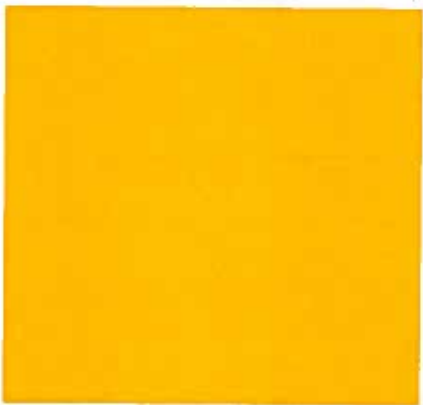
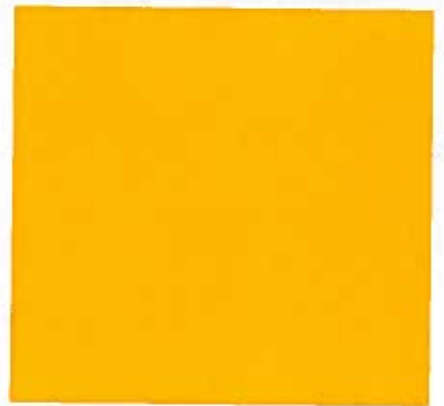
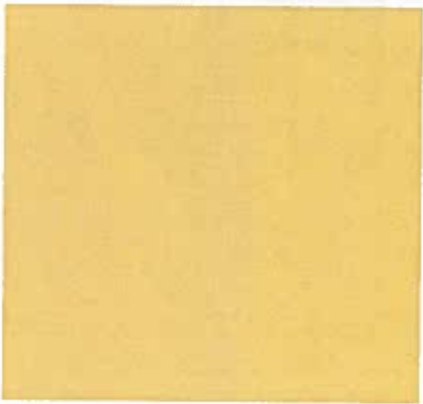
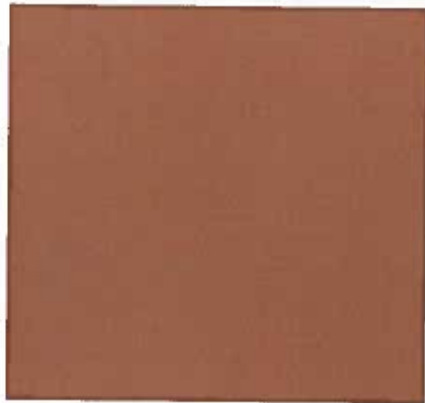
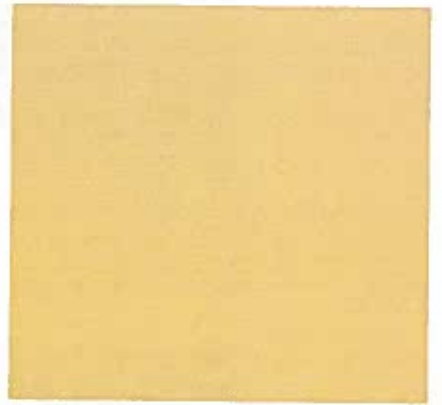
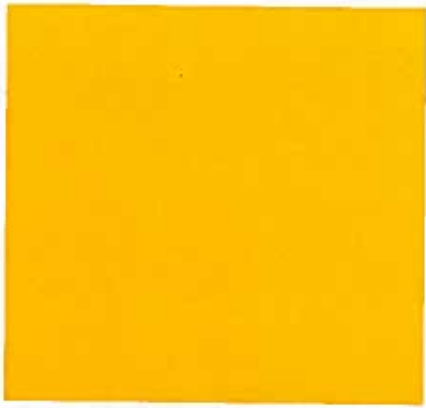


