



Office of Academic
Multicultural Initiatives

ANNUAL REPORT



2023-2024



OAMI BY THE NUMBERS

2023-2024

11,000+

Program, initiative, and event participants

2,300+

Coaching sessions

160

Events and training workshops

970+

Tutoring sessions

\$210K

In grant funding awarded to students

93

Students employed

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A MESSAGE FROM OAMI'S DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

I am pleased to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report for the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI) at the University of Michigan. This year has been one of remarkable growth and transformation for OAMI, highlighted by a major leadership change and significant advancements in our programs and initiatives.

In October 2023, we celebrated the retirement of our long-term director, Gloria Derr Taylor, and I was honored to step in as the third director of OAMI. This transition was uniquely significant as it coincided with the 35th anniversary of our office, a milestone commemorated with a symposium that drew over 250 participants. As we celebrated our history, OAMI's commitment to promoting student success and fostering an inclusive campus environment remained steadfast, guiding our vision for the future.

Our flagship program, SuccessConnects, achieved new milestones this year. We implemented a comprehensive recruitment plan, leading to a 9% increase in student registration and serving 576 students. The program's expansion included 37 community and skill-building workshops, alongside enhanced tutoring services, culminating in 979 tutoring sessions and over 2,300 coaching sessions during the Fall and Winter semesters.

OAMI's collaboration with the State of Michigan was further strengthened through the renewal of two critical grants. The M-Connect program, bolstered by the KCP MICUP Grant, broadened its reach to include transfer students from all in-state community colleges. Meanwhile, the M-STEP (4-S) program exceeded its recruitment goals, enrolling 66 students.

Our multicultural programming continued to enrich the campus culture through various initiatives and events. Notably, OAMI's First-Generation Gateway reached its highest attendance, with 828 students participating in six signature events. Additionally, we launched the Dreamer Scholarship, which provided over \$100,000 in funding to undocumented and DACAmented students and advocated for policies to support internships for this population.

OAMI proudly hosted three major campus-wide events: the 38th annual MLK Symposium and Keynote Lecture, the Juneteenth Symposium, and the fiftieth anniversary of the Dance for Mother Earth Powwow, attracting over 7,000 attendees collectively.

We also transitioned the Men of Color Leading & Investing in Community (M-CLIC) program into a university-wide mentorship initiative, successfully engaging 44 male students of color through the "CLIC-N-CUTZ" Barbershop Series.

Our cultural graduation celebrations flourished, with over 500 students participating across seven ceremonies, fostering a strong sense of belonging among our diverse student body.

Through Student Academic Multicultural Initiatives (SAMI) grants, we allocated \$110,000 to student-led initiatives that promote multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion. These grants facilitated cultural awareness events, educational workshops, and community service projects.

OAMI's impact this year is reflected in the elevated levels of student participation, with over 11,000 participants across various activities and programs. Our Marketing & Communication team also expanded our outreach efforts, launching a new website and Instagram channel, significantly boosting engagement with both the campus and the broader community.

Looking ahead, OAMI has set ambitious goals for the upcoming school year, focusing on enhancing academic success coaching, strengthening partnerships, and increasing our capacity through external funding. We are committed to addressing challenges and finding strategic solutions to support our diverse student population as we move forward. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the entire OAMI staff for their dedication and contributions to this report.

Thank you for your continued support of OAMI and our mission to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for all students at the University of Michigan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Dawson". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and larger than the rest of the letters.

Rachel Dawson, J.D.
Director

MISSION

The Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI) at the University of Michigan supports and promotes academic excellence, leadership development, and multicultural understanding through innovative programs, services, and initiatives. We empower students to achieve their full potential and celebrate their unique backgrounds and experiences while enriching the campus community.

By providing opportunities for campus leadership, we prepare future global leaders to contribute positively to their communities and the world.

VISION

OAMI envisions a campus that celebrates diversity, ensures equity, and provides all students with the resources and opportunities to excel academically and personally.

We strive to be a national leader in fostering an inclusive educational environment that values and integrates diverse perspectives. Through our commitment to innovation, collaboration, and community engagement, we aim to cultivate a culture of belonging and prepare students to lead and inspire positive change in a multicultural and interconnected world.



VALUES

Our commitment to strengthening the connection between academics and multiculturalism guides our mission.

We believe that:

- 1** Multiculturalism and diversity are synonymous with excellence, growth, and academic achievement.
- 2** Multiculturalism is an essential and distinctive aspect of our campus community.
- 3** Respect and appreciation for each student, faculty, staff, and community member is a core value that motivates us.
- 4** All students can achieve and thrive at the university with the proper support and resources.
- 5** Collaboration and relationship building with students, faculty, staff, and external constituencies is critical to everything we do.

To carry out our mission, vision, and values, OAMI seeks to:

Promote Academic Success

Provide tutoring, mentoring, academic coaching, and well-being resources to help students reach their educational goals and to improve academic outcomes of underrepresented and underserved student populations.

