



Recruitment as Storytelling

How to Gain More Students through Meaningful Engagement

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY





Thank you to our Conference Host and Sponsors



What will we be exploring in this session?

Introduction – “Who’s this guy?”

Understanding the “CANR” at MSU

New Materials and the Pandemic

Expansion of Digital Assets

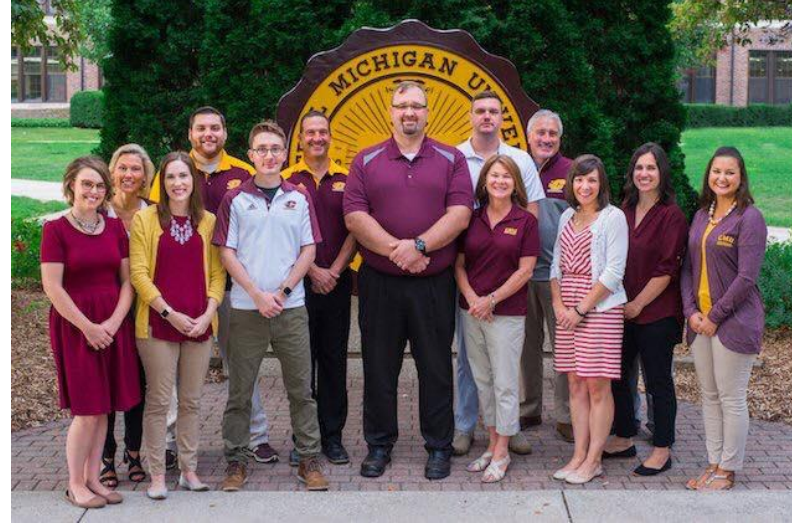
Refining the Process

Future Directions and Coming Challenges

Toolkit + Discussion



Meet the Presenter – Jeff Keson



Leadership Safari – Logistics Staff Assistant (Undergrad)

TRiO Student Support Services (Grad School)

Academic Success Coach (Alma Mater)

Assistant Director of Recruitment and Retention

Director of Recruitment



College of Agriculture & Natural Resources



Founding college of the Pioneer Land Grant University – Michigan State University

Also known as the CANR or ANR (never the ‘College of Ag’)

12 independent schools and departments with 27 majors

Enrollment of over 4,000 students across certificate, bachelor and graduate programs

Active alumni base of over 65,000

Large footprint on the 5,200 main campus with 12 buildings and 15 research centers

Education abroad on all seven continents (global impact)



ENTOMOLOGY

Entomology is the field of biological science concerned with insects. It is a branch of biology that deals with the study of insects in relation to humans, other animals, plants and the environment. It is a field that is important in securing food, fuel and fiber, protecting biodiversity. Students interested in pest management, government-related careers, and other fields can find many opportunities in entomology.

www.canr.msu.edu/majors

The Fisheries and Wildlife undergraduate program provides a strong base in the foundational and applied sciences of natural resource management. The program is designed to develop understanding of the cultural, recreational, and economic values of biological resources.

Employment is generally found with state and federal natural resource agencies such as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service. There are excellent job opportunities with private companies, non-profit organizations, and colleges and universities.

Students choose one of the following concentrations:

- **Conservation Biology** – focus on the science of analyzing and protecting the earth's biological diversity.
- **Fisheries Biology and Management** – research and management of fish, other freshwater and marine organisms, and the ecosystems that sustain them.
- **Wildlife Biology and Management** – understanding and management of terrestrial habitats and animals including game, non-game, and endangered species.
- **Water Sciences** – study of the biological, physical, chemical, geological and hydrological aspects of lakes and ponds, rivers and streams, wetlands and groundwaters including water quality, protection, and restoration of water resources around the Great Lakes and the world.
- **Fish and Wildlife Disease Ecology and Management** – understand the emergence and spread of infectious diseases and the likely consequences that increased contact between fish and wildlife, and domestic animal and human populations have on these environmental problems.
- **Pre-Veterinary Studies** – designed for students interested in continuing their studies in veterinary medicine.

For more information about this major visit http://www.canr.msu.edu/majors/fisheries_and_wildlife or contact:
Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Natural Resources Building
480 Wilson Rd., Room 13
East Lansing, MI 48824
fw.msu.edu

Jim Schneider
Academic Advisor/Wildlife Biologist
schnejb@msu.edu
517-353-9091

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. MSU reserves the right to make changes in its programs, policies, rules, regulations, organizational structure, faculty and staff through the appropriate university processes.

- Core areas of study**
- Ecology and management
 - Ecological problem solving
 - Population analysis and management
 - Ecosystem management
 - Fisheries and Wildlife laboratories

- Supporting discipline areas**
- Biological, physical and earth science
 - Math and statistics
 - Communication and writing
 - Ethics and philosophy
 - Internships and research

Career opportunities

Fisheries/Wildlife Technician
Fisheries/Wildlife Biologist
Water Quality Specialist
Outreach/Extension Specialist
Naturalist/Outdoor Educator
Environmental Consultant
Wetland Monitoring Assistant
Fish Hatchery Manager
Land Management Planner
Conservation Officer

Study abroad opportunities

Fiji – Integrating Ecosystems and Human Dimensions in the Face of Climate Change
Greece and Turkey – Environmental Science and Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean Basin
Madagascar – Paradise in Peril? Exploring Madagascar's Biodiversity Crisis
South Africa – Conservation and Biodiversity in Parks and Nature Preserves
Antarctica – Studies in Antarctic System Science

First review of existing materials

Numerous one-sheet “program flyers”

Webpages were varied

“Wild West”





Student Life

Take opportunities to apply what you learn in the classroom to the real world!

Join [student clubs and organizations](#) to meet new friends, participate in fieldwork to learn more about career paths or [support research initiatives](#) to connect with world-class faculty members doing cutting edge work.

To support your journey, we have a wide range of [interdisciplinary programs](#) and [scholarships](#), as well as [education abroad](#) opportunities spanning the globe.



[Student Organizations](#)



[Undergraduate Research](#)



[Education Abroad](#)



[You Belong Here](#)

Beginning with Our Websites

Most begin their exploration with our websites

Can people find what they're looking for?



Undergraduate Majors



**AGRIBUSINESS
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



**AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
EDUCATION (B.S.)**



ANIMAL SCIENCE (B.S.)