Annual Report

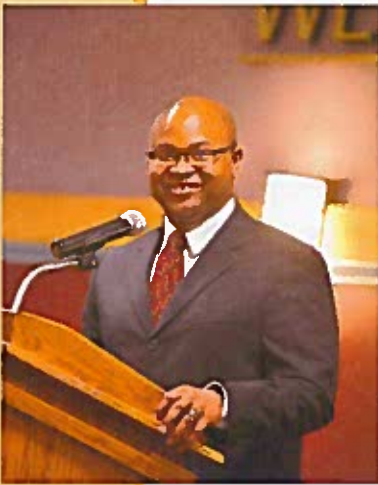


2015-2016

W Seita Scholars
Program
Center for Fostering Success
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Over the last eight years, the Seita Scholars Program has become an internationally recognized program that is the largest and most comprehensive support program for college students who experienced foster care – and we are not done yet! With graduation and retention rates continuing to exceed national averages for students who experienced foster care we are confident that the tools we have developed here at Western Michigan University, which help our own students, have the power to benefit students across the nation. The paradigm for our students is slowly shifting – not just here, but across the nation.

This academic year, we saw the number of Seita Scholars graduates swell to 91 – and we expect to see our numbers exceed 100 in the coming academic year! To celebrate this incredible milestone, we are preparing a community-wide celebration on May 17, 2017 to recognize our graduates. I invite you to save the date for this opportunity to recognize not only our graduates but the amazing community partnerships that enable us to continue the work that we are doing here in the Seita Scholars Program.

The type of growth we have continued to see does not come without necessary changes, some of which will be implemented this academic year. As our program continues to grow, we have to be realistic about our ability to continue to support students on a financial level. Though we will continue to serve 150 students annually, nearly 100 more students than we served at the inception of our program, our scholarship budget has, and will continue to, remain static.

To account for the rising cost of tuition, beginning with the 2016-2017 class of Seita Scholars, the Seita Scholars Scholarship will be adjusted from a full-tuition scholarship to a flat-rate scholarship that can be applied to any academic cost that students incur. We hope that providing this adjustment will make it easier for students to budget for the academic year, and allow our program to continue to serve the same number of Seita Scholars for the coming academic years.

As we close out this academic year and prepare to enter the 2016-17 year, we want to recognize and thank all of our community partners for your continued support. We have accomplished so much this year, and have a year full of milestones ahead!

Sincerely,

William C. Harris-Wimsatt, Director



J. GABIREL

WMU Graduation Date: Spring 2016

Major: Journalism

Minor: Criminal Justice

Career Goals: To be a journalist, novelist, and screenwriter.

WMU Favorites: My favorite thing is WMU's landscape. I love sitting at the Miller Fountain and the fountain in front of Waldo Library in the summer time. I also love the University Rec Center

The Seita Scholars Program Means:

The Seita Scholars program means giving opportunities to students who thought they had no opportunities

To Program Supporters:

Thank you for everything you do so that this program continue to exist. So many past Seita Scholars have went on to have successful careers and lives.

Recent Accomplishments:

I was named one of WMU's 2016 Presidential Scholar (the highest honor that any undergraduate student can receive at Western Michigan University) Receiving this award is the absolute highlight of my college experience. I barely made it out of high school (had to attend summer school to make up failed courses multiple times). So be able to come to WMU and earn the highest recognition means so much to me.

PURPOSE

WMU's goal is to increase opportunities for youth who experienced foster care to pursue higher education and to provide support that promotes success and well-being throughout their undergraduate experience.

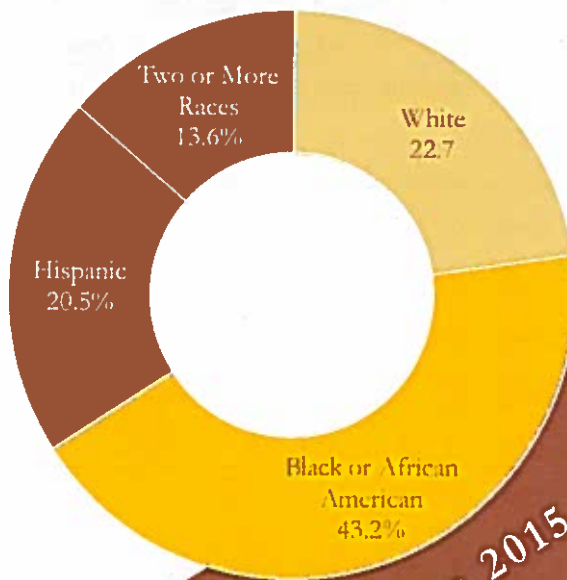
OBJECTIVE

The primary objectives of the Seita Scholars Program are to promote academic success toward college graduation that leads to professional employment while maintaining personal well-being, developing career aspirations, and building leadership capabilities.

