

In this year's report, find out how your memories, feedback, and the many ways you live the liberal arts every day have helped to define LSA, **one word at a time ...**

LSA (n.):

Defining the role of a public liberal arts education in today's ever-changing, globalized world is not an easy task—nor can it be done alone. Now in its eighth year, the College Connections Program has conducted one-on-one interviews with more than 6,000 alumni and parents in 100+ communities across the globe, and your input has been invaluable in tackling such a task. Over the last year alone, our small team of recent graduates interviewed 814 alumni — that's 814 different stories and insights into what it means to be both a student and an alum of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts at the University of Michigan.



M | LSA

COLLEGE CONNECTIONS
ANNUAL REPORT

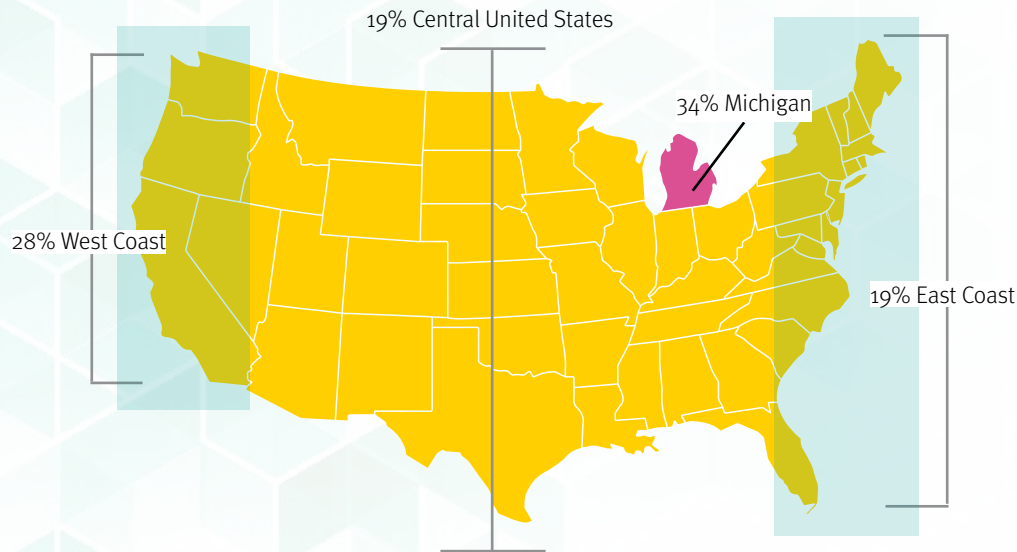
But **FIRST**

a look at you. Who are the 814 alumni that we interviewed this past year*?

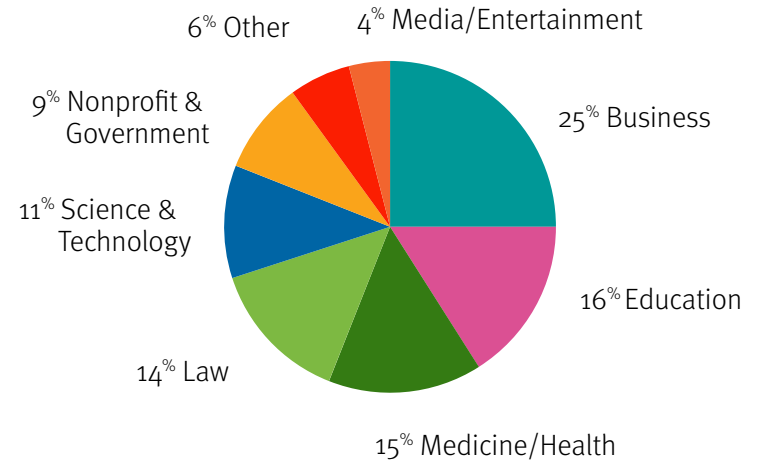
In just one year, we met alumni spanning many generations, disciplines, and industries—in more than 50 cities within Michigan and around the country.

*Between May 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016

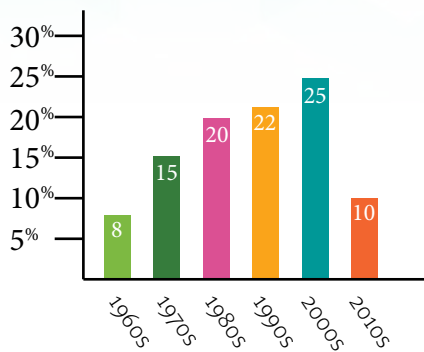
Where do you live?



