Michigan State University
Higher Education Advocacy
Today 22% of MSU’s general fund comes from state appropriations. In 2011, the Snyder Administration began its term by cutting higher education by 15% equaling $42M. Michigan’s students and families pay $3000 more.
In **our efforts** to absorb the cut and **maintain affordability**, **MSU**

- cut **$110 million** in **annual budget**
- **eliminated or modified** 40 academic **programs**
- **Restructured our Extension Program**
- **Faculty concessions and lay-offs**

What we didn’t do was communicate why to our constituents...
How We Built the Program

• **Support** from the Top
  » **Collaboration of Resources**
  » **Develop a clear message**

• **Know your Audience**

  **WHO** are you targeting to become your advocates

  **WHAT** are their interests—why would they advocate for you

  **CONNECT THE DOTS** make becoming an advocate impactful

  **HAVE** you provided the appropriate tools to empower influential advocacy
How we began to change the dialogue...

Designed to promote and highlight the work done by MSU faculty, staff and students to our alum, partners and elected officials.

*MI Spartan Impact* showcases what MSU means to the state of Michigan *region by region*.

With *education* comes *engagement*
The Spartan Advocate

an initiative of MSU’s Office of Governmental Affairs, is a website that has the facts, resources, and opportunities to help people communicate the importance of supporting Michigan State University and higher education to state of Michigan elected officials, the media, and more.

MSU launched the website in February, after the Governor’s budget announcement and we now have over 550 Spartans actively engaged in advocating to support funding for higher education, we are on track to reach 2500 by next October.

Spartan Advocates are committed MSU alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends who lend their voices to educate and influence those making critical decisions about a variety of important issues affecting higher education in Michigan.
Advocacy Outreach Opportunities

- **Take advantage of pre-existing channels** to spread your message to a broad audience.

- Use Email, FB, Twitter to **provide interesting facts about the University, students and alumni** in each legislator’s district.

- **Connect Legislators to your advocates** by inviting them to events:
  - **and re-shape your story**
2014 Advocacy Overview by Quarter

January - March

Opportunities and Tactics:

State of the State – VPGA blog
Revenue Est. Conference - Email update to Advocates
Budget Recommendation – MSI quarterly newsletter
FRIB Groundbreaking – Advocacy toolkit
Michigan Political Leadership Program – Media outreach

April – June

Opportunities and Tactics:
Budget – VPGA blog
Mackinac Policy Conference - Email update to Advocates
Election Cycle – Legislative tours, Email update to Advocates,
Election toolkit distribution, Alumni/Chamber/Rotary visits,
new Advocate development, outreach to County Commissioners
2014 Advocacy Overview by Quarter

**July – September**

Opportunities and Tactics:

- Election Cycle – VPGA blog, monthly Advocate emails
- Golf Outings/Association Meetings – Advocate engagement, media engagement and Advocate development
Contact Information

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