GOALS

The program has four main goals:

- **Create transitions** that lead to success in college and career for WMU students from foster care ages 18 to 25.
- **Develop a community** of scholars among WMU students who experienced foster care, and create a safe community to deconstruct and reconstruct identity.
- **Educate** WMU students from foster care and their support network to enhance professional skill set.
- **Transform** WMU students from foster care by integrating experiences of one's past to build opportunities for the future



Seita Scholars 2015-16 Cohort
Demographic Profile

OVERVIEW

To increase successful outcomes among youth who experienced foster care in the state of Michigan, the Seita Scholars Program:

- Provides **cost of attendance scholarships** to undergraduate students who experienced foster care and are attending Western Michigan University.
- Supports students in accessing additional financial resources and scholarships specific to youth who have experienced foster care, allowing students to maximize their **potential to graduate from college with little to no debt**.
- Supports students in need of **year-round housing** on campus to ensure a stable living environment.

GROWTH

Since its inception in 2008, the Seita Scholars Program has seen a growing number of students from foster care who attend Western Michigan University but are not enrolled in the Seita Scholars Program. While these students do not receive financial support from the program, beginning in the 2016-17 academic year the Seita Scholars Program is proud to announce a formalized support program for WMU students who experienced foster care but are not in the Seita Scholars Program.

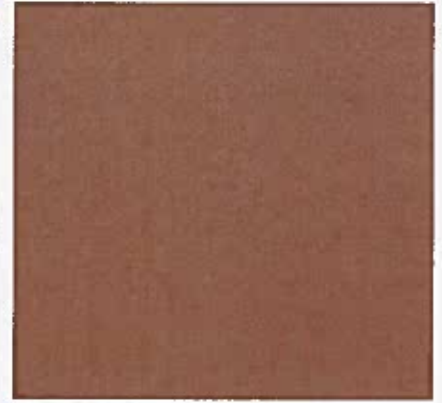
The Seita Scholars Extended Support Program (ESP) will provide necessary support to students who experienced foster care but are not eligible for the full financial support of the Seita Scholars Program. Support provided through ESP will be led by our Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Liaison and include support in applying for scholarships, DHHS paperwork assistance, and more.

Like the coaching that Seita Scholars receive, students participating in ESP will receive support based on their individual need. To date, the Seita Scholars Program has touched the lives of 444 Western Michigan University students. Through ESP, we expect that number to soar even higher!

2015-16 Cohort
Home Counties



Michigan
Counties





BRANDON Y.

WMU Graduation Date: Spring 2018

Major: Social Work

Minor: Psychology and Philosophy

Career Goals: I want a career where I can work to influence policy.

WMU Favorites: The city of Kalamazoo is one of my favorite parts of being a Bronco—I really enjoy the city!

The Seita Scholars Program Means: Opportunity and collectivism.

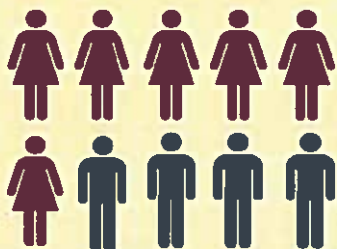
To Program Supporters:

The things that you are doing for us are unprecedented and I hope that you continue to feel the way that you do.

Recent Accomplishments:

This year I have served on the Michigan Foster Care Review Board, raised my GPA to a 3.9, been officially accepted into the undergraduate Social Work program at WMU and I was hired as the Center for Fostering Success Ambassador. I also helped organize the first ever Foster Care Awareness Walk in May.

2015-16 Cohort
Gender Profile



2015-16 YEAR

July 2015

- Mark Delorey, one of the founders of the Seita Scholars Program, retired from Western Michigan University.
- Summer Early Transition (SET) Week took place from July 12-17, welcoming new Seita Scholars to campus.
- Ball State University visited to learn more about the program.

