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State of Michigan and Michigan State University Sign Historic Letter of Agreement

*MSU to Host DELEG's King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellows Conference
for Next Three Years*

July 8, 2009 - Emphasizing the importance of graduate education to Michigan's economic viability globally, Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (DELEG) Director Stanley "Skip" Pruss today announced the signing of a Letter of Agreement with the Graduate School at Michigan State University (MSU) to host the state's annual King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellows Conference (KCP FFF). The conference will be held jointly with the Michigan Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) each fall for the next three years.

"KCP and the Future Faculty Fellows programs have been effective in achieving higher education for all of our citizens that is vital to Michigan's ability to compete globally in research and development, jobs, and entrepreneurship," said Pruss. "We're thrilled to have MSU as host because of its high distinction of membership in the Association of American Universities, and as a major Big Ten research-intensive university, participants will be offered an even broader range of workshops for career advancement."

The Martin Luther King, Jr. -- Cesar Chavez -- Rosa Parks (KCP) Initiative's Future Faculty Fellowship (FFF) Program provides funds and fellowship awards through the annual higher Education Appropriations Act to Michigan's 15 public universities to increase the pool of candidates pursuing masters or doctoral degrees for postsecondary

faculty teaching careers. The Future Faculty Fellowship Program was created by the Michigan State Legislature in 1986 as part of the larger KCP Initiative and has been renewed annually largely due to its success of stimulating college graduation rates among academically and economically underrepresented students and increasing the number of faculty and administrators in Michigan's colleges and universities. A featured experience for future faculty fellows is an annual conference for networking, and academic, career, and professional development.

The Letter of Agreement was signed by Rudy Redmond, Manager, King-Chavez-Parks Initiative, Office of Lifelong Learning, Bureau of Workforce Programs, DELEG; Karen Klomparens, Dean, Graduate School and Associate Provost for Graduate Education, MSU; and Kim Wilcox, Provost, MSU. The agreement is contingent on the State of Michigan's continued financial and personnel support for the KCP Future Faculty Fellows program.

An important part of the agreement is that the KCP Future Faculty Fellowship Conference will be held in conjunction with MSU's annual Michigan AGEP Alliance (MAA) Fall Conference of the Michigan Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP), a collaboration between MSU, the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and Western Michigan University. MSU currently hosts the annual MAA Fall Conference that features concurrent workshops tailored to different stages of academic professional development, from the graduate admission process to early-career faculty mentoring.

"By collaborating with MSU and the Michigan AGEP Alliance we will significantly increase the attendance of future faculty fellows and offer the unique opportunity for them to interact across broadened disciplinary lines," said Pruss.

The Michigan AGEP Alliance involves STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) whereas the Future Faculty Fellowship Program has traditionally focused on disciplines relating to SBE (Social, Behavioral and Economic), humanities, and education.

"MSU Graduate School looks forward to hosting this conference and to the enhanced collaboration between the State of Michigan and the graduate programs in Michigan's

public universities,” said Karen Klomparens. “Both the students and the state will benefit from this partnership.”

KCP and the Future Faculty Fellowship programs align with Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm’s goal of doubling the number of Michigan citizens who graduate from college over the next 10 years and are consistent with recommendations set forth in Lt. Gov. Cherry’s Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth.

The Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (DELEG) is investing in Michigan's future by preparing for the new energy economy, helping to create the jobs of today and tomorrow, ensuring that our children and adults have the skills these jobs demand, making Michigan a better place to do business, and training and placing those who need jobs now.