**APPLIED CONSERVATION
BIOLOGY (B.S.)**



**AQUATIC ECOLOGY AND
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



**BIOSYSTEMS ENGINEERING
(B.S.)**



**CONSTRUCTION
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



**CROP AND SOIL SCIENCES
(B.S.)**



DIETETICS (B.S.)



ENTOMOLOGY (B.S.)



**ENVIRONMENTAL
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



**ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
AND SUSTAINABILITY
(B.S.)**



**FISH ECOLOGY AND
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



**FOOD INDUSTRY
MANAGEMENT (B.S.)**



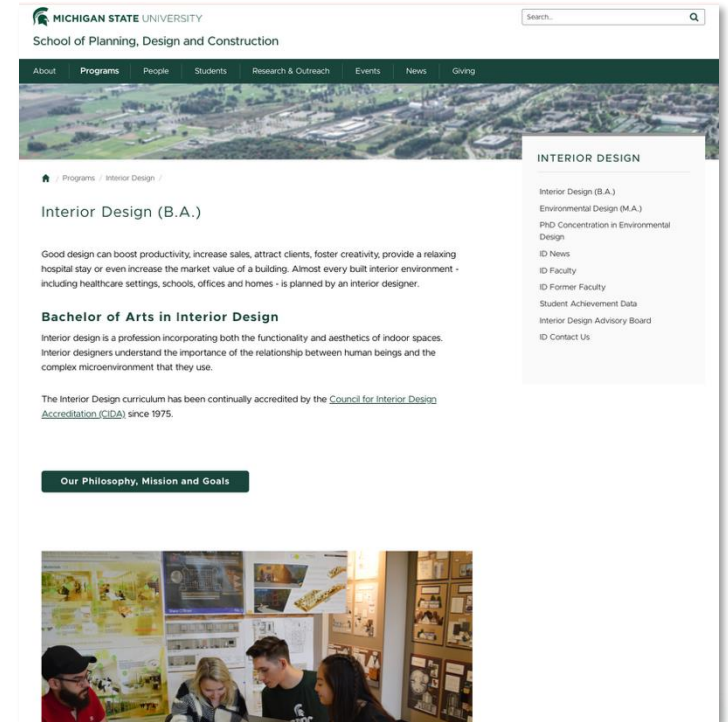
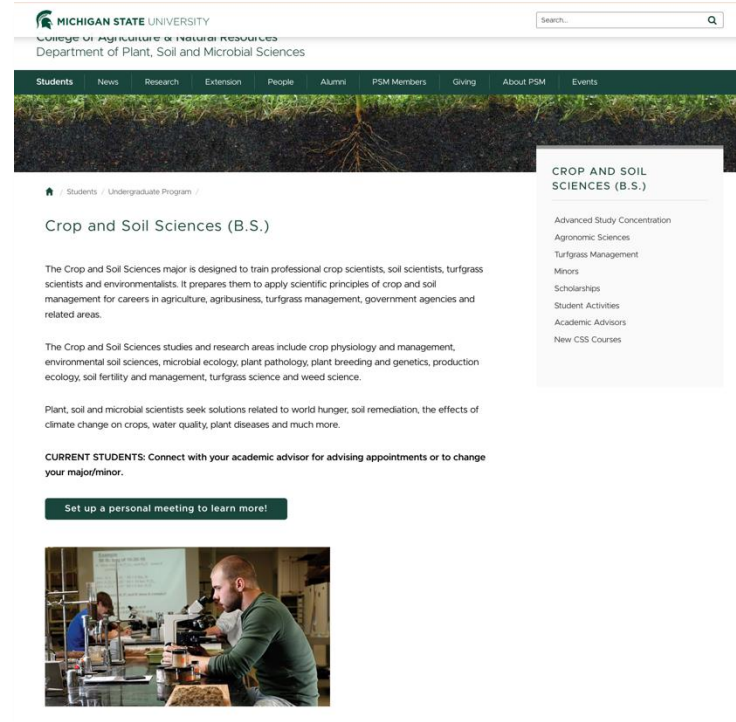
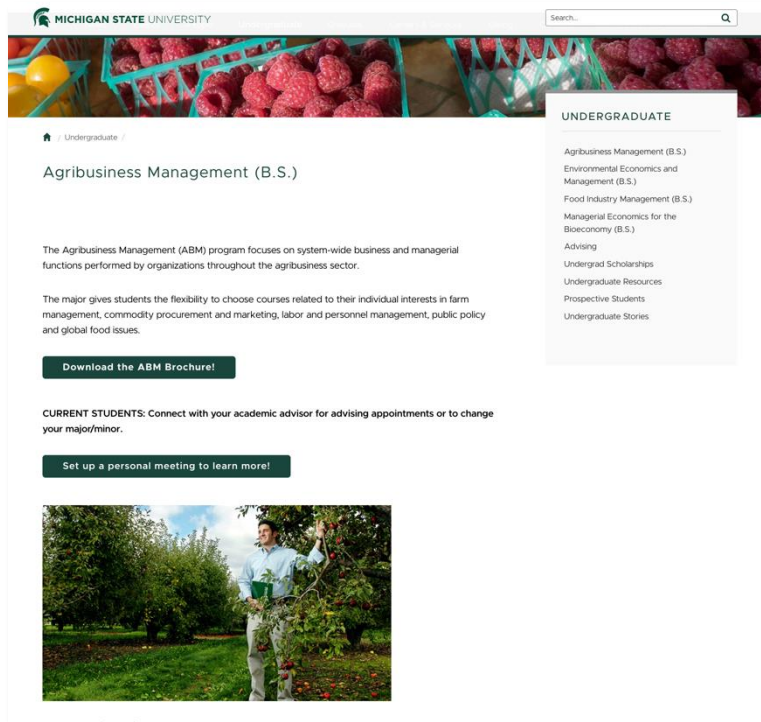
FOOD SCIENCE (B.S.)



FORESTRY (B.S.)



Consistency is KEY!



Can students find **similar information about our majors** across all our webpages or is it a scavenger hunt?

Are the webpages **user intuitive**?



Development of a unified print piece

Tracking who had the original files for the one-pagers, updating them, printing them, organizing them and taking them along to events was not efficient

Overwhelmed students with paper – challenging to carry, harder to organize

Only focused on major specific content

What if we had one print piece that told our story and pointed our students to our websites that are updated constantly?



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

YOU
BELONG
HERE



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

canr.msu.edu/studentsbelong



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

LEADING ADVANCEMENTS IN

FOOD

HEALTH

ENVIRONMENT

Each day, we use science, technology, engineering, mathematics, business and creative design to take on some of the world's greatest challenges, including feeding more than 9 billion people by 2050.

