

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE®



YOU'RE THE STAR OF THE
STORY! CHOOSE FROM 22 POSSIBLE ENDINGS.

PHI THETA KAPPA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

MAY 16-17, 2025 • SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE • VISTATECH CENTER



THE POWER OF STORIES



Fellow Scholars,

I hope you've had an excellent year! Some of you already know me, but my name is Elvis Velu, and I am the president of the Omicron Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. With this letter I'm both excited and honored to invite you to the 2025 Phi Theta Kappa Michigan Regional Conference at Schoolcraft College on May 16-17, 2025.

Our theme, **"Choose Your Own Adventure"** is inspired by The Power of Stories - because your journey, both academic and in life, should be one that you create. With top-tier facilities, excellent accommodation, and some very cool guests and activities, we're ready to craft an unforgettable experience.

As part of that journey, we've got some special guests we'd like to highlight, including, but not limited to:

- From Schoolcraft College to NASA, Hossein Zabihian's journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and innovation. As an Aerospace Engineer, he has contributed to the James Webb Space Telescope, modeled thermal assets for spacecrafts, and is now working on a next-gen internet satellite project for Northrop Grumman. During General Session #1, he will share his story - one that began as a Phi Theta Kappan at Schoolcraft and led him to engineering the future of space exploration.
- Keynote speakers Dr. Michael Oliver and Dr. Deborah Daiek will lead a Vibrational Science Lecture and Live Sound bath. This session will explore the science behind vibrations and their profound effects on the human body and mind. Research suggests that specific sound frequencies and binaural beats can promote deep relaxation, alleviate stress, and enhance mental clarity. Dr. Oliver will discuss the role of sound in energy balance and healing, while Dr. Daiek will lead participants in a live sound bath experience using therapeutic instruments like chakra bowls, gongs, and chimes. Join us for this immersive session to discover how sound can serve as both a science and a tool for wellness.
- Early birds will get a chance to participate in a Cooking Demonstration by Students from Schoolcraft's nationally recognized culinary program.
- And many more!

To register, please go here <https://cvent.me/DqVX9G> by April 25th.

We furthermore have several great lodging options available to you at hotels within two miles of the campus. For block booking details, register here by April 25, 2025.

We'd love you to be part of this adventure. Join us in celebrating the past year, exploring your path, and making this story your own. We hope to see you there!

Best,
Elvis Velu
President, Omicron Iota Chapter

Choose Your Own Culinary Adventure: YES CHEF!

Step into the Collaborative Learning Studio Lab and embark on a flavor-filled journey guided by one of our talented student chefs, Jose Vargas.

Will you be a spectator, soaking in expert techniques?

Or will you dive deeper, tasting and learning the secrets behind culinary artistry?

**THE CHOICE
IS YOURS!**

Cochinita Pibil

Student Chef Jose Vargas will be preparing Cochinita Pibil, a traditional, slow-roasted pork dish that originated in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.

The meat is marinated in achiote paste, citrus juices, and spices, wrapped in banana leaves, and then roasted then served in a deshidratada tostada, in a bed of black beans topped with pickled red onion and habanero.



Join us from 4:30- 5:15 p.m. in the Collaborative Learning Studio - Vistatech Room 705.

YOUR ADVENTURE BEGINS HERE

Uncover the stories that shape heroes, legends, and destinies—
Join us Friday, May 16 & Saturday, May 17 and
discover where your adventure will take you!

REGIONAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MAY 16 PRE CONFERENCE

2:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Candidates Set up booths in the Town Hall Area

3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Meeting with the Michigan Regional Officer Candidates
• Wilson Room

4:00 - 6:00 P.M.

Student Chef Jose Vargas will provide a culinary demonstration
and samples in the Collaborative Learning Studio
4:30 to 5:15 pm in Vistatech 705

Registration Open | Location Mainstreet in the Vistatech Center

Candidates campaigning in the Town Hall Area of the Vistatech

6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

**CONFERENCE
BEGINS**

General Session 1 | Kehrl Auditorium

Schoolcraft College Administrator Welcome

Elvis Veliu, 2024-25 Omicron Iota Chapter President Welcome
and introduction of Friday Keynote speaker.