Advance Multicultural Understanding

Organize cultural events, dialogues, and initiatives that celebrate diversity, promote cross-cultural understanding, and increase students' sense of belonging and inclusion.

Facilitate Leadership Development

Offer leadership training, workshops, financial support, and opportunities to students and student organizations to engage in campus and community leadership roles.

Enhance Campus Engagement and Climate

Encourage and facilitate student involvement in community service, social justice, and civic engagement activities and work to improve the overall campus climate by supporting activities that celebrate a diverse and inclusive culture.

Reflecting on over three decades of service and engagement

35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



In 2024, we celebrated OAMI's thirty-fifth anniversary with a full-day symposium titled, "Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Present, Building for the Future." Led by our new director, Rachel Dawson, this event was an opportunity to reflect on our journey, the impact we've made, and the challenges both old and new that lie ahead. Through this gathering, we aimed to set the stage for a renewed commitment to serving the university community with dedication and innovation.

Born from the sacrifice of student activists

Since its establishment, OAMI has been at the forefront of promoting a campus environment that values diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our multicultural and academic programs have played a crucial role in recruiting, retaining, and graduating racially, culturally, and economically diverse students. But these advancements were built on the tireless effort and sacrifice of student activists.

In January 1987, after racially charged incidents and a lack of action from university leadership, students organized to protest the poor racial climate. They

demanded increased minority representation, anti-discrimination policies, and the creation of an Office of Minority Affairs (OMA). With Reverend Jesse Jackson mediating, the university made six concessions in March 1987, including establishing OMA, to support minority students, faculty, and staff. In 1993, OMA was renamed the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives to reflect its expanded mission.

BLACK ACTION MOVEMENT LEGACY TOUR

The origin of OAMI is just one chapter in U-M's rich history of campus activism. We are thrilled to announce a new initiative that invites prospective students and the community to explore this legacy. The project features videos and photos documenting various eras of campus protests and will soon include an in-person tour of spaces brought into being by student demands.

Learn more at:

oami.umich.edu/bam



Exploring current trends in student support

The anniversary symposium featured two insightful panels focused on understanding our current campus climate. The first panel brought together university leaders who specialize in academic success and student services. They shared valuable lessons learned in supporting students post-COVID, examined the impact of emerging technologies on student success services, and discussed strategies for maintaining multicultural initiatives despite legislative attacks on DEI efforts.

Recognizing the importance of student perspectives, the second panel showcased a diverse group of students sharing their experiences at the university during these challenging times. Their candid discussions highlighted both the obstacles and opportunities they face, offering a nuanced view of the essential elements needed to create effective and comprehensive support systems. The students recounted stories of discrimination and resilience, and shared optimism and advice for future generations.

“This celebration allowed us to honor the important work that forged and grew OAMI. I’m excited to take the baton and lead us into the future, letting our commitment to student success and belonging guide our path.”

Rachel Dawson
Director of OAMI

Honoring OAMI’s outgoing leader

The day concluded with a heartfelt retirement party for our former director, Gloria Derr Taylor. The celebration was a tribute to Gloria’s innovative approaches to program development and her unwavering dedication to student success. University leaders and former staff members reminisced about her significant contributions and lasting impact on the OAMI community. Damon Williams, a former employee and now a leading expert in strategic diversity leadership and youth development, delivered an inspiring keynote address. The League Ballroom was filled with joy, reflection, and a deep sense of community, perfectly encapsulating the spirit and mission of OAMI.



OAMI alum Damon Williams (left) gives a rousing keynote, and Gloria and university leadership celebrate and connect.



Community connection and holistic growth through evidence-based programming

As OAMI's premier initiative, SuccessConnects provides students with a supportive, inclusive, resource-filled community that encourages holistic success at Michigan. From networking and professional development to academic success and study abroad opportunities, SuccessConnects scholars build their skills within a unique and empowering community of peers and leaders.

The most compelling success of the program lies in the seamless integration of its multiple components: student participation, coaching, and coaching delivery, tutoring, and community building/activities and workshops. These components advance the mission of the program to support the holistic success of its participants in their academic, social, and personal journeys as students in college and beyond.

“Just being able to have someone to talk to and to come into a space that is safe for you: This is probably one of the best things on campus.”

Christina

Former SuccessConnects scholar and current peer coach

TUTORING

With the high academic expectations at Michigan, our one-on-one tutoring program is not only a core component of SuccessConnects but continues to be a major incentive for participation. Tutors are current U-M students who have previously taken the courses they provide help with, giving these more experienced students a chance to support their community while earning money.

Tutors support courses across schools and majors, including:

- Biology**
- Chemistry**
- Computer Science**
- Economics**
- Electrical Engineering**
- French**
- Math**
- Physics**
- Physiology**
- Psychology**
- Spanish**
- Statistics**

979

Tutoring sessions for 2023-24 school year

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

37 SESSIONS

This school year, scholars participated in our largest offering of workshops and events. In our schedule, we included programming tailored to specific cohorts and their communities.