Through the application of cutting-edge technology and innovations, we're working to meet the worldwide demands of the next century.



canr.msu.edu/studentsbelong 3

OUR STUDENTS

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is home to about 4,000 undergraduates. We value differences by advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion in the classroom and beyond.



92%

placement rate
(employed,
pursuing an
advanced
degree, starting
a business)



55%

engage in
volunteering
and service-
learning
activities



80%

complete
internships
or other
career-based
experiences



37%

participate in
undergraduate
research
activities



32%

study abroad

Figures based on MSU Destination Survey Data of College of Agriculture and Natural Resources graduates

4 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

OUR ACADEMICS

*Collaborating for the greater good to solve
the world's most pressing problems*

Our academic programs are at the intersection of people, our built environments and the natural world.

We create educational plans tailored to your individual strengths and passions, charting a path to your career goals through four main areas of study.

AGRICULTURE: Plants & Animals

BUILT ENVIRONMENTS: Construction & Design

HUMAN HEALTH: Food & Nutrition

NATURAL RESOURCES: Sustainable Environments



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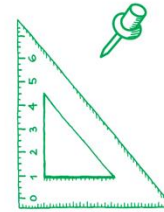
Telling our story

Provide an overview of the college

Just enough to introduce our programs – then point folks to our websites



BUILT ENVIRONMENTS: CONSTRUCTION & DESIGN



We study design, packaging, construction, landscape and interior design to create better physical spaces and products both in the home and around the world.

CAREERS INCLUDE:

- Construction Management/Contractor
- Interior Designer
- Environmental Designer
- Landscape Designer/Architect
- Packaging Engineer
- Packaging/Structural Designer

MAJORS

Construction Management (B.S.)

Horticulture (B.S.)

Interior Design (B.A.)

Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.)

Packaging (B.S.)

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Fisheries & Wildlife (B.S.)

Focuses on conservation biology, wildlife biology and management, fisheries biology and management, water sciences and wildlife disease ecology. (A preveterinary program alternative path.)

Food Industry Management (B.S.)

Investigates the business and managerial problems confronting organizations in the food industry using a systems-wide perspective that recognizes the increasing interdependence among such firms and emphasizes their role in creating consumer value. Develops skills in food marketing, economics and management.

Food Science (B.S.)

Applies elements of chemistry, microbiology, engineering and nutrition to develop new food products and design processes to improve the safety and quality of foods. Internationally recognized and approved through the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT).

Forestry (B.S.)

Combines the science and care of trees and forests and their interactions with people through field-based and hands-on courses in the biological and social sciences.

Horticulture (B.S.)

Makes discoveries in the plant and crop sciences while combining science, business and art to protect the environment, feed the world and manage landscapes.



College of Agriculture
& Natural Resources
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

**YOU BELONG
HERE**

WITH US!

canr.msu.edu/studentsbelong



CANRatMSU
#CANRatMSU

CONTACT US
oasa@anr.msu.edu
517-355-0234

APPLY TO MSU
admissions.msu.edu

**“You Belong Here” book was finished and printed on
February 25, 2020**





College of Agriculture & Natural Resources
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Congratulations, , on your admission to Michigan State University!

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is home to more than 20 academic majors and minors focusing on the **next big ideas in food, health and the environment**.

By joining this community of student scholars, you will learn from world-class faculty, conduct vital research, take your education international and develop the skills necessary to thrive in your future career.

Below you'll find a link that provides more information on your Agribusiness Management Major as well as a link to help you explore similar programs within our college.

[Learn about YOUR MAJOR](#)

[Explore Other Majors in Agriculture: Plants & Animals](#)

Over the next few months, you'll receive more information from me about the exciting things our students and faculty are doing. **As you continue to explore and learn about your future at MSU, please feel free to connect with me directly.** I'd be more than happy to meet with you over the phone, in person, or answer any questions you may have via email.

I'm excited for you as you begin this process – and want to congratulate you again on your admission to Michigan State University!

Go Green!

Jeff Keson

Assistant Director for Student Recruitment and Retention
Office of Academic and Student Affairs
(517) 353-0560
kesonjef@msu.edu

Engage... at a distance

Email campaigns needed to expand overnight

How do we invite people into our community when they can't physically visit campus?





College of Agriculture & Natural Resources MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

March 2020: You Belong Here with Us. Still.

A Global Crisis. The Spartan Community Responds.

Michigan State University and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) are working with students, faculty and staff to ensure campus is a safe and secure environment for you. We know this is an uncertain time. We are here to support you in any way we can.

- **If you have questions about College of Agriculture and Natural Resources programs, you can contact me directly at (517) 353-0560 or kesonjef@msu.edu.**
- **If you have a question about the admissions, enrollment or deposit process,** you can contact your Admissions Counselor directly by visiting the [Admissions Contact Page](#). The [MSU Admissions Coronavirus website](#) is also being updated regularly with new information.
- **If you have concerns about paying your Admissions Enrollment Deposit by May 1, you can apply for an extension** by visiting the MSU Admissions Corona Virus website listed above and following the provided instructions.

While on-campus visits have been put on hold through May 1, know that we're here to help convey what being a Spartan is like through photos, videos, phone calls and online meetings. **Ask us anything .**

We also have different online resources to highlight student life and academic opportunities that await you in the fall. **Connect with the academic advisor related to your major to learn more about your program on an individual basis.**

Areas of Study

Future Student Information

Getting Prepared for Fall: Placement Exams



There are a few things you should do to prepare for your first semester as a Spartan. **All entering freshmen at Michigan State University are required to take the online math placement exam before New Student Orientation (NSO).** Students who have studied a foreign language prior to MSU who wish to continue study must also complete a foreign language placement exam.

It is highly recommended that all tests be completed before orientation this summer. By doing this, your Academic Advisor within CANR can help you build the perfect fall schedule.

Take Placement Exam

Important Next Steps...

Now that you've been officially admitted to Michigan State University, **you can continue your journey by completing the following steps:**

STEP 1: Activate your MSU Net ID & Email Account

STEP 2: Submit Your Advanced Enrollment Deposit (AED) – Due May 1, 2020

STEP 3: Sign Up for Orientation

STEP 4: Apply for On-Campus Housing

STEP 5: Complete Your Placement Exams (BEFORE your Orientation date)

OPTIONAL: Apply for Financial Aid (Applications Opened October 1, 2019)

We understand these are challenging times. Know the Spartan community is here to support you. We're all in this together.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly at kesonjef@msu.edu about anything.

