

# WIND *through the* PINES

*A publication for the alumni of the  
Spartan Housing Cooperative*

NOVEMBER 2023



**SPARTAN**  
**HOUSING COOPERATIVE**

[spartan.coop](http://spartan.coop)



# Spartan Housing Cooperative



**APOLLO ♣ BOWIE ♣ BEAL ♣ BOWER ♣  
FERENCY ♣ HARAMBEE ♣ HEDRICK ♣  
HOWLAND ♣ MILES DAVIS ♣ NEW COMMUNITY  
♣ ORION ♣ PHOENIX ♣ RAFT HILL ♣  
RIVENDELL ♣ SHIRE ♣ TOAD LANE ♣ VESTA**



***With room to grow since 1969!***



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# What's Going on with SHC Lately?

## SHC's 50 Years Reunion!

Ester Lee served the SHC as an Americorps VISTA strengthening alumni oriented functions for the co-op. Her hard work paid off, especially regarding the reunion she organized at Potter Park in May of this year. The City Pulse, a Lansing area newspaper, ran an article about it. Pictured in the top photo are Rowan Price, SHC's Maintenance Systems Americorps VISTA 2022-2023; Ester Lee; and Clay Griffith, SHC president now in their second term, after serving as Vice President of Education beginning in 2021. In the lower picture are Phillip Bozzo and Jim Jones, both of whom were founding members of the SHC back in 1971. There were outdoor games, a food truck, memorabilia borrowed from the SHC archives, and a great time had by those who attended to celebrate half a century of cooperation. The co-op got a very nicely produced plaque made of the news article to hang in the co-op office.



Below left: a line-up of former SHC presidents (and current prez, Clay, third from right). Marty and Jimmy, first and second from left, are current staff members of the co-op.  
Below right: former member services coordinator Nola Warner with ca. 2016/2017 VP of Education, Nikki Turek.







*More photos  
from the  
reunion of  
yesteryear  
co-ops!*



## SHC Represents in Michigan State's Fall 2023 Homecoming Parade

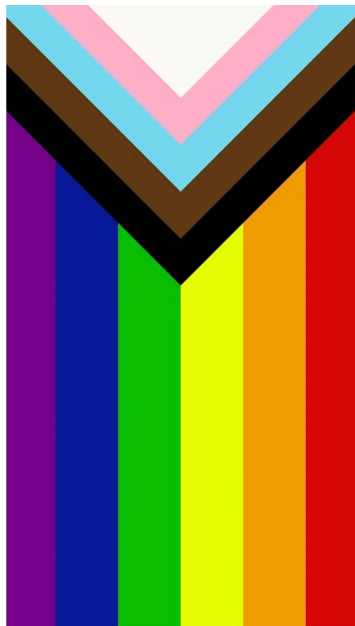
Membership Committee this fall, under leadership of current VP Membership Riley Jeffery (at Bowie [Elsworth]), organized for SHC to be involved in Michigan State's homecoming parade through East Lansing on Friday, September 23rd. The co-op walked with an SHC banner, and tossed candy for the kiddos from the SHC's new facilities staff pick-up truck, driven by Accounts Payable staff member Jimmy Coyer, himself an alum of both Apollo and Harambee houses.





# SHC Leads Organization of East Lansing's 2nd Pride Festival

SHC leadership, forefronted by Vice President of Membership Sky Stillwell ('22-'23, Orion) and President Clay Griffith ('22-present, Phoenix), made arrangements with the City of East Lansing to hold East Lansing's second public Pride festival downtown, after doing it last year as well. The event was originally planned to occur toward the end of June (Pride month), but it was postponed to July due to air quality concerns as a result of Canadian wildfires at the time. It was an afternoon-evening affair including tables with goodies, DIY screen printing, performances, and more. Pride is the celebration of LGBT+ identifying folks, and as Lucinda Gleespen, current Vice President of Education put it, "It really showed the community coming together in support of LGBTQ people."



