As with all illnesses, it is important to remember to:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay home and avoid close contact with others while sick.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean your doorknobs and light switches with disinfectant wipes frequently.

MSU will continue to support our Spartan community.

For more information and support services, visit [msu.edu/together-we-will](http://msu.edu/together-we-will).

In our last issue of Serving State, I noted that we were not just entering a new year, but a new decade; that we had a fresh opportunity to dedicate our efforts to creating and delivering unequalled experiences, products and services to the students and many guests of Michigan State University. I had no idea at the time, just how unequalled they would be.

Residential and Hospitality Services seeks to provide an environment that is maximally conducive to the learning process of students. On-campus residents are at the center of all MSU has to offer: academic support, health resources, award-winning dining facilities, recreational activities, student organizations, leadership opportunities, friends and fun. Many of those central resources have been altered, moved online or closed until it’s safe to open again.

This past year’s Spartan experience has been far from typical, and it has not been easy. Currently, all undergraduate classes are online, with few exceptions. We have consolidated our residential communities, placed students in rooms by themselves and modified our dining services to fit the needs of those communities. Students are not able to truly experience the social benefits of being on campus, and the energy on campus has not been the same without our extended family of 14,000. We miss all the students who were not able to live with us this school year.

This issue of Serving State looks at the ways our division has approached the challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic and intends to embrace the future with the same flexibility and determination we’ve displayed thus far. Our housing and dining team works hard to ensure the health and safety of our community as we make considerations for the future.

I said this at the beginning of the year, and I’ll say it again: RHS is seen as thought leaders in strategy on campus, so much so that many of our team members are serving on the university’s strategic planning committees. The strategic planning committees are a bit different, but the statement remains accurate. It’s a true testament to everything we do.

Vennie Gore
Senior Vice President for Auxiliary Enterprises

“OUR HOUSING AND DINING TEAM WORKS HARD TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY AS WE MAKE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.”
LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP
To our campus partners,

We are all in an incredibly unique position, working to meet the needs of our Spartan community in new and extraordinary ways. Your efforts to come together and support our division, specifically, have not gone unnoticed. Without your willingness to help us meet our financial obligations, we would not be able to do what we do best: care for our students. Your support has afforded us the ability to focus on student success and safety, with less concern for finances.

There is nothing quite like a global pandemic to bring clarity to what’s important. Spartans are a resilient, tenacious sort. They can see the bigger picture, the cogs in the machine. The real game changers – like you – realize MSU is a united community, backing our Spartans as they seek to make an impact on the world. You’ve shown true Spartan spirit; we truly could not do this without you.

Your optimistic, responsive approaches through the initial stages of the crisis and into our first semester have been inspiring. Because of you, RHS is able to provide housing and dining for our students who need it most. It means a lot to people – our students, their families, and our MSU community – to know they can rely on the dedicated staff at MSU. And it means a lot to us to know we can depend on you. There aren’t enough words to describe how grateful we are.

This past year has been different in many ways. It will not be an easy road. But moving forward, we have the right balance of supporting an engaged, connected experience for all Spartans while also keeping our community safe.

Together, we will.

Warmest Regards,
Vennie Gore, Senior Vice President for Auxiliary Enterprises
Dr. Tariq Abdelhamid, Chief Lean Enterprise Officer
Diane Barker, Chief Planning and Projects Officer
Kat Cooper, Chief Communications Officer
Ray Gasser, Executive Director of Residence Education and Housing Services
Kelly High McCord, Interim Director of RHS
Human Resources:
Denise Ngubeni, Interim Director of Digital Strategies and Services
Bob Patterson, Chief Financial Officer
Rebecca Selesky, Executive Director of Culinary Services

Photos courtesy of University Communications.
The novel coronavirus has not been kind to the hospitality industry, nor the university housing system. As the university transitioned to remote learning last spring, team members across Auxiliary Enterprises (AE) and, subsequently, the Division of Residential and Hospitality Services (RHS) made quick efforts to come together and work gracefully through each challenge. Team members had to make several adjustments in 2020 to maintain the level of service and care students and guests are used to.

One major adjustment due to the coronavirus has been the separation of Spartan Hospitality Group (SHG). With Director Joel Heberlein’s retirement July 1 and continued closure of most SHG units, responsibilities were reallocated throughout the division. These changes, among others, have taken place since March:

- Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, Kellogg Catering and the State Room Restaurant report to Culinary Services (CS).
- The MSU Alumni Memorial Chapel reports to Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS).
- Strategic Innovation and Lean Performance Manager Kelly High McCord became the interim director for RHS Human Resources.
- The Auxiliary Sports Group was formed, comprised of the Breslin Student Events Center, Forest Akers Golf Courses, MSU Tennis Center, and Spartan Spirit Shops.
- Project Manager in the SVPAE Office Dr. Erin Carter accepted leadership for the Space Management committee and membership to university committees as an RHS representative.
- Information Services became AE Digital Strategy and Services (DSS), of which Denise Ngubeni is the interim director.
- Dr. Tariq Abdelhamid took on leadership of the new Lean Enterprise and Assessment Unit, which combined the RHS Assessment Office and Lean Performance Unit.

In early May, RHS established six task forces, also called Look Ahead Planning Teams (LAPTs), to plan for a divisional COVID-19 recovery phase. SVP Vennie Gore and RHS Chief Lean Enterprise Officer Tariq Abdelhamid created six strategy documents with multiple “mission commands,” or statements, summarizing the intended end goal (e.g., back-to-work safety protocols; on-boarding and training for new and returning staff). Each LAPT brainstormed ways in which RHS could work toward and ultimately achieve each mission command. These carefully reviewed plans then went to RHS Leadership for feedback and approval. Approved plans for fall 2020 were then put into action by new LAPTs.

In August, MSU President Stanley announced that effective Sept. 28, the Division of Student Affairs and Services (SAS) would report to Vice President for Auxiliary Enterprises Vennie Gore on a temporary basis. Gore’s role was then elevated to that of Senior Vice President to reflect his level of responsibility and impact. Senior Vice President (SVP) Gore served on the COVID-19 Reopening Campus Task Force and led the Residential Learning and Living Subcommittee. While serving the greater university community, SVP Gore also wrote monthly blog posts to encourage the team, recorded several videos to engage the team, and hosted weekly town halls to educate and learn from the team. His continued commitment to the needs of RHS enabled units to do what they do best.

RHS Health and Safety worked hard to help guide RHS through these unprecedented times. The team met daily with RHS Leadership to determine strategic steps forward. They worked closely with RHS Leadership, RHS Human Resources (HR), MSU Police and MSU HR to interpret the various coronavirus executive orders and university directives and what they meant for RHS.