Our sessions included guidance and opportunities focused on:

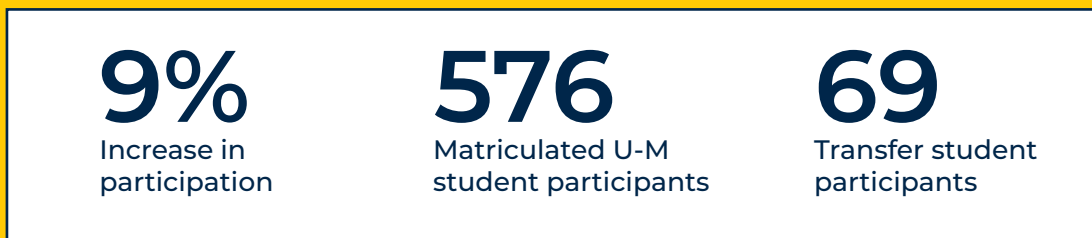
Professional development and career preparation, academic enrichment, social engagement, campus collaborations, skill building, and broader campus awareness and exposure.



SuccessConnects offers chances to relax and have fun, while also providing opportunities to develop as a student and professional.

PROGRAM IMPACT

SuccessConnects has seen a continual trend toward growth since its launch in 2017. The program is built on evidence-based student development research and scholarship focused on holistic success, coaching approaches, and student growth methodology. This year we saw some of our most impactful numbers to date:



TARGETED DEMOGRAPHICS

While SuccessConnects is open to all U-M students, we focus particularly on the historically underserved and minoritized groups at the university and on a national level. These include:

First-Generation • Detroit residents
Limited-income • Community college transfers

TESTIMONIALS

“My OAMI tutor challenges me in a way that is beneficial to my learning. When we go over my homework, she asks questions that are beyond the homework problem, which helps test whether or not I truly know what I am doing. She’s also communicative and patient.”

“My OAMI tutor was fantastic. He helped me a lot throughout the semester, and I don’t think I would’ve passed without him. EECS 280 was an intimidating course, but my tutor was able to break down concepts, connect them to other concepts I was already familiar with, and then redefine them so that I understood at a holistic level. My tutor also goes above and beyond to make sure that I understand the concepts.”

“I really enjoyed studying statistics with my tutor. He was very nice and always explained the material in clear terms. He helped me understand that I have a tendency to overcomplicate things and was able to help me figure out ways to control that habit. He is an amazing tutor and I don’t think I could’ve survived Stats without him.”

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

OAMI empowers our students, amplifies their voices, and celebrates their achievements. Here are just a few examples of our exceptional Wolverines and their remarkable journeys.

A transfer student turned campus leader brings unique experience to her marketing career

When Gabby Gjerding transferred from Schoolcraft Community College to the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, she didn't know whether she could succeed in such a large institution. With M-Connect, she found a supportive and welcoming community of people she could relate to and bond with. She built her confidence and community engagement skills as M-Connect's program assistant, a member of OAMI's welcome desk staff, and an undergraduate research assistant.

Double majoring in Communication & Media Studies and Spanish, Gabby's keystone project explored the effects of social media usage on women's body image, especially within her peer demographic. After graduating this May, she is embarking on a career in marketing and public relations, looking to use her leadership skills and academic research to advocate for more positive and healthy approaches to audience engagement.



Gabby Gjerding
Class of 2023

"Both as an involved student and someone who worked on the M-Connect team, I can say that M-Connect had a big part in shaping my U-M experience.

When I first started here, I felt really lost, as if I didn't belong.

However, M-Connect helped reinforce that I do belong here, connected me with an amazing community and abundance of resources, and set me up for success as a transfer student."

Empowering undocumented students and furthering social justice on campus and in Detroit

Rodrigo Sandino, a third-year student at the University of Michigan, is a beacon of resilience, leadership, and community service. As a first-generation, undocumented student from southwest Detroit, Rodrigo has faced numerous obstacles, yet his determination and perseverance led to his admission to one of the nation's premier universities. Majoring in economics with plans to pursue a graduate degree, Rodrigo's dedication to education and personal growth is evident.

On campus, Rodrigo shines as a leader, serving as co-president of SCOPE, an organization that provides vital peer support to undocumented students. His leadership in SCOPE highlights his commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for those facing similar challenges.

