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www.mi-ramp.org

TO: Michigan-Reading and Math (STEM) Performance, MI-RAMP: Board members, Donors, Granting Agencies, Community and Parents of Student Participants--MI-RAMP Young Scholars

FROM: MI-RAMP Board of Directors

Executive Board:

- Dr. T. Carter Gilmer, CEO
- Ms. Pamela (Pam) Parks, Co-CEO
- Mr. Glenn Jackson, Co-CEO for Math (STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- Mr. Ron Bettie, Secretary
- Mr. Edward Broom, Jr., Treasurer

DATE: February 15, 2022

RE: 2021 Annual MI-RAMP LETTER

"MI-RAMP is committed to providing effective strategies for the development, dissemination and application of mathematical and literary knowledge. This will serve as a foundation for life-long learning and critical thinking....."

Iolous Lee and Ellis Hayes --- December 2019

Introduction and Summary:

MI-RAMP has completed its second year as a community charity to uplift children, ages 4-12, both educationally and socially. Year #1, 2020, was used to establish the 501 (c) (3) as a viable nonprofit, while putting logistics in place to be an ongoing:

- a. Organization with a Board of 27 talented/dedicated people to provide a balance for educational, legal, tax, and fund-raising matters, and
- b. Viable programs, such as:
 1. A free, distance-learning, virtual, 3-person model which focuses on helping children learn fundamentals of math, reading and critical- thinking.
 2. An in-person program using a tri-set mode of people interactions (teachers-tutors/students/parents).
 3. A Relief Fund to “help those suffering!” from the devastations of coronavirus which emerged in early 2020 and persists even today.

Our 2020 Annual LETTER-- linked to the website (mi-ramp.org) under DOCUMENTS--describes issues in item “a” above (firm footing for key matters). This second 2021 Annual LETTER focuses on item “b”, the 2 programs implemented and one (in-person program) which has been tabled primarily due to the ailments from the COVID-19 disease. This LETTER will also cover key changes that occurred during 2021, such as:

- c. The addition of two new talented teacher-tutors, TT’s, (Victoria Washington and Lory Armstrong)
- d. Three changes within the Board with Pamela Parks being elevated to the Executive Board of 5, Lorna Broom and Gerald Dixon joining as new Board members with new ideas and much enthusiasm.
- e. The dis-continuation of the MI-RAMP RELIEF FUND in November 2021.

Lastly, the Board is developing a 5-year plan with the “Free, 3-person, Virtual Model to Bolster Early Learning” being the central activity. Routinely, we foresee serving the community and children with three terms per year of 12-week sets of “classes”. Firm estimates are that each term will have 14-18 children—18 being the plateau number—at a cost of about \$15,000/year with \$9800 (65%) of the budget for instructional costs (TT’s).

The Programs:

As enumerated in the 2020 LETTER, MI-RAMP based its primary ideas to uplift children on combining two principles:

1. Applying Nobel-prize-winning theories of James Heckman on early learning to reap the maximum returns on investment (human capital) and
2. Obtaining parental involvement to gain long-term support of youth.

Thus, our initial ideas arose from having tri-fold arrangements for in-person teaching-learning programs then, ultimately, distance-learning programs.

- A. In 2020, the onset of MI-RAMP, we planned an in-person program which is described in detail in the 2020 LETTER. That proposal, in its tri-fold arrangement of teachers-tutors/parents/students was to launch in summer 2020 with three grade levels: a) Pre-K to 2, b) 3-4, and c) 5-6. When coronavirus emerged, March 2020, we postponed the in-person idea. Over the following 2-4 months we searched for viable alternative initiatives and hoped that COVID-19 would quickly subside so that we could pursue the initial in-person plan. COVID-19 persisted. We adjusted to:

- A short-lived but helpful Relief Fund
- A long-term and active free, virtual, 3-person program, which will be discussed thoroughly.

