



# The State News

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Weather

Scattered thunderstorms

High 73° | Low 53°

Three-day forecast, Page 2

**To read a review of "Strangers With Candy," visit [lansinglowdown.com](http://lansinglowdown.com)**

**State, nation turn attention to climate change issues**

CAMPUS-CITY, 6

## SUPREME COURT

### HISPANIC NOMINATION GENERATES DISCUSSION

By Meredith Skrzypczak  
THE STATE NEWS

President Barack Obama's nomination of federal appellate Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court of the United States on Tuesday created a divide in the MSU community, with some praising the nomination and others questioning Obama's choice.

If chosen, Sotomayor would be the nation's first Hispanic justice to sit on the court. She served for more than a decade on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City. Sotomayor, who was raised by Puerto Rican parents in a Bronx housing project, would become the 111th justice for the nation, replacing Justice David H. Souter.

Some members of the MSU faculty said the nomination is a result of Sotomayor's upbringing and race.

"I think it looks like President Obama wanted to concentrate on choosing a Hispanic and a woman," MSU law professor and constitutional law expert Brian Kalt said. "I think that if he had not focused on those two things as much, he would have chosen someone who would have been a better judge in advancing the causes he believes in."

Others blame the media for focusing on Sotomayor's gender, which could take away from her skills as a judge.

"Those are the factors I think are important to the media and individuals who are looking for that," MSU law professor and Supreme court expert Frank S. Ravitch said. "At the same time, she is qualified regardless of those things."

Although some wondered whether Sotomayor was a good choice, others said her experiences in the past and struggles she has been through might make her a perfect nomination.

"I think that in order to be an effective justice, you have to have a connection to the American people," said Mitchell Rivard, president of the MSU College Democrats. "And she is the epitome of that."

Sotomayor's background in trial court makes her a good candidate, Ravitch said.

For others, her background does not set her apart from other nominees.

"I think that her record on

## UNIVERSITY

### MSU bee researchers discover 7 promising new pollinators for Mich.

By Zane McMillin  
THE STATE NEWS

MSU researchers are buzzing about the discovery they've made in the farmlands of Southwest Michigan.

While conducting a three-year study in the region's blueberry fields,



researchers found seven species not previously known to inhabit Michigan.

"Nobody had really surveyed the bees here, so that was sort of the premise for starting it," said researcher Julianna Tuell, who conducted the study for her dissertation in entomology.

The work accounted for more than 160 species of bees, 112 of which were present during blooming season. The research was done as part of an effort to gain a broader sense of the bee populations in the area.

The study also aimed to find alternatives to pollination by honeybees, whose population has dwindled as a result of colony collapse disorder (CCD), a phenomenon in which honeybee colonies suddenly disappear.

"A lot of other species of bees are out there," Tuell said. "More than half (of the species) are actually visiting the blueberries and pollinating, and are better pollinators than honeybees because they collect more pollen and visit more flowers per minute."

Natalie Ebig Scott, a spokes-

woman for state-funded Project GREENE, which partially sponsored the research, said the work is crucial for Michigan's agricultural industry and affects more than farmers.

"Pollination is a vital part of Michigan's agricultural industry," she said. "There's widespread concern about the long-term sustainability of using honeybees, so native bee populations are something that we need to look into in the future. MSU associate professor of entomology Rufus Isaacs and his team have really stepped

up to meet that need."

Of the total number of species, 10 were found to be vital for pollinating the crops, Isaacs said. "This is sort of the first step," he said. "There's obviously concern about the honeybees, and an aspect of this work is to provide this insight into what other bees are available."

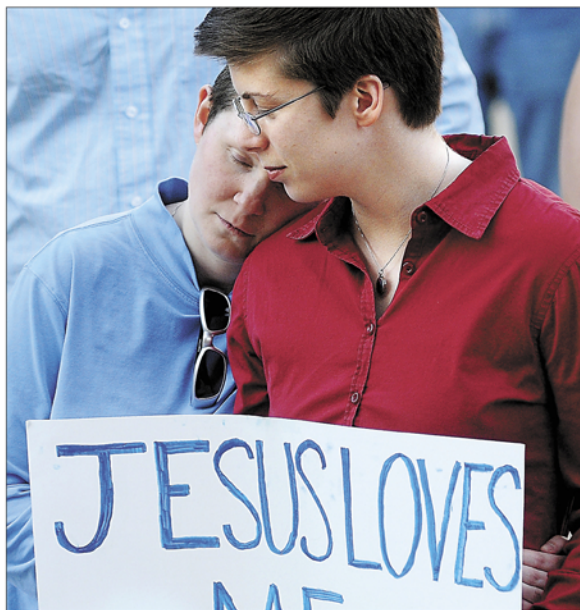
Tuell said there still are plenty of questions that need answers. "Just knowing what species are out there means you could actually find ones who could have potential for management in

these fields," she said. "If we can find ways to help honeybees and also add other managed bees into the system, we can have manageable pollination."

The team will continue researching pollination in Southwest Michigan during blueberry bloom throughout May and June, and there is plenty to look forward to, Isaacs said.

"Even though (the research) does show a declining bee population, (it) shows there is still a diverse population out there," he said.

## Prop 8 protesters gather at Capitol



Ann Arbor residents Jen Chapin-Smith, left, and Alexi Chapin-Smith embrace in front of the Capitol as they listen to speakers at the protest against the upholding of Proposition 8 in California. "We want to be able to get married in Michigan and have all the same rights," Jen Chapin-Smith said.

NICHOLE HOERNER/THE STATE NEWS

*"We're disappointed that the Supreme Court in California has not stood by its duty to protect the constitutional rights of its citizens,"*

Robert Van Kirk, rally co-organizer

By Zane McMillin  
THE STATE NEWS

ansing — Before heading off to have brain surgery at Lansing's Sparrow Hospital, Tom Cook and his partner, Jerry Ward, made the decision to commit their lives to each other.

And after Cook made it through his 1996 operation, the duo was the first male same-sex couple to wed at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Lansing in November of that year.

"We committed if Tom made it through the surgery ... we were going to actually have a ceremony," Ward said.

Although their union wasn't legal, the couple was among almost 120 people who rallied at the state Capitol on Tuesday evening in opposition to the California Supreme Court's decision to uphold a statewide constitutional amendment passed in November 2008 that outlawed the state's 18,000 same-sex marriages.

"We're disappointed that the Supreme Court in California has not stood by its duty to protect the constitutional rights of its citizens," rally co-organizer Robert Van Kirk said. "The state of Michigan must come together as a people to oppose this uncon-

See REACTION on page 2

**For more online ...**

To see a video of the protest at the Capitol, visit [stateneews.com/multimedia](http://stateneews.com/multimedia).

## INTERNATIONAL

### African-MSU relations progress throughout a half century of work

By Kayla Habermehl  
THE STATE NEWS

The 50-year relationship between MSU and Africa has opened doors and shaped the histories of both MSU and some of Africa's nations.

From study abroad to establishing research programs in developing countries, what began more than half a century ago has elevated MSU to the top of the nation's African studies programs.

"I think that's one of the strong commitments of the university is to have partner-

ships with African institutions rather than being missionaries and taking knowledge to Africa," said David Wiley, director of MSU's African Studies Center from 1978 to January of this year. "It's partnerships, and we benefit from the linkages when they accept our students. We're known nationally as a university that focuses on the ethics of equality rather

than missionary."

MSU has been involved in Africa since 1958, when then-MSU President John Hannah journeyed to Nigeria to discuss a possible partnership that would help build a new university, Wiley said. The University of Nigeria Nsukka, which eventually was established with MSU's help, also was equally formed by Nnamdi Azikiwe, a high-ranking official in Eastern Nigeria who later went on to become the nation's first civilian president, Wiley said. The University of Nigeria Nsukka

opened in October 1960.

Although MSU's relationship with Africa has been positive, there also has been contention, Wiley said.

In 1978, MSU got rid of its stock in corporations that worked in South Africa because of apartheid. Apartheid was a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination under a white government in South Africa. It ended in 1994.

"The entire university, with the vote of Board of Trustees, voted to withdraw investments from American companies who were in South Africa and sup-

ported the apartheid government," Wiley said.

Terrie Taylor, an MSU professor of internal medicine, started her research on cerebral malaria and its effects on children in Africa in 1986. Her interest in working in Africa started with an experience in Sudan.

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