Beyond the university, Rodrigo demonstrates a passion for community service in his summer internship with *We the People of Detroit*. As an organizing intern, he spearheads various campaigns focused on coalition building and resource provision to empower and mobilize Detroit citizens, enhancing their quality of life. His work with the organization reflects his deep commitment to social justice and community advocacy. Rodrigo's unwavering support for students and proactive involvement in community initiatives underscore his



Rodrigo Sandino
Rising Senior

"OAMI is filled with diverse people who are very knowledgeable about my situation, my struggles. Having someone I can relate to in terms of my struggles made college life a lot easier for me. Especially given how you sometimes feel isolated, it's reassuring to know OAMI has that circle where you're always welcome to be there."

exceptional leadership qualities. His journey and achievements inspire others, showcasing what can be accomplished through determination, hard work, and a commitment to uplifting others. Rodrigo Sandino is truly making a positive impact both within the university and in the broader Detroit community.

From imposter syndrome to a bright future in medicine

Irene Lopez, a recent graduate, earned her B.S. in Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience with a minor in Latina/o Studies. As a first-generation, low-income student, Irene's journey is a testament to resilience and courage, inspiring many peers along the way.

Currently, Irene works as a patient attendant with Michigan Medicine and is preparing for the MCAT with aspirations of becoming a pediatrician. During her time at U-M, she played a crucial role in OAMI as an Academic Success Partner mentoring sophomores, in addition to her duties as an administrative assistant.

Irene's story continues to inspire as she pursues her dream of becoming a pediatrician.



Irene Lopez
Class of 2023

"I genuinely believe I could not have graduated without the OAMI community. I had imposter syndrome and feared not making friends as an introvert. SuccessConnects became the foundation for my success, providing a support network, community, friendships, jobs, and lasting memories. My time at U-M was fun and manageable because of the encouragement from my coworkers and supervisors at OAMI. I am ever so grateful to have been part of the OAMI family, and it's because of OAMI that my love for mentorship has grown."



A summer bridge student steps confidently toward her future in pharmacy

As a first-generation college student coming to U-M from Chicago, Tasnova Adrita knew she needed to be ambitious from day one. She also knew she needed resources and guidance that would help her succeed. The summer before freshman year, Tasnova participated in M-STEP's bridge program, which introduced her to the potential challenges and opportunities of college life and helped her build a positive mindset and academic skills. With a dedicated M-STEP coach, she excelled in her first year, securing a highly competitive student assistant position in the College of Pharmacy's Office of the Dean. She is now well on her way to fulfilling her dream of becoming a pharmacist.



Tasnova Adrita
Rising Sophomore

“Transitioning to U-M was both thrilling and challenging. M-STEP has been crucial in shaping my academic journey and my dream of becoming a pharmacist.”

REINVIGORATING OUR COMMUNITY SPACE

As OAMI continues to rebound from the pandemic, welcoming students back into our space has become a top priority. Our goal has always been to provide a place where students can find resources, collaborate, build community, study, and relax. To facilitate this, we introduced new programs as part of our ongoing efforts to foster a welcoming environment.

OAMI Sammy Tuesdays

Each week, OAMI offers free lunch to attendees, typically featuring delicious deli sandwiches—hence the name. Students are encouraged to ask questions about OAMI's resources, study, meet in groups, or simply relax. Since the program's launch in October 2023, over 520 students have attended these events, enjoying good food and great company.

Evening Study Hours

After suspending weekly study table events due to low attendance, OAMI responded to student requests for later study sessions. The Evening Study Hours, launched in the Winter semester, saw 58 students taking advantage of the quiet, supportive place to study.

Celebrating the diversity and global perspectives that make Michigan leaders and best



MULTICULTURAL INITIATIVES

OAMI strives to serve as a beacon of inclusivity and cultural celebration at U-M. Multiculturalism is a core part of our mission and identity. We enrich campus life by providing funding and resources that allow students to celebrate and showcase their identities and cultural traditions while connecting with and exploring the cultures of their peers.

As the world around us becomes more divided and uncertain, OAMI continues to be a vital force in creating a more inclusive, welcoming, and diverse campus at the University of Michigan, supporting students in celebrating their identities and fostering a sense of belonging for all.

“ I wanted to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to speak at La Celebración Latina. It meant the world to me to be able to share my thoughts and experiences with my fellow graduates and their families.

Your dedication to organizing such a meaningful event did not go unnoticed. La Celeb provided a platform for us to celebrate our achievements and cultural heritage, and I am honored to have been a part of it.”

Lady A. Funcke

Masters of Social Work graduate in Interpersonal Practice

Bringing graduates and their communities together to celebrate

Among OAMI’s most cherished and wide-reaching programs are the cultural graduation celebrations, which supplement the traditional spring commencement. Held during graduation week, these events express appreciation for the achievements, commonalities, and cultural differences that characterize the experiences of students.

Each celebration is led, planned, and implemented by student committees, and features special cultural elements unique to the populations being celebrated. Personal stories, gifting of leis, drumming and honor songs, and faculty and staff awards are among the many meaningful aspects of these celebrations. This year’s keynote speakers included Olympian Dr. Tiffany Ofili Porter and Robert Santos, Director of the U.S. Census Bureau, both U-M alumni.