Expansion and improvement

Steep learning curve running email campaigns – content is key!

Multiple revisions year after year, honing the right messaging for students

Need to think how our pieces will work together in one ecosystem

Design, test, run, evaluate, revise, repeat



**It's about
building relationships!**



Life
in
2050



FOR THE

**LAND
WATER+
PEOPLE**









ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

2025/2026

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY





We collectively acknowledge that Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary

LANDS OF THE ANISHINAABEG - THREE FIRES CONFEDERACY OF OJIBWE, ODAWA, AND POTAWATOMI PEOPLES.

In particular, the University resides on Land ceded in the **1819 Treaty of Saginaw**. We recognize, support, and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan's twelve federally-recognized Indian nations, for historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, for Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and for those who were forcibly removed from their Homelands.

By offering this Land Acknowledgement, **we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.**



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) is the founding college of Michigan State University, the land grant university of the state of Michigan. Since MSU's founding in 1855, our college's mission has been to provide a practical education to all citizens regardless of social class.

MSU was the first institution of higher learning in the United States to teach scientific agriculture, preparing students to become farmers, engineers, educators and scientists.



PREPARING SPARTANS FOR THE IN-DEMAND CAREERS OF TODAY - AND TOMORROW

Each day, we use science, technology, engineering, mathematics, business and creative design to take on the world's greatest challenges - including feeding more than 10 billion people by 2050.

As we face the compounding issues of severe weather and a changing environment, increased demand locally and abroad, and the need to conserve and restore our natural world - **we need people like you.**

Through the application of cutting-edge technology and innovations across disciplines, we're ready to meet the global demands of the next century with a focus on the environment and sustainability - for all of us.

\$1,500,000+

in scholarships available to undergrads across the CANR

BY THE NUMBERS (FALL 2024)

Undergraduate Students:	3,116
Certificate Students:	302
Graduate Students:	587
Total Enrollment:	4,005

76.9%

of all CANR undergraduate students **complete an internship***

SUCCESS AFTER MSU:

PLACEMENT RATE = 90.6%

employed, pursuing an advanced degree or completing volunteer service*



\$65,000

Median starting salary of CANR Spartans that **complete an internship** (compared to \$49,920 for their non-internship peers)*

*Based on available Destination Survey data from 2020 - 2024



UNDERGRAD MAJORS

**SOLVING GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH
INNOVATION – AND COLLABORATION**

Our world is a complex place – with the added challenges of competing demands, priorities, perspectives, experiences, histories, and mindsets. By engaging fellow citizens, utilizing cutting-edge research and integrating historic insights, **we can develop solutions that are both effective in the present and sustainable for the future.**

OUR MAJORS EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING
ACADEMIC THEMES:





NATURAL RESOURCES SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS

The world around us is an incredible place. Our natural world is rich in abundant wildlife, plants, forests, and ecosystems. Each of our programs is dedicated to both protecting and sustainably utilizing these precious resources.

Through conservation, restoration, policy and public engagement, we are focused on preserving our natural resources today while building toward sustainable solutions for tomorrow.

MAJORS

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Education

Applied Conservation Biology

Aquatic Ecology and Management

Entomology

Environmental Economics & Management

Environmental Studies & Sustainability

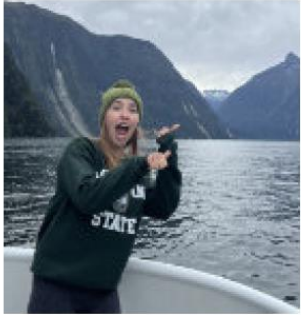
Fish Ecology and Management

Forestry

Sustainable Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Wildlife Ecology and Management

COLLEGE OF **AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**



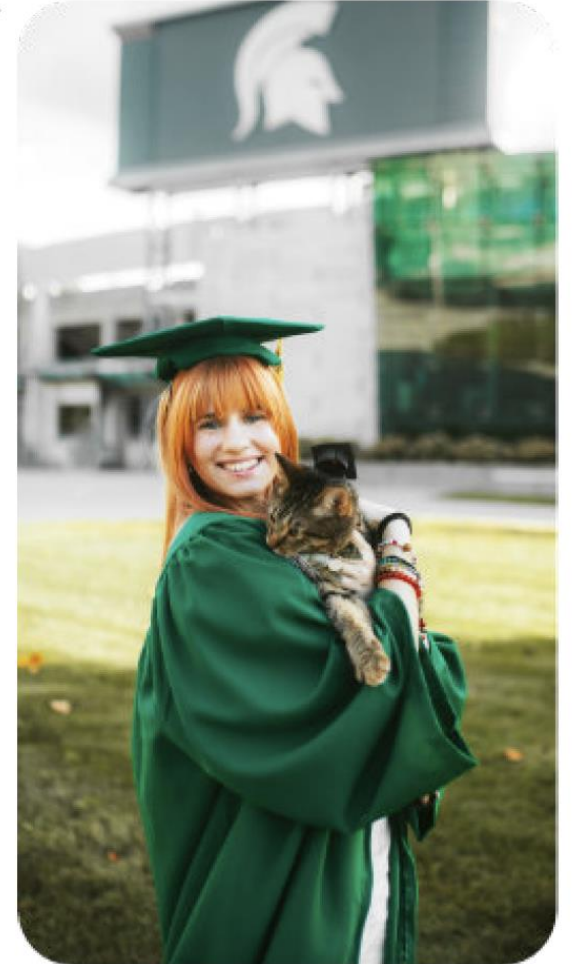
A COMMUNITY OF **SPARTANS** READY TO CHANGE THE **WORLD**

With an exceptional team of faculty, advisors, staff and campus partners, we help students align their academic pursuits with their passions.

Through their time at MSU, students in the CANR gain practical experience – enabling them to make a meaningful impact in the world and their communities.

Join us for world-class opportunities on campus and around the globe that impact and improve the lives of others.

We can't wait to see what you do!



GO GREEN! GO WHITE!

