Graduate Leadership Summit 2020

*Saturday, October 31st, 2020*

The pandemic has rattled all of us, and one of the most universal impacts has been a comprehensive and distressing sense of isolation.  We are separated from each other and from physical spaces, separated from the things that we normally count on to sustain us.  This year’s Leadership Summit will focus on the theme of Connection: connecting to ourselves, to each other, to our work and to a sense of hope.  As leaders, we need to develop and sharpen all of the skills in our toolkit to keep ourselves meaningfully connected and to lead effectively in our spheres of influence.

**10:00-11:00am: Welcome and Plenary by Dr. Meg Akehi**

***Skills: Community building, managing time/energy, coping with uncertainty, fostering hope***

Dr. Akehi will kick off the Summit with a welcome and introduction to the Leadership Institute, which houses several other leadership development programs that you can take advantage of while at MSU. Her opening remarks will also unpack this year’s theme of Connection. She will address practical ways to find and foster connection with self and others, while also staying connected to a sense of hope and purpose. The skills we need to stay connected are the same skills we need to lead effectively, and we need them now more than ever.

**11:00-3:00pm: Workshop Series (attend as many as you like)**

**11:00- 12:00pm:** **Leadership as Reinvention: Adapting in Times of Crisis by Dr. Pero Dagbovie.**

***Skills: Intellectual flexibility, environmental assessment, critical thinking***

Successful leaders must be able to gauge their environment accurately and match their plans and strategies to the unique demands of their environment. It requires staying connected to our own sense of purpose and values while adjusting how we function, reinventing ourselves as needed. This skill has never been more necessary or more difficult as it has been during the pandemic we are facing today. Dr. Pero Dagbovie will share his insights with us about how to continually adjust in the midst of a crisis.

**12:00 - 1:00pm: Tools for Building Emotional Resilience by Lisa Laughman**

***Skills: Emotional resilience, self-awareness***

In this workshop, we will view a brief video followed by a small group discussion. This video introduces the Health4U Resilience Training Model developed by lead emotional wellness consultant, Lisa Laughman. We will have the opportunity to learn a little about each of the 6 theories embedded in the model. This introductory course will highlight 3 principles of healthy human psychological functioning that will help you shift towards an inside-out understanding of your moment to moment experience of life. Lisa will also offer a 6-word framework to help you process your emotions with greater ease and respond to difficult life challenges more effectively. This practical framework will help you begin to practice resilience right away.

**1:00 - 2:00pm: Skills for Navigating Imposter Syndrome in the Context of Leadership by Drs. Olivia Scott and Yvonne Connelly**

***Skills: Resilience, self-advocacy, reality testing***

Many of us find ourselves comparing our work and our performance to an imaginary ideal graduate student. We know that this ideal student is smarter, works harder, and is much better respected than we are, and we are fearful that one day, someone is going to poke right through our façade and we will be exposed. Such self-doubt, known as the Imposter Syndrome, can be crippling and is especially problematic in higher education institutions. These feelings can be even more overwhelming for those in leadership positions, as the stakes, expectations and visibility all get higher. This workshop will help graduate students identify imposterism and understand both the internal and external factors that maintain it. Ways to manage imposterism will also be discussed, as well as tools for selecting professional contexts that promote thriving rather than perceived inadequacy.

**2:00 to 3:00 pm Methodology as a Lifestyle Choice; Reflections on Research Practices Inside and Outside the Academy by Dr. Vivek Vellanki**

***Skills: Critical reflection, ethical decision-making***

In this session, we will think about research methodology and the varied approaches that scholars adopt. Using his own journey exploring various methodological approaches, Vivek will discuss ethical and moral questions that will help us examine our interests, commitments, and disciplinary agendas for doing research. These questions will help us reflect on how, where, why, and with whom we do research and to briefly explore other possibilities.

**3:00-4:30 Panel of Graduate Student Leaders**

***Skills: Self-care, community building, motivation***

The panel will be facilitated by Ronald Asiimwe, Co-coordinator of the Leadership Institute. The panel questions will focus on how these graduate students cultivate the qualities of self-care, compassion, connection, courage, and joy as leaders.

Speaker Bios

**Dr. Megumi Akehi, Associate Director of Graduate Student Life & Wellness**

Dr. Akehi is the Associate Director of Graduate Student Life and Wellness, a collaboration between The Graduate School and Student Affairs and Services.  In her role, she seeks to create opportunities for wellness across all sectors of a graduate student’s life: intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, social and occupational.  She holds a Ph.D .in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education (HALE) from MSU, an M.A. in Counseling from Ashland Theological Seminary, and a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Michigan.  Her research interests include graduate student socialization, identity development, and leadership.  Prior to her role with GSLW, Dr. Akehi served as a mental health counselor at MSU, with an emphasis on serving graduate students, college athletes and non-traditional student.  She also has a background as a consultant for individuals and organizations concerning mental health issues, team dynamics, conflict resolution, leadership development and personal development.