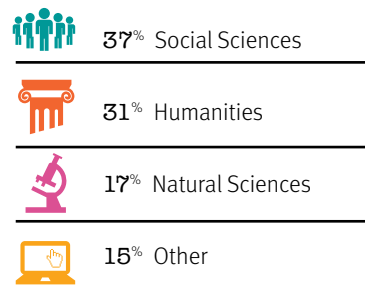
INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED



DECADES REPRESENTED BY GRADUATION YEAR



WHAT DID YOU STUDY?



Top Majors

English
 Psychology
 Political Science
 Economics
 History

IN YOUR WORDS

If we were to search for “LSA” in a dictionary, what would we find? There is no single definition, but according to our conversations with you, these are the words—your words—that give meaning to the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts at the University of Michigan.

Exploration (n.)

^[1] *The act or instance of exploring.* ^[2] *The coursework that exposed you to an idea or way of thinking that you had never experienced before, or that allowed you to delve deeper.*

Whether you knew you wanted to be a doctor since the age of 5 or came into LSA without any idea of where you wanted your life to go—to many of you, LSA means exploring all of your interests and discovering new ones.

Well-Rounded (adj.)

^[1] *Pleasingly varied or balanced, or fully developed in all aspects.* ^[2] *Providing a framework for study across different disciplines through a range of electives and distribution requirements.*

Natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, creative expression, language proficiency, quantitative reasoning, writing, and more. As cumbersome as these requirements may have seemed when you were 18, many of your lived experiences exemplify how a broad course load not only enriched your life, but also enabled you to better navigate and adapt to the world around you. [Read](#) what 2007 graduate Keary Engle has to say about why a Great Books class was integral to his life as a chemist.

HOW DID LSA INFLUENCE YOUR LIFE OR CAREER?

(Top 5 responses)

Cultivated ability to communicate and interact with diverse individuals	33%
Built a solid foundation for graduate school and/or career	31%
Allowed to explore, gain exposure, and build a broad knowledge base	29%
Developed capacity to analyze, think critically, and problem solve	28%
Well-roundedness	28%

(More than one response could be selected.)

STANDOUT CLASSES

What are some of the most interesting courses that stand out in your memory?

- 1 **Art History**
- 2 **The Bible as Literature**
- 3 **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**
- 4 **Tibetan Buddhism**
- 5 **Psychology and Spiritual Development**
- 6 **The Sociology of Economics**

Students today continue to explore LSA’s diverse offerings, from classes like the Physics of Music, to Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, to an interactive mini-course on [how to give the “talk of a lifetime.”](#)

Choice ⁽⁷⁾

^[1] *The power to choose or make a decision between multiple possibilities.* ^[2] *The LSA course guide.*

We can all likely recall paging through the LSA course guide—whether a physical copy, or, for younger generations, online—and feeling a sense of awe at just how many different courses were at our fingertips. For students today, that power of possibility holds true:

“At first I thought my interest areas were perhaps a bit disconnected and too broad. But through a series of courses, I was able to realize the interconnections between them and then create a degree that allowed me to combine several of them to propel me in the direction that I really wanted to go. Being in LSA, you have to find your own path, and that’s a good thing—you get to make your education your own.”

—Kieran S. O’Brien (A.B. ’08, M.P.H. ’12)

Epidemiology research coordinator,
University of California-San Francisco



92
majors

109
minors

36
interdisciplinary
seminars

capped at 18 students and
available only to first-years

2400+

LSA courses to choose from per term

Expansive (adj.)

^[1] *Causing or tending to cause expansion or growth.* ^[2] *When your learning extended beyond the classroom and into the world.*

Maybe you spent a year doing political science research as part of the [Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program](#) (UROP), or got your hands dirty up in northern Michigan at the [Biological Station](#). Or perhaps the mountains became your classroom when you earned both natural science and humanities credits at [Camp Davis](#), located just south of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Whatever it was, that kind of hands-on learning often left its mark.

And it continues to impact students today: Take [Global Course Connections](#), an LSA program that allows students to investigate a topic in the classroom throughout a semester and then travel globally at the end of the term to observe, learn, and apply their knowledge firsthand. This past year in the program, dozens of students traveled far and wide to study everything from global health and education to art and environmental history.