August 2015

- The Seita Scholars Program welcomed a new campus coach, Rachel Johnson.
- Welcome Week kicked off the start of the 2015-16 academic year.
- The Seita Scholars Program celebrated 7 summer graduates.

September 2015

- President and Mrs. Dunn welcomed the Seita Scholars to campus with a pool party and barbecue at their home.
- The Seita Scholars Program kicked off the academic year with the annual President's Welcome.
- The Engaging Men Initiative co-sponsored a talk with former Olympic athlete Billy Mills.
- The Seita Scholars Program presented to youth from Macomb County DHHS.
- Staff and Seita Scholars attended a motivational talk by Dr. Paul Hernandez.
- The Parents' Futures group launched a new initiative, providing children of Seita Scholars with a new book each month of the academic year.



October 2015

- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation Seminar on preparing to transition upon graduation.
- The Seita Scholars Program co-hosted a Design Studio, sharing programming information with professionals from 8 states.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation Seminar on Financial Preparation.
- Seita Scholars SAFE attended a Lyceum Lecture on the prevention of lesbian, gay, and trans suicides.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a mentor/mentee bowling event at Pinz Bowling Alley.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Town Hall meeting with students.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation Seminar on Transportation.
- The Parents' Futures identity group hosted their second annual Halloween Party for the children of students and staff.

November 2015

- Seita Scholars Ambassadors organized a trip for students and staff to visit Gull Meadow Farms.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation on Professional Environment and New Job.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation on Job Search.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a mentor/mentee game day.
- The Seita Scholars Program presented to potential volunteers and donors of the Westside Kiwanis.
- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Thanksgiving Lunch for students and staff.

IN REVIEW

December 2015

- The Seita Scholars Program hosted a Graduation Preparation Seminar on Professional Environment Prep and the New Job.
- The Lady Butterflies hosted a fundraiser at Blaze Pizza.
- Final exam week kicked off with the annual Finals Week Celebration, supported by volunteers.
- 19 Seita Scholars made the Dean's List at the conclusion of the fall semester.
- 7 Seita Scholars graduated during the December commencement ceremony.
- AFSCME cooked a holiday meal for students and staff to enjoy together.
- The Seita Scholars Program, with the support of donors, held a White Elephant Gift Exchange for students.

February 2016

- Seita Scholar, J. Gabriel Ware, is named a Presidential Scholar for the School of Communication.
- Seita Scholars Presented at the Portage Optimist Club.
- Campus Coach Ronica Hamilton and College of Arts and Sciences Director of Academic Advising, Kevin Knutson, presented on the Fostering Success Coach model at the NACADA (academic advising) conference in Dubai, India.
- Seita Scholars Program partnered with Outreach and Training to present on the Fostering Success Coach Model for the WMU Department of History.
- Seita Scholars Program held the spring Town Hall Meeting.
- Engaging Men Initiative hosted a pre-Superbowl bowling event.
- Seita Scholars attended *A Soldier's Play*.
- Seita Scholars Ambassadors organized a Seita Scholar volleyball tournament.
- Seita Scholars campus coaches supported the MLS scholarship competition.
- Seita Scholars Engaging Men Initiative and Lady Butterflies hosted 2nd Annual Relationship Panel.
- Lady Butterflies held a fundraising event at Coldstone Creamery.

January 2016

- Seita Scholars Program presented to the Ladies Library Association
- The Resilience Project kicked off in partnership with the Kalamazoo Promise, Friendship Village and Foundation Scholars Initiative.

March 2016

- Lady Butterflies applied for an Accelerating Change Award for women of color.
- Seita Scholars Program Director, Chris Harris-Wimsatt, attended NASPA, a national student affairs conference.

April 2016

- Lady Butterflies and Engaging Men presented Open Mic Night.
- Lady Butterflies and Engaging Men hosted an Elegance Dinner.
- Lady Butterflies attended a women's conference, "Beautiful You" in Detroit.