Hossein Zabihian from NASA and Northrop Aerospace –
former student with the Omicron Iota Chapter –
has worked on the James Webb telescope.
(20 minute presentation with 10 minutes after for Q and A)

Regional Officer Election Overview (Ben Fries and Sarah Henry)

Candidate Speeches

Alumni Meeting – Provide benefits for all in attendance– MRAA

8:00 - 9:00 P.M.

Political Rally - Lower Level of the Vistatech in the
Student Activities Lounge

8:00 - 11:30 P.M.

Meet-Up Mixer | Lower Level, Vistatech

YOUR ADVENTURE CONTINUES

REGIONAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 17

8:30 A.M.

Political Rally and beginning of session #2

General Session 2 | Kehrl Auditorium

Regional Business Meeting Nicole, Tammy, Sarah
and Regional Officers

10 -10:15 A.M.

Intermission

10:15 -11:30 A.M.

Saturday Keynote:

Unveiling the Science and Mystery of Sound

Dr. Michael Oliver and Dr. Deborah Daiek will explore
the science as well as the mystery of sound.

• Kehrl Auditorium

11:30 A.M.

Lunch Break | Lower and Upper Vistatech areas available
for seating

MRAA Business Meeting in the common area of the
Lower Level, Vistatech during lunch

Advisors Lunch together in Conference Room E -
Lower Level, Vistatech

12:45 -1:25 P.M.

Breakout Session 1

Homayra Adiba - Crafting your story to bring value in research
Wilson Room

Dr. Mark Huston – Conspiracy Theories

• Kehrl Auditorium

Annaliese Corace, LMSW-C-

Mental Health Matters- Erasing the Stigma

• Sutherland Room

1:30 -2:15 P.M.

Breakout Session 2

Tuesday Dixon - Running for PTK International Office

• Wilson Room

Debashish Chakrabarty - Embedded Stories,
Tracing Ruptures, and Continuity

• Sutherland Room

Sharon Christian - Ask Me Anything: Navigating Followership,
Leadership, and Supervision

• Kehrl Auditorium

YOUR ADVENTURE CONTINUES

REGIONAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 17

2:30 - 3:15 P.M.

Breakout Session 3

Professor Samer Hariri - A Rocky Form of Storytelling:
The Petoskey Stone
• Sutherland Room

Elvis Velu & Steven L. Berg Ph.D., Professor of English
and History - How to Publish a book
• Kehrl Auditorium

Nicole Vergara - Stories as Bridges:
Connecting Communities Through Narrative
• Wilson Room

3:30 - 4:45 P.M.

General Session 3 | Kehrl Auditorium

Candidate Caucus
Voting Instructions (Ben and Sarah)

4:45 - 5:30 P.M.

Free Time (Delegates vote during this time)

6:00 - 7:30 P.M.

Dinner Service

Dinner Menu: Chicken Breast Marsala,
Seasonal Vegetable Palomino Pasta, Rice Pilaf,
Fresh bread rolls, Garden Salad with ranch and
balsamic vinaigrette, Raspberry White Chocolate Cheesecake

Dinner music performed by Soonghee Ha

7:30 - 9:30 P.M.

Gala & Awards Ceremony

All Michigan Academic Team Awards sponsored
by the MCCA

Michigan Region of Phi Theta Kappa presents
the Hallmark Awards.

Individual, Team and Chapter awards

College Project

Honors in Action

Most Distinguished Chapter

Choose Your Own Adventure: From student to NASA Engineer!

Join us for an inspiring keynote by Hossein Zabihian, a former Omicron Iota Chapter officer who charted his own path all the way to NASA! Now an Aerodynamicist and Thermal Engineer working on the James Webb Space Telescope, Hossein's story is one of passion, perseverance, and the power of dreaming big.

- **Will you embark on your own adventure in science, engineering, or beyond?**
- **What choices will shape your future?**
- **How do the lessons of today prepare you for the discoveries of tomorrow?**



Hossein Zabihian

Hossein Zabihian was a student at Schoolcraft College from 2012-2014. He was born in Tehran, Iran, and moved to the United States in 2010. While studying at Schoolcraft College, he joined the honor society of PTK. He became the vice president of service during his time at the college.

After that, he pursued his bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering at the University of Michigan in 2014. He joined the University of Michigan solar car team. He designed and built an efficient car to race throughout the harsh Australian outback environment. His car finished second place in the World Solar Car Challenge of 2017.