Perspective (n.)

^[1] *The capacity to view things in their true relations or relative importance.* ^[2] *The result of having your viewpoints challenged and of engaging beyond your comfort zone.*

The moments that altered your worldview — that gave you a new lens through which to approach a problem, concept, or person — are the ones that truly defined your experience in LSA.

For 2015 graduate Nicolette de Simone, the value of gaining new perspectives through the LSA New England Literature Program [became clear](#) when she started her first job out of college.

TOP RESPONSES

WHAT'S YOUR MOST
VIVID MEMORY?

26%

Friendships/Relationships

22%

Academic Experiences

18%

Athletics/School Spirit

14%

Campus/Ann Arbor

9%

Student Organizations

“I have this huge emotional response to art still ... [My degree] has allowed me to put a framework on beauty and appreciate beauty in the world. And that's really what we're living for — those kind of moments of beauty that transport you to a different realm.”

— Mary Hendriksen (A.B. '77, J.D. '80)

Assistant Director, Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies; University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN

“I took a senior seminar with 12 students all about the playwright Samuel Beckett. And the thing about Beckett is that he got really into the human condition — he gives you insights into yourself and other people. No matter what field, people are the leading indicator, so understanding how you can connect with people — that's the value of what LSA gave me.”

— Jon Ford (A.B. '88)

Communications Director, Vitalyst Health Foundation; Phoenix, AZ

“I remember one time they dropped us at the bottom of a road and told us to walk up while making observations of what we saw. We truly got to roam Wyoming doing what geologists do, mapping terrain and looking at time as it was recorded in the rocks. That had a great impression on me and, ultimately, when I got into teaching as a clinical law educator — I always thought back to Camp Davis as the place where I first experienced the power of hands-on learning. And I would never have been able to go without a scholarship that I received through the geology department.”