Intentional strategy for new students



Congrats Mailer

Congratulations on your admission, Spartan!
(Check your email)



Email Campaign

Build a connection with your major, explore important resources



Welcome Kit

Letter from Associate Dean, 'college gift', check list of next steps



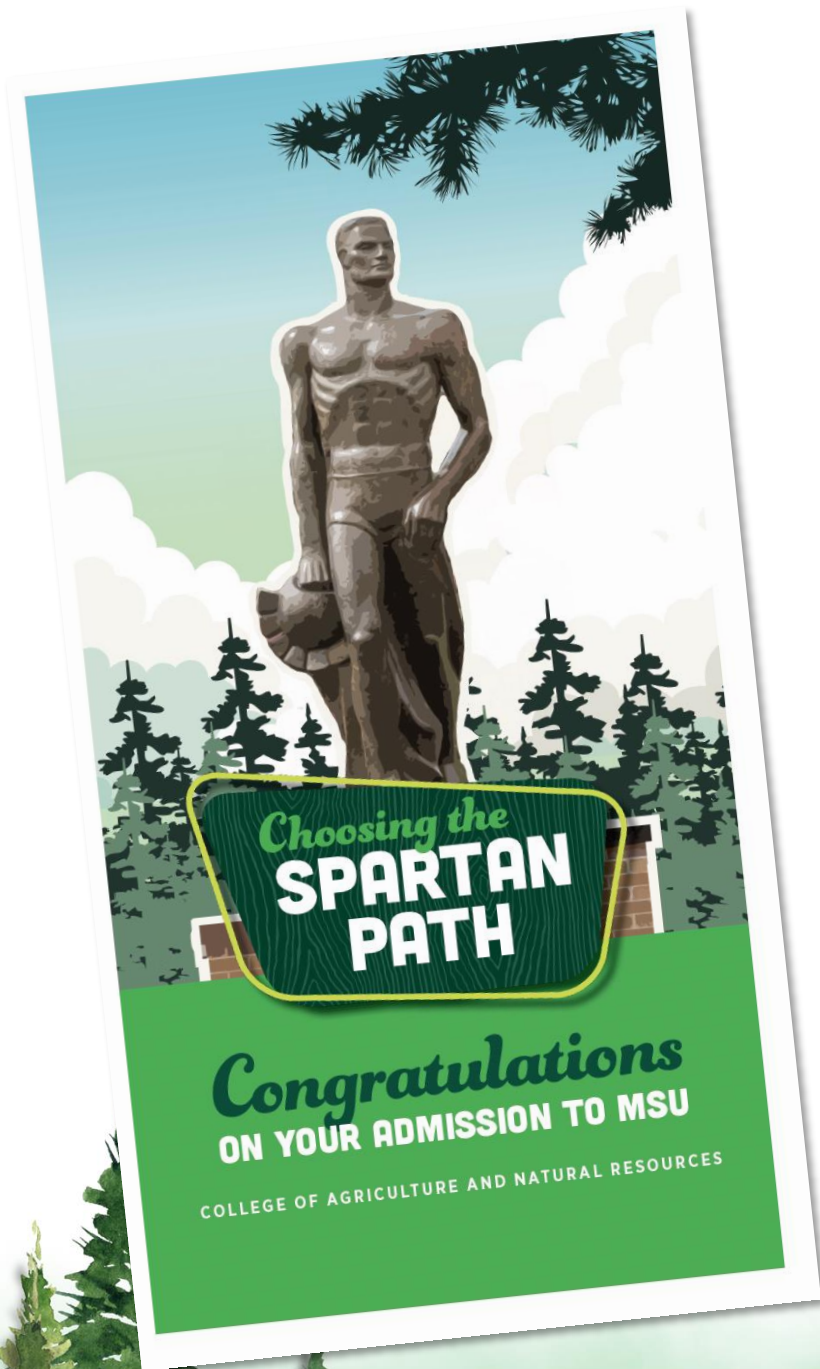
Supporting Your Spartan

Community mailer sent to families in early August

(Budget reductions have changed our strategy)



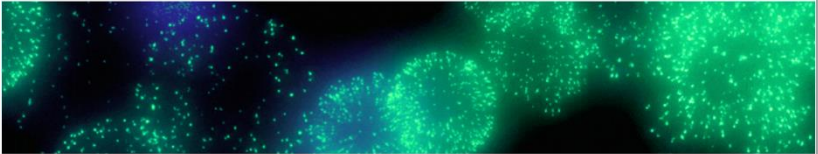
Congrats mailers



Email campaigns

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES



Congratulations, <<First Name>>!



Welcome

FUTURE SPARTANS!



A special message from our Dean and Associate Provost, Dr. Matt Daum.

Forestry at MSU

Welcome to the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources (CANR) and our Spartan community! Your major, **Forestry**, is housed in the **Department of Forestry** within the CANR.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES



Will you call Michigan 'home', <<First Name>>?

As you think about where your adventure takes you next, we hope you'll consider making Michigan home. With three bustling cities and metro areas, five incredible Great Lakes, a vast expanse of 96,000 square miles, and over 10 million Michiganders, Michigan has something for everyone.

Michigan State University's campus is a whopping 5,300 acres, bigger than 8 square miles, right in the heart of East Lansing. Our campus has over 41,000 undergrads, from all 50 states and over 120 countries around the world - and guess what? **More than 3,200 of them call the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) home.**

To help you learn about everything this great state and our university has to offer, we'll spend some time exploring Michigan, MSU and the CANR. **Let's go!**

Discover Pure Michigan





MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES



How will you grow as a Spartan?

Becoming a Spartan in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) is about more than just going to college - **it's about joining a community**. With over 3,000 students from around Michigan, across the US and around the globe, we embrace a legacy built on innovation to improve the lives of those around us.

During your time at MSU, you will learn alongside faculty that are experts in their fields. You will build friendships that last a lifetime. You will learn how to connect your passions to a meaningful career. Every walk through campus, late night study session, student organization meeting, volunteer trip and lecture in the classroom is a chance for you to grow and contribute to something greater than yourself.

How will you make the most of your time as a Spartan, <<First Name>>?