B. The MI-RAMP Relief Fund (RF) was a brainstorm of Board member Naurice Roberts (of Chicago). Its rationale was that since so many were being devastated by COVID-19 (loss of jobs, extreme illnesses, excessive poverty, etc.), Mi-RAMP could provide some financial and emotional relief to some--by simply giving unfortunate families a one-time gift of \$50. Imploring the 27 Board members from 7 states, Ms. Roberts drafted a plan and logistics. Board members could submit a name each month on a rotating basis. That selected person would be mailed a \$50 check, with no obligation nor explanation. We established a separate 501 (c) (3), MI-RAMP-RF, for this purpose.

The RF was started in August 2020, with seven checks being mailed monthly. The selectors were all Board members, and they chose recipients in the alphabetical order of the members' last names. Eighty (80) families/people received checks from August 2020 to May 30, 2021 (9 months, 4 in 2020; 5 in 2021)—totaling ~\$4000.

In 2021 (1-1-21 to 5-30-21), 5 months, 44 families received \$50 gifts totaling ~\$2200.

The Board voted to end the MI-RAMP-RF initiative at the September 2021 meeting and to donate the residual account balance (\$445.79) to MI-RAMP, since MI-RAMP's free/3-person/virtual program was proceeding slowly, but smoothly, after starting December 2020. Said donation was made. The MI-RAMP-RF was terminated and will be defunct with the final tax filing in early 2022.

C. Due to the disruptiveness of COVID-19, in-person activities for educational systems around the country, and other in-person activities were shrinking or ceasing in 2021. Schools were struggling and students/parents/educators were frustrated with the uncertainties of attendance, styles of teaching-learning and engagement (in-person, virtual or hybrid situations). Independent of school districts, MI-RAMP seized the opportunity to provide supplemental learning of basics in math, reading and critical thinking for youth ages 4-12 with:

“A Unique Concept—Free, 3-Person, Virtual Model to Bolster Early Learning: Michigan Reading and Math (STEM) Performance”.

The first virtual cohort started December 2020 with 7 youngsters (5 boys/2 girls, as pictured on our website under COHORT PHOTOS). Two young scholars are pictured in Figures I and II during a tri-person virtual session led by their teacher-tutor. Subsequently, cohort numbers have grown and are projected to continue to grow, plateauing at 18. Each term has consisted of 12-weeks of 30-minute weekend virtual (Zoom, Google Duo, Google Meet, or FaceTime) “classes”. Cohort growth has been:

- Cohort #1 (started Dec. 2020)—7 young scholars
- Cohort #2 (started April 2021)—10 young scholars
- Cohort #3 (started July 2021)—11 young scholars
- Cohort #4 (started Nov. 2021, ends March 2022)—14 young scholars
- Cohort #5—projected (to start April 2022)—18 young scholars
- Cohort #6—projected (to start July 2022)—18 young scholars

Central to the virtual program is that we lean toward students who typically are underserved. Most of our students—at least ½— must qualify for the National School Lunch program (free or reduced) and be

classified as marginalized. To date more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of our admits fall into that category. About 60% have been boys, who frequently lag behind girls academically and in maturation. Our current cohort #4 has 14 students with a 50/50 split of males to females with 13 of 14 (92.8%) being underserved.

Regardless of cohort size, our virtual program is a dialogue between 1 TT, 1 student and 1 parent with the TT leading the learning session but encouraging input, questions, and requests from the parent. The goal is enhanced learning of the basics (reading, math, and critical thinking). Our TT's are highly qualified and dedicated to the growth of each child on an individual and customized basis. The young scholars are assessed early in the 12-week term. Benchmarks and learning targets are established as soon as possible and designed to fulfill fundamental needs of each child at their age/grade level and learning style.

MI-RAMP addresses their reading acumen and follows a theorem that they must: 'learn to read, then read to learn'. A case in point is illustrated in Figure III, where a 5-year-old, who could not read, was exposed to sight words (e.g., a, is, dog, me, mom, I, dad, apple, etc.) via a Google Duo "class" over a 12-week term. On week #1 he only recognized 3 sight words. See Figure III, which plots # of sight words recognized versus weeks. The number of sight words increased each week and during week #8 he read for the first time. The TT projected these words: "Where is mom"? The child verbalized the words and turned to his mom, while touching her, and responded, "Here is mom". He had read for the very first time. He read one more 3-word sentence; overjoyed with himself.