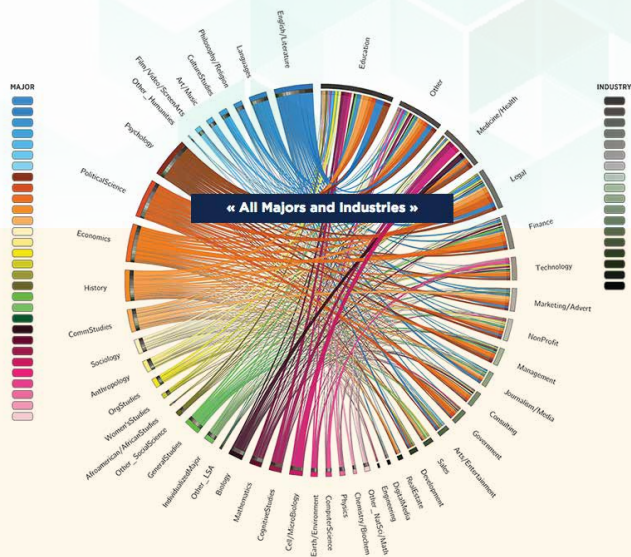
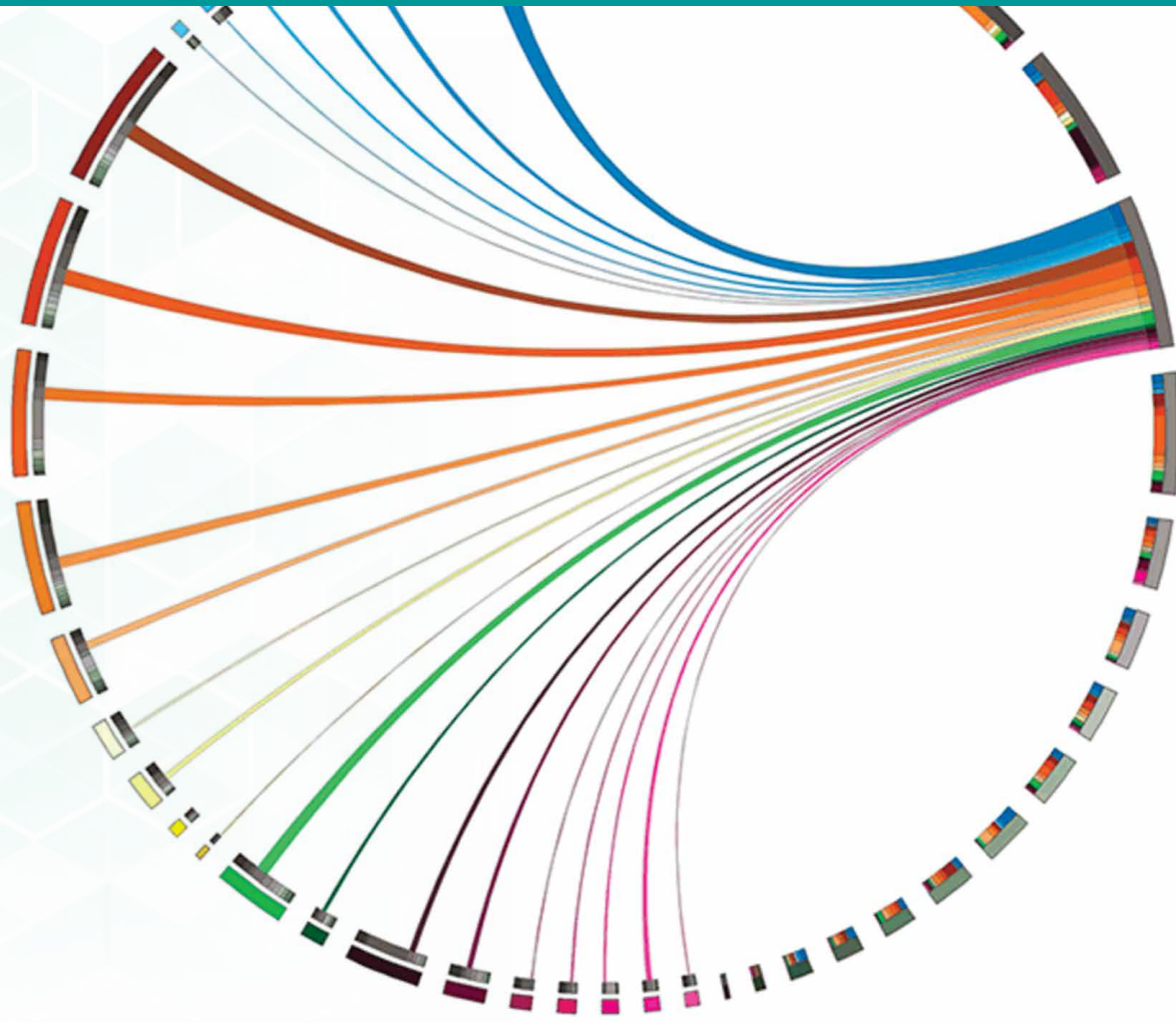
— Tom Guernsey (A.B. '73)

President and Dean, Thomas Jefferson School of Law; San Diego, CA

Foundation ^(n.)

^[1] A basis upon which something stands or is supported. ^[2] How you were able to go off and do vastly different things in your lives and careers.

We know from meeting each of you that your major doesn't always determine your career. In fact, we hear far more nonlinear paths than linear ones—because, in your experience, LSA is the foundation from which graduates can launch in any direction imaginable. [This interactive tool](#), created from your own feedback, illustrates just that.



Few of you could have even imagined where you would end up 10, 20, or 30 years down the road, and the same is true for students today. We've taken [this career wheel](#) around campus to show students the many possibilities in store for them.

opportunity (n.)

^[1] A chance to do something, or a situation or condition favorable for attainment of a goal. ^[2] The community, resources, and experiences that gave you a home and pushed you to reach your potential.

The most commonly used word to describe the impact of your LSA experience was “opportunity.” The opportunity you had to explore and grow; to engage with many different disciplines, people, and ideas; and to make your education your own. Opportunity is very much at the core of the LSA experience — and, as many of you agree, that should extend beyond a student’s four years here.

The future of opportunity in LSA

Your feedback has been invaluable in defining LSA — both as it is, and as it should strive to be — so we wanted you to be among the first to know...

