

DETROIT READY FOR GROWTH



Brianna Valleskey / The South End

Students from universities all over the state rally against the cuts to higher education in front of the Capitol Building in Lansing.

Students, workers protest higher education budget cuts in Lansing

Protesters enter capitol building, denied access to House chambers

BRIANNA VALLESKEY
The South End

LANSING – Students from the 15 public universities in Michigan and union workers from throughout the state

marched down Michigan Avenue and gathered on the steps of the Capitol Building March 24 to protest the proposed budget cuts to higher education.

With signs that read “Where’s the Funding?” and “Why does the ‘Nerd’ hate education?”, students rallied against Gov. Rick Snyder’s proposed 15 percent, or \$42 million, cut to higher education in Michigan.

One of the major concerns

surrounding the proposed budget cuts include education only being available to the privileged. WSU Student Senate member Keely Czartorski spoke during the rally and said that higher education for students needs to be a higher priority if the goal is to reinvent Michigan.

“My fears are that education isn’t going to be equally accessible,” Czartorski said. “We are only going to have education available

to those who can afford it. So we need a system that can ensure that whoever works the hardest gets those seats in colleges, whoever works the hardest gets to have the chance to get a future.”

Rep. Maureen Stapleton (D-Detroit) said if Michigan is truly a state where training and education will be catapulted into better times, the cuts to higher

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Study stresses micro-successes over larger negative image of city

ISAAC ELSTER
The South End

Ever since the release of the official census data that declared Detroit’s population to be around 715,000, several voices have been raised to look on the so-called bright side of the news.

But one report, the 2009 DrillDown, anticipated Detroit massive drop in population and concluded from that information that it is ripe for revitalization and for businesses to move into and be created in the city.

“If one looks only at population loss and the negative descriptions of many private sector sources, one misses the fact that Detroit is underserved in many retail and service areas,” said Kurt Metzger, director of Data Driven Detroit, which partnered with Social Compact and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation to compose the report. “While there is a high degree of low-income households, the higher household density in the city (than in the) suburbs adds up to more income per square mile.”

The DrillDown estimate for Detroit’s population ended up showing only a 10 percent decrease between 2006 and 2009, from 933,043 residents to 850,259. The census showed that the city’s population plummeted by 25 percent.

But both Metzger and Olga Stella, vice president of business development at the DEGC, said it was anticipated that the official census numbers would come in smaller than the DrillDown

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MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

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‘DOUBT’ PREMIERES AT HILBERRY

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estimate.
“I think everyone realizes there has been population loss because of economic downturn and financial crisis,” she said. “The way DrillDown is different from these estimates is it gets real-time data and puts that on top of one another and tries to see where there are real households.”

Metzger said it is important to now realign the city to create “dense, strong neighborhoods that will serve to stabilize and then grow the population.”

He also said higher income neighborhoods still exist and some parts of the city, including the downtown area, are attracting younger entrepreneurs with tech and creative businesses and disposable incomes.

A key term used to describe various neighborhoods’ market health is leakage.

Leakage, according to the DrillDown, is unmet market demand, which is the difference between retail revenue and estimated resident expenditures.

The leakage figures, along with buying power and aggregate income estimates, were used in the report to display the opportunities businesses could have to meet the need for services in various communities.

If an area has a positive leakage number, it means its residents are traveling outside its boundaries to access certain services.

The DrillDown may contradict some perceptions of certain areas of Detroit, such as Midtown.

Media reports have painted the area in which most Wayne State’s main campus lies to be one of the city’s comeback regions.

The DrillDown, however, shows that Midtown lost a little more than 1,900 people between 2006 and 2009.

But the report mostly attributes this population loss to the closing of the Brewsters-Douglass and Jeffries public housing projects.

The remainder of the people were lost because of a 5 percent reduction in rental properties’ occupancy, according to the DrillDown.

Throughout the rest of the report, Midtown saw a mixed bag of news.

For example, as the lower-income residents have moved out of Midtown, the median income in the area rose from about \$22,000 to \$25,000, and the average income for new homebuyers averaged at \$144,000.

This income increase is also up to 20 percent more than the citywide increase in income since 2000.

Midtown also has a higher density, a



Corey Wheeler / The South End

The economic juxtaposition of Midtown can be found in its southeast corner. To the east of Beaubien Street (left), blight can be found. But to its west (right) lies upkeep real estate.

more robust informal economy and one of the highest rates of home purchase loans.

