Renewing $200,000 in support

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See more photos from the lobby rededication ceremony.
March 16, 2015

**MSU and Consumers Energy to celebrate partnership on March 20**

To keep Michigan's engineering and technical talent in the Great Lakes State, key partners need to constantly be connecting with students. So the Michigan State University College of Engineering and Consumers Energy start early and generate the lessons, relationships, and network access it takes to turn experiences that start freshman year into serious career opportunities.

In 2014, Consumers Energy hired 54 MSU summer interns, mostly engineering students, and paid them for their strong critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, and their keen willingness to learn and be good communicators.

Often, they look for people like James McCormick, a senior electrical engineering major from Eaton Rapids, Mich., who after two years as a cooperative assistant at Consumers Energy has created an off-the-grid learning curve for himself.

“That's what is really cool,” McCormick explained. “I'm in the field verifying that the engineering designs work by conducting testing and maintenance in electric substations. Sometimes, I'm the last double check before they energize.”

McCormick said the hybrid of his co-op experiences particularly benefit him when he returns to campus as a student. “I get to see how it all comes together and make sure it all works as expected. This kind of feet-on-the-ground experience lets me take what I’ve seen in the field and use it in the classroom.”

McCormick will join Consumers Energy as a full-time employee when he graduates in December 2015.

“Consumers Energy is committed to attracting Michigan's next generation of talented college graduates to work with us,” said John Butler, senior vice president of Human Resources and Shared Services at Consumers Energy.

“We're excited to do even more with MSU and the College of Engineering to build relationships with these students today.”

The vibrant strength of the MSU-Consumers Energy relationship will be celebrated at 3:30 p.m. Friday, March 20, during a recognition ceremony honoring Consumers Energy and its Foundation's most recent $200,000 donation to the college’s Cornerstone & Residential Experience (CoRe) program. CoRe is an integrated first-year engineering academic program and living-learning community that works to “build the whole engineer,” with activities ranging from strengthening interview skills to festive seasonal celebrations.

Representatives from Consumers Energy and MSU will cut ribbons to formally dedicate the redesign of the second-floor lobby in East Wilson Hall. The updated lobby is decorated with colorful circles and geometric patterns and offers students a gathering space with charging stations and other furnishings to encourage studying and socializing.
S. Patrick Walton, CoRe director, will serve as the master of ceremonies. Speakers include:
• Leo Kempel, dean of the MSU College of Engineering,
• Satish Udpa, MSU Executive Vice President for Administrative Services,
• June Pierce Youatt, MSU Provost, and
• John Butler, senior vice president of human resources and shared services for Consumers Energy. Butler will be joined by Dennis Dobbs, vice president of generation engineering and services, and John Broschak, vice president of major projects and construction, for Consumers Energy.

Following the ceremony, guests will attend a reception and networking event.

“Consumers Energy is a remarkable leader in welcoming and supporting our students,” said College of Engineering Dean Leo Kempel. “The company is particularly skilled at getting their information in front of our future engineers and computer scientists and actively competing for that young talent by offering valuable engineering and volunteering experiences.”

Butler added, “We want engineering students to know they can work for world-class companies like ours when they graduate. This event at Wilson Hall is a symbol of our dedication to providing opportunities for these students now and in the future.”

Consumers Energy: Consumers Energy, Michigan’s largest utility, is the principal subsidiary of CMS Energy. It provides natural gas and electricity to 6.6 million of the state’s 10 million residents in all 68 Lower Peninsula counties. For more information, go to www.ConsumersEnergy.com

About MSU Engineering: The Michigan State University College of Engineering has seven academic departments serving 4,900 undergraduate and more than 800 graduate students through 10 undergraduate and nine graduate degree programs. For more, go to: www.egr.msu.edu Read more on CoRe at: http://www.egr.msu.edu/core/
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Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

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