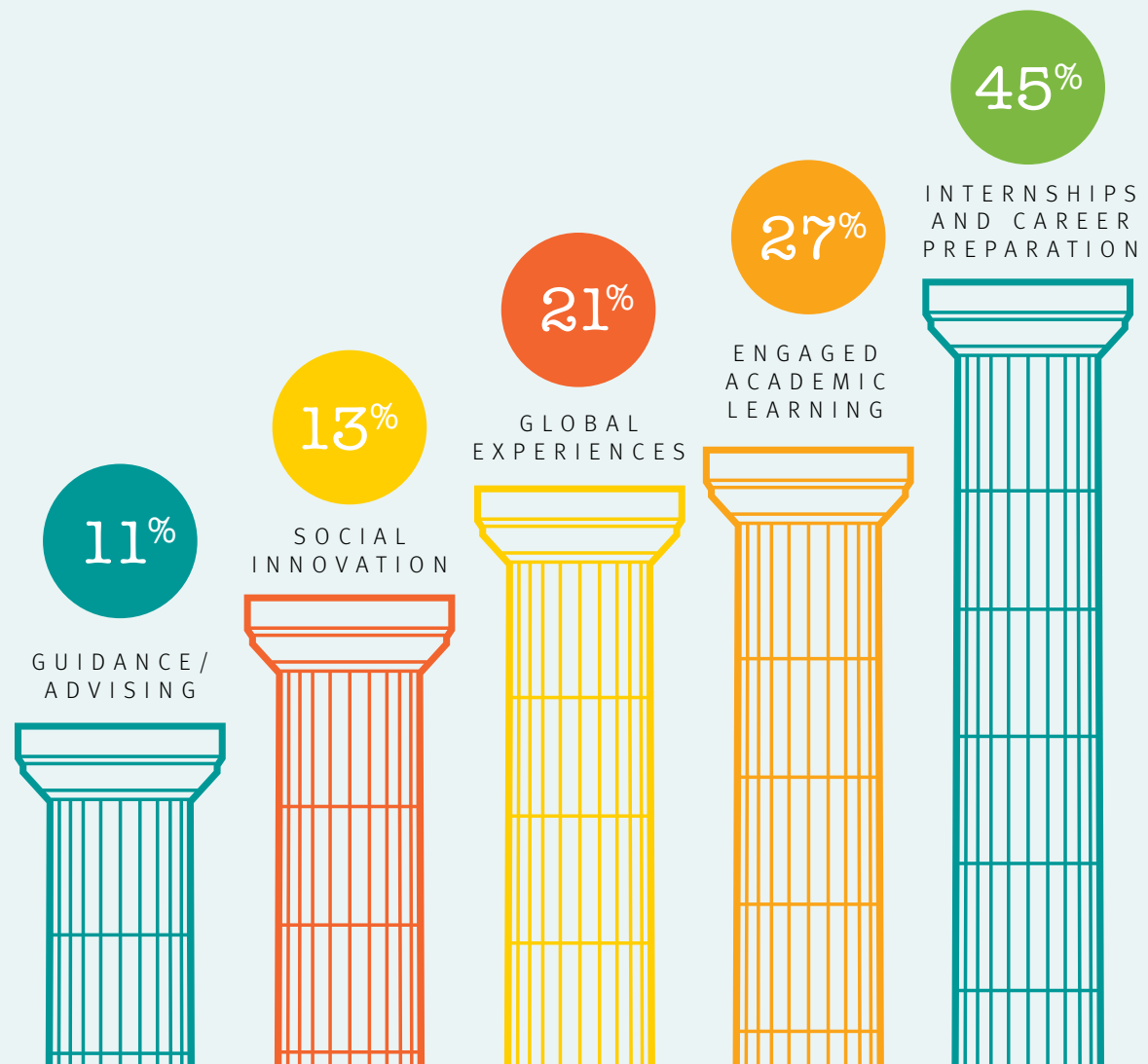
This fall, the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts will launch the LSA Opportunity Hub.

In just under three years, the [LSA Internship Network](#) has provided students with thousands of internships around the world and more than \$1 million in scholarship support. But we can do even more. We know from your feedback that when we pair the broad and valuable skills of a liberal arts education with real-life experience, strategic advising, and the benefit of connecting with employers and alumni, we give our students an even greater foundation for success after graduation in work and in life. The LSA Opportunity Hub will build upon our internship program to serve as a robust and central resource for our undergraduates — because graduation should be viewed not as a cause of anxiety, but as a source of boundless enthusiasm. Learn more about this exciting initiative [here](#).

Interested in hiring an LSA student intern or recent graduate?