## Punks with Lunch Fundraiser Drive by Education Committee

Punks with Lunch is a Lansing area mutual aid and harm reduction group that focuses on providing food, clothing, and other necessities to those who need it, serving with the Fledge, a community center in Lansing's eastside, as their home base. Founded in 2017, they now have several years behind them of "non-religious, non-political" and nonprofit service to community members in need. Recently, the SHC's education committee, chaired by VPE Lucinda Gleespen (in her second term), ran a fundraising competition whereby SHC members were encouraged to make individual monetary donations to PWL, report their giving to the VPE, and then the house with the most given proportionate to house population size would win a cash prize as well as a very cool and unusual stuffed animal. All in all, members together raised over 700 dollars, with Orion in first place, Raft Hill in second and Vesta in third.



<https://www.punkswithlunchlansing.org/>



# SHC Maintenance System Improvements

From August of 2022 through July of 2023, the SHC had an Americorps VISTA whose assignment was to spend his service year engaging in process improvement for and optimizing the maintenance systems of the co-op. His name is Rowan Price, and he lived at Hedrick house during his service, coming from Escher house of the Inter-Cooperative Council co-op in Ann Arbor. With a degree in industrial engineering, Rowan led the SHC to make major gains in its maintenance realm, such as creating flow systems for determining work delegation and improving the organization and efficiency of maintenance communications and meetings. His work also led the SHC to decide to make investments in purchasing two vehicles for SHC's maintenance techs, a van and a truck. The SHC also now has storage units for storing equipment and supplies.



## **By the way, who's staffing SHC these days?**

The current staff composition of the Spartan Housing Cooperative includes executive director holly jo Sparks, member services coordinator Martin Sloan, finance and accounts payable clerk Jimmy Coyer, maintenance technicians Josh Shaltry and Zach Crewes, and maintenance dispatch MC Rothhorn. The SHC is fortunate to have on its team multiple alumni of the co-op, with lived experience in the houses they now serve.



# Remembering Keith Thomas

SHC executive director holly jo Sparks wanted to share in this alumni publication the belated news of the passing of Keith Thomas. Keith was a finance staffer for the SHC from March of 2010 through December of 2015. Keith passed in the spring of 2021. From his obituary:

"Keith, a husband, father, brother, and friend left this earthly world for heaven's realms on March 7, 2021. He was born in Lansing, MI on October 7, 1946 to Marcia (nèe Himes) and Allison 'Al' Thomas....Keith's career consisted of auditing and accounting in the Lansing area starting at Knapp's Department Store and then, Farm Bureau Insurance, Melody Farms Dairy, Orchid Gene Screen, and finally MSU Student Cooperative.....He enjoyed meeting people and working on community service projects over the years with the Jaycees, Kiwanis or Rotary groups and exercised playing racquetball, swimming, canoeing and working out at the 'Y.'" *via Gorsline Runciman Funeral Homes*

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/east-lansing-mi/keith-thomas-10090681>



"Thanks for sharing this. \*Hugs\* he was such a great coworker. He always had a level head and something kind to say. He brought me to and from work for a while and was always so jolly about it. He'll be missed." - Nola Warner, SHC member services coordinator 2015-2021.

"Rest in Peace, Keith Thomas. Donut Angel, finance guru, kind hearted and hopeful-minded. He shall not be forgotten. Keith was such a goofy, kind and lovely man. He didn't have a bad bone in his body that I could see. Reading his obituary reminds me of his generosity of spirit. Xoxo" - Kris Metzger, manager of the building in which the SHC office is located.

Shown above is Keith (left) in the SHC office with MC Rothhorn, whom Keith trained into the finance position with the SHC. MC is still with the SHC, now working as part of the maintenance team.



# All Nations Co-op (131 Whitehills) Nearing the Finish Line

*Note: see previous editions of WTPP for prior information about 131 Whitehills developments.*

At long last, 131 Whitehills Drive, the brick building next to SHC's Bower house (AKA "Left Bower") and often referred to amongst SHC staff as simply "131," is in its final stages of preparation for cooperative occupancy.

