

## MSU softball stormed back from a 5-0 deficit to beat Central Michigan in extra innings Wednesday

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MSU senior pitcher Megan Hair pitches against Central Michigan on Wednesday at Old College Field. The Spartans defeated Central Michigan, 7-6.

# The State News

## HOVERING THROUGH HEADWINDS

MSU officials evaluate policy regarding work-related air travel



By Justin Harris  
THE STATE NEWS

Despite racking up 18,500 flights-worth of miles last year alone, MSU doesn't track frequent flier miles on flights for university business. MSU officials said they continue to evaluate this policy as the university weighs a possible tuition increase, program cuts and layoffs to address shortfalls in a budget plagued by rising costs and decreased state funding. These officials defend MSU's policy, saying it would cost too much money to sign a contract with a specific airline to track and accumulate bonus miles and other perks.

"This notion that the dollars we're spending can somehow be used for miles is just misdirected," said David Brower, assistant vice president, chief financial officer and university controller.

Brower said instead of worrying about tracking how those 18,500 flights last year fits within the university's \$11 million travel budget, MSU advocates that university employees book the cheapest possible flight, regardless of airline.

Although other schools in the Big Ten mandate frequent flier miles incurred on university business must be used for other work-

related flights, MSU's policy only suggests faculty use their miles for the university's benefit.

### Lowest-available fare

Although the university advises employees to book the cheapest flight possible and use any accumulated frequent flier miles for future university business, there is no way to ensure this happens, MSU spokesperson Terry Denbow said.

"I view (frequent flier miles) as a huge red herring," Denbow said. "Booking the lowest, logical available airfare makes much more sense."

Brower said this method of booking flights is more cost effective than tracking every mile faculty uses.

"The university does not want travelers to book tickets based on getting frequent flier miles, because a lot of times, there are cheaper fares on other airlines that they may not be pre-

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### STUDENT GOVT

## ASMSU reps asked to work more hours

By Chris Vannini  
THE STATE NEWS

ASMSU's Academic Assembly recommended this week that its vice chairpersons double their summer work hours to match a pay raise due to take effect in May.

ASMSU is MSU's undergraduate student government. Last summer, the assembly's vice chairpersons were paid \$2,304 for working a required 120 hours a week. Effective May 18, the assembly's vice chairpersons will make \$2,664 per semester to comply with Michigan's wage minimum requirement.

"The chairs were making less than minimum wage for the hours that they were working," assembly Parliamentarian Kristy Currier said.

ASMSU Chief of Staff Kara Spencer conducted a pay compensation study for every position within ASMSU, which led to pay increases for some positions, Currier said.

The assembly recommended Tuesday the vice chairpersons work 288 hours in the summer, or about 18 hours per week, rather than the 120 hours worked previously.

"Basically, in the code currently, it says 120 hours, which means basically the person would be making \$22 an hour to do the work over the summer, which we feel is a waste of taxpayer money," Currier said.

Given that the change is only a recommendation from the assembly, the vice chairpersons can choose not to fulfill 288 work hours, but Currier said they could face repercussions.

"It should be followed because there are reviews... so (a failure to work 288 hours) would be taken into account when the reviews of the chairs go on at the end of the summer," she said. "So it will be a serious issue that would have to be dealt with. They could potentially be removed from their position."

While chairpersons only can be removed by a vote of the assembly, summer hours will be logged in biweekly reports to ensure vice chairpersons are following the recommendation, Currier said.

The assembly attempted to change the code during its last session but failed to meet quorum for its final meeting, so the code change couldn't be voted on.

"It needed to be fixed, and it didn't get fixed last session," assembly Chairperson Pro Tem-

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UP IN SMOKE  
Wild Side Smoke  
Shop opens on  
Grand River Avenue,  
page 3A

Weather  
Sunny  
High 65° | Low 38°  
Three-day forecast, Page 2A

### RALLY

## TAX DAY PROTEST DRAWS THOUSANDS TO CAPITOL

By Allison Bush  
THE STATE NEWS

Lansing — Signs painted "Taxed Enough Already!" and "Stop Reckless Spending!" were scattered

throughout a crowd of about 5,000 gathering on the Capitol lawn in Lansing, where Samuel Joseph "Joe the Plumber"

Wurzelbacher hosted a rally in honor of tax day.

At one of the hundreds of rallies held across the nation, the signs were accompanied by chants of "U.S.A." and "No Bama!" as Michigan residents gathered to protest increased government spending and higher tax rates.

Wurzelbacher addressed the crowd with his message that common sense needs to be brought back to American government.

He encouraged citizens to contact their senators and congressmen with complaints and referenced quotes by Benjamin Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt dur-

ing his speech, which lasted less than 10 minutes.

"These guys were about actions, not about words," Wurzelbacher said.

The Ohio native added that although the protesters in attendance might be construed as extremists, "We're just practicing our First Amendment rights, and what's so extreme about that?"

Although Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., used "Joe the Plumber" as an emblem during his bid for the Oval Office, assistant James Madison College professor Michael Crow said Wurzelbacher did not have a big political impact on the presidential campaign last fall.

Crow said Republicans can't do much to stop President Barack Obama's administration from carrying out its plans, but featuring Wurzelbacher at this rally might have influenced the size of the crowd.

"These people are fairly committed to the Republican take on what's going on with the economy right now," he said. "We're seeing an attempt to solidify the Republican base again."

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Rochester Hills resident Aleta Moffitt looks to the sky while a speaker thanks God for blessing America during a tax day event at the Capitol building Wednesday. An estimated 5,000 people were present at the event to protest the Obama administration's appropriation of tax-dollars.

SEAN COOK/THE STATE NEWS