[Click here to find out how.](#)

Which opportunities should LSA prioritize?



How does

Dean Andrew Martin define LSA?

Access (n.)

^[1] The ability to approach, enter, or use. ^[2] Dean Martin's vision for how an LSA education should be defined.

You and Dean Martin agree: LSA needs to ensure that students from all backgrounds cannot only attend the University of Michigan, but also thrive once here. Thirty-seven percent of you are concerned that higher education, and U-M in particular, is becoming financially unrealistic. With scholarship support for students with financial need, and initiatives like [H.A.I.L.](#) and [Wolverine Pathways](#) that provide prospective students with learning experiences, application assistance, scholarships, and a multitude of resources once on campus — LSA is dedicated to alleviating concerns of inaccessibility.

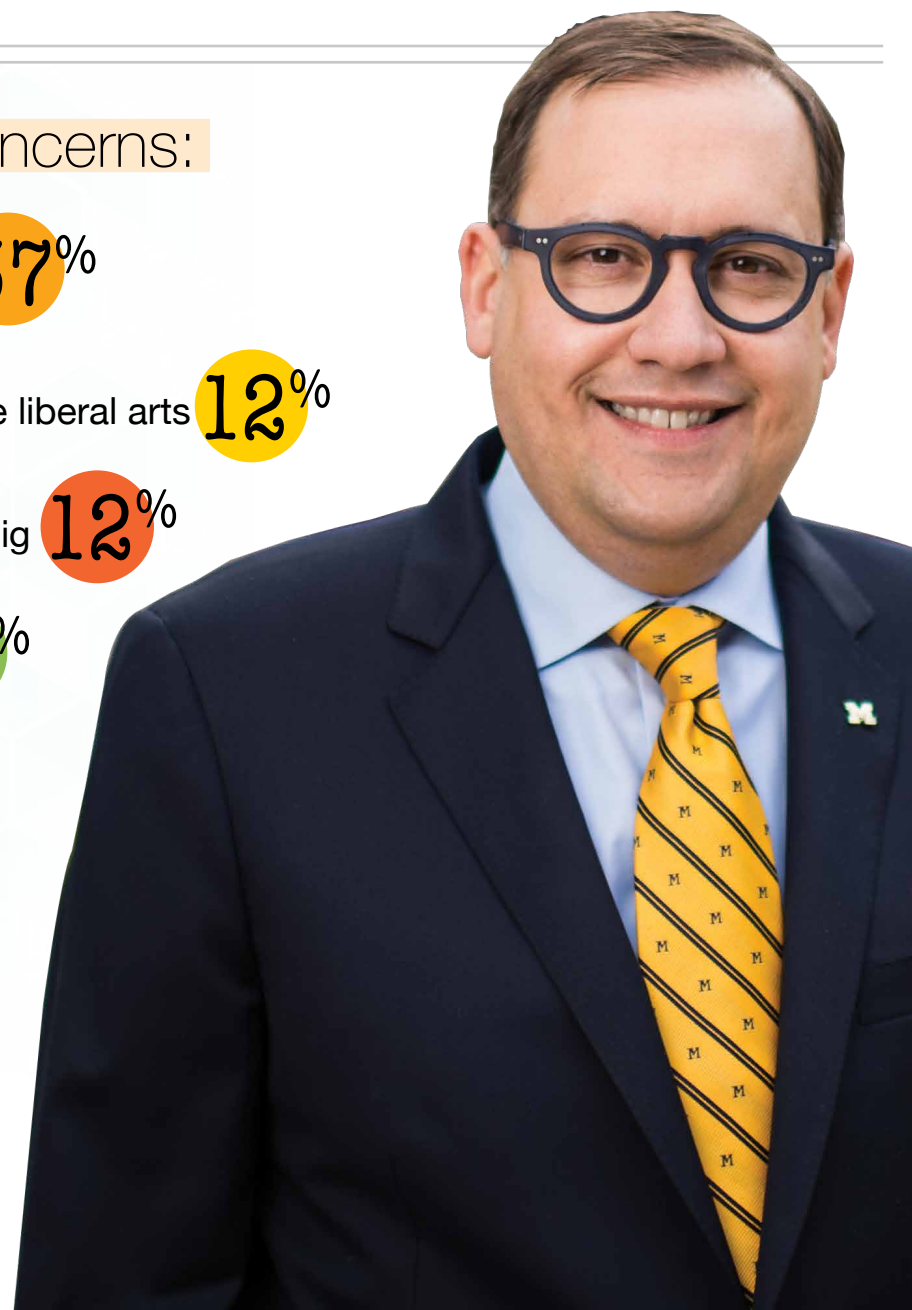
Diversity (n.)

