

LOUD & CLEAR

COLLEGE CONNECTIONS **ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

We've turned fifteen! Since 2008, LSA's College Connections Program has enlisted recent liberal arts graduates to travel throughout the country and interview alumni and parents regarding their experiences at Michigan, LSA, and beyond. We have heard thousands of stories from people in all walks of life. Here's everything we've learned.

TIMELINE OF THE PROGRAM

Take a look at everything that the College Connections Program has **accomplished in the last 15 years.**

2008

The College Connections Program was launched and thus began the largest documented oral history project at U-M. The initial feedback was used to improve advising and enhance curriculum. Only alumni were interviewed.

2011

The LSA Young Alumni Council (YAC) was established in four regions and YAC members began mentoring current LSA students during the summer. This led to the creation of the LSA Summer Mentorship Program. The College Connections team also began interviewing parents of current LSA students at this time.

2013

The Young Alumni Newsletter was launched.

2016

The LSA Opportunity Hub was launched, where students are able to form their professional identity through coaching, interactive classes, alum-hosted internships, networking opportunities, etc.

2018

The College Connections team celebrated its 10th anniversary!

2019

Dean Anne Curzan started her first term as Dean of LSA.

2022

The LSA Well-being Fund was launched. Two student well-being advocates were hired by the college.



OUR FIFTEENTH YEAR

In our fifteenth year, College Connections talked to

397
PEOPLE

319 80% / IN-PERSON

53 13% / ZOOM

25 6% / PHONE



NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS BY POPULATION

ALUMS & PARENTS

332 Alums
97 Parents

GRADUATION YEARS

4	1960s	80	2000s
25	1970s	113	2010s
30	1980s	31	2020s
49	1990s		

TRAVEL, TRAVEL, TRAVEL

This year, the College Connections team has **traveled 42,971 miles** to meet you! We've driven 20 rental cars, slept in 26 hotels and visited a ridiculous amount of coffee shops, all for you.



While we may not have much time to explore the cities we travel to, we definitely get to know (and try) a lot of their coffee shops. Here are some of our favorites:

- Gjusta - Venice, CA
- Bowerman's on 8th - Holland, MI
- The Rabbit's Foot - New Orleans, LA
- Cafe Intermezzo - Atlanta, GA
- Lofty Coffee - Solana Beach, CA
- Americano Lounge - Nashville, TN
- La Brioche - Madison, WI
- Good Ambler - Chicago, IL
- Arabica Coffee - Portland, ME
- Collins Quarter - Savannah, GA
- Compass Coffee - Washington, D.C.
- Maman - New York City, NY



ALL ABOUT YOU

To better understand the Michigan and LSA experience, we seek to interview people with a wide variety of backgrounds. That is what makes LSA so special and what makes these interviews so meaningful. **Here's a little peek at who we met in our fifteenth year.**

LSA offers 85 majors, sub-majors and other degree programs, as well as over 100 minors. Although we cannot reach everyone, this year we met with alums from **over 55 majors**, and these departments were represented the most:

Anthropology

Biology

Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience

Communication Studies

Economics

English

History

Neuroscience

Political Science

Psychology

**Here's how (and where)
the majority of you spent
your time at Michigan:**

CGIS Study Abroad

Dance Marathon

Greek System

Internships

LSA Student Government

OPTIMIZE

UROP

Work

POST LSA

THE POWER OF AN LSA EDUCATION AS EXPRESSED BY OUR ALUMNI



I was a Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) major and it was the best decision I could have made. The analytical and critical thinking skills that I learned were so important, especially as I applied to jobs after graduating. I felt like this was my biggest edge. I was able to approach problems with a wider lens and I felt like my unique major and multifaceted skill set set me apart from others while interviewing and could be applied to a wide variety of jobs.”

— Evan Friedland (A.B. '19)



I had never experienced anything like LSA before. I found myself surrounded by people who were so diverse, so truly open and what was more incredible was the fact that people embraced those differences. I learned so much at LSA and not just in the classroom. Everything I know about the world, everything I believe in was somehow influenced there.”

— Leah Brecheisen (A.B. 1996)

WHAT YOU'RE DOING

One of the most powerful things about an LSA degree is that it is so flexible and pragmatic. Grads from every major find employment in a variety of fields. Some have a clear and expected path while others find surprises at every turn. Here are the **top industries** represented by our LSA alumni in our interviews this year:

- MEDICINE/HEALTH
- EDUCATION
- CONSULTING
- LEGAL
- MARKETING/ADVERTISING
- GOVERNMENT
- TECHNOLOGY
- ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT
- RESEARCH



[CHECK OUT HOW LSA ALUMNI UTILIZE THEIR MAJORS IN THE WORKFORCE](#)