These celebrations have become vital resources for building belonging at U-M, with record attendance and success. Notably, the Native Student Graduation had 14 participants, up from 9 the previous year, and the Black Celebratory saw a record number of graduate students, with 15 doctoral candidates. Across the events, over 500 students participated with thousands of the university community, family members, and loved ones there to recognize all the victories and accomplishments.

OAMI hosts seven cultural graduation celebrations:

- **Asian & Pacific Islander Graduation**
- **Black Celebratory**
- **First-Generation Student Graduation**
- **La Celebración Latina**
- **Middle Eastern/North African Graduation**
- **Native Student Graduation**
- **Undocumented Student Graduation**

A real space for real talk

Men of Color Leading & Investing in Community (M-CLIC) is a one-of-a-kind program giving space for men of color, who have the smallest representation at U-M, to build community and foster belonging. M-CLIC's signature series, the "CLIC-N-CUTZ" Barbershop, attracts men of color across campus to get free haircuts from local barbers and be in conversation with an impressive roster of male leaders at the top of their game. Last year's guests included Fab 5 basketball legend Jimmy King, life coach and motivational speaker Greg Harden, and rapper, DJ, and educator Buff1. While the programs are geared toward men of color, people from across the community, regardless of race or gender are welcome to engage and foster a stronger sense of belonging. The consistent participation of 44 male students of color highlights the program's success.



Supporting students regardless of immigration status

OAMI also strengthened its commitment to DACA and undocumented students, providing a safe environment and supportive community for students of all ethnicities and nationalities. This year, OAMI introduced the Dreamer Scholarship, a gift from a U-M alumna, which awarded \$100,000 in funding to undocumented students. Additionally, OAMI successfully advocated for institutional policies supporting internships for undocumented students, creating more opportunities for professional development. The upcoming launch of OAMI's Inclusive Fellowship Consulting will support departments and offices in creating invaluable opportunities for students unable to work in roles only available to U.S. citizens.



Strengthening community is key to OAMI's programs, like Jimmy King (top left) speaking to M-CLIC participants and students showing their support for immigrants on the U-M diag.

Empowering students to share their cultures and learn from others

Another cornerstone of OAMI's multicultural programming is the Student Academic Multicultural Initiatives (SAMI) grants, which provide funding for individual students and student organizations. The funding facilitates and promotes projects or events designed to increase self-development and educate the campus community on multicultural issues through an academic lens. This year, OAMI received 124 applications from undergraduate and graduate students across university schools and colleges. The grants committee distributed \$110,000 in awards for the 2023-2024 academic year, resulting in tangible outcomes such as cultural awareness events, educational workshops, and community service initiatives.



From service projects to cultural exchange events and performances, SAMI grants support students in developing programs that broaden their own experiences while bringing vibrancy to the campus community.

First-Generation Initiatives supports U-M in fostering an ever-growing and visible community

A key partner in supporting first-generation college students, OAMI is home to the First-Generation Student Gateway, an open, mixed-use space for first-gen students to study, meet, and find resources and support. This year, 828 students participated in six signature First-Gen events, including a parent and family open house, community dinners, and a full week celebrating first-gen students. OAMI expanded partnerships with U-M departments and units, including the Career Center, Student Housing, and the College of Engineering, to better serve these students. Additionally, we provided consulting and training services to five units and hosted an all-campus training on the demographics and needs of first-generation college students.



First-Generation Initiatives creates spaces for students and their loved ones to gain the knowledge and perspectives to navigate a large institution such as Michigan.

U-M is a First-Forward institution

Driven by OAMI's leadership in supporting first-generation students, the University of Michigan is recognized as a First-Gen Forward Institution by the NASPA Center for First-generation Student Success. This designation recognizes our commitment to improving the experience and outcomes of first-generation college students. The program offers a national scaling model that brings together higher education leaders from around the country to share data, model innovation, and scale impact to first-gen student support.





Energizing the community through inclusivity and cultural connections

Since its founding in 1987, the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI) has made significant strides in promoting diversity and inclusion at the University of Michigan. Originally known as the Office of Minority Affairs, OAMI was established through student activism advocating for Martin Luther King Jr. Day to be observed as a university holiday to address racism and cultural diversity. This movement not only led to the creation of OAMI but also ushered in a tradition of campus-wide programs focused on inclusivity and diversity.

