

Former Spartan tight end vies for open trustee spot in 2010
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Dantonio happy about team's effort, excited for next season
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Mich. artists show state-themed art at E.L. gallery
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CRISIS

STUDENTS REACT AFTER TUESDAY'S EARTHQUAKE

By Lauren McKown
THE STATE NEWS

When Terry Pharaon learned of the earthquake that shook Haiti on Tuesday, his body went numb as he pictured his family in the country and feared for their lives.

Pharaon, a political science freshman and former Haitian resident of 10 years, frantically made phone calls to his family in Haiti when he heard the news. Pharaon said he had trouble sleeping until nearly 3 a.m. that night after the news broke.

"I couldn't sleep; I couldn't think," Pharaon said. "I went to my economics class in the morning and couldn't even comprehend what was being discussed."

After finally getting in touch with his mother, Pharaon learned his family was safe. Despite the relief he felt when he learned of his father's safety, Pharaon was shocked to learn Wednesday night that one of his close friends in Haiti died as a result of the earthquake.

"I sat there quiet, staring blankly, at a loss for words," he said.

Pharaon is one of many people around the world who concerned for friends and family after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti at about 5 p.m. Tuesday. Pharaon said he is emotionally struggling and has not yet recovered from the initial shock of the disaster.

"I feel out of my body, out of my mind," he said. "Haiti is my second home. My family is there, my friends are there ... I'd be buried there."

To reach students such as Pharaon who might have been affected by the earthquake, the MSU Caribbean Students Association, or CSA, is organizing aid efforts and providing information about the current situation in Haiti.

Nicholas Kerr, CSA president and political science graduate student, said the organization is willing to help Haitian international students and students of Haitian descent looking to contact family members and friends who might have been in the earthquake's path. Kerr said the CSA encourages students affected by the disaster to contact the organization for support.

"We're looking to support Haitian students and also to raise awareness of the disaster to the rest of campus, allowing them to participate in the aid efforts as global citizens," he said.

Board members of the CSA will meet today to determine a plan of action. Members already have initiated efforts to reach students and will answer questions at a display in the International Center's Crossroads Food Court in the coming weeks.

"The board (also) is planning a huge event for the coming weeks with music and dance that will commemorate Haitian culture and help raise aid for those affected by the tragedy," Kerr said.

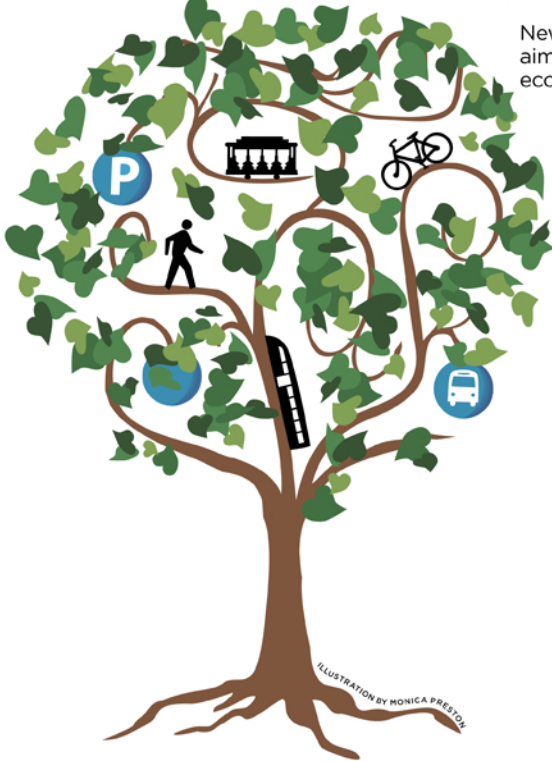
Kerr said the group will collaborate with other student groups on campus. Although they might be coming from the disaster, MSU students can help support Haitians, CSA member and African American and African studies graduate student Darcia Garcia said.

"The Haitian people aren't strangers to this kind of disaster, so they'll persevere, but not without our help from the international community," Garcia said.

Although he will be involved in relief efforts, Pharaon said the road ahead will not be easy.

"It'll be down," he said. "Not hearing from people is hard. All you can do is hope and pray."

Branching out



New transportation plan aims to revive Lansing-area economic development

By Zack Colman
THE STATE NEWS

Thousands have lined up at the 2010 North American International Auto Show in Detroit for a first glimpse at the automobile fleet that is charged with saving the state.

