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MICHIGAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM’S CLASS OF 2014 SET TO GRADUATE
CELEBRATES WITH MSU DIRECTOR AND TWO WHITE HOUSE ADVISERS

In just a few days, Michigan State University’s 26th class of the Michigan Political Leadership Program Fellows will be celebrating graduation at a dinner featuring two best-selling authors who’ve advised two U.S. presidents.

They’ll be gathering, officially as a class one more time, for a special ceremony at MPLP’s 20th annual dinner on Thursday, Feb. 26 at Laurel Manor Banquet and Conference Center in Livonia.

Nicolle Wallace, co-host on ABC Daytime’s The View and former White House Director of Communications for President George W. Bush, and Doug Sosnik, former White House Adviser to President Bill Clinton will speak at the event.

Wallace and Sosnik will also appear together the next morning at MPLP’s 13th annual breakfast on Friday, Feb. 27 at the JW Marriott in downtown Grand Rapids.

The events are open to the public. Tickets and more information about MPLP are available at www.ippsr.msu.edu/mplp.

Before dinner, the 24 MPLP Fellows will be congratulated by their MPLP mentors and co-directors – Anne Mervenne, of Mervenne & Company governmental relations consultant and Global Detroit Director Steve Tobocman.

Then, on something of a bittersweet note, they’ll hear from Douglas B. Roberts, a former state treasurer who worked for five governors and spent the last dozen years of his distinguished career at MSU.

He’s director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research, where MPLP makes its home in MSU’s College of Social Science.
An economist who earned his master’s and doctorate degree at MSU, Roberts will address the MPLP class of 2014 for the last time as IPPSR director. He plans retirement in June. Nearly half of MPLP’s alumni have graduated during his tenure at IPPSR.

“This is a terrific program,” he said about MPLP, considered one of the nation’s premier training grounds for people who have a compelling interest in public service. “It’s been my privilege and my pleasure to serve MSU.”

The first class of Fellows graduated in 1992, each year since 24 new Fellows are competitively selected each year. MPLP is multi-partisan. Among MPLP Fellows are Republicans, Democrats, members of the Green Party and those who consider themselves strong independents.

The weekend curriculum is delivered over the course of 10 months. It includes presentations by some of the state’s leading policymakers, elected officials, corporate, economic and media leaders. Sessions are conducted around the state and include tours, hands-on activities and workshops on policy analysis, governing and media relations.

Alumni reports indicate 50 percent of MPLP alumni are serving or have served in an appointed or elected capacity since MPLP’s founding in 1992. Their service ranges from city, village and township offices, to school boards, and 11 legislators in the Michigan Legislature, including four in the state Senate.

The 2014 graduates include:

- Wendy Burris, of Vicksburg, operations officer for the 110 Logistics Readiness Squadron, Battle Creek Air National Guard Base.
- Brian Davis, of Port Huron, A-10C Attack Pilot, Michigan Air National Guard.
- Christina (Tina) DeMoore, of Petoskey, self-employed attorney and mediator.
- Dennis Fedewa, of Delta Township, Delta Township trustee.
- Kyle Harris, of Chesaning, legislative assistant, Rep. Tim Kelly.
- Tiffany Hauser, of Grand Ledge, legislative consultant, The Auto Club Group.
- Barb Holt, of Grand Rapids, Chair, Board of Directors, The Rapid.
- Amina Iqbal, of Canton, outreach director, Michigan Muslim Community Council.
- Sarah Kile, of Gladwin, executive director, 211 Northeast Michigan.
- Chelsea Knauf, of Grand Rapids, marketing and public relations, MFP Automation Engineering.
Kylee Mitchell, of Dearborn, associate director, Detroit Office of Grants Management.

Thomas Nafso, of Novi, state assistant attorney general.

Rob Nederhood, of Grosse Pointe Woods, business lawyer, Foley & Lardner LLP.

Trevor Pawl, of Detroit, managing director, Pure Michigan Business Connect.

Megan Petzko-Sweet, of East Lansing, policy adviser, House Republican Policy Office.

Rico Razo, of Detroit, District 6 manager, Office of Detroit Mayor.

Kayla Roney, of Eastpointe, executive director, Hazel Park Promise Zone and College Access Network.

Jacob Santangelo, of Holland, chief executive officer, Adventurate.

Dr. Kimball Silverton, of Grand Blanc, owner/dermatologist at Silverton Skin Institute.

Sean Sucharski, of Woodhaven, mortgage banker, Quicken Loans.

Jennifer Suidan, of White Lake, assistant to Mark Brewer, Goodman Acker P.C.

Robert Thomas, of Detroit, vice chairman, Board of Zoning Appeals, city of Detroit.

Sarah Thomas, of Royal Oak, attorney, Rasor Law Firm, PLLC.

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