He recognized that he had opened a new door which he enjoyed, saying, "Reading is fun. Let's do some more". This student demonstrated: 1) he learned how to read, 2) he understood/comprehended, and 3) he thought about the new experience and future applications.

We approach math progression by again determining an appropriate starting point for each student and begins with fundamentals-which are needed for mathematical calculations or approaches to solving math-based word problems. Case in point, depending on the age/grade-range, we assist them with learning fundamentals of counting: by 1's, 2's, 5's, 10's; principles of the number line; positive-negative numbers; exponents; addition, subtraction, multiplication, division; shapes/triangles/rectangles/area; logarithms, etc.

For 4th and 5th graders, we purposefully focus on the multiplication tables, so that they can progress to future challenges involving division:

- $56/8=$
- $8/84=$
- $8100/78=$
- $10,000/100=$

Long division is associated with fractions/improper fractions/mixed numbers, %'s and decimals. The relationships must be understood. The foundational skills, i.e., multiplication tables, must be mastered to proceed to more advanced math and memorization skills, in general. Throughout the 30-minute "classes", math and reading concepts/problems are presented. Students are asked questions and encouraged to think about their answers and taught to ask further questions of themselves, and the TT's (and parents). These dynamics lead to improved critical thinking. Such thinking enhances decision making and judgment. Both characteristics help develop responsible people.

FIGURE I
MI-RAMP DISTANCE-LEARNING -"CLASS",
ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD COHORT MEMBER WITH HER MOM