This new co-op will be born as "All Nations." All Nations was chosen as the working name for the house because of its intention to be a place where folks of multiple different cultures may thrive in a shared community.

As a multi-year project, beginning with Jim Jones (a founding member and the first SHC president and then staffer) purchasing the building from its former East Lansing owner and then selling it to SHC per Board of Directors decision and approval, the finish line for the project is near in sight.

This co-op, which will raise SHC's house count from 17 to 18, has been thoroughly renovated and reconfigured as an apartment-style co-op building. There will be nine apartments: two two-bedrooms, four one-bedrooms, two "efficiency" one-bedrooms, and one hospitality suite.

The hospitality suite will be inhabited by the house hospitality coordinator, and will include larger spaces such as kitchen/dining and lounge areas where all residents may be invited to mingle. These spaces will facilitate meetings, group activities, shared meals and more. The hospitality coordinator will be a resident who will lead the house into deliberate community cohesion, and be an internal resource to assist residents in acclimating and integrating into the shared home.

As an apartment style co-op, there will be more privacy in larger personal spaces, but also shared amenities such as laundry units on two floors, storage space, and shared utilities. The apartment style will also be more accessible to families, expanding the variety of housing formats the SHC provides.

Much of the development of the concept of All Nations is thanks to the work of Scott Kelly, a resident of Ferency house from 2022-2023. He researched other apartment style co-ops, generated connections with community resources such as the Refugee Development Center, and







drafted the house's inaugural constitution. Scott's experience as a teacher abroad and as a dormitory advisor contributed his skills in this work.

Scott has now moved onward to a new opportunity teaching in Colorado, and SHC is grateful to him in his major contributions to the development of the vision for All Nations at 131 Whitehills.

At the time of writing, the SHC has secured the building permit from the city of East Lansing, and imminently awaits the forthcoming rental license - which likely will be attained by the time this is published.

As one of the values of the cooperative movement is to continuously work to expand opportunities for cooperation, SHC is striding forward into expansion of our community and diversifying the type of housing we can offer.





# Community Groups Join Together to Create a New Co-op in Lansing's Eastside



Something exciting has been brewing for some time now, as a tri-way partnership between the Spartan Housing Cooperative, the Refugee Development Center, and the Allen Neighborhood Center. That something is the Asante Co-op, also referred to as the ANC Housing Co-op.



We all know SHC - housing for people, not for profit; intentional community; collaborative self governance; living environment suited toward learning interpersonal and life skills; the list goes on. Though historically concentrated in East Lansing surrounding the MSU campus, SHC's more recent history includes expansion of its cooperative organization, with examples such as the Rivendell and Shire merger that occurred in 2017; Beal and Howland joining the SHC in 2009 and 2012 respectively (formerly these houses operated as independent co-op houses in East Lansing); and the purchase and renovation of 131 Whitehills that is currently wrapping up.



Then we have the Refugee Development Center (RDC), "a vital nonprofit organization created in 2002 to provide critical services for refugees in mid-Michigan. By providing formal and informal learning opportunities, the Center aims to be an open and inclusive place for refugees to learn and locate the resources they need to flourish as residents and citizens" (via their website homepage).

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, the Allen Neighborhood Center (ANC) has been working in the eastside of Lansing for decades providing food, health and housing resources. Their mission states, "[ANC] serves



as a dynamic hub where Lansing Eastside neighbors access resources to improve their health and well-being; expand their capacity to seize job and entrepreneurial opportunities; create a strong sense of place, belonging, and community pride; and build a safe, sustainable, and thriving neighborhood.”

So what happens when these three stars align? A new housing co-op!

This co-op will provide 16 beds in 1- and 2-occupancy units, aimed toward refugees and new citizens as well as young Americans who are seeking a mutually supportive housing environment. The housing co-op will include common spaces such as kitchen, living room and laundry; the mixture of private and common-use areas will allow for a balance of personal and public life within the cooperative housing environment.