But about 90 miles away, Lansing, East Lansing and Meridian Township view economic recovery through a different windshield and with a new mindset. They're grabbing the steering wheel as the municipalities put a new public transportation plan in place to restructure and economically shift the Michigan and Grand River Avenue corridor into gear.

The Michigan-Grand River Avenue Corridor Study, conducted by Capital Area Transportation Authority, or CATA, will evaluate public opinion and other data to determine a better transportation system from the Capitol to Marsh Road along Michigan and Grand River avenues.

CATA, city officials and residents said they believe a new mass transportation system will kick the Lansing area's economic development into ignition as people will be able to move more easily from one end of Grand River and Michigan avenues to the other.

Public forums were held this week in East Lansing and Lansing, with a final forum 5 p.m. tonight at Meridian Township Hall, 5151 Marsh Road, in Okemos. CATA is considering several different modes of transportation to improve efficiency, such as a light rail, trolleys, bus rapid transit — which would provide an express lane only for bus use — and bicycle lanes.

Many area residents and students were excited about the project's prospects while highlighting frustrations and complications with the current system.

Joshua Croff, an urban and regional planning junior, said the overstretched CATA Route

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To see an interactive map of the proposed project, visit stateneews.com/multimedia.

OFFSEASON

GREG JONES TO RETURN TO MSU FOOTBALL TEAM FOR 2010 SEASON

By Chris Vannini
THE STATE NEWS

Greg Jones made a promise to his mother. That he would get a college degree. The promise weighed heavily on Jones' decision to return for his senior season. Jones announced Wednesday that he will not enter the NFL Draft. He had until Friday to make the decision.

"When you talk about the relationship with my mom, we talk a lot about sports. But ever since I was younger, she was always more excited when I did good in class," Jones said. "I do want to keep that promise to her. She obviously means a lot to me and getting closer to that degree means a lot."

Jones said he consulted as many people as he could —

More online ...
To see video of Greg Jones' press conference, visit stateneews.com/multimedia.

including ex-players, his coaches and his family — to come to his decision.

"I kind of just wanted to make an educated decision about some things," he said.

Jones was a consensus 2009 First-Team All-American and also was named the College Football Performance Awards' Linebacker of the Year.

Head coach Mark Dantonio was excited that his star player and team captain was returning. "Greg making this announcement is a huge thing for our football program," Dantonio said. "To have (Jones) back ... provides a nucleus for our entire program defensively. Just as importantly, having a team captain coming back sends a message to a lot of people. I've always talked about discipline and maturity as a person and Greg shows a great deal of that

in doing this. He shows a very unselfish attitude, which I think sends a message across the entire country."

The media's choice for 2009 Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year, Jones' 154 tackles led the conference and ranked third nationally. But his small size has been one of the few question marks NFL scouts have in regards to selecting Jones. Jones, who stands 6-foot-1 and weighs 228 pounds, said he's trying to gain weight.

Jones has led MSU in tackles all three seasons as a Spartan, improving his total each year. As a sophomore in 2008, he finished with 127 tackles and was named First-Team All-Big Ten by conference coaches, becoming the first Spartan linebacker to earn the honor since 2001. As a freshman, Jones started all 13 games, finishing with 78 tackles to earn Freshman All-American accolades from numerous publications.

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BASKETBALL

MSU defeats Gophers in hard-fought game

By Chris Vannini
THE STATE NEWS

Coming into Wednesday night, the Minnesota Golden Gophers led the Big Ten in turnover margin while the Spartans were second — seven on the offensive side — in a first eight minutes.

"I think the difference in the game was, early, they had tremendous energy and they got every loose ball; they got every offensive rebound," Izzo said. "They worked out in the first half. It wasn't like we were (not playing well), as I told my guys, but they took it to another level."

After the Gophers grabbed a 21-20 lead, junior guard Darrell Summers ignited the crowd with a dunk and a breakaway layup to put MSU up 24-21, adding a free throw due to an intentional foul by Summers then followed with a 3-point shot. It was a string of plays that Minnesota coach Tubby Smith said changed the game.

"I think we did a little better job on film work and showing them exactly where they come from and how, if you beat them, they just send a buzz out at you from behind," Izzo said. "I thought our assistants did a very, very good job as far as prepping our guys and our

guys followed the game plan and that's the focus we need."

The game was a slugfest early, with the officials letting bodies bang in the post, but the Gophers answered the tough Spartans with physical play of their own and grabbed it rebounds — seven on the offensive side — in a first eight minutes.

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