Get Involved at MSU and in the CANR



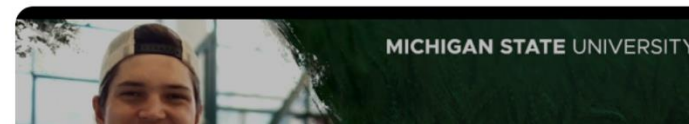
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

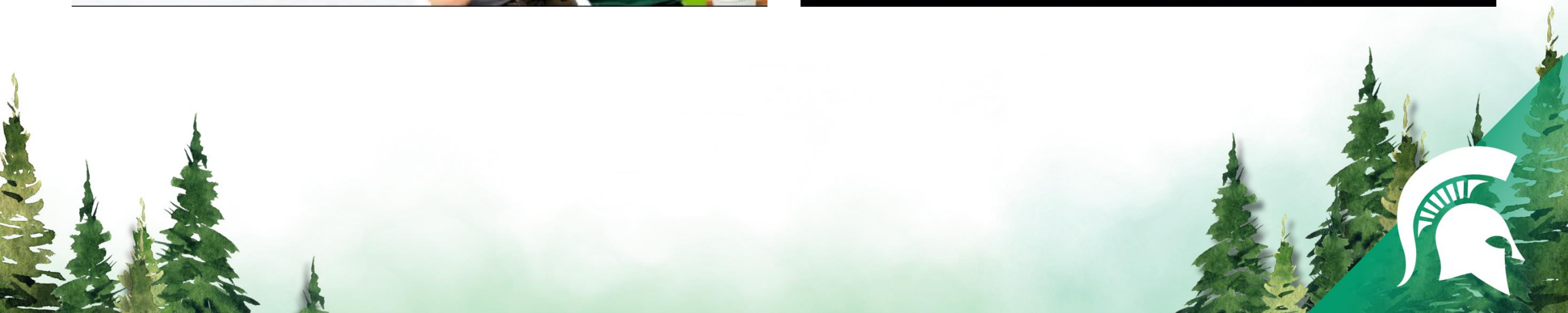
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES



Will you choose the Spartan Path, <<First Name>>?

Over the past few weeks, you have explored what it means to be a Spartan at MSU in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR). This time in your life will have an incredible impact on who you become, changing you in unexpected and profound ways. **But don't take it from me - learn what it means to be a Spartan from two of our graduating seniors, Lilly and Caden.**







Welcome kit

(Cut for 2026 cycle due to budgets)





Supporting your Spartan



For a full list of resources, please visit undergrad.msu.edu/resources

Personal on-campus experience

Fall 2024: 73 personal meetings

Fall 2025: 167 personal meetings

Fall 2026: 183 personal meetings

Mix of motivational interviewing and 'dreaming' to help students (and families) explore our majors, providing a personal touch

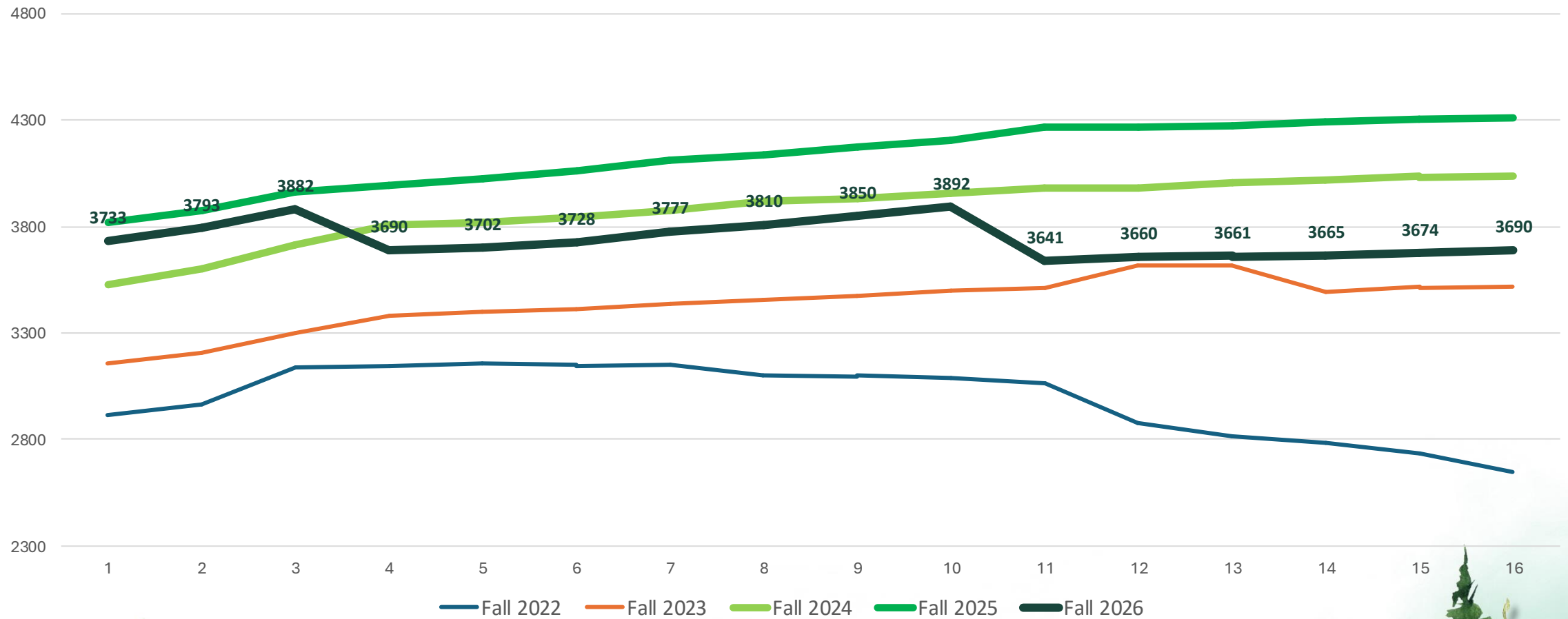


The most important question...

