

Dean Transportation and Michigan State University: A Successful Partnership

by Tamera Nielsen. Photo by Terri Shaver.

Headquartered in Lansing, the Dean Transportation family of companies employs 1,200 people and provides various transportation services nationwide. Kellie Dean, president and CEO of Dean Transportation and Dean Trailways, is deeply committed to the revival of Michigan's economy. Dean's involvement with multiple departments at Michigan State University, as well as Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), underscores this commitment, and it is making a difference despite local economic turmoil.

Dean's relationship with MSU began in 1971 playing football under tutelage of football coach Duffy Daugherty, and has blossomed into a solid, widespread economic, educational and service-oriented bond that reaches thousands.

The Dean family of companies supports MSU athletics at all levels including fundraisers and special events, as well as provides academic support. "We stand ready for any assistance they may need: helping transport athletes to community services they may get involved with," says Dean, adding passionately, "We are very connected at every level. It's a labor of love."

Dean's company works with Mark Hollis, Paul Schager, Chuck Sleeper, Dr. Carol Ames, and many others at MSU by providing transportation, corporate sponsorship dollars, and participating educational outreach programs, such as the Eli Broad scholars.

This philanthropic program busses students, by way of Dean Transportation's yellow busses, from Detroit Public Schools to study on the MSU campus. These students stay on campus from two to 30 days at a time. This effort is effective at educating these young students, and ultimately the program encourages them to choose MSU when college age is upon them.

With a thousand vehicles, ten offices (as far north as Traverse City), and over a thousand employees, Dean's companies provide stable employment opportunities as well as a myriad of support for educational, athletic and economic outreach programs at MSU and beyond. Serving as a board member of the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau, Dean is involved in a multitude of events, including the Hoop Fest.

Dean's commitment to helping rebuild Lansing's economy is exemplified by his chairing a newly formed committee under LEAP. Dean explains, "This committee is leveraging MSU's economic force. We want the whole world to know the economic value and generator that MSU is to our region."

"We have just recognized 75 businesses, organizations and individuals who have a longtime collaborative relationship with MSU, which will help us tell the world that our region is a great place to live, work and raise a family." ■