The Planning and Projects (PPO) team assisted RHS in developing a Housing Consolidation Plan and the Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) Critical Path, a planning tool that allowed REHS to have a strategy for cleaning and performing maintenance for the residence halls and apartments. Additionally, PPO put together an RHS Facility Action & Support Tactics (FAST) guide, which
provided information on facilities and tactics needed while residence halls are in low-occupancy mode and when units reopen. These strategic plans and documents helped to increase efficiency and lower costs. The PPO team also helped to develop, implement and lead the RHS COVID-19 Response Hotline. The hotline serves as a resource for on-campus residents in isolation and when units reopen. Residents can call to ask questions, request transportation, and get connected with resources. In addition, the team uses the texting platform “KIPSU” to initiate contact with residents and check-in with them during their stay.

The Lean Enterprise and Assessment Unit surveyed team members regarding their comfortability returning to the workplace and what support they might need while working remotely. The division’s assessment officer also served on various LAPT's to discern what team members needed to feel physically and psychologically safe. Many concerns revolved around job security.

From helping team members understand their leave options to helping units adjust their staffing needs, HR worked tirelessly and consistently engaged with campus resources, including the Employee Assistance Program and the Work Life Office, as well as look at creative ways to conduct core RHS trainings online. The team also conducted “walkabouts,” to check on team members’ well-being and to ensure their needs were being met as well as contacted team members on furlough to check in and to share information on divisional updates.

The coronavirus pandemic put the division in an incredibly precarious financial stance. In April, approximately $11.83 million was credited/refunded to students living in residence halls and on-campus apartments who moved out by the April 12 refund deadline. The MSU announcement Aug. 18 to move undergraduate learning online for fall 2020 reduced the residence hall house count to roughly 1,400, causing RHS operating revenues to be $15 million, down 88% from the $135 million in revenues in 2019. Nearly all summer 2020 events were cancelled, including the Boy Scouts of America National Order of the Arrow Conference set for early August. Thankfully, Forest Akers stayed open throughout the summer, bringing in over $460,000 in revenue for July and August. However, this still hasn’t been enough to tip the scales.

Despite the revenue loss, the RHS team helped reduce operating expenses by reducing and managing variable costs such as labor, travel, supplies, food and other expenses. To preserve financial viability moving forward, RHS will expense agreement renegotiations, plant cash spending reductions and operating expense cuts. Communications and Creative Services worked alongside University Communications to ensure students, guests and team members were consistently made aware of new policies, while also building a sense of community with Spartans. Digital Strategy and Services created new processes to make certain team members have the equipment and support they need in their new remote working environment.

All the work by AE and RHS support units has been important to the short- and long-term success of RHS.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications team within RHS and Auxiliary Enterprises serves as brand managers, internal communications experts, media relations, crisis management, social media managers and writers for the division. To keep the community engaged during this virtual learning season, the members of Communications host town hall meetings over video and post them to the RHS internal website. When it comes to communications, listening is more important than talking. The Communications team is focusing on taking care of people during this time by providing them with timely two-way communication with leadership and helping to keep rumors under control. The Communications team has also been spending more time on social media as a response to the pandemic, as this is where people are expressing their needs and struggles during these times. The team uses social media to moderate parent Facebook pages, share mental health and social connections, and more. Among themselves, the team holds meetings to stay engaged and uses a daily check-in thread to chat throughout the workday.

In an effort to prevent furlough of RHS team members, students/residents, and others are being offered part-time positions within the Business Development division. This offers the division the opportunity to assist on a part-time basis and make meaning of the data they collect and the experiences of RHS team members, students/residents, and guests. By using analytics and quantitative analysis, the unit helped departments make data-informed decisions. Now, the teams work together to use data assessments for tasks such as the LAPT's.

LEAN ENTERPRISE AND ASSESSMENT UNIT

In June 2020, the Lean Performance Unit (LPU) and the Assessment Office merged into what is now known as the Lean Enterprise and Assessment Unit. Before the merge, LPU developed a framework asking three main high-level questions regarding performance and value. One of these questions was: What are the main question asked by LPU for business, customer service and goods production operations is “Are we doing this right thing right the first time?” When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, LPU shifted focus to assist in engineering and advancing renewal, reshaping, innovation, and reinvestment efforts. In May 2020, RHS began to plan for a COVID-19 business reshaping phase by establishing six Managerial Look Ahead Planning Teams (LAPT’s). The planning was a result of an adaptation of a Lean Thinking process called the Hoshin Kanri process. This process guided the strategic crisis planning effort. The Assessment Office worked to oversee departmental assessment plans, conduct a large number of surveys, and report units to make meaning of the data they collect and the experiences of RHS team members, students/residents, and guests. By using analytics and quantitative analysis, the unit helped departments make data-informed decisions. Now, the teams work together to use data assessments for tasks such as the LAPT's.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Interactions within the Human Resources (HR) department have completely changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Having to consider virtual interviews and recruitment fairs, assessing which training and development sessions can be effectively hosted online, and compassionately addressing concerns about safety has caused the department to rethink how everything is done. Some HR meetings are required to be onsite, while others are done through Microsoft Teams. The department is trying to stay nimble and respond to changes in the moment. HR continues working to support the divisional principles it has held since the beginning of the pandemic and will continue to uphold divisional values.

STRAIGHT INTEGRATION GROUP

Members of the Strategic Integration Group have been focused on coordination of IT efforts and projects for RHS units throughout the pandemic. This includes coordination of the mobile ordering implementation for dining operations, a phone system upgrade for Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, and planning and coordination for Zoom room installations at Brody Hall and 1855 Place.
Auxiliary Enterprises/Residential and Hospitality Services Units

Business and Financial Services
Residential student retention and repeat customer business are the keys to financial success. For RHS, even during the pandemic, the goal of fiscal responsibility is to support RHS’ mission of delivering outstanding Spartan experiences to students, guests, and customers. Within that goal, remaining financially viable is critical. RHS has three specific financial objectives to be achieved through net income from operations: 1) to pay debt service costs; 2) provide just-in-time maintenance funds for repairs and improvements; 3) maintain an adequate reserve balance to address unforeseen emergencies. For the RHS Business and Financial Services (BFS) department, fiscal responsibility entails operating within RHS’ means, using financial resources wisely, and making financial decisions in an open and transparent way. Adherence to the MSU Manual of Business Procedures is a primary goal of the BFS and provides proper university business procedures and fiscal oversight. Additionally, preparation of timely and accurate budgets, forecasts, billings/collections/payment transactions, monthly account reconciliations and financial statements are provided to assist decision making and provide essential information as the unit works together to keep the division financially afloat during the pandemic.

Auxiliary Enterprises (AE) is involved in a variety of strategic projects and efforts that impact the student experience in both direct and indirect ways. Situations with direct impact include requests to the RHS Space Committee that relate to student spaces within RHS facilities. Additionally, a second-year live-on reinstatement statement will modify expectations for on-campus living for students. The larger strategic projects and campus committees related to projects and decisions that impact the campus broadly and multiple stakeholders, including students. For example, campus art installations, constructions/infrastructure improvements to the campus environment or community partnerships. Some projects have been adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the redevelopment of Spartan Village and Crescent Road. The MSU Strategic Plan effort has also delayed and adjusted the timing of feedback collection and committee work. These efforts persist, albeit at a different cadence.