Throughout his career, he was a computational analyst for the aerospace industry. In 2018, he worked at NASA Glenn as CFD analyst for the Icing Research Tunnel (IRT).

Currently, he is working for Northrop Grumman Corporation as a thermal analysis engineer. His latest work was the James Webb Telescope, as a thermal analyst, he was working on the survivability of the electronic equipment on the spacecraft bus (control) system.

Come explore the twists and turns of a real-life adventure in innovation and be inspired to craft your own!

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE: THE MEET-UP MIXER!

Co-Sponsored by the MRAA and Michigan Region

Your next adventure awaits in the lower level of the Vistatech—where will the night take you?

Step into a world of games, creativity, music, and fun, and make memories with fellow adventurers!

Will you challenge your fate?
Visit our Tarot Card Reader

Feeling creative?
Grab a brush and paint on canvas with a coach guiding you

Got the voice of a legend?
Rock the mic at Karaoke with guitar accompaniment!

Ready to race?
Take the wheel in our Mario Kart competition for a chance to win prizes!

Game on! Play Giant Jenga and board games with new and old friends.

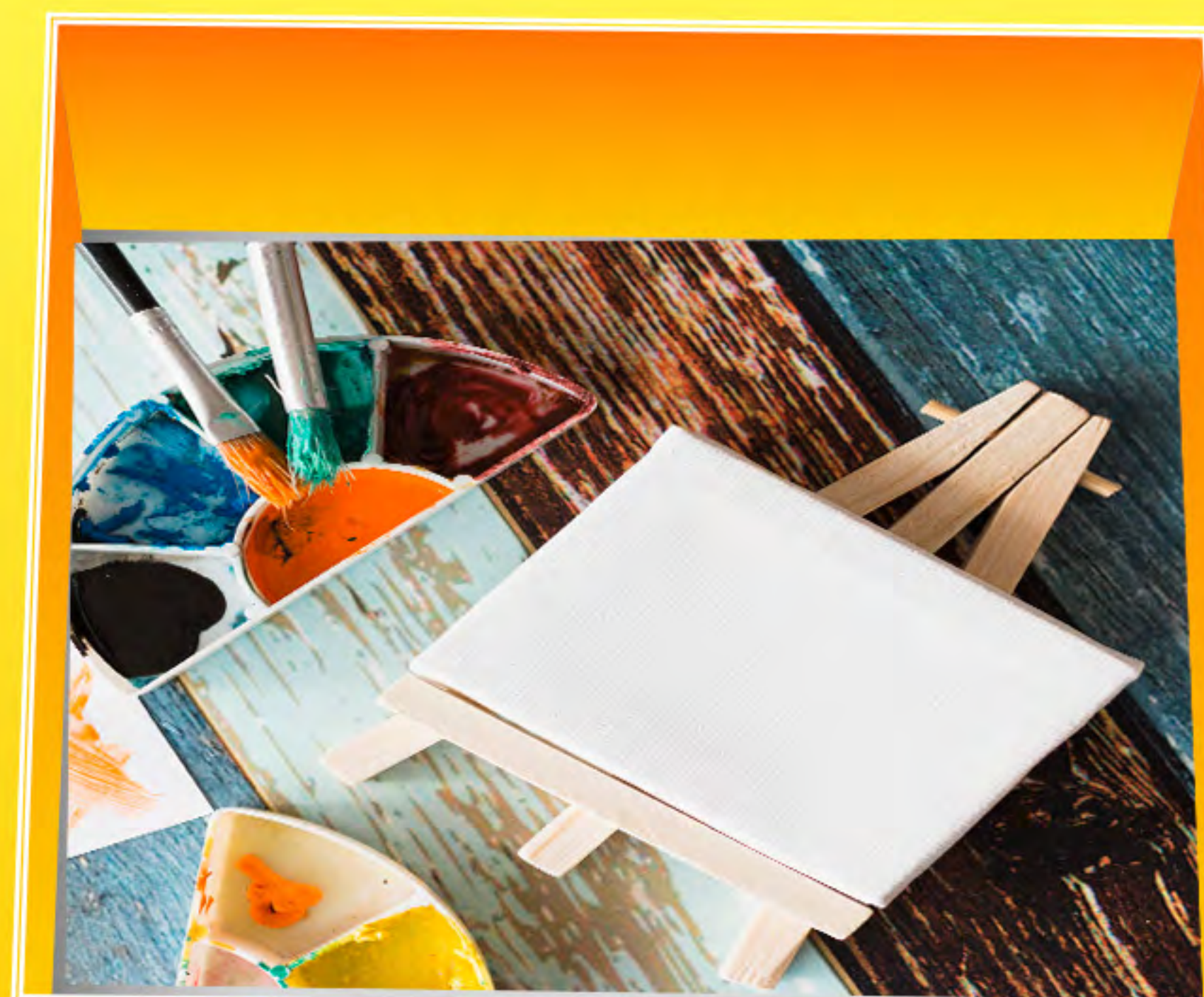
Strike a pose! Get a custom keepsake from our Caricature Artist!