It also has a low rate of retail leakage, a high rate of resident retail spending per acre, an above-average measure of availability to banks and credit unions and high access to restaurants.

However, Midtown has a low rate of access to full-service grocers, with more than 76 percent of the area’s residents having to travel outside the boundaries for their groceries.

Also, Midtown residents shopping for clothes have a higher rate of traveling outside the area to find stores.

Midtown, however, cannot be looked at as a single entity. For example, two extremes of the area’s health and struggles can be found near I-75, where the Fisher and Chrysler freeways meet.

On the edge of that junction, where the old Brewster projects rest, is an area that the DrillDown estimated has seen a much more drastic population loss than originally expected.

It cites the census 2009 estimate at 1,805 and the DrillDown’s 2009 figures at 560, a difference of 69 percent.

However, on the opposite side of Beaubien Street is an area that the DrillDown reported as inhabiting 42 percent more than the census estimated.

Similar contrasts can be made with the Midtown sections of WSU.

The section immediately encompassing the campus is estimated at having 31 percent less population than the census reported. On the other hand, the area near the School of

Medicine is estimated to have 41 percent more population than reported.

Despite the various successes seen in areas such as Midtown and the riverfront on the east side, there are several other neighborhoods that continue to suffer economically.

Stella, however, believes the attraction for investment that some Detroit neighborhoods hold still makes the city ready for revitalization.

“The city is a mosaic,” she said. “The report doesn’t say and the press release doesn’t say every neighborhood is in the same condition. It tries to point out which is ready for new investment.”

And Metzger said that while areas such as Midtown work to retain and attract a middle class that can create a tax base and market, work must still be done to address low literacy and skills in much of its population.

We must concentrate efforts to lift the boats of the least of us while we work to attract an educated and skilled population back to the city,” he said.

Metzger also said in an email that the DrillDown study represents “one piece in the puzzle that is Detroit.

“It is time we begin to collect and make available the information that truly reflects the ‘true Detroit.’”

SHIFTING IDENTITIES & THE (Re) DISCOVERY OF THE OTHER

SATURDAY, APRIL 2
Greek Room, Manoogian Bldg.

8:30-9:00 Registration & Coffee

12:30-1:30 Lunch, French & Romanian Rooms

9:00-9:15 Introduction

1:30-2:30 **Keynote & speaker Idelber Avelar**

- Beana Bethy, CMLLC and Prof. Michael Giordano, Graduate Advisor of CMLLC

- Introduction by Sara Wicrinski

2:30-2:45 Coffee Break

PANEL 1 - TRANSFORMATION BEYOND THE FEMININE

PANEL 3 - BELONGING: WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

9:15-10:45 Moderator: Paula Olive-Fiori, CMLLC

2:45-4:15 Moderator: Juana Lidia Coello-Tissert

That's SO Meta: Meta-theater and Meta-Mythologizing in Euripides' Helen
- Joclyn Duck, WSU, CMLLC

A Conspiracy of Cartographers: Notions of Self-Fashioning Applied to Geography
- Bradley Stabler, WSU, English

Bilingualism and biculturalism in The Americano by Enrique G. Motta, and America's Dream by Esmeralda Santiago
- Dolly Trille, WSU, CMLLC

The Other in Sandra Cisneros' Caramelo
- Rosalinda Derrick, WSU, CMLLC

Disempowering Scheherazade: Silencing the Feminine in Gautier, Poe and Wilde
- Elyanalis Mourouvaspin, WSU, CMLLC

Border Crossing: Transformation of Language and Corporeity in Zane Grey O'Connell's Mutterzunge
- Judith Lochner, University of Oregon, Department of German and Scandinavian

10:45-11:00 Coffee Break

PANEL 2 - DEMONS, DELUSIONS AND TRICKSTERIES

11:00-12:30 Moderator: Maissa Baker, CMLLC

The Trickster's Search for Self in Ursula K. Le Guin's Always Coming Home
- Robin Coleman, WSU, English.

Closing Remarks

- Julie Koehler, CMLLC

Fear and Imagination in Cervantes' El celoso extremeño
- Colleen Melow, WSU, CMLLC

The Female Protagonist in 20th Century Literature: Demonic Type as a Result of Image Transformation
- Ganna Kalyanova, WSU, CMLLC