Transaction Management
The Transaction Management team has been busy getting the mobile ordering application working correctly to meet the dining needs of residential students more efficiently. It has also been busy processing off-campus meal refund requests. To date, more than 460 requests totaling more than $123,000 have been processed.

SPARTAN SPIRIT SHOPS
The Spartan Spirit Shops (SSS) throughout MSU’s campus, which supply students, staff, and other MSU enthusiasts with all the essential pieces of Spartan merchandise, have taken great steps toward maintaining the health and safety of customers as well as student team members and other active team members placing emphasis on keeping up to date with COVID-19 restrictions and regulations, all while continuing to provide the best services and products for its wide range of customers. An example of such efforts can be seen by the program-based changes made to the SSS online store, allowing ease of use and overall better performance of the webpage, effectively adapting to one of the many challenges of the pandemic. SSS has also continued its holiday celebration such as the holiday bear promotion, as well as the introduction of seasonal face coverings. One of the biggest adjustments for SSS came in relation to the shift from in-person to virtual graduation ceremonies. Lockdowns started just as the majority of SSS’s spring graduates were set to get their graduation regalia. Cap and gown rentals had to be refunded, and new rental policies were created. Given students and their families reached out for assistance and information on how to celebrate their accomplishments virtually. The team responded quickly by adding yard signs, Class of 2020 masks and more at-home party items to the SSS website.

MSU TENNIS CENTER
The MSU Tennis Center provides students, staff, and the entire Lansing community with full-service tennis programs and services. The Tennis Center is also the home and training ground for the MSU Men’s and Women’s tennis teams. The facility has also partnered with several university departments as well as local high schools and organizations to provide a high-quality tennis experience offering court time, instruction, tennis clinics and cardio workout opportunities. After being closed due to the pandemic, the MSU Tennis Center requested and was approved to provide its instructional services at the campus outdoor courts on Wilson Rd. Strict COVID-19 protocols were put in place to ensure the health and safety of guests and team members. The clinics were extremely well received. In late October, the MSU Tennis Center reopened and was approved to offer a phased approach to reopen indoor operations. A phased approach was taken to fully reopen to the public as the priority for SSS came in relation to the shift from in-person to virtual graduation ceremonies.

Solution Engineering and Leadership
The number one method the Solutions Engineering and Leadership team uses to stay engaged is a daily “lineup” meeting via Microsoft Teams. Normally, the team would gather in person each morning and share what each member had planned to work on that day. There have been hundreds of tweaks made quickly by the Solutions Engineering and Leadership team for websites and products to keep things moving for the division as the team flexes and bends to accommodate the new and ever-changing reality. Some of the bigger changes include moving MSU Bakers and Spartan Spirit Shop to a new (and improved) e-Commerce platform and migrating RHS’ internal website, MyRHS, to a newer version of SharePoint.

Technology Support
In addition to providing regular tech support, the Technology Support team has been supporting all work from home staff via provision of technology hardware, including laptops, monitors and webcams, ticket work to keep them operational, the East at State mobile ordering project, Windows 1709-1909, and Office 365 projects. There is also a support box located at the 1855 Place welcome desk. Amidst the pandemic, the Technology Support team has also updated safety procedures in order to continue to safely work on technology.

Forest Akers Golf Courses
The Forest Akers Golf Courses act as an excellent source of physical fitness and as a destination for local and MSU communities to gather within a safe environment. The courses are an available resource to all members of the MSU community, and the facility itself acts as a source of employment for students within the MSU community. In cooperation with the First Tee of Mid-Michigan, a national organization that educates children on golf, character building, the Forest Akers offers courses that encourage the use of their core values through golf. The facility also furthers its community engagement within MSU by working alongside the Kinesiology department to host golf classes that incorporate the skills of a successful golfer with professional career development through the sport.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing pandemic, many group events hosted by Forest Akers were cancelled this season. Nonetheless, the Forest Akers team has made an effort to reconnect with the MSU community by implementing physical distancing measures and by taking full advantage of the outdoor aspect of the sport. Forest Akers has also encouraged the use of online payments and the elimination of the use of touch points such as bunker rakes and ball washers, both of which have been positively received by the community and customers. Despite the challenges it faced this year, Forest Akers Golf Courses was once again rated as one of the Top 30 Golf Courses by GolfWeek Magazine and will go on to host the 2021 NCAA Division III Women’s National Golf Championships on the West Golf Course in 2021.
SUSTAINABILITY
The RHS Sustainability Office, which works in conjunction with the Planning and Projects Office, advocates for sustainability efforts in operations within academics and departments throughout Michigan State University and the local community. The unit focuses largely on eco-friendly, green projects that engage all on-campus as well as off-campus community members, such as recycling programs, closing food waste loops, and regional buying power, healthy environment promotion, food donation programs, and the provision of hands-on ability for students. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these operations have been put on hold, as there is neither the on- campus engagement through the students, nor the aid through the university itself due to numerous unknowns. Last year, 4,000 gallons of oil, 500 gallons of paint, and 20,000 pounds of food, set in preparation for incoming students, were quickly donated to local food drives due to under consumption on campus. The RHS Sustainability Office, as well as the community, is still as hopeful and mindful as ever, as it continues to look at ways to move to resusable resources, maintain a small food waste program to keep up the worm composting program, and by recycling the basics like cardboard and paper. Once the department gets clearance and has safe measures in order, the Sustainability Office will resume its basic practices on recycling efforts, food waste programs and student engagements.

RHS HELP SUPPORT DESK
The RHS Help Support Desk continues to provide phone support Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It also increased the volume of its remote desktop support and implemented a new chat feature for RHS team members to engage with the Support Desk team. Help Desk Support has also set up after-hours support setup for emergency IT needs. The team has also now knowledge base articles for team members to read. This includes audio guides for RHS computers, Microsoft Teams, Zoom and clearing cookies on internet browsers. There have also been articles posted providing tips for working remotely.

RHS ACCESS MANAGEMENT
RHS Access Management has been ensuring the best security practices for user permission access based on roles during all transitions and thoroughly reviewing each request before granting or removing access. Thus far, more than 2,600 user changes in access have occurred. Access Management has also partnered with Human Resources on coordinating user access permissions based on role and delivery methods to be more efficient. The Access Management team also held its first remote quality assurance round table with authorized requests processing access request forms for feedback. Access Management has also managed all divisional server access for students, on-calls and temp employees working remotely.

