University-wide recognition awarded to college’s Diversity Programs Office

The MSU College of Engineering Diversity Programs Office (DPO) was honored at MSU’s Excellence in Diversity Awards celebration on Feb. 1, the first day of 2018’s Black History Month. DPO Director Theo Caldwell accepted the Unit Award for Excellent Progress Toward Advancing Diversity Within the Community during the university-wide event that was hosted in the MSU Union.

Caldwell said the award was based on DPO’s ongoing contributions since 1960 that have supported the academic success, social well being, and inclusion of students from historically underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at MSU.

“We join with others to make MSU racially and ethnically diverse, inclusive, and welcoming for STEM students from marginalized communities,” he explained.

Caldwell noted that DPO collaborates with similar efforts at MSU, including:

• the Drew Science Scholars program in the College of Natural Science,

• the Lyman Briggs College to support the success and well-being of its diverse students,

• the Summer Undergraduate Research Academy enabling students to develop connections,

• the TRIO program supporting low-income first-generation students, and
• with the Detroit Pre-College Engineering Program to engage K-12 students in strengthening their STEM skills.

Other key collaborations include the Big Ten Academic Alliance's Summer Research Opportunity Program, the MSU Graduate School, the Bio/Computational Evolution in Action CONsortium office, the Dow STEM Scholars program, the Office of Undergraduate Research, and corporations such as General Motors.

DPO’s Engineering and Science Summer Academy (ESSA) program has spurred on both the persistence and academic success of underrepresented minority STEM students, which is a point of pride for DPO, he added.

Additionally, Caldwell and Assistant Director Kyle Foster serve as faculty advisors for the MSU chapters of the National Society of Black Engineers and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.