FIGURE II
MI-RAMP DISTANCE-LEARNING -"CLASS",
EIGHT-YEAR-OLD COHORT MEMBER WITH HIS DAD

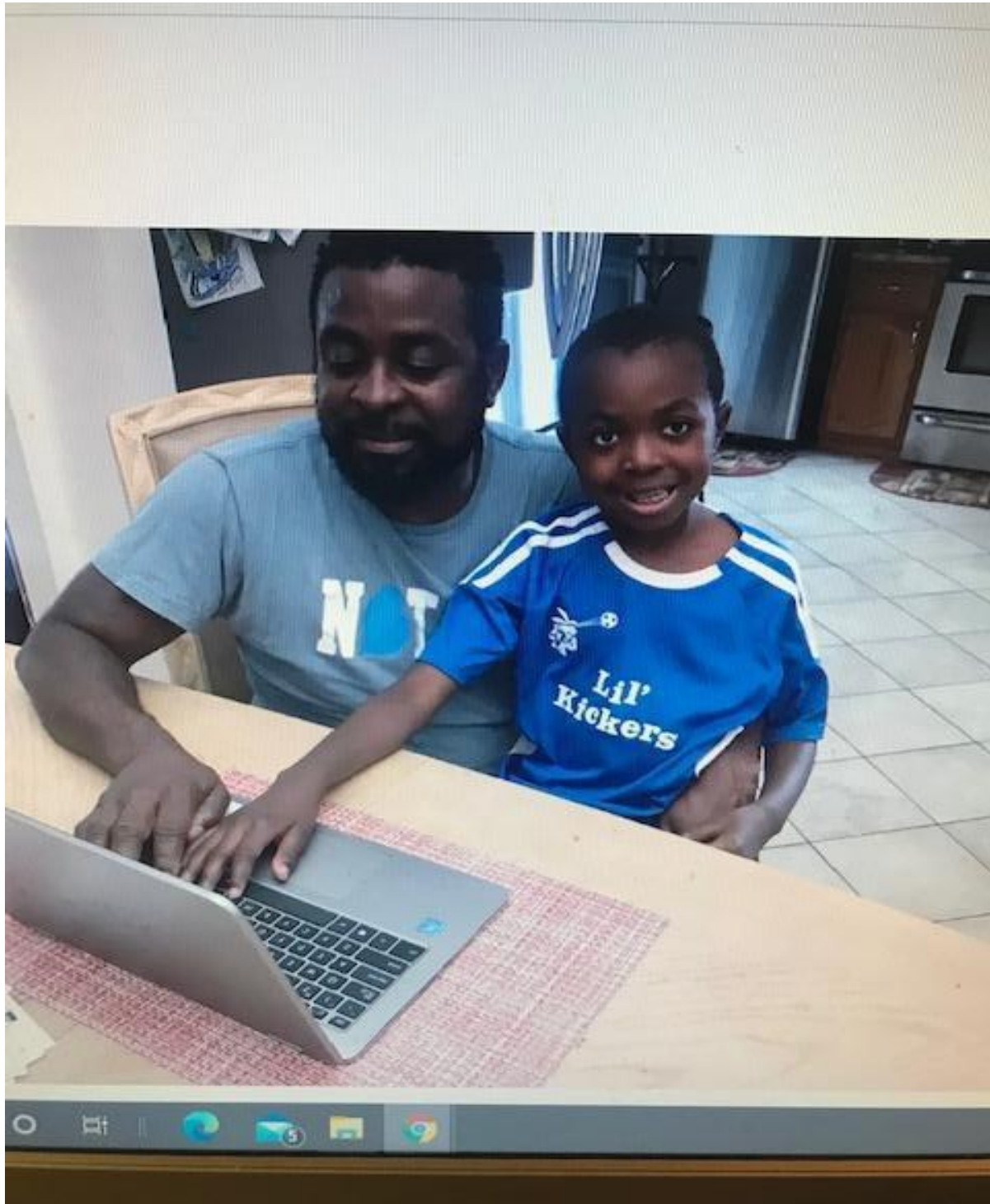
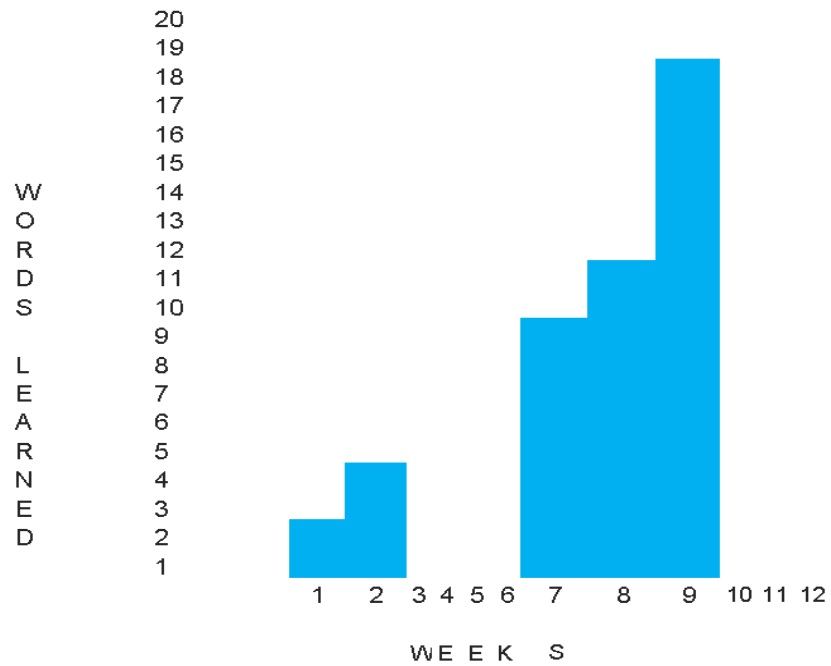


FIGURE III
WORD PROGRESSION OF PRE-K YOUNG SCHOLAR In COHORT #1



A. Costs of the Distance-Learning program

The primary expenses for the virtual program are: 1) instructional costs for the TT's who earn \$30/contact-hour, and 2) incentives to the young scholars who can earn \$35 for each 12- week term (\$2 for 2 consecutive "classes" and \$25 as a Target gift certificate upon completion). As the number of children in each cohort varied (from 7 to 14), expenses have increased. Fortunately due to donations (cash and in-kind), we have been able to cover those primary expenses and secondary ones, i.e., insurances, supplies, website maintenance, postage, etc.