May 2016

- The Seita Scholars Program kicked off Foster Care Awareness month by participating in the Kalamazoo Art Hop at Sticks & Stones, displaying student created artwork.
- The inaugural Foster Care Awareness Walk, sponsored by the Seita Scholars Program, was held in honor of Foster Care Awareness Month.
- With the support of the Center for Fostering Success graduate student team, the Seita Scholars Program presented data collected from students about the impact of the program.

June 2016

- The Lynn and Dean Fiegel Endowment was created.
- Seita Scholars Campus Coach attended the annual Teen Conference with a Seita Scholars graduate, Lyric Morgan.
- Campus Coach Ronica Hamilton took several Seita Scholars to an annual benefit for the Michigan Education Trust Fostering Futures scholarship.



RONNIE S.

WMU Start Date: Fall 2012

Major: Criminal Justice & Sociology

Minor: Addicted Studies

Career Goals: I will be getting my MPA and Masters in Urban and Regional Planning, and will be starting this fall. So I am hoping to get a position after my masters programs as an Economic Development Urban and Regional Planner.

WMU Favorites: My favorite thing about WMU are the football games and den pops!

The Seita Scholars Program Means:

The Seita Scholars Program Means that I got a chance at an undergraduate degree. When applying to colleges & universities the Seita Scholarship was the only program of its kind. Without it I am not sure I ever would of gone to a university.

To Program Supporters:

For the program supports, thank you for supporting this amazing program. This has been one of the best experiences of my life and without all of you and the program I honestly can't say where I would be today.

Recent Accomplishments:

Who's Who University & College award, Kalamazoo Child Abuse & Neglect Council 2016 Community volunteer award winner. I also obtained a internship my sophomore year at the House of Representatives, that went from intern, to part time staff, to full time staff. That really helped me figure out what I wanted to do with my life.

SEITA SCHOLARS PERFORMANCE

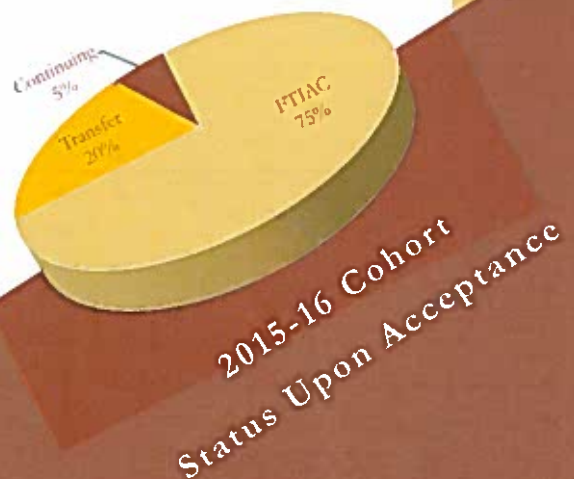
Research has shown that foster youth are not only less likely to enroll in college but they are also less likely to graduate with a college degree in 6 years. Only 2-4 percent of foster youth are expected to graduate college, compared to 24% of their non-foster care peers in the general population. The table below compares Seita Scholars who are First Time in Any College (FTIAC) to other FTIAC freshman at WMU in the same semester. The table shows that Seita Scholars are less academically prepared for college, and this academic achievement gap persists in the first semester of colleges, as evidenced by lower Fall GPAs.

	Fall 2013 (Cohort= 43)				Fall 2014 (Cohort= 41)				Fall 2015 (Cohort= 44)			
	Seita FTIAC Count	Seita FTIAC	FTIAC Count	FTIAC	Seita FTIAC Count	Seita FTIAC	FTIAC Count	FTIAC	Seita FTIAC Count	Seita FTIAC	FTIAC Count	FTIAC
Number of Students	32	-	3,158	-	33	-	2,970	-	33	-	2,953	-
Average ACT	31	18.32	3,055	22.32	33	18.58	2,891	22.29	33	19.52	2,858	22.36
High School GPA	31	3.15	3,106	3.32	30	3.08	2,938	3.35	33	3.06	2,931	3.35
First Semester	32	2.51	3,117	2.97	33	2.49	2,936	3.35	32	2.04	2,912	2.96
By Ethnicity												
White	14	2.67	2,242	3.07	12	2.61	2,070	3.10	9	2.17	2,027	3.09
Black or African American	11	2.49	433	2.45	14	2.04	436	2.50	12	2.54	431	2.53
Other	7	2.18	442	2.88	7	3.07	430	2.83	11	1.34	454	2.83

