



Grandparents University: Uniting Spartan Generation

Description and Audience

Since 2005, Michigan State University has welcomed young Spartans ages 8 to 12 and their grandparents to campus for a unique intergenerational learning experience at Grandparents University. This three-day summer camp is a truly unique, fun-filled experience that actively engages kids in Michigan State academics while creating lasting family memories. Each year, approximately 1,300 guests from throughout the United States and around the world choose from nearly 200 classes offered by more than 25 colleges and units at MSU. Students participate in four classes and unique evening programming, with ample time allocated for exploring all that the MSU campus has to offer. Since the program's inception in 2005, we have hosted 12,709 participants!

In 2018 we had over 70 volunteers that worked shifts over 3 days.

2018 Participants

The 2018 program hosted the largest number yet, with 255 families bringing a total of 1,321 participants. We are still the largest intergenerational program in the nation.

There were 15 Colleges/Departments represented from by our participants, with Education drawing the most attendees once again at 108. The Eli Broad College of Business came in second with 79 participants attending with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources finishing in third with 49 participants. Other affiliations worth noting are: Social Science (43 participants), Engineering (33 participants), Communication, Arts and Letters (27 participants) & Natural Science (19 participants). Other notable partners include RHS, IPF, Wharton and Athletics.

Program Criteria

- The criteria for admission into Grandparents University is based on a first come, first serve basis.
- Scholarships are also offered to families based on need.

Objectives

- Use Grandparents University as a recruitment tool by highlighting much of what MSU has to offer.
- Feed on grandparent's nostalgia to connect them to the university, other MSUAA programs and our alumni communities.
- Continue to showcase our scholarship opportunity to both bring participants in under the scholarship, and also use this as a philanthropy option in University Advancement.
- Each year provide Grandparents University participants an opportunity to make a difference in their community. The 2018 focus was ePIFanyNOW™

Quotes from Participants:

- "The entire program is an exceptional experience. I have had the pleasure over the years to introduce 2 nieces and a nephew to the wonders of MSU. The fact that each one of them is disappointed when they age out speaks volumes. It's wonderful to share my love of MSU with the next generation."
- "The well-designed and well taught classes that allowed me to interact with each of my grandchildren outside of their day to day activities at home. I was happy to see the strength and independence that were revealed."
- "It was most meaningful to spend time with my grandson. I was most impressed by the quality of instruction

and overall organization. All those leading classes presented information my 8 year old grand understood with talking down to him. Busses, meals, and programs ran smoothly.”

- “The kindness of volunteers and staff and their total dedication to making it an outstanding and memorable experience for the grandparents and their grandchildren!”
- “We loved the enthusiastic and genuine crew everyone seemed to feel towards the kids and grandparents. Everyone was most helpful. The Green and White Night was so well planned and had something for everyone. We also appreciated having the buses available so we could visit other areas of campus in a timely manner.”

Quotes from Instructors:

- “I love teaching at this because of the intergenerational interaction. I love how the grandparents and grandchildren are able to learn from each other and I see the bond and relationship being strengthened. I also appreciate all the support and assistance from the grandparents as I instruct as they provide help with activities and clean up.”
- “Contact with the students and their grandparents. The interaction between the generations is one of the best aspects of the program.”
- “I was really impressed with how engaged both the kids and grandparents were. During my sessions, they were engaged, asked a lot of questions, and I always had more than one kid volunteer to answer the questions I asked of them.”
- “Meeting all the wonderful grandparents, parents, and grandkids who took my class. Also interacting with those who have taken my class in the past who came and talked to me in the dining hall.”
- “This was ABSOLUTELY the best experience I have ever had at MSU.”

Funding:

- This program is a self-sustaining organization funded on participant fees, donations and sponsorships. Any leftover funds are given to the participating colleges GPU has contracts with.



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