Refuel your journey with pizza and refreshments while connecting with Alumni & the Alumni Association Meeting.

Invite your fellow adventurers to return and relive the experience!

Where will your story take you?

Join us from 8 -11:30 p.m. in the Lower Level of Vistatech
THE CHOICE IS YOURS!





UNVEILING THE SCIENCE AND MYSTERY OF SOUND

Dr. Michael Oliver and Dr. Deborah Daiek will explore the science as well as the mystery of sound.

An overview regarding the science will be presented, and then participants will experience a live sound bath. Sound has the power to transform how we feel, think and move through the world. It offers us a chance to step away from the stress of daily life and reconnect with our inner selves.

Join this workshop which will combine the science and experimental serenity of sound. Learn and experience how frequencies and vibrations influence mental health, emotional states, and overall wellness.



Dr. Michael Oliver

Dr. Oliver's engaging presentation will deliver interesting facts regarding the connection of sound in our lives and will share how our DNA has the ability to heal through sound.

Many surprising benefits will be shared. Leading researchers consider that sound will be our future medicine. Dr. Oliver will introduce the concept of individualized therapeutic bowl sessions and differentiate them from the more common sound baths.

He will share the research which confirms that specific sound frequencies and binaural beats can evoke deep states of relaxation, reducing stress and alleviating anxiety. Sound works with our body's natural energy, creating balance and healing. Sound has the ability to profoundly affect our minds and bodies.



Dr. Deborah Daiek

Dr. Deborah Daiek will offer participants an opportunity to experience the relaxation induced through a live sound bath – the vibrations and tones will wash over participants, creating a shared experience of relaxation and renewal.

She will use therapeutic bowls, chakra bowls, gongs, Zen sticks, ocean drum, thunder can, rain sticks, chimes, and a crystal pyramid.

*Through sound baths and sound therapy
we can access the same brain states as practices
like yoga, tai chi and meditation – those moments of
profound stillness where healing and clarity can begin.*

Event Highlights:

- Tips for applying sound therapy techniques to enhance personal wellness
- Educational discourse on the science and impact of sound
- A therapeutic live sound bath for all participants

**WELCOME, INTREPID EXPLORER! YOU'VE ARRIVED AT THE CONFERENCE,
EAGER TO EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECT WITH LIKE-MINDED ADVENTURERS.**

**THE PATH AHEAD IS FULL OF EXCITING BREAKOUT SESSIONS—
BUT WHICH JOURNEY WILL YOU TAKE?**

BREAKOUT SESSION 1

12:45 - 1:25 P.M.

Wilson
Room

Homayra Adiba

Crafting your story to bring value in research:

A vision board to establish holistic practices amongst team members to help align individual values of the team members with their HIA/research project and to target growth as a team. In other words, why should your team tell the story you are telling?

Kehrl
Auditorium

Dr. Mark Huston - Conspiracy Theories:

Conspiracy theories are quite prominent in current American life. Often the use of "conspiracy theory" is derogatory in nature, allowing a rejection of the proffered theory out of hand. However, some believe conspiracy theories can be useful tools for thinking about the nature of reasoning, argumentation and explanation. Additionally, conspiracy theories provide a model for interdisciplinary and global understanding. A full appreciation of conspiracy theories relies on a cross section of work in political discourse, psychology, sociology, literature, pop culture and philosophy.