In 2021 MI-RAMP collected \$13,400 from 103 gifts. That was preceded by \$11,527 from 65 gifts in 2020. We hope to extend our outreach and better the income in the upcoming year—2022.

See Appendix A for lists of many contributors.

In 2022 we plan to have three 12-week terms with 18 children in cohorts 5 and 6, but 14 in cohort #4 (active now) which ends in March 2022. Our 2022 budgetary needs are projected as \$15,300.

B. Financial Statements for 2021

Table 1 presents specifics related to our 2021 balance sheet. Please review.

	<u>End of 2021 (12-31-21)</u>	<u>End of 2020 (12-31-20)</u>	<u>Change</u>
~Total assets	\$12,900	\$10,300	\$2,600
~Total liabilities	\$0	\$0	\$0
~ Cash	\$7,100	\$4,700	\$2,400

TABLE I
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
YEAR END 2021

Assets:	<u>11/30/21</u>	<u>12/31/21</u>
Cash	7,802.49	7,068.24
Website	1,276.37	1,276.37
Org Costs	1,870.00	1,870.00
Student Supplies	2,130.62	2,130.62
Prepaid Insurance	47.37	583.04
Total Assets	13,126.85	12,928.27
Total Liabilities	0.00	0.00

Statement of Activities
November 30 and December, 2021

	<u>11/30/2021</u>	December	<u>12/31/2021</u>
Change in net assets without donor restrictions			
Revenue and gains:			
Donations - Cash	7804.79	1120.00	8,924.79
Donations - In kind	470.00		470.00
Donations - 5K Run/Walk	2132.00		2,132.00
Total unrestricted revenues	10406.79	1120.00	11,526.79
Expenses and Losses			
Office Supplies	534.29	95.39	629.68
Publications			
Administrative Assistant	550.00	100.00	650.00
Teachers/Tutors	3,242.50	870.00	4,112.50
Travel and Meetings			
Fund Raising			
PayPal Fees	100.68	5.86	106.54
Insurance Expense	520.64	47.33	567.97
Student Incentives	1,247.40	200.00	1,447.40
Fees and Licenses	40.00		40.00
Expenses 5k Run/Walk	1,370.00		1,370.00
Total Expenses	7,605.51	1,318.58	8,924.09
Net Assets at end of period	13,126.85	(198.58)	12,928.27

Personnel Changes:

A. Teachers-Tutors (TT)

1. Victoria Washington joined MI-RAMP for Cohort #2, April 2021. She has contributed tremendously to the growth of young scholars in cohorts 2, 3 and 4. She is a chemist, a University of Michigan graduate, and an experienced tutor with a passion to help children learn.
2. Lory Armstrong joined MI-RAMP at the onset of Cohort #4, November 2021 and brings over 30 plus years of teaching Pre-K and elementary school children in the Detroit area and Detroit Public Schools. Ms. Armstrong constantly demonstrated her mature understanding of young children and related parental challenges.

B. Board Members

1. Pamela (Pam) Parks is an original member of the MI-RAMP Board since inception and the Chairperson for (student) Recruitment. During summer 2021 she was selected to fill a vacated Executive Board (which consists of 5 member) position, as a Co-CEO of MI-RAMP. See the organization chart on mi-ramp.org.
2. Lorna Broom joined the MI-RAMP Board January 2021 and has added much expertise in the medical field, as a NP-C (Nurse Practitioner, Certified). Mrs. Broom keeps the Board abreast primarily on current health-related issues connected to the effectiveness of masks and types of masks to combat COVID-19, vaccine effectiveness, spread of the disease/occurrences/hospitalizations/deaths/etc.
3. Gerald K. Dixon joined the Board, during the fall of 2021. He brings expertise in math and engineering (STEM) along with business planning. He will be active with the 5-year plan and parent/student outreach.