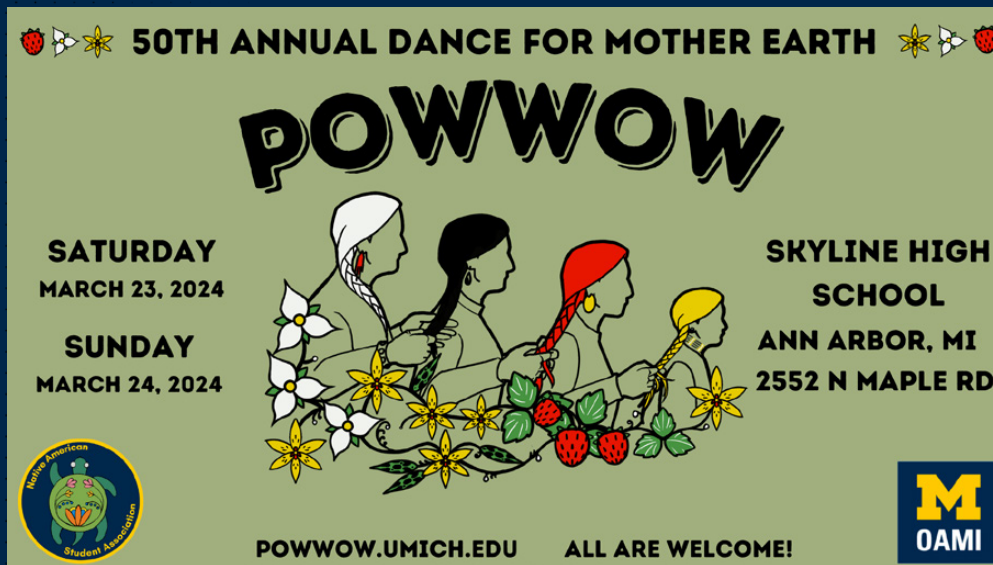
OAMI has proudly hosted the annual MLK Lecture Series and added significant events such as the Dance for Mother Earth Powwow and the Juneteenth Symposium. These events are now integral to the university's commitment to an inclusive and diverse campus.

This year's events demonstrated the university's ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion through powerful lectures, compelling discussions, and vibrant cultural celebrations. The offerings elicited enthusiastic participation from both the university and the broader community, with some events streamed on local PBS affiliates. As OAMI continues to grow, its mission remains clear: to foster an inclusive, welcoming, and diverse campus for all.

CAMPUS-WIDE EVENTS

Celebrating 50 years of a sacred Native American tradition

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the Dance for Mother Earth Powwow, which drew 3,109 attendees over two days. The event featured over 100 non-profit organizations and vendors, along with more than 100 dancers and drummers. The Powwow showcased the richness of Native American culture and traditions, bringing together participants and volunteers for a truly memorable celebration.



50TH ANNUAL DANCE FOR MOTHER EARTH



POWWOW

SATURDAY
MARCH 23, 2024

SUNDAY
MARCH 24, 2024

SKYLINE HIGH SCHOOL
ANN ARBOR, MI
2552 N MAPLE RD

POWWOW.UMICH.EDU ALL ARE WELCOME!



In the echoes of King, a call to action

The MLK Keynote Lecture returned to pre-pandemic attendance levels this year, with over 2,100 participants attending in person and online. The lecture's theme, "Transforming the Jangling Discords of Our Nation into a Beautiful Symphony," inspired attendees to continue Dr. King's legacy as advocates for peace and harmony. Keynote speaker Michelle Alexander—best-selling author, legal scholar, social justice advocate, and columnist—delivered a compelling address, urging attendees to "speak and act with unprecedented courage and with love" in confronting present-day racism and hate.



A panel of experts, including keynote speaker Michelle Alexander (far left), grappled with the complexities of social justice and DEI in a polarized world. BLKBOK (right) brought artistry and joy to the day.

A Juneteenth celebration of activism and progress through art

The annual Juneteenth Symposium also experienced impressive growth, attracting over 1,800 participants both in-person and virtually. The two-day event included a thought-provoking keynote from Professor Loretta Ross, who highlighted the importance of civility in discourse and advocated for "calling people in" instead of canceling them. Renowned artist and activist Damon Davis spoke on the transformative power of art in promoting equality and justice.



U-M's Debby Covington and Damon Davis (left) explored the power and nuance of artistic expression while Loretta Ross (far right) challenged attendees to question how they engage with others.

A prosperous future for our students and the state of Michigan

TRANSFER STUDENTS CONNECTED



GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Since 1986, OAMI has played a pivotal role in shaping brighter futures for Michigan students through dynamic state partnerships. OAMI has spearheaded major state initiatives, including the King/Chavez/Park (KCP) College Day initiatives, the Detroit Compact, and the Wade McCree Incentive Programs. More recently, OAMI has overseen the Michigan College/University Partnership Program (MICUP) and the Michigan Select Student Support Services (4-S) Program.

The renewal of U-M's MICUP and 4-S programs, following a competitive grant application process, strengthens OAMI's long-standing relationship with the state and underscores a shared commitment to educational access for economically and academically disadvantaged students. This continued success in securing state support highlights the critical importance of sustained investment in educational programs. As OAMI forges ahead, many students will benefit from these transformative initiatives, ensuring pathways to achievement through robust state partnerships and an unwavering commitment to student success.