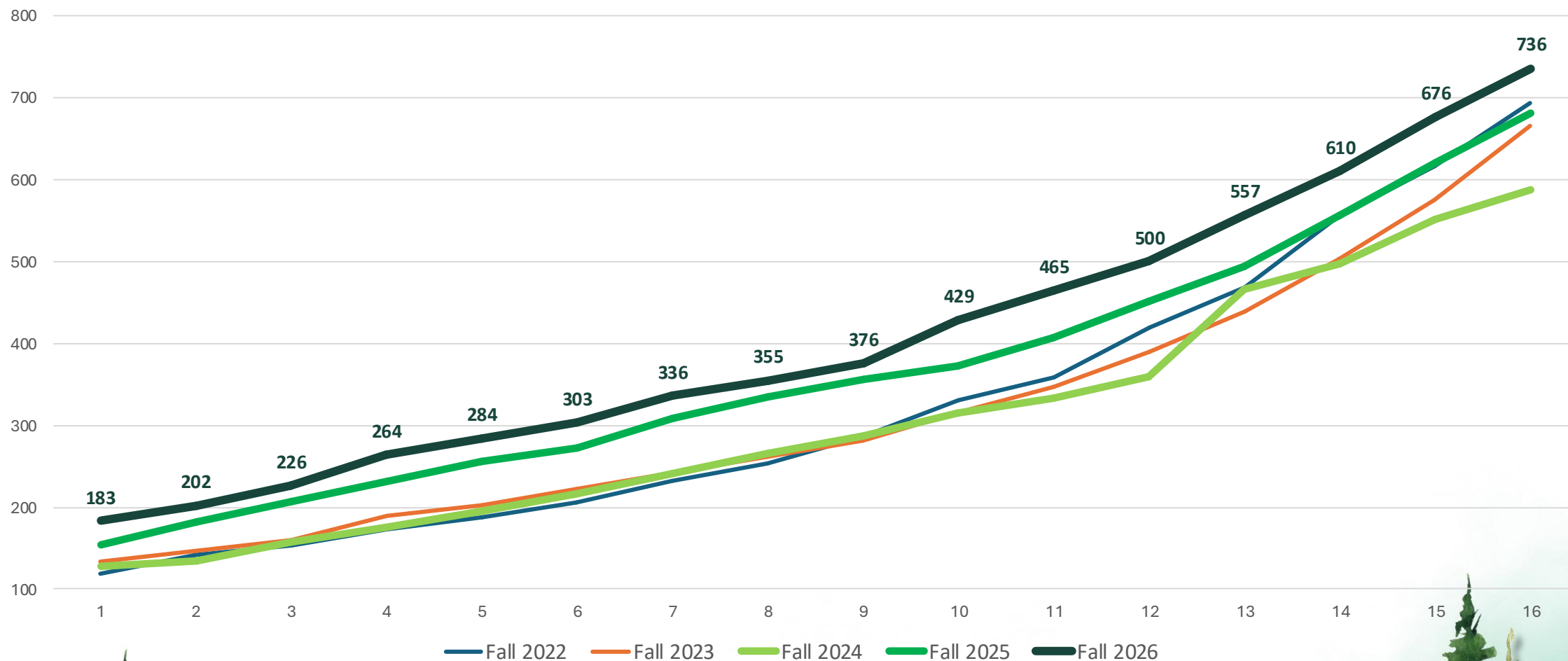
is it working?



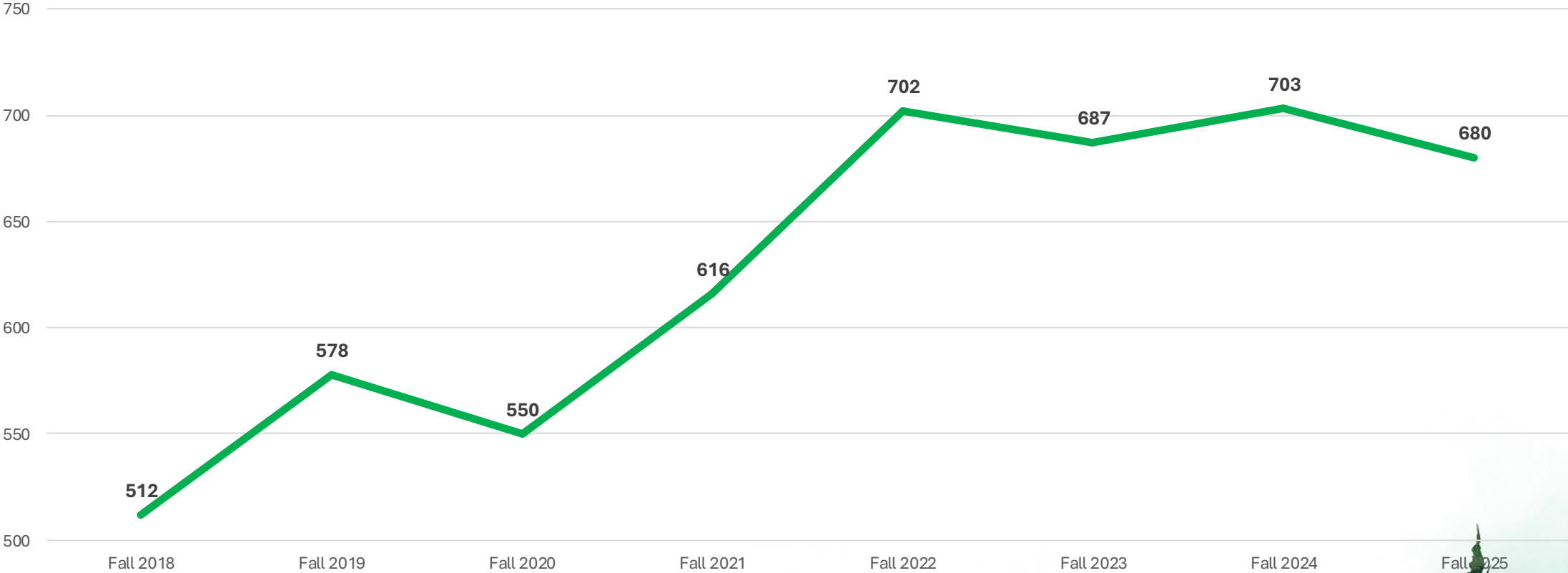
CANR Fall Recruitment Cycles: **Applications** (2022 - 2026)