^[1] An instance of being composed of differing elements or qualities.
^[2] An LSA that mirrors the full variety of the society it seeks to challenge and improve.

LSA administration, students, and faculty — along with many of you — value diversity as one of the College's highest priorities. In addition to increasing diversity among faculty and staff, Dean Martin hopes to expand upon the legacy of initiatives like the [LSA Comprehensive Studies Program](#). Offering support and guidance to students from diverse populations ensures that LSA brings together an array of perspectives to engage with our world's most complex problems.

Your top concerns:

- 1 Affordability 37%
- 2 Concern for the liberal arts 12%
- 3 U-M feels too big 12%
- 4 Diversity 12%

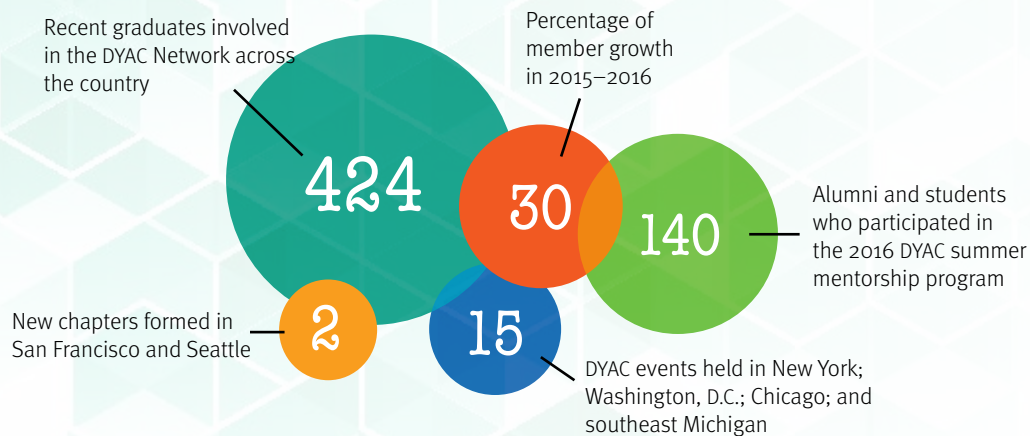


Program Updates

Idea (n.)

^[1] *A, thought, plan, or suggestion about what to do.* ^[2] *What our team puts into action when we hear your feedback.*

The [Dean's Young Alumni Council](#) (DYAC) was established to provide a meaningful way for recent graduates to stay connected and volunteer with the College of LSA. From writing blog posts and mentoring current students, to organizing events and raising support for the College, our young alumni have more opportunities to stay engaged than ever before.



We also heard a need for better communication immediately after graduation. That's why we created the Young Alumni Newsletter: a weekly email written for young alumni, by a recent graduate. The newsletter now goes out to all new classes of LSA alumni, having begun with the class of 2015. The newsletter shares updates relevant not only to Michigan, LSA, and Ann Arbor, but also to a young person with a liberal arts degree entering the world today—from articles on technology and privacy to pieces on email etiquette and networking.

OTHER UPDATES AROUND TREE TOWN

Discovery (n.)

^[1] *The act of finding something for the first time.* ^[2] *The unearthing of remains from an adult male mammoth in your backyard.*

Last fall, on a day like any other, James Bristle was digging at his Washtenaw County soy farm when he struck what he believed to be part of a fence post. After a bit more excavating, he soon realized that he had uncovered something of slightly more [mammoth proportions](#): a Jeffersonian mammoth, to be exact. The bones were soon gifted to the College of LSA, where they were studied by renowned paleontologist Dan Fisher. Be sure to visit the mammoth at the U-M Museum of Natural History when the new exhibit opens later this year!

Nostalgia (n.)