By early July, the SHC/ANC/RDC partnership project received a \$500,000 grant from the Ingham County Housing Trust, which, as stated on the Ingham county website, “was established by the Ingham County Board of Commissioners to encourage construction, improvement, and maintenance of affordable, sustainable housing to help establish homeownership, and build wealth and equity in Ingham County.”

Additionally, the project secured 1.2 million dollars carved out from the Michigan State Legislature budget. With all necessary funding secured, the project moves forward into the next phase: buildout and preparing the space for future co-op residents.

As stated in the press release for the project, which went out along with the announcement of the grant recipients ceremony that took place on August 30th outside ANC, “All three partners believe that living in space shared by both native born and foreign born offers rich opportunities for cross-cultural learning-- this in a neighborhood where 10% of households are headed by someone born in another country.”



*Holly jo Sparks, Erika Brown-Binion, and Joe Enerson, executive directors of SHC, RDC and ANC respectively, photographed together at the Ingham County Housing Trust recipient ceremony held at ANC on August 30, 2023.*

This opportunity to not only serve a community in need of affordable, quality housing, but also to expand the cooperative method of organization, is a thrilling prospect of expansion for all three of these non-profit organizations. SHC in particular stands to gain by reaching its arm of experience in cooperative housing past Frandor and increasing its number of co-op entities in the Lansing community.



*The space within ANC where the development will come to exist*

## ELFCO: The Revival of a Historic Local Food Co-op

ELFCO was born as East Lansing Food Co-op in the mid-1970s, just as the cooperative movement in East Lansing was booming and the SHC was gathering strength after uniting as a federation of housing cooperatives as one corporation (which occurred in 1969). Today, ELFCO stands for Eastside Lansing Food Co-op, a small change to its title with a big story behind it.



Until a handful of years ago, the food co-op of East Lansing operated at Northwind Drive, then closed in 2017. Since then, its Board of Directors had been working hard to get it back into physical reality as a cooperatively owned and operated grocery store. After a few tries didn't work out, the co-op found an opportunity with the Allen Neighborhood Center in the eastside of Lansing.



Allen Neighborhood Center (ANC), at 1611 E Kalamazoo St, has for years been a place in the eastside neighborhood providing crucial access to food, health, and housing resources, with their services and programs always adapting and expanding. A recent project completed by ANC was the creation of a housing development at the site of the neighborhood center, called Allen Place. After the completion of that development, ANC still had available room for further development in the building.

That's where ELFCO comes in. Literally. Joan Nelson, longtime and recently retired executive director of ANC, helped to facilitate the process of ELFCO finding its new home in the south-facing side of the building, with main doors opening out onto Kalamazoo street.



I got the chance to listen to Sally Potter, the general manager of ELFCO, tell me about how it all came to be, and how it's been going since the opening of the reincarnated store in October 2022.

"Joan Nelson was a friend for a long time," Sally said. Sally had retired from teaching and "needed a new project." With experience in hotel restaurant management and ownership of a restaurant in Old Town, Lansing, in her background, she got the job as ELFCO GM.

When the chance for buildout in Allen Place was offered, the ELFCO Board decided it was the right move and signed the lease in April of 2022. In June 2022, the future storefront space was, as Sally put it, "a box, a white, echoey, empty box" that needed electrical reconfiguration, which was done expediently by a master electrician who came in from Grand Rapids. He got it all sorted in a couple of weeks, putting outlets exactly where ELFCO needed them to be for the layout of the store. "Opening in three months was outrageous," Sally commented.





However, it did all come together, with the help of advice and overall support from ANC, as well as getting grants for labor and equipment. For “starting from scratch”, it was an impressive feat to go from the “empty white box” in June to an operating grocery store beginning October 5, 2022.

When ELFCO first opened, it was only partially filled, with plenty of space to work toward building up its inventory. The ELFCO team spent last winter securing distributors, and constantly adding more and more to offer as a grocery store. The shelves gradually filled: “Every day the store looks better than it did before,” Sally said.



