W ith beneficiaries ranging from the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum to the College of Engineering and the Spartan Marching Band, Steve Noll (Engineering, ’74) is an eclectic donor and good friend of Michigan State University. He is a member of MSU’s Wharton Society.

A former national merit scholar, Steve could have attended any number of institutions of higher learning, but was swayed to MSU’s Honors College after seeing an impressive “road show” the MSU admissions team put on in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. He is proud of his MSU degree and particularly values the flexibility of the Honors College program which allowed him to broaden his education. “I will recommend it to prospective students I meet,” Steve said.

He had planned to major in physics, one of MSU’s strongholds, but was lured to another of MSU’s top programs: electrical engineering. After graduation he did a stint as engineer for Magnavox, but decided to go to law school where he says his MSU background served him well. “Engineering is not a typical path to law school,” he noted. “But the MSU engineering program is oriented toward solving problems, which was a skill I could easily apply to law.” Steve merged his expertise in engineering and law by specializing in patent law. Today, he is a successful patent attorney at Schiff Hardin LLP in downtown Chicago.

Over the years, Steve has stayed connected and involved with MSU in many ways. He returns to the College of Engineering each semester to provide a lecture on intellectual property law and to serve as a judge in the annual Design Day competition. He recently accepted an appointment to the Interim Advisory Board for the soon-to-be constructed Broad Art Museum (see article below).

As an avid art collector, Steve has amassed a significant collection of over 50 Whistler and Rembrandt etchings, among other works. Through his estate plans, he has determined that these works will come to MSU.

His love of music performance, nurtured throughout his MSU years as a tenor saxophonist in the Spartan Marching Band, is now nourished through the Lyric Opera in Chicago as well as the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. When Steve frequents an MSU football game, he never misses the marching band performances. “Overall, my most fun and rewarding experience at MSU was being in the marching band,” Steve said.

Steve married Sarah Haag one year ago. A practicing physical therapist, Sarah affiliates with Marquette University but has become an avid Spartan fan. Sarah’s enthusiasm for MSU started with her first campus visit, and like Steve’s, has never waned.

Steve Noll and his spouse Sarah Haag recently attended the MSU Friends of Kresge Twilight in the Garden event.

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