Through these initiatives and ongoing state partnerships, OAMI continues to lead in providing essential pathways to educational success for underserved populations.

M-Connect: Enhancing transfer student support

M-Connect serves as a vital resource for prospective and current U-M transfer students. The recent renewal of the State of Michigan's KCP MICUP grant has provided OAMI with \$77,412 annually from 2023 to 2029, enhancing transfer student services. This funding has enabled M-Connect to expand advising and support services to include students from all in-state community colleges.

During the 2023-2024 school year, M-Connect offered an impressive array of services, including academic coaching, and hosting 27 programs for over 850 students. Key achievements include:

- **278** prospective students receiving frequent updates via informational emails;
- **52** prospective students participating in virtual open houses or student panel discussions;
- **38** prospective students attending individual meetings via Zoom, phone, or in person, with **29** gaining admission to U-M;
- **262** enrolled students receiving newsletters throughout the year;
- **270** active MICUP participants.

M-STEP: Elevating academic success

The M-STEP (4-S) program, supported by state and university funding, aims to boost academic advancement, GPAs, retention rates, and graduation rates for academically and economically disadvantaged students. OAMI's successful renewal of this program secures annual funding of \$107,200 from 2023 to 2029.

66 students were recruited and enrolled, exceeding the target of **50-55**. These students were invited to over **20** events throughout the year and received personalized advising and coaching services.

How donors help us pave the way for underrepresented students at Michigan

Pipeline programs are crucial for ushering underrepresented populations into higher education, with countless efforts dedicated to college recruitment and preparation. However, the challenge doesn't end there. Many initiatives fall short when it comes to retention and academic success during college, leading to persistent gaps in performance and graduation rates between underrepresented students and their peers.

OAMI is a vital link in this pipeline. We offer a rich array of resources, from tutoring and academic coaching to mentoring and leadership development. Our initiatives, though open to all, specifically focus on underrepresented minority students, first-generation students, and community college transfer students.

We understand that academic success is deeply tied to a sense of belonging. That's why OAMI proudly hosts a variety of multicultural events and programs designed to foster an inclusive and welcoming campus environment. This essential work requires significant effort and funding, supported by grants, state funding, and the generosity of committed donors.

OAMI is immensely grateful for this crucial support and is excited to collaborate with our donors to champion student success at Michigan.

Together, we're not just closing the gap — we're empowering dreams and building a brighter future for all.





**Let's work
together
to enrich
our campus
community
and prepare
future leaders
for success at
Michigan and
beyond.**

**Scan the QR code or visit
oami.umich.edu/donate**



Providing employment opportunities for students to grow and lead

Each year, OAMI employs over 80 students in various roles, essential for program delivery, resource development, and enhancing student academic success. These employment opportunities provide both financial support and invaluable experience, helping foster student employees into leaders within the campus and broader community.

OAMI student employees undergo extensive training to master U-M processes and procedures, business systems, campus resources, and best practices in tutoring, mentoring, and community building. This year alone, OAMI offered 10 training and development programs, enabling our student employees to grow both professionally and personally. The dedication of these students is evident in their achievements: completing 929 tutoring sessions and contributing to 90% of OAMI's academic success programming.

Through these roles, OAMI not only supports students academically and financially but also cultivates a new generation of leaders, well-equipped to make a positive impact in their current and future endeavors.

STUDENT STAFF POSITIONS

1. Welcome Desk Staff: These students gain professional experience by answering phones, greeting and assisting guests, supporting office staff, and participating in program and event support.

2. Academic Success Partners (ASPs) and Graduate Success Partners (GSPs): These peer mentors support students' success in OAMI's SuccessConnects program through success coaching, event planning assistance, program communications, special projects, and resource connections. They work collaboratively to address the needs of a diverse student community and ensure students maximize their university experience.

3. Tutors: These tutors help students navigate U-M's most challenging courses, fostering academic excellence, and a community of shared support. Providing one-on-one guidance on coursework for one hour each week, tutors gain important communication, organization, and interpersonal skills.

4. Student Program Coordinators (SPCs): SPCs develop and coordinate activities that recruit, retain, and enrich the experiences of students involved in our programs. Their work includes event planning, communications and marketing, special projects, and resource connections. SPCs use their perspectives and passions to tailor these programs so they are as meaningful and useful as possible.

5. Marketing Team Assistants: For students passionate about photography, web design, and beyond, OAMI's marketing team provides an excellent opportunity to refine their skills in a dynamic, collaborative environment. The team comes together to devise creative solutions that address a diverse array of program and event requirements.

Amplifying programs and initiatives across campus and the broader community

As the university has expanded and the communications landscape has evolved, the tools and tactics for engaging with students and a wider audience have become increasingly more complex. To address this, OAMI implemented a dynamic communications strategy to highlight its value to students and the university's 19 schools and colleges, while promoting collaborative efforts to foster student success and multiculturalism.