WHAT YOU SAID

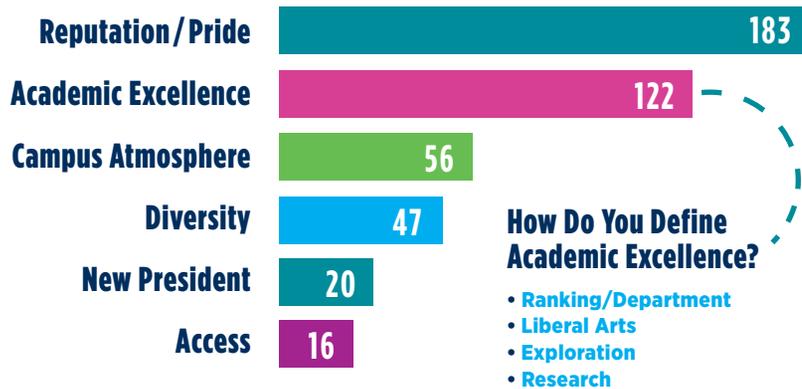
The College Connections program strives to gain constant, current, and constructive feedback from our LSA alumni and parent communities so that LSA can continue to thrive in the years to come. We want to assure you that we have heard your feedback, Loud & Clear.



The College Connections Program has been a foundation of Annual Giving & External Relations at the College of LSA for 15 years. It was started as a way to make important connections with LSA alumni (and now current parents), and provide feedback that guides the future of the college. Along the way, CC Coordinators have had thousands of meaningful conversations, hearing about wonderful times on campus, tough moments of resilience, and careers that are changing the world. Each of these meetings help guide our path and together make us a better LSA community.”

— Michael Reed
LSA Director of Annual Giving and External Relations

ALUMNI STRENGTHS



ALUMNI CONCERNS



PARENT STRENGTHS



PARENT CONCERNS



WHAT WE DID



The liberal arts have never been more relevant or foundational than they are right now. The opportunities for discovery and transformation are breath-taking. And the challenges we face are daunting and complex. The solutions will require rigorous research and innovation that reflect a deep understanding of the natural world and the human condition: our emotions, histories, vulnerabilities, behaviors, and beliefs. The education we need in this moment must pair rigor and empathy, inspire flexible and creative thought, and ask us to fully reimagine our world as it needs to be. With our core values at the center of our work — exploration, common good, inclusion, well-being, and integrity — LSA is working together to reimagine the world and create positive, purposeful change.

I am thankful for the thoughtful and insightful feedback I receive from the College Connections program. The conversations our coordinators have with alumni and parents, like you, have a real impact on the work we do at LSA. Your feedback allows me to continue to respond to the most pressing needs of our community. It helps us continue to be an ever more diverse community where everyone can thrive, where everyone knows their voice matters in advancing our shared mission. Thank you for giving of your time and expertise — and, I hope, reliving some good University of Michigan memories."

— Anne Curzan, LSA Dean

Discover how LSA is Meeting the Moment by tackling the world's most daunting problems, reinvigorating liberal arts education and research, and making it more equitable and relevant than ever.



OUR UPDATES

One of the things that makes LSA and Michigan so special is the amount of resources students have access to. These resources continue to expand and change in hopes of serving students better, in part due to the feedback we have heard from you. Here's what is going on at Michigan now.

- [Opportunity Hub](#)
- [Camp Davis](#)
- [New England Literature Program](#)
- [Michigan in Washington](#)
- [Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program](#)
- [Biological Station](#)
- [Center for Global and Intercultural Study](#)
- [Service Learning](#)
- [Center for Social Solutions](#)
- [National Center for Institutional Diversity](#)
- [LSA Research Museums Center](#)



“ Push yourself out of your comfort zone and be willing to try something new. Take classes in the things you’re really excited about even if you think it won’t be useful, because it will.”

— Kathleen Horsfall (A.B. '19)

“ Don’t sweat the small stuff and there is a lot more that is small than you realize.”

— Benjamin Levin (A.B. '13)

“ My advice to current students is to explore Michigan. Take any classes that seem interesting to you, even if it isn’t part of your major. Your time at Michigan goes by fast so try to make the most of it by following your curiosity.”

