



DEI INITIATIVES IN LSA

Our commitment to true diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the college and beyond

The liberal arts provide a unique foundation for solving complex problems. In LSA, the very exchange and development of ideas is improved in a community of broadly diverse individuals, with a variety of perspectives and an improved understanding of them. In this context, LSA students learn to ask hard questions, test ideas with rigor, and recognize that we must study history to understand the present. They learn to empathize with people whose identities and experiences are different from their own and build trust while putting their minds together to find creative solutions.

Members of the LSA community share the goals of producing groundbreaking research, providing world-class liberal arts education, and making a positive impact on our diverse society. Inextricably connected to our goals, academic excellence and embracing our differences are at the core of our work. And because our excellence is about the people that are here, we are a stronger community when we welcome in more people and ensure accessible resources for everyone to thrive. To address inequities in its many forms, LSA has goals that foster a positive climate and culture for everyone in our community.

UNDERGRADUATE INITIATIVES

FIRST GENERATION STUDENT SUPPORT

Gifts to this fund will be used to provide need-based scholarship support for LSA first-generation college students. An expendable gift of \$60,000 over four years could cover the annual educational costs of one in-state student, while an expendable scholarship of \$150,000 over four years could support one out-of-state student. As each new LSA scholar grows and develops, they help shape the character of our institution, which strengthens LSA's contribution to the world. As citizens of the world and professionals of tomorrow, these individuals will educate future generations, shape public policy, make new discoveries in every field, and continue the important work of building human society—making the real value of their scholarship support not just what they accomplish during their time at Michigan, but also what they contribute to their communities and the world over the course of their lifetimes.

COMPREHENSIVE STUDIES PROGRAM STRATEGIC FUND

Comprehensive Studies Program (CSP) provides comprehensive academic support to U-M students through LSA courses, academic and co-curricular programming, and student support services that utilize high-impact, inclusive practices to encourage student agency and engagement. As the University of Michigan addresses access issues, CSP is critical to the goals of access and equity that are so central to the college and the university as a whole.

We need to secure and provide more resources to grow and strengthen CSP in order to recruit and support high-potential U-M undergraduates, especially those who come from backgrounds that continue to be underrepresented, diverse, and minoritized in higher education. Each year, expendable funds are a vital means of addressing urgent needs for the program, providing key resources, and increasing their ability to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. Gifts of all sizes to the strategic fund are critical to CSP's ongoing success and development.

OPPORTUNITY HUB STUDENT JOURNEY FUND

Every student's journey starts in a different place. For some, the Hub opens doors to career exploration in fields that are entirely unfamiliar to them. For others, the Hub provides funding for internships that seem out of reach. And for all LSA students, the Hub serves to guide their exploration of the next steps that a liberal arts and sciences undergrad might take to clarify their post-graduation goals. Students can have experiences that are not only vital to self-discovery and decision making, they also open doors to meaningful career opportunities.

Gifts of all sizes to the Hub Student Journey Fund make it possible for all LSA students to receive the individualized support they need and provides access to experiences both on and off campus that will enable them to journey from career discovery to a fulfilling professional life after graduation. Contributions to the Fund build a pooled resource that the Hub can draw upon to make it possible for hundreds of LSA students to benefit from Hub programming and services, such as career coaching, mentoring opportunities with alumni to explore a variety of professions, workshops that prepare them to engage with employers for professional experience, and more online tools and resources.

SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENT TECHNOLOGY GRANTS

As a part of the college's commitment to equity and inclusion, LSA is addressing barriers to access for our graduate students. A gift of \$1,500 will provide one student with a laptop and accessories, while \$150,000 is our total goal to support all eligible graduate students in LSA through this pilot program. Not having access to current technology that supports their work, study, and research needs is a significant obstacle for some graduate students. It is crucial to LSA that all students have adequate resources to help them succeed. Through Graduate Student Technology Support Grants, grad students are relieved of the burden of inadequate laptops and other technology and can focus on what they came to LSA to do.

LSA COLLEGIATE FELLOWS

The LSA Collegiate Fellowship Program is a major faculty hiring initiative to promote a diverse academic environment. Promising early-career scholars with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and scholarly excellence are encouraged to enter the academic profession while preparing them for tenure-track appointments at Michigan. As of 2023, the college reached our initial goal to hire 50 new Fellows, in many LSA fields, who demonstrate the critical perspective that comes from their non-traditional educational background and/or understanding of the experiences of groups historically underrepresented in higher education. These Fellows have increased faculty diversity across the college—46 of them have or will become U-M tenure-track assistant professors and bring valuable perspectives to their research and undergraduate teaching in LSA.

An expendable gift of \$100,000 over two years supports a Collegiate Fellow during their preparation for and transition into a tenure-track appointment at the University of Michigan. Funds will provide postdoctoral scholars with dedicated research time, mentorship, travel funding, and professional development opportunities. By providing the resources to enable the college to recruit scholars whose commitment to diversity will bolster the academic excellence of the university, gifts will support one of the most important elements of LSA's strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

IMPACT

Mostafa Hussein is an assistant professor in the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies and a 2019 Collegiate Fellow at the U-M College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. His research focuses on the intersections between Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine, Israel, and the Middle East. Driven by acknowledging complicated histories, Hussein works to unite communities that are often pitted against one another in the region.

"I teach courses that help students understand the multidimensional aspects of relations between Jews and Muslims, while simultaneously challenging preconceptions and assumptions. The United States is a rich country in a sense of the inclusion of various groups who originate from different societies but, through immigration, were able to come and live in this country. People with different languages, racial backgrounds, religious beliefs, and histories are found in many places—in the neighborhood, in the workplace, and in the market—so I teach my students that we should be armed with adequate knowledge, patience, and understanding to cherish diversity and embrace it. I also use a variety of sources to make the intellectual journey as enjoyable and challenging as possible.

As for takeaways, I think that if we open our eyes we can enjoy a symphony, not a cacophony, we can enjoy a colorful garden, not just a garden of a single color. I think that if we just open our eyes, and our minds, we can further embrace diversity and beauty which has a value that we should all appreciate in practicing our humanity."



SUPPORT FOR DEI VISUAL INSTALLATIONS

With DEI 2.0 involving a great deal of work at the unit level, it is easy for programs or initiatives to go relatively unnoticed. Through the installation of visual materials in different LSA spaces, the college will have opportunities to showcase the work of units, display materials that would benefit from a wider audience, and encourage further sharing of efforts. Funding is needed to install display cases in locations with high visibility and regular foot traffic.

LSA ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS

Endowed professorships have long been recognized as both a hallmark of academic quality and a means by which a university honors its most esteemed scholars, artists, and teachers while creating a philanthropic legacy. They are instrumental in attracting and retaining the most eminent scholars in the field, who influence generations of students and enhance the reputation of the department and college, enabling it to attract the most talented scholars in the nation. Because of the importance of the fields, LSA is seeking endowed professorships in the Departments of Afroamerican and African Studies, American Culture, and Women's and Gender Studies. This would be a landmark in our DEI efforts in LSA. An investment of \$2.5M for an endowed professorship in one of these department allows for sustained excellence and would cement the University of Michigan's place at the forefront of original research and scholarly knowledge in these disciplines, as well as instruction and community outreach.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your partnership connects the college's rich past to a boundless and bright future. You can change lives with gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities, and create a meaningful legacy through your bequest, trusts, gift annuities, and other planned gifts. Your generosity makes an impact on what's next, for a better tomorrow.

for what's next ▶

Look to Michigan

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