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Power Strategists at Michigan Political Leadership Program
Jim Messina and Karl Rove Headline MPLP Dinner and Breakfast

The power strategists behind the winning presidential campaigns of the past two decades are headed to the stage at MSU’s Michigan Political Leadership Program’s dinner and breakfast in March 2016.

Jim Messina, mastermind behind President Barack Obama’s 2012 re-election, and Karl Rove, President George W. Bush’s senior adviser and deputy chief of staff, will be the speakers at MPLP’s 2016 fundraising events on March 3 and March 4.

MPLP is one of the nation’s premiere political leadership programs, training 24 competitively chosen Fellows each year to take part in 10 months of a specially designed leadership curriculum.

Training sends the Fellows around the state for a series of lectures, events and hands-on activities on such topics as personal leadership, campaign finance, policy analysis, social media and ethics. Sessions are led by two co-directors – one Democrat and one Republican – and feature some of the state’s leading analysts and top elected officials.

The March 3 dinner, at Laurel Manor Banquet and Conference Center in Livonia, and March 4 breakfast at the JW Marriott in Grand Rapids raise majority support for the multipartisan program. MPLP is also supported by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation of Midland, along with associations, corporations, labor organizations, alumni and individuals.

This year marks the 21st annual MPLP dinner and 14th annual MPLP breakfast.

Tickets for individual seats, tables for 10 people and sponsorships at all levels are now available here or at https://commerce.cashnet.com/msu_3040

Messina served as Obama’s deputy chief of staff from 2009-2011 and was campaign manager for the president’s 2012 re-election campaign. He was director of personnel as part of the presidential transition team.

Prior to joining the president’s staff and campaign, Messina worked in congressional campaigns. He’s now president and CEO of The Messina Group, a strategic consulting firm.
Rove served as Bush’s senior adviser from 2000-2007 and deputy chief of staff from 2004-2007. At the White House, he played key roles, overseeing the Offices of Strategic Initiatives, Political Affairs, Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs.


**MPLP Alumni Lead at Every Level**

MPLP’s alumni have made their mark as well, said Douglas B. Roberts, Ph.D., director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research where MPLP makes its home at MSU. IPPSR is a unit of Michigan State University’s College of Social Sciences.

By the latest count, about 45 percent of MPLP’s alumni are serving – or have served in the past – in an elected or appointed position. Currently, 11 are seated in the Michigan Legislature.

“MPLP alumni are leaders in elected and appointed state, local and regional offices. We’re proud that they can be found at all levels of government,” Roberts said.

“They serve as urban and suburban mayors, school board presidents, township supervisors, tribal government officers, planning commissioners, judges, county commissioners and professional board members.”

**Apply Now for MPLP Class of 2016**

A new MPLP class is chosen each year, and now’s the time to apply. Applications are available year-round. They are due Friday, September 11, 2015. Interviews are planned for October and November with final selections announced in December.

“Successful candidates will have a desire to seek leadership positions,” said MPLP Co-Director Steve Tobocman, a former state House member who is managing partner at Detroit’s New Solutions Group, LLC and director of Global Detroit. He is a former elected Majority Floor Leader – the House’s second-highest position, and authored 24 public acts during his three terms.

“We are looking for candidates dedicated to sound public policy, experience in local community activities and electoral politics and willingness to learn and explore different points of view,” he said.
MPLP involvement doesn’t end at graduation, said MPLP Co-Director Anne Mervenne, CEO of Mervenne & Company, a governmental relations consulting company. She served 12 years in the administration of former Gov. John Engler, was a member of Gov. Rick Snyder’s transition team as vice-chair for talent and held elected office as an Ingham County Commissioner.

“Our alumni create great new networks during and after their MPLP experience, and that experience doesn’t end at our mid-winter graduation ceremonies,” Mervenne said.

“MPLP was founded in 1992, and it is incredible to think we are now reaching 600 graduates.”

“MPLP alumni are inspired by each other’s leadership skills and campaigns for higher office. They are excited to gather as alumni to expand opportunities for all. And they discover what it means to learn, to lead and to succeed with each other side-by-side in a multipartisan environment.”

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Download high resolution photos of Jim Messina and Karl Rove.

Apply for an MPLP Fellowship.

MPLP Fellows, alumni and supporters are proud of the program. See their excitement.

MPLP alumni come from all regions of the state. Find out who they are.

MPLP alumni are in office across the state. Track their successes.

Tickets, tables and sponsorships are available. Reserve now.