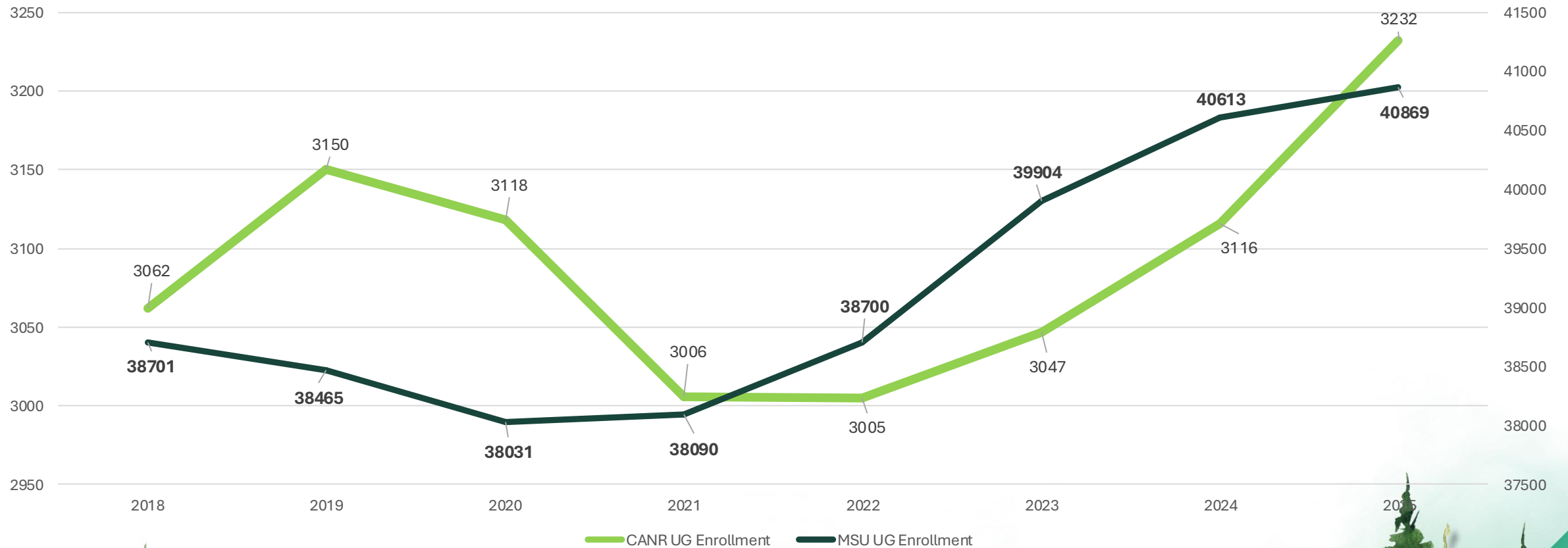
CANR Fall Recruitment Cycles: **Enrollment Fee Paid** (2022 - 2026)



CANR New Incoming Students: Fall 2018 - Fall 2025

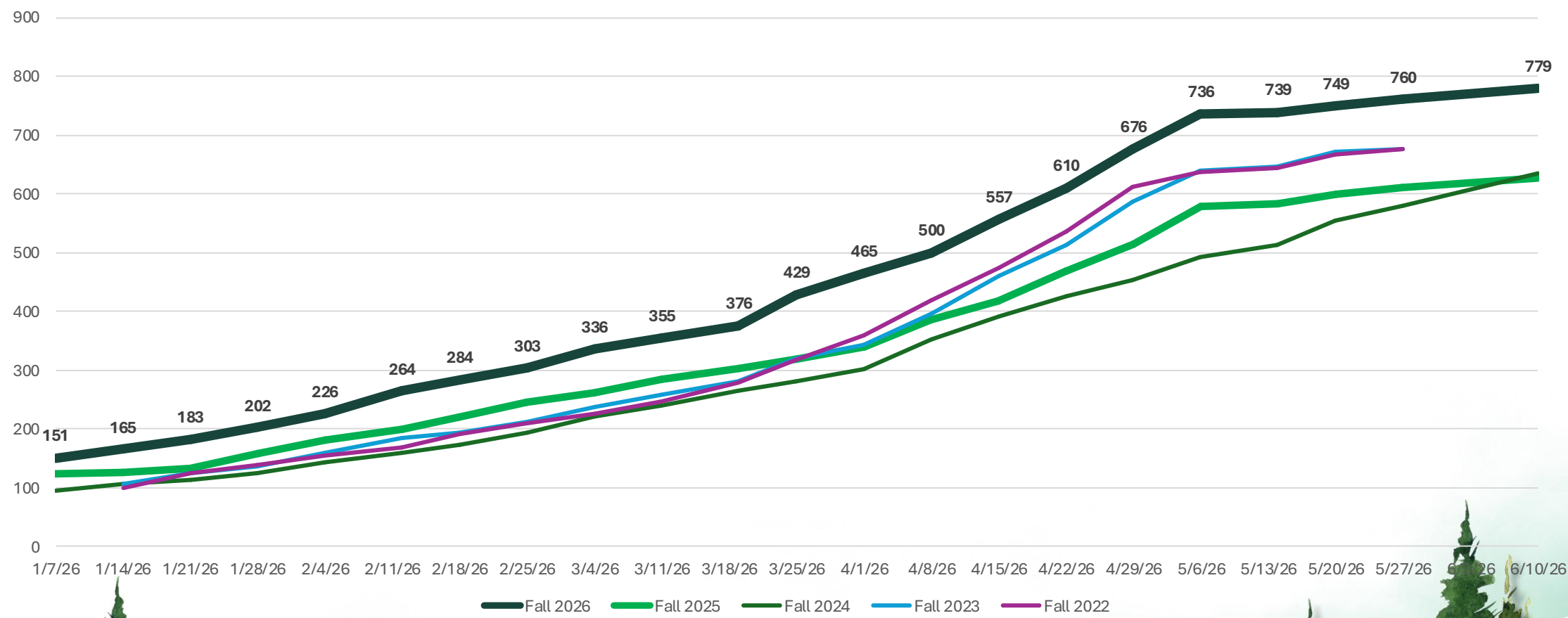


MSU & CANR: Undergraduate Enrollment Comparison (Fall 2018 - Fall 2025)



Current Outlook for Fall 2026

Fall 2026: Enrollment Fee Tracker



Looking ahead

Declining graduation class size

Expansion of Michigan's "Community College Guarantee"

Changes in federal financial aid policy – development of funding gaps

Potential impact of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and the higher education Do No Harm Earnings Test (more to come this summer)

Website updates – so many updates

Feedback groups – current students (Undergraduate Fellows), Academic Advisors, and recent students that went through this process

Budget woes – do more with less



“Toolkit” Time

Telling Your Story – what’s your 30 second pitch?

Community Partners – engage with champions and critics

Institutional Partners – same engagement, internal lens

Fresh Eyes – who’s the newest person in your unit? Ask them questions!

Wild Card Projects – try something new; even ‘losing projects’ teach us

Your Intention Matters – always ask “why are we doing this?”; if you struggle to find an answer, ask yourself if there’s something better you can try?

Resources – what do you have? What do you need?

“No” is a complete sentence.





Questions? Discussion?

e-mail: kesonjef@msu.edu

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY





Please take one minute
to complete our session
evaluation and
committee interest form





Thank you to our Conference Host and Sponsors