In this presentation Dr. Huston will cover three main areas:

(1) Through examining some of the current academic, as well as popular, literature on conspiracy theories, he will explain the conceptual nature of conspiracy theories and defend why they should be explored at the college level

(2) He will present several core features of conspiracy theorizing and demonstrate how a comprehensive understanding of conspiracy theories needs a philosophical, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach

(3) He will look at a few examples of conspiracy theories in order to give some practical examples of how different disciplines might approach the issues.

Sutherland
Room

Annaliese Corace, LMSW-C, Student Support Specialist
Mental Health Matters- Erasing the Stigma:

This session will discuss some common mental health misconceptions and myths. After breaking the stigma, students can learn meditative and relaxation techniques clinically proven to reduce anxiety and depression. This session will end with each student having the opportunity to practice guided journaling.

WELCOME BACK, EXPLORER!

WITH SESSION 1 BEHIND YOU, NEW PATHS AWAIT.
WHICH BREAKOUT SESSION WILL SHAPE YOUR
NEXT CHAPTER?

CHOOSE WISELY AND LET STORYTELLING GUIDE YOUR WAY!

BREAKOUT SESSION 2 1:30 - 2:15 P.M.

Wilson
Room

Tuesday Dixon -

Running for PTK International Office

We invite you to embark on a journey with Tuesday Dixon as she shares her story of empowerment on the road to becoming the next Phi Theta Kappa International President. She will discuss the successes and near misses she encountered on her path to greatness.

Kehrl
Auditorium

Sharon Christian, MBA -

Director of Workforce Mentorship and Placement, Schoolcraft College
Ask Me Anything: Navigating Followership, Leadership, and Supervision

Join an experienced business leader, professor, and career success professional for an open conversation about followership, leadership, and supervision, and ask your most pressing questions! How do you ensure success in a new job? Gain buy-in from colleagues and supervisor? Address concerns? Mitigate conflicts? Work with colleagues who have different styles? Ensure an enriching environment to grow and thrive as a professional and leader? Learn communication strategies and techniques to navigate various professional scenarios and gain valuable career success tips through this discussion. When it comes to navigating your career, don't be a bystander; be bold and brave! Take a step towards learning more about how to stand out as a leader in everything you do.

Sutherland
Room

Debashish Chakrabarty -

Embedded Stories, Tracing Ruptures, and Continuity

A personal journey from novice student to cultural producer navigating the complexities of a contemporary world in crisis.

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS—CHOOSE WISELY,
AND LET THE LEARNING BEGIN!

WELCOME BACK, EXPLORER!

WITH SESSIONS 1 AND 2 BEHIND YOU,
NEW DISCOVERIES AWAIT. WHICH BREAKOUT SESSION
WILL YOU EMBARK ON NEXT?

CHOOSE YOUR PATH AND KEEP THE ADVENTURE GOING!

BREAKOUT SESSION 3 2:30 - 3:15 P.M.

Wilson
Room

Nicole Vergara -

Stories as Bridges: Connecting Communities Through Narrative:

In this talk, Vergara will explore how storytelling serves as a powerful bridge between cultures, identities, and generations. Reflecting on her experience growing up as a Filipina-American, Vergara will share how navigating the complexities of identity has shaped my journey and inspired the creation of A Colorful Collection—an initiative dedicated to increasing representation in children's literature. Ultimately, Vergara hopes to highlight storytelling as a means of fostering belonging, amplifying underrepresented voices, and building stronger, more connected communities.

Kehrl
Auditorium

Elvis Velu and Dr. Steven L. Berg Ph.D.,

Schoolcraft Professor of English and History - How to Publish a book

Elvis Velu is the editor of The Forest of Knowledge: A Reflective Guide to Student Success. Dr. Steven L. Berg is a professor at Schoolcraft College and the publisher of Ehipassiko Press. Velu will describe the process he and other members of Schoolcraft College's PTK Chapter engaged in to turn their Honors in Action project idea into a published book. After his brief presentation, Berg will lead an interactive discussion on how other PTK chapters as well as individual PTK members can take their ideas and turn them into books. Ehipassiko Press and its authors receive no royalties or other forms of compensation for the distribution of their books which are released as Open Educational Resources (OERs).