PROGRAM SUPPORTS

The Seita Scholars Program is designed to address the academic gaps that many youth who experienced foster care encounter, which lead to the initial achievement gaps demonstrated in the data above. Among these program supports are:

- Scholarships to undergraduate students who experienced foster care and are attending Western Michigan University
- 7 Campus Coaches (24 hour on call support, meeting student needs at locations and times that are convenient to the student)
- Access to additional financial supports for youth who experienced foster care (e.g. the Education and Training Voucher, Michigan Education Trust Fostering Futures scholarships, Youth in Transition funds, and more)
- Support with other systems (e.g., courts, human services, Medicaid, public assistance)
- Student care packages (Welcome Week, Exam Week, Campus Breaks)
- Graduation preparation assistance (Graduation Preparation Seminars)
- Year-round campus housing
- Financial aid and financial planning assistance
- Work study, employee skill development
- Academic assessment, support and monitoring
- Campus engagement and social connections
- Cultural and personal identity development
- Leadership development
- Career mentoring
- Emergency funding support



STUDENT OUTCOMES

The Seita Scholars program is a learner-centered, theory-based, and data-driven program. A sample of fall semester student outcomes for all seven cohorts of students who entered Western Michigan University as first-time college students is presented below.

	FTIAC Average	2012-13 N=47	2013-14 N=43	2014-15 N=41	2015-16 N=44
Percent enrolled through to end of Fall semester	99	100	100	100	97
Percent withdrawing from one or more courses during the Fall semester	16	19	16	15	33
Percent with Fall GPA at 2.0 or higher	82	65	75	64	55
Percent with Fall GPA at 3.5 or higher	28	16	6	4	12
Percent who persisted from Fall to Spring semester	92	89	94	94	79
Percent who returned to WMU in Fall of second year (retention)	75	68	84	73	-

PERSISTENCE TO GRADUATION

At the conclusion of the summer I 2016 semester, the Seita Scholars Program has 91 graduates of Western Michigan University, with 1 additional Seita Scholar graduating from another institution. This brings the graduation rate of Seita Scholars far above the national average for youth who experienced foster care.

Cohort Year	Number in Cohort	Number of WMU Grads	% Graduated from WMU	Number on Track to Graduate	% on Track to Graduate from WMU
2008-09	55	20	36.3	1	38.2
2009-10	50	22	44.0	1	46.0
2010-11	55	17	30.9	1	32.7
2011-12	57	19	33.3	7	45.6
2012-13	48	9	18.7	13	45.8
2013-14	42	3	7.1	18	50.0
2014-15	41	-	-	29	70.7
2015-16	48	1	8.3	29	62.5



JASMINE

WMU Start Date: Fall 2012

Expected Graduation:

Major: Organizational Communication

Minor: Global and International Studies

Career Goals: I want to be a Sales Consultant and Representative after graduation. I want to help companies figure out issues relating to their organization's revenue and profit. I also would like to be a Manager of a Company, in hopes to one day become an Entrepreneur.

WMU Favorites: My WMU favorites are Sangren Library, Waldo Library, Bernhard center café, and Sprau Tower café.

The Seita Scholars Program Means:

The Seita Scholarship program to me means a place of acceptance. The Seita program gave me an opportunity to improve myself, at the same time allowed me to be myself.

To Program Supporters:

Your contribution has allowed Seita Scholars like me to reach our full maximum potential; something that would have been impossible without people like you. I am accomplishing my dreams all because of you.

Did you know that the 2015-16 Cohort of Seita Scholars are pursuing over 20 different majors in the sciences, arts, aviation, education and professional degree programs at WMU?