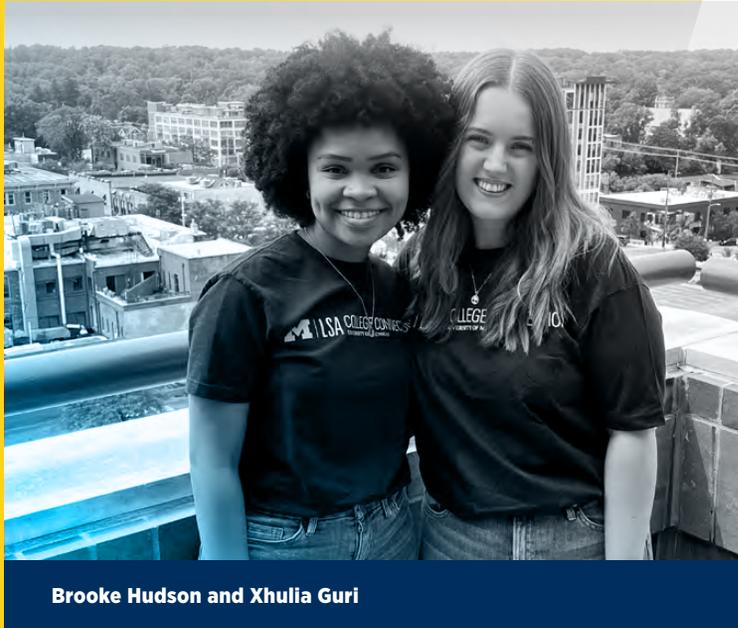
— J. Kim (A.B. 1992)

“ Practice being an adult now. Balance your life right now in the way that you want it to look when you’re working post graduation. Make time for yourself but also be social.”

— Ameya Gehi (A.B. '18)



ABOUT THE COORDINATORS



Brooke Hudson and Xhulia Guri

Xhulia Guri

Xhulia graduated from LSA in May 2022 with an A.B. in International Studies and English. During her time at LSA, Xhulia was fortunate to receive a number of scholarships, including the LSA Internship Scholarship, which allowed her to pursue an internship abroad with the Municipality of Tirana. Xhulia worked as a research assistant for the Institute for Social Research and the U-M School of Public Health, where she first learned about development and opportunity-building for students. On campus, Xhulia was also actively involved with Michigan Foreign Policy Council and Xylem Magazine, where she developed meaningful relationships with other students. Xhulia loves connecting with the LSA community and discovering new places.

Brooke Hudson

Brooke graduated from LSA in May 2023 with an A.B. in Psychology. She is a Detroit native and an alumna of University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods. During her time at LSA, Brooke was an Alumni Association LEAD scholar and a recipient of the Mitchell and Shirley Raskin Scholarship. Brooke held a variety of positions at the university as a dental school barista, student coordinator at Oxford, program assistant in the Office of Housing and Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, user experience design intern for LSA, and computer consultant for Information Technology Services. In her spare time, Brooke loves to meet new people and try out new restaurants in downtown Ann Arbor.



Farewell, Paige & MaryRose!

We're celebrating Paige and MaryRose! Although we miss them, we know that they're doing incredible things: Paige is now a Marketing Coordinator at Michigan Creative and MaryRose is a Major Gift Officer at U-M Ross School of Business.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

- **Kai Mason (2019-2021)**

is using her bilingual skills as a project manager at Fujitsu Research of America.

- **Selena Joarder (2018-2020)**

works to integrate child welfare and behavioral health services as a cross-system trainer for the Allegheny County Department of Human Services in Pittsburgh, PA.

- **Anna (Thompson) Wojan (2017-2020)**

is part of the LSA Major Giving team meeting alumni and donors in the southeastern states.

- **Joe Murray (2016-2018)**

is a part of the LSA Major Giving team meeting alumni and donors in Arizona, Southern California, and Utah.

- **Amanda (Harvey) Piazzon (2016-2018)**

is living in Cardiff, Wales, working as a Project Support Associate at Deloitte.

- **Samantha (Lemmen) Stears (2016-2017)**

is a part of the LSA Major Giving team meeting alumni and donors in the central states.

- **Avery Gleason (2015-2016)**

works for the Office of University Development in Ann Arbor as a business intelligence analyst.

- **Patrick Pjesky (2015-2016)**

works for Google as a financial analyst in London, UK.

- **Christina Pechette (2014-2016)**

lives in Minneapolis, MN, and works as an associate director of clinical strategy at UnitedHealthcare.

- **Monica Philipp-Adams (2014-2016)**

is the Regional Director of Development at the U-M Law School.

- **Ellie Chessen (2012-2015)**

works for Deloitte as a manager of strategy & analytics in Washington, D.C.

- **Mark Chou (2013-2015)**

lives in San Francisco, CA, and works at Facebook as a project manager.

- **Kathleen Hinkley (2011-2014)**

is a grateful family philanthropy officer at the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

- **Jenny Howard (2009-2012)**

is pursuing a Masters of Divinity degree at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

- **Elizabeth (Williams) Blouin (2009-2012)**

works for the Office of University Development as a director of major gifts in Washtenaw County and Southeast Michigan.

- **Tina Sula (2009-2012)**

is a philanthropic advisor at the Jewish Federation in Detroit. She also is a lecturer in U-M's Program in International and Comparative Studies (PICS).



THANK YOU & CONNECT WITH US!

Thank you! We appreciate all of the thoughtful feedback, sincere conversations and your commitment to LSA. If there is anything that you'd like to share with us, you can do so [here](#). We are grateful for your participation in the College Connections Program.