In 2019, OAMI took a significant step by hiring an Assistant Director of Marketing and Communication. This role has become a strategic partner for the office and its programs. This year, the assistant director spearheaded the launch of a new website and Instagram channel, laying the foundation for a more robust communication strategy.

The marketing team also developed new collateral to enhance the OAMI brand and boost program recognition. These initiatives have not only expanded OAMI's reach but also strengthened its ability to communicate effectively across campus and beyond.

CONNECT WITH OAMI

Visit our website

oami.umich.edu

Follow us on Instagram

[@OAMlumich](https://www.instagram.com/OAMlumich)

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oami.umich.edu/contact

Scan the QR code to learn more



OVERVIEW OF OAMI'S COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

Strengthen branding and identity

Enhance and tailor OAMI's design and branding to resonate with our diverse audience and stakeholders.

Develop marketing toolkits for office and cross-campus events (e.g., MLK and Juneteenth symposiums) to ensure brand consistency when collaborating.

Leverage a new website for engagement

Design the core of OAMI's student-focused website to facilitate intuitive navigation, allowing visitors to easily locate desired information.

Create sub-sites for each cross-campus event, aligning with their specific branding and design, and providing information tailored to the broader community.

The new website received:

32,000+

total visitors

9,200+

returning visitors

Launch our Instagram channel

Keep students and the community connected to our programs and events with the support of @umichdiversity and other partner channels.

8,000+

accounts reached

2,800+

interactions (likes, comments, shares)

OAMI'S STAFF

In an office comprised of just 12 dedicated individuals, OAMI undertakes a substantial workload to support students and enrich the campus community. Despite our small size, we achieve a significantly outsized impact through innovative and collaborative methods. Each member of our team is deeply passionate about helping others, and we consider ourselves fortunate to advance our mission together while supporting one another in the process. Our commitment is evident in the positive changes we consistently bring to the lives of students and the university.



Julia J. Barron, M.S.
Success Coach

Julia has a Master's in Developmental Psychology from the University of Michigan and began her educational journey at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). She is passionate about supporting students in achieving their academic, personal, and professional goals.



Sharon R. Burch, M.A.
Associate Director

Sharon manages administrative and operational functions for OAMI, with experience in pre-college outreach, admissions, and program development. As a U-M graduate, she prioritizes student success.



Angela Espinosa
Administrative Assistant

Angela has over 15 years of administrative assistance experience and brings diverse cultural insights from growing up in Los Angeles. Outside of work, she enjoys being a foster mother.



Rachel Dawson, J.D.
Director

Rachel guides OAMI's vision and mission, defining goals and priorities, and develops collaborations across campus to facilitate student leadership development, student success, community engagement, and diversity programming and education. She brings experience in academic success programming, career development and strategic department management to her role.



Hector Galvan, M.A.
Associate Director

Hector leads Undocumented Student Initiatives, chairs the SAMI grant, and is a DEI lead for the Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion. He also coordinates the Dance for Mother Earth Powwow and various graduation celebrations. Hector was raised in Detroit and is a U-M graduate.



Erika Johnson, M.A.
M-Connect Program Director

Erika, the director of M-Connect and a Success Coach, has worked with transfer students for over 25 years in admissions and new student programs. She holds a B.A. and M.A. from U-M and helps students recognize how they belong.



Janice Jones, Ph.D.
M-STEP Program Director

Janice is dedicated to helping students achieve academic and professional goals and encourages meaningful personal growth. In her free time, she enjoys watching classic movies, taking walks, drawing, and spending time with loved ones.



Samrawit Kahsay, B.A.
Program Manager, Success Coach

Samrawit, coordinates Graduate Success Partners in SuccessConnects and holds a B.A. in Women's Studies from U-M. Passionate about mentorship, she facilitates holistic student success.



Brendan Kirwin, M.A.
Assistant Director of Marketing & Communication

Brendan supports OAMI's programs as a marketing and communication specialist and holds an M.A. in Communication, Culture & Technology from Georgetown University.



Nrupali Kulkarni, M.S.
Data Manager

Nrupali manages data systems for OAMI, ensuring alignment with its mission, and holds an M.S. in Information Systems Management with a specialization in Data Analytics from Arizona State University.



Terra Molengraff, Ph.D.
Program Director of First-Generation Initiatives

Terra is the Program Director of First-Generation Initiatives, a two-time U-M alum, and completed her Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota, focusing on support for first-generation college students.



Gregory O. Thomas, M.A.
Assistant Director, Success Coach

Greg is the Program Director of M-CLIC, Co-Chair of the U-M MLK Symposium, Coordinator of the Black Celebratory, and a Success Coach with SuccessConnects. He holds a Master's in Higher Education/Student Affairs.

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC MULTICULTURAL INITIATIVES



ADVANCING MULTICULTURALISM. PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS.

**Office of Academic
Multicultural Initiatives**

ANNUAL 2023-2024
REPORT



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