Sally discussed the model of ELFCO, explaining how it not only functions as a ‘farmer’s market every day,’ but also a fully stocked grocery store with shelves of a great variety of food goods, essential household products such as laundry detergent and tissues, a hearty bulk section, and more.



The bulk section of the store is noteworthy. It is constructed of the original bulk structures that were at the “old ELFCO,” with several dozen bins of dry foods from rice to oats to nuts to coffee and more, then nearly a hundred jars of bulk spices and seasonings (from Frontier Co-op, no less). Longtime ELFCO members will recognize the ‘staging table’ in front of the bulk bins, where shoppers can fill and label their bulk baggies.

A plethora of very local farm fresh produce is offered at ELFCO. Sally explained how the store buys the produce and pays the farmers up front, rather than using a more complicated consignment method. She expressed the farmers

really like being paid up front, and ELFCO likes getting fresh produce in, that shoppers buy and take right out so the cycle can continue.



Once the seasons change and the Michigan produce won't be flowing anymore, ELFCO will still have all the produce that's on your grocery list. Sally explained that obviously it's a priority to sell local—including in-the-neighborhood local—produce, but that it's just as important to be able to provide shoppers with what's on their list.

As Sally phrased it, grocery shopping shouldn't be a chore - you should be able to go in, get the things you need, enjoy the atmosphere while you're there, and get back on your way. Not only does the store offer an efficient model on grocery shopping, but it also offers a community oriented environment, with friendly staff, who will check out and bag your purchases, even carry them to your car if you'd like, as well as being a visually attractive space.

Sally pointed out the multitude of 2'x2' canvas artworks along the top of the walls, by local artist Roxanne Frith: not only do these colorful canvas photos brighten up the store, they also function as noise control for that "empty box echo" mentioned from before the store was filled out. Similarly, the nine upright coolers displaying the chilled foods have along the top, rather than harsh fluorescent lights and the words "FREEZER" or "DAIRY," colorful inserts that diffuse the light, offer pleasant imagery, and bear quotes and phrases that align with the spirit of the store.

ELFCO's new beginning as Eastside Lansing Food Co-op is growing in presence and visibility in the neighborhood and in general by the people of Lansing. Sally said that if it's someone's first time in the store, they're offered a free coffee (ELFCO sells cups of fresh-brewed hot coffee by Equal Exchange, a coffee roasting co-op), which is both a welcoming gesture and slows people down as they sip to really take in the store and see just how much it has to offer in its compact space.



By the end of my conversation with Sally, we got to talking about the co-op houses. And she made the point that, if all 17 (soon to be 18!) SHC households bought their groceries at ELFCO, what a significant boost that would be to the food co-op's business. Sally remarked, "You can give your money to the Meijer family, you can give your money to Costco...or you can give your money to the food co-op." So "if you bleed co-op," as Sally put it, you can 'vote with your dollar' and put your money into the cooperative economy and ecosystem.

# Alumni Voices

**Meghan Hurley, Bowie member 2015-2017 as well as former VP of Education, responds to prompts about her experience living in the co-op.**

*What is something you learned in the co-op that still benefits you or that you have grown further after leaving the co-op? This could be a belief, an attitude, a skill hard or soft, a formative experience....*

I notice that even as the years pass, I still reference my time living and working at the co-op often. I yearn for community and shared space because I had access to such vibrant and loving people both within my house (shoutout Bowie 4 ever!) and across the co-op community. I've had the opportunity to live in 4 different states since graduating and so the search for community and welcoming shared spaces is a constant one. It's only really because of the co-ops that I had enough confidence to pair with my insatiable curiosity, to travel to unknown places and build relationships wherever I go.

I have also realized that it takes so much to build places as vibrant as the SHC and then maintain it over decades of members rotating in and out. The idea of shared work is something I appreciate more now than ever before. It's because of my experiences with the co-ops that I knew there were people out there who want to work together to make the world better. It's really hard to be an adult. It's also really hard to be lonely. To be both? Oof - not an easy life. The spirit of community is powerful.

*What challenge(s) did you face during your co-op experience, and how have you built strength with those things since then, or grown from those challenges?*

Facilitating house meetings, navigating house conflict, the grievance process, determining equitable but incentivising consequences and fee structures, and so many other touchy group dynamics are an inevitable part of living in the SHC. It's through these tough moments that I realized a few things: 1. Expecting that everyone is happy by the end is unreasonable, but ensuring that everyone feels heard and respected should be a shared priority.



2. Setting norms that people actually find helpful/useful empowers people to use the support structures in place and 3. Apologize when you mess up. If something came out your mouth a lot meaner than you meant it - SAY that! If people walk away feeling differently than you intended, it's part of your shared responsibility to take ownership of the role you played.

One of the most challenging aspects of co-op living is weighing your personal priorities with the shared priorities (wants, needs, interests, values, etc). I feel more confident navigating new relationships of all kinds now that I've had the practice of acknowledging when my priorities are not the same as the shared priorities. It allows me to evaluate when I need to stand up and advocate for something or when I need to step back and let it roll. Group dynamics are a forever thing in this world, and I'm really glad I didn't go into the workforce with only having my academic career to help me out.

### *Any favorite stories or memories about your time in the co-ops?*

As I mentioned - I speak of the co-ops often. I have many of my first moments and many of my favorite moments in the thoroughly decorated halls of the homes. I loved working for the co-ops, how it shaped how I dream of workplaces culture in terms of compassion and flexibility. Working for and living in the co-ops allowed me to experiment with ideas other than capitalism and what I knew growing up in upper-middle class suburbs. I am thankful for the launch pad my experiences in the co-ops became for more exciting and more diverse experiences as an adult. It's so easy to leave college and feel aimless, or uncertain and then fall into a routine. The co-op experience nurtured my love for diversity - of thought, of experiences, of people - much more than any class I took at university.



*Howland family tailgate, 2017*



*Bowie Cookie Decoration, 2016*



*Potluck at Toad Lane, 2017*



*Bowie Party, 2017*

Thanks for sharing these photos, Meghan!

## **Alex John, 2012-2015 House of Apollo member, reflects on the structures of his household that held it together.**

When I decided to return to MSU to finish my degree I found myself in a familiar situation - I knew no one here and had no friends. It was my luck that the summer before returning I happened to run into Sarah, the partner of one of the guys who was re-colonizing the house formerly known as Avalon. She told me about the co-ops and I was intrigued, having never heard about them even 4 years prior when I came to MSU as a freshman. A few clicks and a scheduled tour later I found myself walking around my future house, seeing the flooring ripped up, deep cleaning of the basement, re-painting of all the hallways, and **the** smallest room in all the co-ops which would be mine (trust me, this is true, we called it the Harry Potter room).

The first day that everyone moved in I found myself surrounded by unfamiliar faces but felt closer after our first house dinner and 3 hours of writing the house constitution from a skeleton outline. We were a group that was about 14-4 split between those who had not lived in a co-op and those who had, respectively, and those four who had lived before gave us guidance for how to handle chores, guests staying over, quiet hours, etc. After this we did the most important thing a sustainable co-op does: assign chores. I signed up for weekly cooking of one of our house meals and to be the membership officer for the house, a decision that led to me becoming VP of Membership for the SHC for two years (thus my confidence in my smallest room statement before) but that is not the point of this article.

Throughout the first few weeks at the newly dubbed Apollo I started getting closer with my housemates while we all gave this co-op thing a shot. Our house average age was on



the higher side and most of us had jobs on top of school, so when it came time to do chores at the house people sometimes did not have time to do their scheduled chores. We had created a position when handing out chores that was dubbed The Taskmaster whose job it was to make sure that others were doing theirs. They would go around once a week at a predetermined time and would check that all the cleaning, shopping, etc. was completed. At this point they would put up on a white board the job bounties that were available for others to take. The taskmaster would fine the house member who did not do said chore and eventually credit the completer an equal amount. We didn't understand the beauty of the advice the former co-ops gave until we hit this point a few weeks in and we saw what happens with *cumulative fines*.

Cumulative fines are the idea that instead of offering a flat rate bounty to do other's chores, the rate is determined by the amount of times that chore had not been done in the semester. I can't remember the base rate we started with, maybe it was \$5 for the first time the chore was missed, but the next time it turned into \$10, third time \$15, fourth \$20, etc. When this was first proposed I thought it extreme for house chores, but I can tell you that once people missed their third chore they did not miss doing it again. The other part of this fine is that it is **completely avoidable** if you ask someone else in the house to help do your chore prior to chore-checking time. I lived in this house for three years and I don't ever think I saw a fine go past \$20 and while I cannot speak for the wonderful people I lived with over the years, I believe they would say that this was one of the best things we agreed upon at the beginning of the year. This not only ensured that chores were being done but, most importantly, that dishes were being washed.

Dishes are a challenge, to be sure, and it seemed unreliable of us to assume that people would always do their dishes immediately after using them. I have lived alone and now with my Fiance for seven years after living in the co-ops and I rarely do this.

We decided that instead of putting the onus on the individual, we would create a partnered dishwashing chore schedule separate from the house chore responsibilities. Every night the group had until 8pm to wash the accumulation of dishes that had formed in the last day, and then the bounty was up for grabs. Compared to jumping weekly chore bounties this was a frenzy. I remember some people waiting in the kitchen for the hour to turn to jump on those sweet co-op credits. Again, this was **completely avoidable** if you arranged with another housemate to take your chore prior.

To me, forcing people to do their work is not the point of this system. This system is more about making sure that people are invested equally into this house and that they care about the space that they cohabitate. For what it's worth our house was always in a pretty clean state, most importantly the bathrooms. If this article inspires you I say bring it up at your next house meeting and see what others think. It's not a perfect solution by any means, but it worked for us for three years without a hitch.

## **Syd Burke, SHC Alum and former Alumni Coordinator, Continues her Dedication to Cooperative Movement**

Syd (Phoenix 2012-2016, Vesta 2016-2017, Phoenix 2018) is in her first month as the Director of Community Engagement with NASCO. (NASCO is the North American Students of Cooperation, a co-op of co-ops that leads in educating, organizing, developing and strengthening its member co-ops across the US and Canada. SHC was a member for a long time.) Syd has spent 11 years living in, working for, and spreading the cooperative movement, and feels that living collectively has added incalculably to her well-being and worldview. She has personally lived with over 150 people, across six community houses, and currently resides in a community house she formed in Detroit where she's plugged into spreading the community movement locally. She's traveled to over 80 communities of all types around the U.S. and Canada.

Syd has worked with cooperatives in a variety of settings; as a NASCO board member and executive committee representative, alumni coordinator with SHC, campaign fundraiser, intern, membership officer of Phoenix, new collective liaison, and informal visitor.

She's confident that with the right stewardship, support, and advocacy, collective housing will be much more commonplace and ultimately contribute significantly to the battle against inequality, the ever-worsening housing crisis, and the loneliness epidemic. Some of her favorite co-op work has been in alumni organizing which she believes is imperative to the success and reach of the movement.

### **"Syd Sucks"**

"Some adoring roommates made a phrase/acronym called "Syd Burke Sucks" after walking by the Student Book Store's \*SBS\* Logo downtown. The phrase was later shortened to Syd Sucks, for anonymity. Then came 4 versions of pins, a pre-party facebook group roasting me, and a "Syd Sucks" party, where over 150 pins were passed out, an original song in my honor was played, and the fire alarm shut it all down after two hours." - Syd

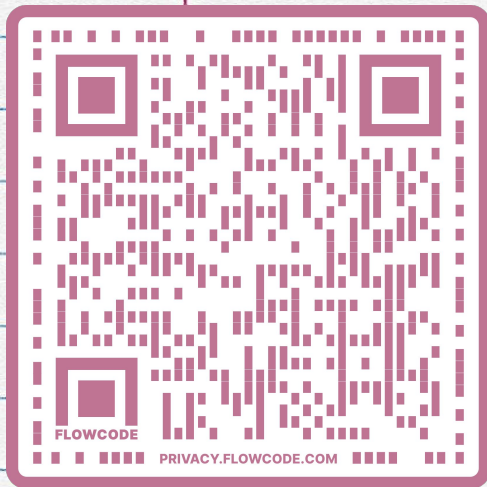
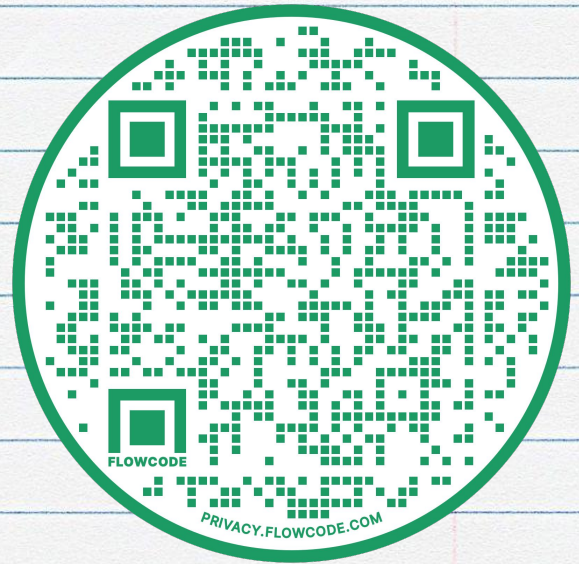




# CONNECT WITH US!



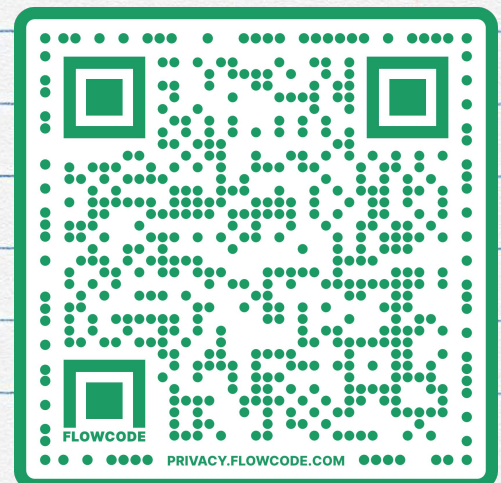
We have an SHC Alumni group on Facebook! Use the search terms "MSU Student Housing Cooperative - Alumni" to find us.



Join the Spartan Housing Cooperative network on LinkedIn!



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# ***Thank You For Reading!***

Thank you for your readership and continued interest in your co-op. A common phrase amongst co-ops is “we sit in the shade of trees we did not plant,” meaning that we benefit from the contributions made by those who came before us. Alumni, we sit in the shade of trees YOU planted. Thank you!

## ***Giving Back***

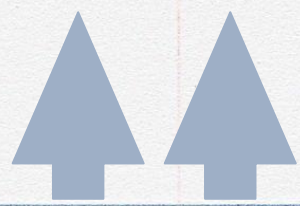
SHC is now, as of December 2022, an IRS recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization, retroactive to June 2022. While SHC has always operated under the banner of “housing for people, not for profit,” this status is symbolic and an accomplishment for the half-century-old cooperative we call SHC - those houses we have all called home.

Donating to the SHC nurtures our ecosystem, a symbiosis of our greatest assets: our members, and our houses. These are the two main components needed for the co-op to continue to thrive and provide affordable community based cooperative living. When you donate, you are supporting the members who make us SHC, and the houses that make SHC home.

You can make a donation by visiting our website at [spartan.coop](https://www.spartan.coop) and clicking the “Donate” button toward the top right corner.

***<https://www.spartan.coop/alumni/make-a-gift/>***





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