Future Work:

Beyond 2021, MI-RAMP envisions:

1. Refining the free, 3-person, virtual program
2. Assisting other nonprofits with replication/duplication of our virtual program
3. Evaluating new activities related to computer basics, cyber security and technology
4. Developing a 5-year plan (1-1-22 to 12-31-26)

Suggestions:

- Read website: www.mi-ramp.org
- Consider donating to MI-RAMP
- Recommend students (and parents) for MI-RAMP. Applications are on the website. See page 1 for contact information.
- Expand fund-raising via grants, such as, Skillman Foundation, Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan; others
- Consider fund-raising activities, such as, raffles

Conclusions:

1. MI-RAMP demonstrated the utility and repeatability of its free, virtual, 3-person program.
2. Youth, ages 4-12, learned from their 12-week, 30-minute “classes” which supplemented math and reading principles from school; or provided some new approaches/methods to learn basics in math, reading and critical thinking.
3. Steady growth/improvements occurred in this signature virtual program by fine-tuning techniques to present and determine outcomes from learning targets. Iterations with surveys/evaluations, from cohort to cohort, facilitated improvements.
4. TT training sessions were used and helped by providing uniformity and additional resources, such as Khan Academy and professional contacts.
5. The virtual program is replicable/duplicable and worthy of further exposure. Accordingly, this work, as a concept model, has been submitted for publication in a journal. Publication is anticipated in 2022.
6. MI-RAMP is ongoing; accordingly, a 5-year plan is being developed where expansion and new areas of exploration (such as, robotics, computer literacy and cyber-security) will be considered.
7. So far, due to the generosity of scores of donors and volunteers, the financial challenges of these nonprofits (MI-RAMP and MI-RAMP-RF, relief fund) have been met. We raised about \$11,000 and \$13,000, respectively, in 2020 and 2021 (cash and tangible in-kind gifts).
8. The MI-RAMP-RF was timely/appreciated/helpful, but appropriately discontinued.
9. *Giving is still needed and solicited to meet our 2022 budget of \$15,300 for 3 cohorts of young scholars.*
10. MI-RAMP believes in:
Education, not Incarceration!

APPENDIX A

Contributions: Organizations, Businesses, Nonprofits

- Edward Jones Investments (Robert Stokes of TN)
- Meijer of Walled Lake, MI
- Network for Good of Wash., DC
- SCARCE of IL
- Southfield KAPPA Foundation (Southfield, MI)
- Spencer Foundation of IL
- Staples of Walled Lake, MI
- Target of Walled Lake, MI
- United Methodist (UM) Women of Hope UM Church of Southfield, MI
- United Way of Southeast MI

Ideas/Service/Contributions: Individuals

- Armstrong, Lory of MI

- Behn, Kay A. of NV
- Bettie, Ron of MI
- Broom, Edward Jr. and Lorna of MI
- Brown, Eric of MI

- Dixson, Michelle of MI

- Fedus, Sally of MI
- Ford, Donald Dexter of IL
- Freedman, Joel, and Georgene of GA

- Garrett, Alberta of MI
- Garrett, Eufaula K. of GA
- Gay, Thomas (Tom) of MI
- Gilmer, Marquita D. of NV
- Gilmer, Phyllis A. of MI
- Gilmer, Ralph T. of CA

- Henderson, Roosevelt of MI
- Howard, Everett, and Joan of NV

- Jackson, Glenn, and Susan of MI
- Jones, Art, and Peggy of IL

- Lee, Carlton of PA
- Leontis, Neocles Professor/Dr./Ph. D. of OH (deceased)

- Malone, Carmen of MI
- McCoy, Artisha of MI

- Newell, William (Bill) of MI
- Newton, Staci R. G. of TX

- Palmer, Twinet, Professor Dr./Ph.D. of MI
- Parks, Pamela (Pam) of MI

- Randle, Nathan (Nate), and Venus of MI
- Ray, Geneva of CA
- Reed, Ernest of MI
- Regan, Kevin, and Joyce of MI
- Roberts, Naurice of IL

- Smart III, Richard, Esq/Judge of MI
- Smitherman, Wendell of MI
- Stanfield, Spencer of MI
- Strong, Lamont of CA

- Talley, Barbara of MI
- Thomas, Ron of NY
- Turner, Andrew (Drew), Dr./Ph.D. of NY

- Washington, Victoria of MI
- Wright, Collin T. of GA