Sutherland
Room

Professor Samer Hariri -

A Rocky Form of Storytelling: The Petoskey Stone -

A symbol of Michigan and a token of time that tells a fascinating story about our remarkable planet.

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS — CHOOSE WISELY, AND LET THE LEARNING BEGIN!

EVERY GREAT ADVENTURE NEEDS A FEAST!



DINNER SERVICE

6:00 - 7:30 P.M. | DIPONIO ROOM

After a day of exploring new stories and ideas, it's time to refuel. Gather around the table, share your tales, and enjoy a well-earned meal—because every hero needs sustenance for the journey ahead!

Dinner Menu:

Chicken Breast Marsala • Seasonal Vegetable Palmino Pasta • Rice Pilaf • Fresh bread rolls
Garden Salad with ranch and balsamic vinaigrette • Raspberry White Chocolate Cheesecake



Dinner music performed by Dr. Soonghee Ha

Dr. Soonghee Ha is a faculty member in the Music and Humanities Department at Schoolcraft College. She is a skilled pianist and music educator who has developed a teaching methodology based on the Dalcroze Method, which emphasizes learning music through body movement. Recently, she has been working on a new music education approach that combines music and art. In addition to her teaching, Dr. Ha served as the president of the Livonia Area Piano Teachers Forum, where she advocated for music education and contributed to the community. She also runs her own piano studio in Northville, where she actively teaches young students.

THE FINAL CHAPTER AWAITS!

Every great adventure deserves a legendary ending. As our journey through storytelling comes to a close, join us for a grand gala and awards ceremony—where the choices made, the stories shared, and the paths taken all lead to this unforgettable celebration.

The final pages are yours to write—let's end this adventure in style!

**GALA AND AWARDS
7:30 - 9:30 P.M.
DIPONIO ROOM**

**ALL MICHIGAN ACADEMIC
TEAM AWARDS
SPONSORED BY THE MCCA**

**MICHIGAN REGION OF PHI THETA KAPPA
PRESENTS THE HALLMARK AWARDS.**

**THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM
AND CHAPTER AWARDS**

COLLEGE PROJECT

HONORS IN ACTION

MOST DISTINGUISHED CHAPTER



Where Stories Unfold: Choosing the Perfect Hotel for Your Conference Experience

Your choice of hotel sets the stage for an unforgettable conference experience. Just like a great story, the right venue creates the perfect backdrop for connection, inspiration, and success. From atmosphere to amenities, every detail contributes to the narrative of your event—ensuring attendees leave with a story worth telling.

01



Townplace Suites

17450 Fox Drive
Livonia, MI 48152
734-542-7400

Studio suite:
\$109 per night/per room

Reservations should be made no later than **April 25, 2025** for the special rate

Contact :
patti.najduk@aimbridge.com
with any questions.

02



Fairfield Inn and Suites

17350 Fox Drive
Livonia, MI 48152
734-953-0732

Standard Queen 2:
\$119 per night /per room

Reservations should be made no later than **April 25, 2025** for the special rate

Contact:
Rachel.Slaughter@marriott.com
with any questions.

03



Hyatt Place

19300 Haggerty Road
Livonia, MI 48152
734-953-9224

Two Double Beds:
\$124 per room

Reservations should be made no later than **April 25, 2025** for the special rate

Contact:
ashleigh.morris@hyatt.com
with any questions.

There are many hotels in the vicinity of the college and you are welcome to shop around if you can find better accommodations for your guests.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE RAFFLE

**EVERY GREAT STORY IS SHAPED BY THE CHOICES YOU MAKE—
NOW, THOSE CHOICES COULD LEAD TO TREASURE!**

**AS YOU NAVIGATE THE CONFERENCE, COLLECT RAFFLE TICKETS BY
ATTENDING SESSIONS, LISTENING TO SPEAKERS, AND DIVING
INTO ACTIVITIES. THE MORE PATHS YOU EXPLORE,
THE GREATER YOUR CHANCES OF UNLOCKING A REWARD!**

HOW TO PLAY:

Earn a ticket for each adventure you embark on

Drawings held at every general session

Three lucky explorers per session win a \$25 Amazon gift card!

**But beware, traveler—only one prize
per person!**

Will fortune favor your journey?

The next chapter is yours to write...

