membership;
- use 25% released time from MSU position in order to fulfill duties.

President

The President of the CTU is expected to fulfill all of the responsibilities listed for directors and officers. In order to fulfill the Constitutionally mandated responsibilities of the Office, the President also is expected to:

- keep the Executive Board and organization on track between meetings;
- structure Board meetings;
- provide a long-range view of the organization;
- act as official spokesperson for the CTU, internally and externally;
- remind people of deadlines;
- balance a 40-hour week through the use of flex and comp time, and report

to the Board if work demands overload status;

- report activities to the Board and members;
- use full-time released time from MSU position;
- chair Executive Board meetings and negotiations, and sit as *ex officio* member on all internal committees;
- supervise staff;
- chair the Personnel Committee and report personnel issues to the Board for decision-making;
- vote only to break a tie in an Executive Board vote.

Same-sex marriage changes

The Supreme Court ruled on June 26, 2015, that same-sex marriages are legal in all states. This ruling will have an impact on some CTs.

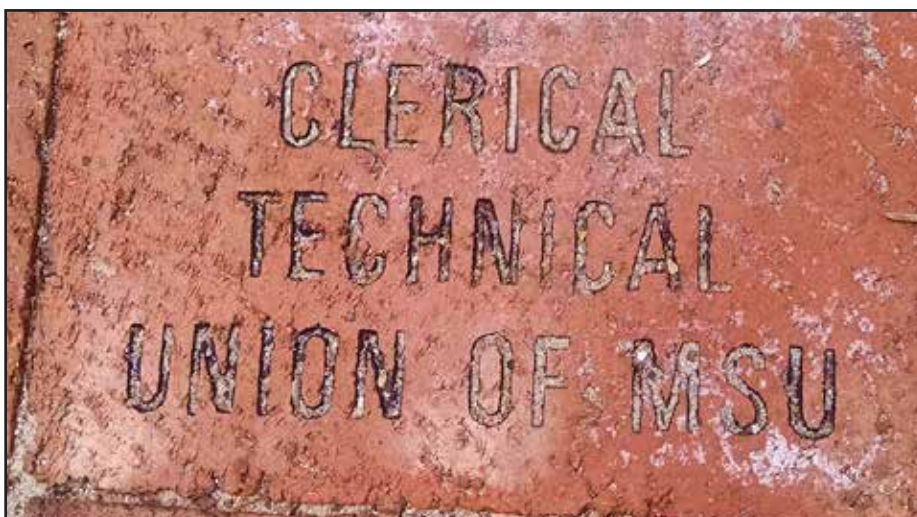
First, there need be no change for those with same-sex or opposite-sex partners registered as “other eligible individuals.” Our contract with MSU, in effect through March 31, 2019, protects these benefits.

However, CTs who have married or decide to marry individuals of the same sex can use MSU’s standard procedure for registering the marriage in order to obtain benefits. Within 30 days of the date of marriage, click on “Life Events Changes” on the Human Resources Benefits website (www.hr.msu.edu/benefits). All coverage will become effective on the date of the marriage for those who marry after June 26.

CTU is questioning MSU’s decision to delay coverage until January 2016 for employees who married an individual of the same sex prior to the Supreme Court decision. We will keep you informed.

Employees whose same-sex spouse was already covered by their MSU health plan before the Supreme Decision will no longer have imputed income as of their July paycheck, retroactive to January 2015.

CTU is monitoring the situation. Please contact your union if you have questions or concerns.



CTU's brick is on permanent display on the Women's Walk at the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame.

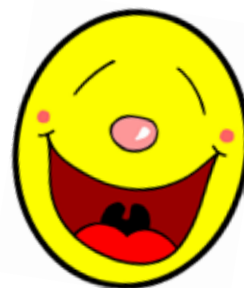
Sometimes you gotta laugh

Investments and Financial Services



“Are you ready to start investing or do you want to keep throwing your money away on food, clothing, and shelter?”

About time!



1. I had this boss who was into all this inspirational and motivational stuff.

I remember once he posted a sign which read, “Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.”

I couldn’t resist attaching a sticky note: “And now you know why.”

2. Being punctual in our office was of no benefit what-so-ever. There was never anybody around to appreciate it.

—Both adapted from Aha Jokes at www.ahajokes.com

Audit Committee

This description of the Audit Committee and the duties of its members is taken from Article VI of the Constitution:

- The Audit Committee shall consist of three members. They shall be elected for staggered three-year terms with said election held at the same time and under the same rules as apply to the Executive Board. Members of the Audit Committee may not be members of the Executive Board.
- The Audit Committee shall make

or cause to be made at least a yearly audit of the Union’s finances and shall report to the membership the result of such audit.

- The Audit Committee shall monitor normal operating expenses and shall serve as an independent communications channel between the members of the Union and the custodians of the Contingency Fund for verification of withdrawals from that fund.





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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CTcalendar

September 1 & 15 (first and third Tuesdays). Executive Board meeting, C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome. [Elizabeth Thomas]

September 1 through 8. Nomination period for the CTU elections.



September 8. Deadline of 5 p.m. for written nominations. Submit nominations to the CTU Organizational Manager or a member of the Elections Committee. The nomination period will culminate with a meeting held at the CTU office from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., where nominations will be accepted from the floor.

September 18. “GE Lies: Surveying the Post-Industrial Landscape of Southern Indiana, 1980-2012.” Joseph Varga, Labor Studies, Indiana University. An “Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives” brown bag presentation. Free. MSU Museum Auditorium, 12:15–1:30 p.m.

September 24. “Making It in Detroit: Songs of Working Class Life.” Don “Doop” Duprie. An “Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives” brown bag presentation. Free. MSU Library, Room 449W, 12:15–1:30 p.m.



Fill the Bus!

Last year, CTU came in second in the “Fill the Bus” event organized by the Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement. We hope to do even better this year.

The event takes place during Welcome Week, August 30 through September 4.

By donating school supplies, we can help students in Greater Lansing get the basic resources to make the most of their educational opportunities.

Small donations make BIG impacts. Watch for more information via email and on the CTU website for how you can help by donating school supplies for students in need in our community.