**Dr. Yvonne Connelly, Staff Psychologist at MSU CAPS**

Dr. Connelly is from New York City, New York – Manhattan to be exact. She joined MSU CAPS as a psychologist in 2018 and has over 18 years of clinical experience. Yvonne is bilingual and fluent in Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys reading, crossword puzzles, music, dancing, and traveling. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from St. Johns University, an M.S. in Counseling from Hunter College, and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Union Institute Graduate School. Her professional Interests include: mood disorders, international students, substance abuse, and working with the multiracial and biracial population

**Dr. Pero Dagbovie, University Distinguished Professor in the Department of History and the Associate Dean in the Graduate School at Michigan State University.**

Dr. Dagbovie’s specific responsibilities in the Graduate School include coordinating the King-Chavez-Parks FFF Program, the TIAA-CREF Ruth Simms Hamilton Graduate Merit Fellowship, the Academic Achievement Graduate Assistantships, and the Emergency Fellowships. He helps advise graduate students active in the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Program at MSU, and also works with the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP). A member of the university’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee and Strategic Planning Steering Committee as well as the College of Social Science Dean’s Advisory Board for Diversity and Inclusion, much of his work focuses on planning and implementing the Graduate School’s goals related to diversity and inclusion for graduate students.

Dr. Dagbovie is the Editor of The Journal of African American History, the oldest and leading journal devoted to scholarship on African American history. He is also on the editorial boards of several scholarly journals, including The Journal for the Study of Radicalism, The Journal of Black Studies, Modern American History, and The Michigan Historical Review. He is the author of six books and numerous articles and essays. His most recent book project was published in 2018 and explores contemporary representations of African American history in U.S. popular culture and politics. Under the auspices of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, from 2008 until 2012, he served as the principal investigator for the Carter G. Woodson Home (NHS) and completed the historic resource study for the Woodson Home. Over the last decade, he has served as the major adviser for more than 15 graduate students who earned their doctorates and are now teaching in colleges and universities.

**Lisa Laughman, LSMW, Employee Assistance Program Counselor, Emotional Wellness Consultant**

Lisa is a licensed clinical social worker who holds a B.A in Social Work from Eastern Michigan University and an M.A. in Social Work from Michigan State University. Lisa has worked in the arenas of addictions counseling, foster care, and employee assistance counseling. Lisa has served the University as an employee assistance counselor since 2003 and as an emotional wellness consultant since 2005. Lisa is the facilitator of the Sustainable High Performance class offered in partnership with MSU Human Resources. This class helps people gain the skills required to live at the intersection of healthy and high performing.

Lisa's counseling and emotional wellness coaching is centered in several evidence-based theories including Acceptance Commitment Theory (ACT), Shame Resilience Theory (SRT), and several system theories that address issues of power and privilege based on race, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation and other human differences. Lisa's work is also heavily influenced by Three Principles of healthy human functioning. Lisa has recently become a Certified Daring Way™ Facilitator who provides transformational learning experiences based on the shame resilience research of Dr Brené Brown.

Outside of her work at MSU, Lisa is the founder of Wisdom Heart Life a counseling and coaching service dedicated to helping people live their life lined up with their deepest wisdom and their greatest sense of meaning and purpose. Lisa's enjoys moments spent with her 3 incredible adult children and her amazing partner, family, and friends. Her favorite way to spend a summer day is on the edge of a Great Lake or in her kayak on quiet waters.

**Dr. Olivia Scott, Staff Psychologist at MSU CAPS**

Dr. Scott was born in Virginia and calls it home, but spent about half of her childhood in Luxembourg and Canada. It was in these places that she learned French, although now she is a little rusty when speaking it. She joined MSU CAPS as a Staff Psychologist in 2019. Dr. Scott was raised on traveling and continues to love visiting new places. Her other interests include Star Wars, going to the movies, playing most sports, meeting new people, and having a good laugh. She is also passionate about media representation and promoting the stories and visibility of underrepresented groups. She holds a B.A in Psychology at Messiah College, an M.S in Counseling at Loyola University Maryland, and a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at West Virginia University. Her specialties and clinical interests include: working with students from minoritized groups, identity development and conflict, relationship and family concerns, religious/spiritual concerns, and working with student athletes.

**Dr. Vivek Vellanki, Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society at Indiana University.**  
Dr. Vellanki earned his Ph.D. in Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education from Michigan State University. His scholarly and artistic work is centered on issues of migration, transnationalism, and youth identity/culture. He draws on visual methodologies and research-creation in order to question the boundaries between scholarly/creative work. Dr. Vellanki’s dissertation examined the experiences/stories of immigrants and refugees in the U.S. using the photographic medium. He curated an exhibition titled Do you have anything to declare? featuring his dissertation work in the fall of 2019. He has worked with teachers and youth in India and the U.S. in exploring the role of the arts and the possibilities for envisioning the classroom as a site for exploration, play, and imagining socially just futures. At IU, Vivek’s work explores the relationship between photography, migration, and youth identity/culture through a collaboration with South Asian youth living in the area.