Community Partners

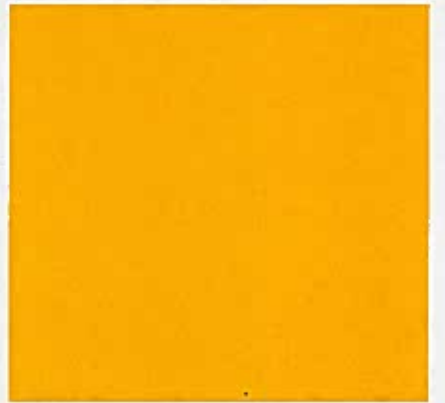
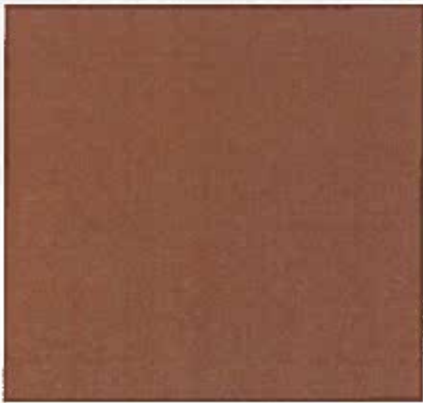
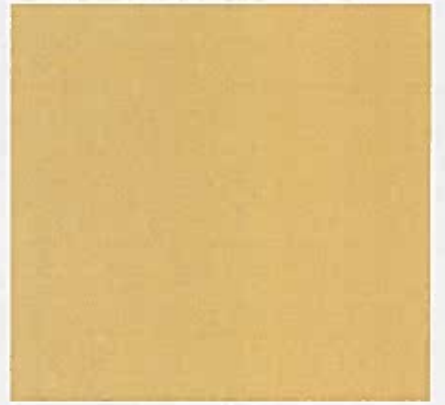
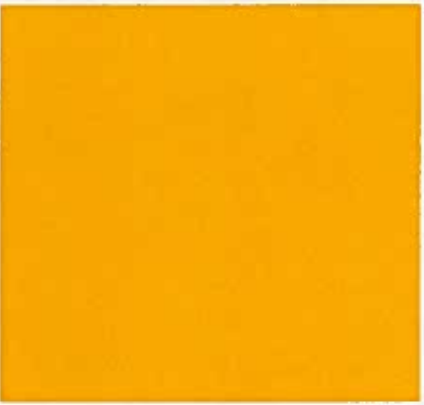
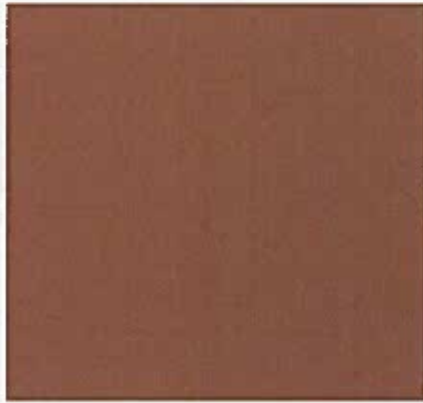
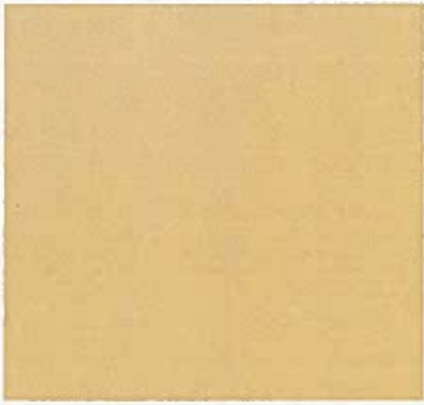
- Community Mental Health
- Community Volunteers
- Foster Care Youth Boards
- Kalamazoo Area Newcomers
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Samaritas Social Services (Educational Training Voucher)
- Second Reformed Church
- St. Catherine of Sienna
- SWELL

2015-16 Major Support

- Arcadia Brewing Company
- Julie Falconer (in memory of Bruce Falconer)
- Lynn & Dean Fiegel
- Michigan Education Trust (MET)
- Old National Bank
- Paul & Bonnie MacGrayne
- Pete & Libby Seaver
- PNC Bank
- Private & Individual Donors
- Speckard-Knight Charitable Foundation
- State of Michigan

CAMPUS PARTNERS:







**Seita Scholars
Program**

Center for Fostering Success

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY