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**Texting raises health, academic concerns**  
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COURT

## 5 who gave alcohol to minor to face trial

By Brittany Shammis  
THE STATE NEWS

Five people, including two former MSU students, could be held liable for providing alcohol to a minor who was convicted of stealing an MSU service vehicle, operating it under the influence and killing an

He was sentenced in July 2006 to 18-20 years in prison for killing John A. Hawkins, 46.

Winters, Meeker and three others could be sentenced for \$25,000 each in connection with the alcohol provision. They are scheduled for trial July 26, 2010, in Ingham County Circuit Court.

"You're not legally able to provide a person under the age of 21 with alcohol," said Larry Nolan, an attorney for the Hawkins' estate. "If it is shown that providing alcohol caused the person to be intoxicated and caused that accident, then you can be held liable."

Attorneys for the Hawkins' estate argue providing alcohol to Hamil was negligent and caused Hawkins' death.

David M. Dark, attorney for all five of the defendants,

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# IN BETWEEN THE LINES

MSU exceeds disability parking requirements; some say improvements still can be made



Academic enrichment coordinator for the Office of Supportive Services and MSU alumnus Matthew Gerhardt sits before his wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Gerhardt said one of his reasons for coming to MSU was for its accessibility and accommodations.

**"There could be more, but for the rest of the parking that's available, there are adequate spots."**

Matthew Gerhardt, academic adviser

By Kayla Habermehl  
THE STATE NEWS

For Matthew Gerhardt, blue lines in a parking lot mean something different: accessibility. Gerhardt, an academic adviser at MSU, is a wheelchair user who utilizes disability parking. Gerhardt also attended MSU for his undergraduate degree. One of the reasons he chose to come to MSU was for its accessibility.

"As far as accessible parking and handicap parking, it's adequate," he said. "There could be more, but for the rest of the parking that's available, there are adequate spots. ... Even though it's not perfect, the university takes it seriously."

As of 2007, MSU had about 25,000 parking spaces and more than 800 handicap spaces, said Mike Rice, assistant chief for

MSU police. MSU only is required to have 621 handicap spaces by federal regulations. Although MSU is working to meet the needs of the disabled, some say the efforts could go further.

Last summer, MSU completed a \$2 million redistribution of accessible parking across campus, campus planner Steve Troost said.

The redistribution came after an audit from the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights. Although MSU had more than the required number of spaces, they weren't dis-

tributed according to current standards, said Michael Hudson, director of the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) at MSU. Prior to the audit, MSU had placed more accessible parking near heavily used areas and fewer in more remote areas, Hudson said.

MSU also is working to remove on-street parking, including handicap spaces, because of safety. The accessible spaces will be moved to locations that will allow the safest route of travel.

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RESIDENCE HALLS ASSOCIATION

## 15 percent of budget spent for conference

By Marissa Cumbers  
THE STATE NEWS

MSU Residence Halls Association allocated about 15 percent of its summer budget to help fund a trip for representatives to attend the National Association of College and University Residence Halls conference in Tucson, Ariz., on May 22-24.

Members said the trip allowed the nine students in attendance to collaborate with other universities and bring back ideas to implement next year. No specific programs discussed at the conference have been chosen to be put in place in the upcoming school year. RHA representatives at the conference gained insight on programs in areas such as drinking awareness, sex education and residence hall community-building programs, said Emma Perot, president of RHA and hospitality business junior.

"Each delegate went to eight different sessions on a variety of

topics," she said. "Next year, we will be bringing those back, and the people that went to the conference will show them at the RHA meetings so everyone else has an idea of what went on at the conference and what can be implemented."

A total of \$8,700 of the \$59,730 summer budget and \$1,360 of the spring budget were allocated for the three-day conference, said Keith Mika, RHA chief financial officer and an accounting senior. The total amount used by RHA members for the conference fee and travel expenses is not available, but is expected to be less than the allocated amount, Mika said.

The \$10,060 RHA allocated for the trip covered the \$161 conference fee, which included room and board at the University of Arizona and a flight for RHA Executive Board members and an RHA adviser. There were six Executive Board members and three general assembly members and

one adviser who attended the conference.

Perot said members of RHA frequently have attended the conference since 1978, and the amount allocated for the conference this year was more because of the timing and location of the event.

"Because it was in Arizona this year, we knew (the amount) was going to have to be higher for flights," she said. "Also, (the conference) was held over Memorial Day, so when we were trying to budget ... we budgeted on the high side."

General assembly delegates had to petition a residence hall government to fund the \$161 NACURH fee and travel expenses. Each hall government receives funding from the RHA general fund at the beginning of the year. If the hall government did not have sufficient funds for the delegate, money from the general

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MICHIGAN

## Rep. proposes U.P. to house Gitmo detainees

By Meredith Skrzyneck  
THE STATE NEWS

Moving prisoners from Guantanamo Bay to Michigan's Upper Peninsula could either be a smart economic move or a dangerous plan, state officials said.

During the Mackinac Policy Conference last week, U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Menominee, spoke about a letter he sent to President Barack Obama in February, suggesting a Manistiquia, Mich., prison as the new home for more than 200 Guantanamo Bay detainees.

Although plans have not been made to move the suggestion forward, state officials are sounding off.

"Michigan can base its economic future off of more than importing 240 of the most dangerous people in the world to the U.P.," said

U.S. Rep. Peter Hoekstra, R-Holland.

Safety was not a concern for residents in Stupak's district, said Nick Choate, a spokesman for Stupak.

"Safety was not an issue they raised," Choate said. "They are more interested in the economic benefits of it."

Economic benefits such as job creation at the prison would help the local community and the state, said state Rep. Gary McDowell, D-Rudyard.

"We do have the highest trained, most professional correction officers in the state, (maybe) in the world," McDowell said. "We need to look at (the proposal) ... It would really help our state in this time."

Until he receives support from more federal and state officials, Stupak will not push the proposal, Choate said.

"At this point, that broad base of support does not exist," Choate said.

Stupak pitched the proposal to Obama in response to the president's plans to consider closing the Guantanamo Bay facility.

"Obviously nobody wants these people," Manistiquia Mayor David Peterson said. "No one wants them in their backyard, and that's the key to this whole thing."

Any offer to the city would be considered, Peterson said. "We just have to hear an offer, if there is an offer and what the conditions are, it said. "(And then decide) is it safe or is it not safe?"

Moving detainees to the state will endanger residents and put them at risk, Hoekstra said.

"The fundamental question is, 'Why?' he said. "Why move them? It just does not make us safer."

Concerns for the safety of prison workers against poten-

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