^[1] *A sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time.*
^[2] *The feeling when you first learned of the return of the P-Bell.*

[Do you remember the Bell?](#) Given its 50-year history on East Liberty before closing up shop in 1984, chances are that many of you can recall turning 21 at the Pretzel Bell, or at least have heard the stories of alumni who did. This year, the P-Bell returned to town sporting elements both novel and familiar, thanks to a group of restaurateurs and Michigan alumni. Take a look inside from when the reincarnated Pretzel Bell [opened this spring](#).

Team Updates



Samantha joins the College Connections team after obtaining her degree in psychology with a minor in business administration earlier this spring. Born and raised in Holland, Michigan, Samantha followed in the footsteps of her older brother, Alex (B.B.A. '13), from the shores of Lake Michigan to the bleachers of the Big House. As an undergrad, Samantha was heavily involved with Appreciate + Reciprocate, a philanthropic student organization that volunteers in the community and also

fundraises for the LSA Appreciate + Reciprocate Endowed Scholarship. This experience led Samantha to the Development Summer Internship Program (D-SIP), where she worked on a fundraising plan for a teen space at the Ypsilanti District Library. She also served a brief stint as a sports writer for *The Michigan Daily*. Samantha's love for the University, strong belief in the value of a liberal arts education, and appreciation for people and stories of all kinds sparked her interest in alumni relations. In her spare time, you can find Samantha watching basketball and football, spending time with family and friends, running, reading, fishing, and likely drinking excessive amounts of coffee. She is excited to join the team and start traveling to the West Coast!



Avery (A.B. '15) had a fantastic year developing a new database to better record and analyze your feedback, managing our mentorship program, and hearing the stories of alumni living in America's heartland. This upcoming year, he looks forward to expanding the reach of our program and traveling to new places to conduct interviews with alumni and parents.



Since Patrick (A.B. '15) joined the team last summer, he has enjoyed conversing with alumni on the East Coast and continuing the College Connections Abroad program. Patrick recently traveled to South Africa to do one last tour with the Men's Glee Club, and to help secure international internships for LSA students. This year he looks forward to finding new and creative ways to engage with LSA alumni living on the East Coast.



Monica (A.B. '14) moved on from the College Connections Program this spring to take on a new role in LSA as a major gift officer for the West Coast. Monica had a wonderful two years interviewing more than 500 alumni and parents across the country, and managing and developing the LSA Dean's Young Alumni Council. She has loved working so closely with recent graduates and is grateful to have had the chance to learn from our diverse group of alumni and represent your voice on campus. She is excited to embark on this next chapter of her career with the College.



Christina (A.B. '13) "graduated" from the College Connections Program in early June to pursue her passion for hunger issues and public health as the volunteer coordinator at Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeast Michigan. In her nearly three years with the College, Christina met with more than 700 alumni and parents, built and ran the College Connections Abroad Program, and managed the Young Alumni Newsletter and other program communications. Recording the stories

of so many thoughtful and inspiring alumni, from Chicago and Houston to Portland and Santa Fe, has been an incredibly enriching and unforgettable experience. She looks forward to staying engaged with the College through the Southeast Michigan DYAC.

THANK YOU

From the Bay Area to Maine, and many places in between, we have loved getting to know each of you. Thank you for taking the time to share your favorite memories and honest feedback, your triumphs and your failures, your pride in Michigan then and today, and your hopes for an even better LSA tomorrow. Defining what it means to be a public liberal arts college in the modern world is no small challenge, and we truly couldn't do it without you. Thank you, and forever Go Blue!

Where are they now?

This fall, **ELLIE CHESSEN** (2012–2015) starts the second and final year of her master's program at the U-M Ford School of Public Policy after spending the summer interning with Deloitte in Chicago.

MARK CHOU (2013–2015) lives in Brooklyn, New York, and works as a special projects coordinator at Uncommon Schools' Bedford Stuyvesant Collegiate.

KATHLEEN HINKLEY (2011–2014) lives in Madison, Wisconsin, with her husband, Tim. She serves as a director of development for the University of Wisconsin Foundation.

JENNY HOWARD (2009–2012) lives in Ann Arbor and serves as an LSA major gift officer for the West Coast. She will also celebrate her first wedding anniversary later this fall!

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS (2009–2012), too, is recently married, and she and her husband live in Washington, D.C., where Elizabeth works as a major gift officer for LSA on the East Coast.

TINA SULA (2008–2012) is now with the Henry Ford Health System as a chief development officer. She continues to stay involved with the College as a lecturer in the LSA Program in International and Comparative Studies.

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