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MSU community joins to support Haiti



Political theory and constitutional democracy freshman Nagela Coffy, center, is comforted by her friends, pre-law and English freshman Shaina Simpson, left, and premedical freshman Sophie Philidor, right, at the candlelight vigil held Wednesday evening for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti at Beaumont Tower. Coffy, who is of Haitian descent, said she wants to help in any way that is asked of her, and her father will be heading to Haiti as soon as an airport opens on the island.

"If we want to promote Spartan pride, then we need to recognize that there are members of our community that are hurting, and donating to this relief effort will help them and their families be able to rebuild it."

Nick Kerr, political science graduate student and president of the Caribbean Student Association



More online ...

To see video of Wednesday's candlelight vigil, visit stateneews.com/multimedia.

By Ian Johnson
THE STATE NEWS

Kyle Martin was sitting in class — the same as any other day — when he received the news. He sprinted out of the lecture as soon as he got the text message: "What's going on in Haiti is horrible."

Martin, an osteopathic medicine graduate student at MSU, has been traveling to Haiti since he was 12 years old and last visited the Caribbean country in August to work in a care clinic. After a magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit the country Jan. 12, the clinic collapsed and victims are now being treated in a nearby soccer field, Martin said.

The place was like a war zone, a Haitian friend told him. "She said that there were people missing limbs — people that have been crushed," he said. "They're running really short on food and water and they don't have any supplies to treat people who have been through traumatic incidents like broken bones or cuts."

Nine days after tragedy struck Haiti, leaving tens of thousands dead, Martin has joined many other MSU students who are doing what they can to support and rebuild the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. With a candlelight vigil Wednesday night and plans for students to travel to Haiti to help rebuild, the MSU community is reaching out to the devastated nation.

From the Caribbean to Mid-Michigan

The bells rang seven seconds apart at Beaumont Tower on Wednesday

night to match the Haitian earthquake's magnitude.

"The spirit of this university has always been to take a look around us and find an answer to what we can do," MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon said to a crowd of students, faculty and East Lansing officials.

Crowd members held candles to a remember those affected by the tragedy as the MSU community showed its support for a country to which some might have little connection.

"That is a message to the world that they care about what happened," said Stephanie Mutschbacher, spokeswoman for International Studies and Programs, who organized the vigil.

There were 12 MSU alumni in Haiti at the time of the earthquake and the MSU Alumni Association has yet to make contact with them as of Tuesday afternoon, said Peter Briggs, director of the Office for International Students and Scholars.

"Sometimes we can let thinking (things) far away (do) not affect us, and in fact in a different indirect sort of way they do affect us," Briggs said.

Currently, there are no MSU students studying abroad in Haiti, the Office of Study Abroad said.

The rebuilding process in Haiti is under way as at least 12 countries, including the United States, have sent aid to help clear roads, provide food, administer medical treatment and build shelters, said Reza Nessori, the Director of MSU's Insti-

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BASKETBALL

Spartans get narrow win over Iowa

By Joey Nowak
THE STATE NEWS

Their work here is done.

The MSU men's basketball team put a final — though potentially discouraging — stamp on a crucial homebound Wednesday night by beating Iowa 70-63

to improve its record to 6-0 in the Big Ten and hold its lead in the conference standings.

The ball is rolling now for the Spartans to embark on a make-or-break portion of their schedule, which includes trips to some of the most imposing Big Ten venues.

As for Monday night, senior forward Raymar Morgan's 16 points paced the Green and White, as the Spartans sharply overcame another slow start, then withstood a late Hawkeye surge.

"We're not where we need to be," a displeased MSU head coach Tom Izzo said afterward. "We're 6-0; there are some other teams that have worse problems than we do. Are you looking for perfection? You're damn right. And I'm not going to stop until we get it."

The Spartans trailed for much of the first half until a 3-pointer came from an unlikely source in Draymond Green.

The sophomore forward caught the ball at the top of the key looking to pass, realized he was open and dropped in just his second deep ball of the season to give MSU a 20-19 lead at the 9:24 mark.

In a span of just more than a minute, the Hawkeyes fell victim to an MSU junior guards high-light reel — a Chris Allen alley-oop dunk, a Kalin Lucas pull-up 3-pointer and a Durrell Summers breakaway layup — as part of a 15-0 run.

In all, it amounted to a 2-14 run to end the half. It also left the Hawkeyes in the rearview mirror for good.

"It's typical that they were in control," Iowa head coach Todd Lickliter said. "I'm sure there was a let-up on their part, but to our guys' credit, they continued to fight. We got in striking range, although you've got to hand it to them that when they did, they made a big shot."

Summers, whose star line has been nearly unpredicatable this year, dropped 12 in the first half

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CAMPUS

More singles dorms created to attract upperclassmen

By David Barker
THE STATE NEWS

MSU students looking for a taste of off-campus living without crossing Grand River Avenue will have an opportunity to do so next fall, thanks to a new student retention program that will increase the number of single room dorms on campus.

The program is targeted at creating single room dorm communities in four residence halls — Butterfield, Abbot, Wonders and McDonel halls — for returning students, said Sharri Margraves, director of Campus Living Services, a unit of the Division of Residential and Hospitality Service.

es. She said the program would increase the number of returning students in Abbot and Butterfield halls, as well as reserve four floors of co-ed dorms for upperclassmen in McDonel and Wonders halls.

"What we're saying to returning students is, 'If you want a single, here's a place you might be happy,'" Margraves said. "Over time, it is possible a community of returning students might be created."

The university expects about 7,000 students to return to the dorms in the fall. On average, Margraves said the university assigns between 1,700 to 1,800 singles each semester.

ADMINISTRATION

End date removed from Simon's contract

By Zane McMillin
THE STATE NEWS

After removing the end date from MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon's employment contract last month,



Simon

intends to depart her post sooner than anticipated.

The board passed a resolution at its Dec. 11 meeting praising Simon's performance

and granting her request that it not recommend a salary increase. The resolution also authorized the board to revise Simon's contract, eliminating the Sept. 30, 2011, end date.

Instead, Simon and the board now are required to give a 60-day notice before Simon's departure.

The board gave Simon a five-year extension in 2006. Trustee Joel Ferguson said removing the end date from Simon's contract is a sign of the board's approval of her leadership. He denied it being an indication Simon intended to leave MSU before 2011.

"It's open-ended," Ferguson said. "So long as she wants to be

president, we want her." Simon could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

University spokesman Terry Denbow said the board's action is reflective of its approval of the job Simon has done.

"In fact, it was in the context of their expressing hope for a longer term, not shorter," Denbow said. "I think it's fair to interpret it as a statement of extra confidence."

Trustee Dianne Byrum said the changes the board made to Simon's contract were minor and should not be read into too deeply.

"The board has complete faith in the leadership of President Simon," Byrum said in an e-mail. "There is no expectation

that the president will leave prior to 2011."

Trustee Faylene Owen also said the board's action signified the board's approval of Simon.

"In my opinion, the president is certainly the right person for these times," Owen said.

In January 2009, Simon succeeded M. Peter McPherson to become MSU's 20th and first female president. From 1993 until her appointment as president, Simon was the university's provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Ferguson said the board wants Simon to be the university's president for the foreseeable future. "We hope to keep her until she gets tired," Ferguson said.