



Older students Williams, Bauer: "Your priorities change"

Lifelong education: Fashionable, tough

When Kay Williams started taking classes at MSU in 1958, most of her classmates were young enough to be her children. By the time she graduated this spring, her fellow grads were young enough to be her grandchildren. Williams earned her B.A. in communications on what she calls a 20-year "installment plan."

Twenty years ago, older students such as Williams were oddities at MSU. Today, however, lifelong education is fashionable and the number of students beyond the 18 to 21 age bracket is increasing. In 1977, some 5,000 undergraduates at MSU were in the "older student" ranks. The College of Social Science is the most attractive to the older enrollees, drawing 528 men and 331 women. Second is the College of Agriculture and Natural Re-

MSU leads Big Ten in '78 NFS honors

Once again MSU leads the Big Ten in the number of National Science Foundation grants awarded this year to university students. Seven MSU students in the sciences and economics received grants in this year's competition. In addition, 28 MSU students received honorable mentions.

MSU also ranks first in the Big Ten in the number of NSF awards received through the 1973-78 period. In the six-year span, MSU students have won 79, while the University of Michigan ranks second with 59.

The awards carry a \$3,900 annual stipend for three years of graduate study leading to master's and doctoral degrees in the mathematical, physical, medical, biological, engineering and social sciences and in the history and philosophy of science.

sources with 564 men and 161 women.

Williams encourages non-traditional students to enroll in university classes. "I tell them not to worry about getting a degree, but just to start. And when they ask, 'Why bother?', I tell them, 'Just to learn things.'"

Self-satisfaction was Williams' motive. She has no plans to change jobs or to earn additional degrees. "Where could I go and be any happier than I am now?" she smiles. (She is an administrative assistant in MSU's College of Communication Arts.)

But for other non-traditional students, earning a degree is a ticket to more satisfying or financially rewarding work. For example, 37-year-old Beverly Bauer traded a position as a medical assistant at the Bay City hospital for full-time student status at MSU. "Returning to school takes a real commitment," says Bauer. "Your priorities have to change and you have to be willing to give up some of the old comforts — for a while. But I figured that for three years the kids and I could sacrifice some comforts in order to have a fuller future."

Bauer's efforts and the resulting 3.86 grade average were recently lauded when she became one of two women in the nation to receive a \$2,500 scholarship from McCalls Pattern Co. The award is given annually to women heads of households over 30 who are pursuing bachelor's degrees.

Bauer feels she has derived more than professional development from her MSU experience. "I have grown close to several undergraduate women my son's age who are working on degrees in social work," she says. "Going back to school has added to my own personal growth in countless ways."

When asked about the toughest time she has experienced as a student, she replies without hesitation, "The first year. Once you've been through a natural science class with a group of 18-year-olds, you can do anything."

Building access for handicappers

Major alterations, costing \$2 million to \$3 million, are planned for the MSU Union, the International Center and the Museum to provide handicapper accessibility and improved fire safety. Preliminary plans, subject to an architect's study, call for an elevator to be constructed on the exterior of the Union's west side, near the present ticket office, making the bowling alleys, barber shop, cafeteria, grill, lounges, meeting rooms, ticket office, classrooms and offices readily accessible to handicappers.

An elevator is also proposed for the International Center where entry to the bookstore in the basement and Crossroads Cafeteria and the Con-Con Room on the upper level now require negotiating flights of stairs. The elevator will be part of a 40-foot extension added to the building's north side, enlarging the bookstore and cafeteria.

Proposed fire safety improvements include adding exits from the Union ballroom, enclosing Union stairwells and building an additional enclosed stairwell on the exterior of the north wall of the Museum. The Museum's upper two floors are now closed to thousands of annual visitors because of fire safety problems.

A steady pace for Presidential search

"We're right on schedule," reports Robert Barker, Biochemistry Department chairman and head of the 17-member Presidential Search and Selection Committee. The committee spent the summer screening the "paper credentials" of some 250 candidates for the MSU presidency.

"We are a search committee as well as a selection committee," reminds Barker. "We feel that we have most of the nominations we are going to get, but the committee is definitely open to more." Meanwhile, the committee will follow up the initial screening with interviews of the candidates.

During the spring, committee members talked to alumni, students, faculty and other interested groups concerning the qualities they would like the new president to possess. Based on those interactions, a job description for the presidency was developed. In addition, the committee developed a rating scale for evaluating and comparing candidates and a preamble to the job description explaining the land-grant philosophy and future problems facing the university.