PLANNING AND PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE
The Planning and Preventative Maintenance (PPM) unit, which oversees operations throughout an extremely extensive array of RHS and REHS departments, has continued to organize a wide variety of upcoming and current proposals. The unit manages projects from construction project planning to interior design and has not let its efforts falter during these difficult times. As a fortunate turn of events, the pandemic has actually allowed the team to complete previous projects as well as work alongside the Health and Safety team in order to renovate areas currently not in use. Even now, PPM continues to diligently keep in touch with various areas around campus and look toward the future in order to develop changes in the coming months. PPM will continue to take advantage of the lack of staff and students on campus to complete any impending projects and to plan for the aforementioned ongoing and upcoming proposals for changes and additions to the campus. As a result, these activities are taking place under strict control of the COVID-19 guidelines, and the health and safety of the staff and workers is always at the forefront of these operations.

SYSTEMS ENGINEERING
The Systems Engineering team is currently engaged in many projects, including the migration of MyRHS to Office 365 and midyear through a joint effort with MSU IT to consolidate data centers.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND INTERIOR DESIGN
The Project Management and Interior Design unit provides attractive, safe and sustainable spaces for students, staff and family members across campus such as the residence halls, dining halls and other auxiliary structures such as the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, the MSU Alumni Memorial Chapel, and the Breslin Student Events Center. Within these, the unit maintains order and cleanliness throughout the campus by taking a holistic approach which ultimately contributes to across campus student safety and well-being. Before the start of the fall 2020 semester, the unit had completed most of its summer projects, working collaboratively alongside REHS and Culinary Services in order to prepare for incoming, on-campus students. Now, as the university begins to prepare for a greater quantity of students residing on campus within the residence halls this spring semester, the unit has conducted a research study in support of REHS in order to determine whether occupied bathrooms should be considered for the spring 2021 reopening. In addition to this, the unit has also taken on a few extra tasks in preparation for the reopening, which include the provision and installation of Plexiglas paneling, point-of-sale stations at Sparty’s and dining halls, and the spacing of furniture across student and staff work areas throughout campus. Now, the unit is actively developing and implementing a building inspection program for closed buildings at MSU in order to take full advantage of the space made available due to the pandemic, while continuing to look out for any changes with the executive orders and making appropriate alterations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY
The RHS Health and Safety Office provides students and guests with a healthy and safe campus environment while also acting as a resource and point of contact for the division regarding occupational health and safety training, regulatory compliance, emergency management, safety and security, and environmental hazard remediation. The unit takes the health and safety of on-campus students and team members seriously and is dedicated to the provision of a reliable environment. Throughout the pandemic, the unit has focused much of its efforts to emergency planning and coordination needs for RHS as well as leading Situational Awareness and Planning meetings. Health and Safety is working closely with university partners, Look Ahead Safety is working closely with university partners, Look Ahead Planning Teams (LAPTS) and other groups to plan for reopening. In order to keep employees, team members and students engaged and safe throughout the pandemic, the unit has also led the Student and Staff Safety LAPT to develop strategic plans for RHS in the areas of psychological safety, personal protective equipment (PPE) and physical distancing. Health and Safety has also partnered with RHS business units to review and approve reopening plans for fall/spring 2020-21, coordinated responses to significant water damage and property losses occurring in RHS facilities during this period of low occupancy, and ensured regulatory compliance through continued unit audits and monthly building system reporting.

BRESLIN STUDENT EVENTS CENTER
The Breslin Student Events Center hosts an assortment of events with the goal of providing students with engaging activities and memorable moments throughout their career at MSU. Examples of such are the Freshman Innovation Fair as well as the numerous career fairs hosted through the department, which encourage students to discover opportunities around the country. The engagement within the community both within and around the MSU campus is also incredibly vast as it ranges from local high school commencement ceremonies to Spartan Men’s and Women’s basketball games as well as MHSAA High School Basketball State Championships. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Breslin Center has been unable to host more than 140 events, all of which have either been cancelled or rescheduled since March. The Breslin Center recently started hosting MSU Spartan basketball games while maintaining all the necessary health and safety regulations, such as appropriate physical distancing measures, and a cleaning team, which will ensure the facility is consistently sanitized.

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To say 2020 is unlike anything the Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) department may have predicted is an understatement. This was intended to be the year the Spartan Navigator second-year experience program launched, the year REHS supported its residents through a turbulent election cycle and the year REHS offered new gender inclusive options in its housing system.

However, the department had to shift priorities. And while these were not the items REHS spent the most time on, the department has overcome challenges it never dreamed of facing. The leaders of REHS have been so proud of its team members, who have been working together and focusing on student success while in crisis mode for longer than anyone expected.

When MSU President Stanley asked residents to return home in March, teams swiftly assembled plans for helping them do just that when it was the right time for them. Some residents left immediately, hoping to return for final classes in late April. This meant leaving belongings in their room, expecting to see them again in a few short weeks. However, that wasn’t to be. The REHS team quickly built surveys to gauge how to best assist these students amidst changing guidance from local, state and federal entities.

For other students, campus is their home, and they needed to remain living on. A large portion of the REHS team remained on campus with them, cleaning and disinfecting, maintaining service center operations, and providing health and safety information and resources, ensuring that even in the middle of a pandemic, residents continued to be delivered outstanding Spartan experiences.

As the days grew longer and warmer, some teams faced the busiest season they have ever seen. The Housing Assignments Office received more than 60,000 phone calls and emails in that time, in addition to the thousands of social media responses and contacts with other REHS units. Team members reviewed new information, watched new trainings, and ensured they retained the latest details to complete their work and address questions.

Departmental plans and playbooks were updated almost daily, along with communications to residents and campus partners. REHS remained committed to following the health and safety guidance of the university, the country and the state in its operations. The department participated in university and divisional planning teams to look at the full picture of its operations. Decisions weren’t always popular, but they were always made from a place of care.

Within its planning teams, REHS was able to establish a quarantine and isolation housing process by mid-June. After that, the team developed a low-contact move-in process for the fall semester. While the decision to remain online changed the housing makeup to those with a need to be on campus, the team feels proud of the move-in and campus living protocols that have been implemented for those students living on campus.

Prior to the change in number of residents, REHS successfully prepared more than 10,000 residence hall spaces for the fall 2020 semester and accepted thousands of packages at its service centers, which have since been returned in the equivalent of four UPS trucks, nine FedEx trucks and 15 USPS trucks worth of packages.

The Residence Education and University Activities Board teams have adapted to virtual engagement beyond the classrooms with a focus on virtual one-on-one interactions, hosting virtual events, sharing resources, and continuing to attend to safety and security within the halls. The MSU Union has remained open as a safe, supportive space for residents and community members throughout the crisis.

The MSU Tours team adapted to virtual tours with prospective and admitted students.

It is precisely in times of crisis when Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) efforts need to drive how REHS approaches its work. When team members and students are navigating tough times and marginalized communities are being impacted disproportionally by the pandemic, racial uprisings, financial concerns and a volatile elections climate, intentional anti-racist principles and practices are critically needed to support a culture of respect, dialogue and civility. The DEI team has approached this work with training opportunities, educational resources...
and campus partnerships. Tough financial decisions have been made, trying to maintain REHS’ usual level of support while being leaner. The department focused on cost savings with consolidating supplies and using current inventories before it moved to staffing decisions. Alternative opportunities for resident assistants and graduate assistants not needed for fall semester operations were implemented. Ultimately, a number of team members have been impacted, whether by not working, by reducing schedules or by completing alternate assignments to support the RHS division.

It hasn’t always been perfect, but the REHS team has worked together and admitted its faults while maintaining grace, professionalism and a continued focus on supporting students and families.

While health and safety are top of mind, REHS continues to expand DEI initiatives to share anti-racism training broadly, create gender-inclusive housing and provide reflection spaces. The department will also launch the Spartan Navigator second-year student experience program in fall 2021 and continues to create intentional residential programming.

This pandemic isn’t over, and on-campus residents, the REHS team and their loved ones are feeling the effects. The bustle of campus activity is, of course, missed. But the REHS team looks forward to continuing the exceptional teamwork and care for each other getting through these times. The REHS leadership team is immensely proud to work with the people in this department and share a bit of their experience with you.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications unit, which supports the entirety of Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) from housing assignments and residence education to brand management and social media, has been using its available resources as widely as possible during the pandemic. The unit has been taking on quite a workload throughout these times by providing requested information and providing consistent messaging for the REHS units as well as the Live On brand. The unit continues to frequently communicate targeted information between the university and the students, family members and staff, as not to overwhelm or spread news pre-emptively. Furthermore, various efforts have been made in order to ease students and their families into their individual on- and off-campus living situations such as numerous, regularly updated FAQ pages, social media posts and email responses. The unit has continued to act as an effective means of communication between the university and the students and will carry on doing so throughout the spring 2021 on-campus housing sign-up period as well as sign-up for the fall 2021 semester, which will be held in January. Although there may still be uncertainties in place, the team continues to put the health and safety of Spartans first and is committed to supporting them every step of the way.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AND STUDENT LEADERSHIP

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) unit has committed itself to combating all forms of systemic oppression alongside developing true-emotional connections between students and staff by providing services such as training, event planning, consultation and best-informing, troubleshooting, and advising student groups. Throughout the pandemic, the DEI unit has continued to open up spaces for dialogue and mutual care, taking into account the many unfortunate occurrences and numerous changes caused by the pandemic, the 2020 presidential election, as well as the tragic murders of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and many additional Black lives. The unit will also be starting a series of dialogues in the near future in order to continue to uplift the voices of the members of marginalized communities and staff members who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be done while continuing to develop new, engaging content that aims for dialogue and mutual care, pre-emptively. Furthermore, various plans for the upcoming semester, one of which includes the opening of Hubbard Hall as a quarantine and isolation location.

COORDINATION AND PLANNING

The coordination and planning unit has taken great steps toward maintaining the safety and organization of MSU community members. This has been accomplished through careful focus on the emergency planning and strategic project management of projects alongside REHS. This includes the move-in and -out seasons, an annual emergency unit checklist review, and the Planon Software Implementation to name a few of the services provided. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the department has been developing an ever-evolving strategy toward isolation and quarantine solutions, as well as sharing information regarding items left behind by affected students. The department continues to diligently develop various plans for the upcoming semester, one of which includes the opening of Hubbard Hall as a quarantine and isolation housing location.

FACILITIES

Although on the surface level, the Facilities unit largely focuses on REHS maintenance and cleaning, there is a much grander connection between the team members and students within on-campus housing. Community engagement and understanding is an extremely important aspect of the services provided to students and their surrounding areas by this unit, which would, during “normal” circumstances, consist of frequent, personal conversations between students and staff both within and around campus. However, due to the pandemic, much of this has been compromised. On the other hand, there have been numerous and consistent efforts made toward the continuation of student and team member safety. These include physical distancing between team members and students, the use of stronger, more effective disinfectants, the installation of hand sanitizers, and increased building ventilation among other measures. Although there are many personal challenges being faced, there has been an unrelenting amount of care and regulation put in place in order to ensure safety and cleanliness of the facilities around campus and the students and team members who reside within them. The unit continues to evolve and grow with the impending challenges and previous successes in the face of these unfamiliar circumstances.
RESIDENCE EDUCATION AND HOUSING SERVICES UNITS

HOUSING ASSIGNMENT OFFICE

Acting as a call center for RHS, the Housing Assignments Office (HAO) has experienced a grand influx in communication and workload because of the pandemic and the changes it has brought alongside it. Overall, HAO handles a variety of information regarding departments and communication within Michigan State University, such as admissions, housing, financial aid, dining and parking, all of which is catered toward an extensive demographic ranging from prospective students and family members to alumni and outside firms. Even with double the amount of calls and emails from previous years, team members, who now work both remotely and on-site, have been keeping up with current happenings and act as a voice of comfort and information for students and family members.

Furthermore, the unit has been developing ideas for the upcoming housing sign-up for the fall 2021 semester and other anticipated changes. There has been a consistent effort to mirror the off-campus housing market as well, which has dramatically grown in response to the changes made to coursework and remote learning opportunities at MSU. Already, there have been major changes made in terms of spring 2021 housing assignments and planning, such as the move from October to January for student sign-up and remote assignments in order to minimize contact.

MSU UNION

The MSU Union makes a wide variety of resources available to students, as well as the surrounding community. These resources include the University Activities Board (UAB), MosaIC Multicultural Center, the Union Food Court, the North Neighborhood Engagement Center, a Spartan Spirit shop and many more. By providing these goods and services, the union aims to bring students together, whilst parallelly engaging the public through these open resources. As expected, a few of these in-person resources have closed or moved to entirely virtual engagement due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. In addition to this, events and entities such as the Arts & Crafts Fair, UAB activities and others, typically large gatherings have moved entirely to virtual activities or have been rescheduled for a later time. The MSU Union has continued to act as a safe space for community outreach and academic study for those students who currently reside on campus. COVID-19 regulations, as well as the state order, are being upheld through thorough and frequent cleanings, as well as furniture reduction and additional signage throughout the union remind students and staff of the importance of wearing face coverings and physically distancing. In addition to this, the MSU Union is excited to share a new service with students, staff and other community members: the Amazon locker hub. This is not only an extremely convenient resource, but it also ensures faster delivery and shipping of packages throughout campus.

OPERATIONS

Team members operating service centers are primarily responsible for the delivery of mail and packages, loaner items, such as keys and access cards, and connecting students to resources that may be useful for both on-campus and general student life. In many cases, these individuals are the first people prospective students and families, as well as on-campus students, see when they first enter MSU, which provides them with the unique opportunity to make a lasting first impression and establish personal relationships. Although much of their community engagement is largely integrated into their official business, staff members have the opportunity to personally support and encourage various initiatives within and around campus such as the It’s On Us Week of Action and many other opportunities provided by RHS and REHS departments. Unfortunately, however, much of the training, work and community engagement has been dramatically impacted by the pandemic, as most, if not all, events, such as keynote speakers and fundraising, are now conducted virtually. The department continues to grow and develop alongside the pandemic and its challenges, while finding unique ways to connect with staff and students personally, even throughout these tough times.

OUTREACH

The Outreach unit, which specializes in marketing through on-campus tours and maintaining both internal as well as external relations within RHS, housing, dining, staff and MSU as a whole has taken great adaptive steps in response to the coronavirus pandemic, some of which Outreach hopes to maintain for the coming generations of students. The unique learning opportunity the pandemic provoked has encouraged the department to switch to online, virtual tours, which have been extremely effective due to the lessening of the financial burden for out-of-state and international students. In response to this, Outreach is beginning to look toward the future, with the hopes of keeping this method in practice. Because the pandemic has affected team-building activities and general relationships between employees, Outreach has needed to implement safe, talking spaces for its team members to build relationships through breakout rooms during virtual training. The training itself also continues to uphold its previous standards, if not more, due to the sudden influx of information and the importance of proper, supportive communication with prospective students and parents. As always, the unit maintains thoughtfulness and accuracy within the information it shares to its audience and outside sources.

RESIDENCE EDUCATION

The Residence Education unit focuses on developing community and learning within residence halls by meeting with students individually, providing support, maintaining order, and encouraging various initiatives and support all while continuing to maintain a consistent focus on students. As of right now, this is being conducted through meetings on Zoom, virtual tours, open resources such as the Arts & Crafts Fair, virtual shopping, food distribution, and the continuation of support groups and other available resources that maintain a general focus on academics, social awareness, and the wellness of students. Examples can be seen through the available Counseling & Psychiatric Services, the Neighborhood Student Success offerings, and even virtual workout classes designed to get students involved and moving within the comfort and safety of their residence halls. Currently, the unit is exploring the idea of more in-person alternatives and weaning away from only virtual communication, while maintaining the safety of students and team members.

OUTREACH

Training within RHS, REHS and Michigan State University is run through several independent individuals who each specialize within one specific field in order to ultimately construct a well-polished, ever-evolving product. One particular focus is on onboarding, development and training, which consists both general as well as task- and department-specific aspects. Due to this, the developer must engage with both virtually as well as directly with the department trainers and new hire employees in order to perfect the specific training for the tasks at hand. Similar to how the tasks employees are required to perform has changed, training has also been largely adapted in order to uphold the COVID-19 regulations, meet the requirements for the department and provide basic information on how to discuss current news with teammates and virtually during these times. A virtual training course has been developed that aims to increase skill accessibility, all while maintaining transparency and consistency. Furthermore, a collective RHS REHS training and development hub is in the works to act as a repository for new hires alongside a new onboarding program. Various on-campus training developers and workplace educators have come together with a collaborative MSU training and development group where new ideas and general information is discussed.

TRAINING

18 SERVING STATE | WINTER 2021

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UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES BOARD
The University Activities Board (UAB) plans and organizes a variety of free events for students by students, which include activities such as crafts, music, concerts, comedians, recreational sports and other engaging special events, in order to enhance the college experience for all students at Michigan State University. Within the unit, there is a clear focus on community engagement both within the process of constructing these events as well as when they are carried out within and around campus. Even throughout the pandemic and with the regulations and restrictions in place, there has not been a hindrance of the interconnectedness of UAB and students at the university due to the numerous virtual events taking place on a regular basis. These activities include bingo, workout classes, music, craft nights, trivia, video game tournaments, motivational speakers and many more, all of which aim to encourage community engagement and have a general positive impact on students both on and off campus. This spring 2021 semester, UAB encourages students to look forward to more exciting upcoming events in order to come together as a community while enjoying fun entertainment.

UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE SERVICES
MSU’s University Conference Services department manages the logistics for conferences and events that use the residence halls, as well as guests staying within on-campus living centers, exchange and non-traditional students, and the coordination with the Kellogg and Breslin sales teams, just to name a few. The coronavirus pandemic has brought upon quite a few challenges due to the regulations that need to be met and the ever-evolving state order. Events such as the summer conference season, unfortunately, had to be cancelled, and rates to services have been changes in order to meet the shift in demand.

Sparty’s Market, located on Michigan State University’s campus, offers unique grocery shopping for students, faculty, staff and the community. Try our hot and cold grab-and-go selections made fresh daily. Find us at the corner of Kalamazoo and Harrison in 1855 Place, directly across from the Breslin Student Events Center. Metered parking directly in front of the store gets you in and out quickly and on your way! For changes due to COVID-19 restrictions, please visit eatatstate.com for the most up-to-date information.

HOURS (WHEN CLASSES ARE IN SESSION):
Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
Sunday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Throughout the fall/spring 2020-21, Culinary Services (CS) has been dedicated to supporting Spartans, keeping them nourished regardless of the circumstances. Amid the ever-evolving pandemic, which has created an array of challenges for foodservice providers, the team remains focused on keeping students safe, healthy and well fed.

When COVID-19 began to surge in Michigan and the university transitioned to virtual learning, CS remained flexible and adapted operations. As students were encouraged to return home and learn remotely from their permanent residence, operations swiftly evolved and conformed to new guidelines. The staff in East Neighborhood went the extra mile, developing a meal order and delivery system, overseeing production and distribution to students who were exhibiting symptoms and self-isolating.

Additionally, dining halls and retail locations quickly transitioned to a grab-and-go model, continuing to produce quality selections while reducing customer touch points and maintaining the highest safety standards. Chefs and cooks collaborated across units to re-imagine packaged products, working through food inventories to minimize waste and creating innovative recipes.

To back their efforts, the Food Stores procurement team has dedicated countless hours to securing disposables and supplies. Extra efforts were put toward sourcing products in high demand and acquiring to-go materials far beyond the normal volume. To help control costs for Food Stores, a CS group has also focused on developing an inventory program for implementation.

As the university shifted to summer sessions, Holmes Dining Hall, Sparty’s Market, and Sparty’s locations at McDonel Hall and the MSU Union remained open to serve the campus community. These operations dedicated time and energy to continuously modifying their framework to meet changing guidelines. The residential dining and retail teams showed a positive demeanor and upbeat attitude throughout the chaos and uncertainty.

The efforts of those who continue to support the department behind the scenes are especially valued for connecting with customers, crafting messages, keeping the campus community updated on operational changes and ensuring Spartans have important information in a time of need. This includes the marketing and communications staff, administrative team, and partners in Digital Strategy and Services and at the 1855 Place Welcome Desk.

In preparation for the return of students, faculty and support staff to campus, project teams worked tirelessly to provide maximum safety and uphold the excellent service CS prides itself on delivering. From revamping modes of service, to preparing a mobile app for pre-ordering, to formulating a plan for future grab-and-go expansion, the Culinary team has been forward-thinking and focused on future success.

The Planning and Projects Office’s attention to detail is remarkable, and the team’s hard work remapping all dining locations to include traffic flow, physical distancing markers and barriers was essential for CS’ success.

During the pandemic, CS also welcomed new members to its team from Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, Kellogg Catering and the State Room Restaurant. CS is so fortunate to have them as part of the department and proud of their efforts to be flexible and convert the hotel to quarantine and isolation housing to keep residents safe.

Despite tough decisions made by the Division of Residential and Hospitality Services and university administration, CS remains united and is committed to building upon its vision to nourish, inspire and enrich the Spartan community.

Even with the shift to remote learning last fall semester, CS is pressing on, emphasizing the importance of banding together as One Culinary. The concept of remaining united is one CS has focused on for well over a year as part of the Reimagining the Future initiative. Now more than ever, it’s evident that the department can accomplish anything as a cohesive team.

CULINARY SERVICES’ RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
The Marketing and Communications unit of Culinary Services (CS) creates and implements comprehensive marketing and communications programs to enhance the CS department’s image and facilitate internal and external communications. Regular community engagement has declined due to operational changes in response to the pandemic but not due to lack of interest by the community. Usually, the State Room Restaurant and Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center are frequently used for conferences and community events. Now, the hotel has become quarantine/isolation housing for on-campus students, and contracts were cancelled at the conference center due to occupancy restrictions from Michigan Governor Whitmer’s Executive Orders. In response to COVID-19, the Marketing and Communications unit has created communications to ensure students, faculty and staff feel safe as they dine at MSU. These communication pieces include a multitude of signage for safety measures implemented, physical distancing, seating capacity, cashless transactions and face coverings. The team also created plans for modified services along with plans for communicating those changes. Recently, Culinary Services launched a mobile ordering app, which has proven to be successful. The app is currently set up for orders at The Edge at Akers and South Pointe at Case dining halls and works with on-campus dining plans for payments. Brody Square and the MSU Union Food Court have been added for the spring semester. Spartan Cash is also accepted to support ordering from off-campus students and faculty and staff.

RESIDENTIAL DINING
Residential Dining is a unit within Culinary Services that oversees all nine dining halls on campus. Throughout fall and spring semesters, Residential Dining hosts events to drive engagement, including themed dinners and events in partnership with student organizations and campus departments. The team also has long-standing partnerships with local organizations to safely donate food and support those in need. Due to COVID-19 and the decreased number of students living on campus, fewer dining halls are open. Three dining halls are currently open to serve residents: Brody Square, The Edge at Akers and South Pointe at Case. Residential Dining continues to support the local community and partner with the MSU Student Food Bank to assist with nourishing Spartans in need. Last spring, Residential Dining team members quickly evolved operations and conformed to new guidelines as they were announced. This included a transition to grab-and-go dining, reimagining packaged products, and developing new menus to work through food inventory, minimize waste and create innovative recipes. In September, Transact Mobile Ordering launched, which is a mobile app that allows guests to preorder a meal for pickup at open residential dining halls. The pandemic has given the team an opportunity to evaluate existing processes and make further improvements.

RETAIL DINING
Retail Dining Services consists of Sparty’s retail operations overseeing all nine dining halls on campus. Throughout fall and spring semesters, Retail Dining hosts events to drive engagement, including themed dinners and events in partnership with student organizations and campus departments. The team also has long-standing partnerships with local organizations to safely donate food and support those in need. Due to COVID-19 and the decreased number of students living on campus, fewer dining halls are open. Three dining halls are currently open to serve residents: Brody Square, The Edge at Akers and South Pointe at Case. Residential Dining continues to support the local community and partner with the MSU Student Food Bank to assist with nourishing Spartans in need. Last spring, Residential Dining team members quickly evolved operations and conformed to new guidelines as they were announced. This included a transition to grab-and-go dining, reimagining packaged products, and developing new menus to work through food inventory, minimize waste and create innovative recipes. In September, Transact Mobile Ordering launched, which is a mobile app that allows guests to preorder a meal for pickup at open residential dining halls. The pandemic has given the team an opportunity to evaluate existing processes and make further improvements.

STARBUCKS
RHS operates licensed Starbucks stores that offer the complete Starbucks product line on campus. Currently, the only open on-campus Starbucks location is at 1855 Place. Prior to the pandemic, it was a priority for Starbucks to support the local community by offering monthly donations and encouraging guests to do the same. Starbucks is currently donating any food items and monetary donations to the MSU Student Food Bank. The team was not able to participate in its annual volunteering at the Student Organic Farms during the summer, since Starbucks campus operations were closed until Aug. 10. Due to the pandemic, Starbucks is taking extra safety precautions by closing lobby seating, limiting in-store capacity, and increasing the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing both in the public areas and service areas. All employees are required to wear face coverings and practice physical distancing, as well as complete a health questionnaire prior to beginning every shift. Starbucks is now participating in Eat at State’s Combo-X-Change program for dining plan holders, which includes any tall handcrafted beverage and a snack. Starbucks also now has mobile ordering capabilities with GrabItTo allow for a safe and fast experience.

SPARTY’S
Sparty’s convenience stores are located throughout campus to support the community. Students, faculty, support staff and campus guests visit these locations for grab-and-go meal options, to redeem their Combo-X-Change meal plan benefit, or to pick up snacks, beverages, convenience items or other product offerings. With locations all across campus, the Sparty’s team engages with a wide range of Spartans throughout their day, whether they are in between classes, teaching courses, taking a workday break or visiting for an event. In addition, Sparty’s supports the community through a variety of initiatives, including Help Tackle Hunger in the spring and partnerships for their refillable mug designs to spread awareness of different opportunities for Spartans to get involved. The opportunity to engage with the campus community is challenging but driven by a lesser amount of people on campus each day; however, Sparty’s continued to operate several local tours during the fall semester of 2020 and is available for those Spartans who are living, learning and working in East Lansing. Sparty’s has evaluated the Combo-X-Change meal plan benefit program to be more inclusive for each store. In addition, the team has implemented various safety measures, increased cleaning protocols and removed self-serve options. Sparty’s continues to evaluate products and complement offerings in residential and enhance grab-and-go meal options for quality and convenience.

MSU UNION FOOD COURT AND CROSROADS FOOD COURT
The Retail Food Courts are normally open to the public daily, with many off-campus customers, in both the MSU Union and the International Center. The International Center has been closed since spring 2020, and the MSU Union Food Court reopened in fall 2020. Many events cancelled due to the pandemic have resulted in a lack of business for the food courts. In response to COVID-19, the MSU Union Food Court has a limited capacity in accordance with current state regulations, with grab-and-go food only and closed dining room seating. The MSU Union Food Court has also installed Plexiglas barriers in all retail locations and eliminated all self-serve stations in order to limit customer touch points. The pandemic has altered operations to start offering grab-and-go in the Union Sparty’s retail location and became “All You Care To Eat” for all hours the MSU Union Food Court is open, maintaining the safety of students and team members.
CULINARY SERVICES UNITS

SPARTY’S MARKET

Sparty’s Market at 1855 Place carries a variety of products to meet students’ needs. Due to COVID-19, the store capacity has changed to allow 31 guests in the market at a time. Sparty’s Market has also adjusted its hours for older customers or those who may be immunocompromised to shop Saturdays and Sundays between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Face coverings are to be worn at all times within the store, and physical distancing is enforced while shopping. Cleaning protocols have also been updated within the store in order to provide a clean and protected area for guests. Since the start of the pandemic, there have been some changes made to the Spartys Market lunch menu with grab-and-go services put into place in order to limit contact as much as possible.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Support Services unit works to assist Food Stores, MSU Bakers and Spartan Linen Services. The unit prioritizes food safety and partners with many different MSU facilities, such as the dairy plant and meat lab. Since the beginning of COVID-19, the dairy plant temporarily shut down, so Support Services has not been able to work with them at this time. While there is little purchasing being done at this time, Support Services is working to maintain good relationships with its suppliers for the future. Many suppliers and vendor partners have been accommodating and are excited to come back soon. Support Services has been donating meals though the MSU Student Food Bank and other local community areas in order to use all purchased foods before they expire. They have also been assisting with isolation housing at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center by grocery shopping for quarantining residents and making sure all safety measures are being followed.

FOOD STORES

MSU Food Stores provides food and food service-related supplies to licensed food service facilities on campus. This includes all Culinary Services operations located in residence halls, MSU Bakeries and retail locations across campus such as Sparty’s, Starbucks, MSU Union Food Court, Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, Kellogg Catering, and MSU Concessions. In support of the Spartan community, Food Stores provides warehouse tours for Supply Chain Management (SCM) and Human Nutrition and Foods (HNF) classes. A virtual tour has been created for students in these classes in response to COVID-19. MSU Food Stores also partners with the MSU Beef and Swine farm operations, MSU Student Organic Farm, and Bailey GREENhouse and Urban Farm to procure fresh produce and MSU-raised animals for use by Culinary Services. To aid in community relief, MSU Food Stores donates food products to the MSU Student Food Bank and the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Food Stores has worked with Residential Dining to provide box lunch meals for families and students who could not eat in the dining halls during move-in due to take-out only regulations. The team also partnered with Culinary Services and the MSU Student Food Bank on a large food distribution event that occurred the weekend after classes started this past fall semester. MSU Food Stores has also assembled and distributed 1,500 personal care kits to the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, and continues to adhere to health and safety protocols established by the State of Michigan, Ingham County Health Department, MSU and RHS.

SPARTAN LINEN SERVICES

Spartan Linen Services (SLS) provides linens and uniforms to all departments across campus, including all Culinary Services and retail operations within the residence halls and Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center. SLS works closely with the MSU Sexual Assault Health Care Program to assist in setting up its account in the Student Services building, furnishing them with all needed items such as gowns, towels and pillow cases and sheets. In support of student success, SLS provides plant tours for many departments across campus such as Supply Chain and Hospitality Services. Community events SLS works with, such as the Polar Plunge and Kilwin’s Picnic, are cancelled due to COVID-19. However, SLS will resume its support for these programs once they restart. In response to the pandemic, there has been a large reduction of contact with all departments and programs across MSU. SLS remains open but is not currently delivering students or providing tours. SLS has also tightened its budget and reduced its staffing model. SLS has also taken precautions to allow for better disinfecting and sanitizing, along with cleaning work areas more frequently. There is now contactless delivery and pick-up for SLS customers, which no longer requires signatures on invoices. The team has also added four new accounts within the medical field during this pandemic, along with multiple labs across campus.

MSU BAKERS

MSU Bakers prepares baked goods for Residential Dining, Sparty’s, Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, MSU Business offices, and academic offices. Oftentimes, MSU Bakers is part of MSU community events such as homecoming, ribbon cuttings of new offices or buildings, student welcome events, and more. Year-round, MSU Bakers gives 50 cents per loaf of bread purchased to the MSU Student Food Bank as well as other seasonal fundraisers that benefit causes such as the American Cancer Society and American Heart Association. After being closed from the end of March to mid-July, MSU Bakers opened back up with limited staffing and hours. While the MSU Bakers’ storefront is currently closed due to COVID-19, its website, msubakers.com, allows anyone to purchase their products. Recently, MSU Bakers started off-campus delivery to specific zip codes in the area. The bakery also has plans to open a storefront in the International Center after the end of the pandemic.  

SPARTAN LINEN SERVICES

The Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center has been designated as quarantine and isolation space to support the safe return of a limited number of students. The team is thankful to be able to provide a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment for Spartans who need to isolate or quarantine. Additionally, the Kellogg Food and Beverage team has been preparing and delivering meals for students isolating or quarantining in residence hall room. In a normal year, Kellogg hosts special events like the President’s Brunch, the Blanchard Public Service Forum and many other important Spartan celebrations. Kellogg also serves as the host location for the Lansing Regional Chamber’s Economic Club Luncheons and many other important community and continuing education programs. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Kellogg has not been able to welcome the community back for large banquet events. However, it maintains regular contact with partners and clients and looks forward to hosting events soon. The Kellogg team is working together on formats and menus for physically distanced events upon reopening. The Kellogg Food and Beverage team has some exciting pickup meal packages in the works, and the chef is planning an exciting virtual spin on one of its traditional holiday events. The State Room Restaurant at Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center has been closed since March due to COVID-19. It has transitioned its usual catering models to include curbside and pickup options from the hotel.

KELLOGG HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER AND KELLOGG CATERING

The Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center has been designated as quarantine and isolation space to support the safe return of a limited number of students. The team is thankful to be able to provide a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment for Spartans who need to isolate or quarantine. Additionally, the Kellogg Food and Beverage team has been preparing and delivering meals for students isolating or quarantining in residence hall room. In a normal year, Kellogg hosts special events like the President’s Brunch, the Blanchard Public Service Forum and many other important Spartan celebrations. Kellogg also serves as the host location for the Lansing Regional Chamber’s Economic Club Luncheons and many other important community and continuing education programs. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Kellogg has not been able to welcome the community back for large banquet events. However, it maintains regular contact with partners and clients and looks forward to hosting events soon. The Kellogg team is working together on formats and menus for physically distanced events upon reopening. The Kellogg Food and Beverage team has some exciting pickup meal packages in the works, and the chef is planning an exciting virtual spin on one of its traditional holiday events. The State Room Restaurant at Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center has been closed since March due to COVID-19. It has transitioned its usual catering models to include curbside and pickup options from the hotel.