

Michigan State University's 2007 Truman Scholar connects people, places, concepts

作者 | Michigan State University  
日期 | Michigan State University

原文 | March 26, 2007 Monica Makotoj, of Canton, thinks of herself as a connector of people, places and concepts it took a few moments for the Michigan State University junior to realize MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon wasn't kidding when she informed Makotoj that yes, she really was a Truman Scholar for 2007. Simon and other MSU faculty joined in a surprise scholarship announcement with Makotoj March 16.



ELIZ LANNING, MSU — "It really is Truman Scholar"  
Monica Makotoj, of Canton, thinks of herself as a connector of people, places and concepts.

However, it took a few moments for the Michigan State University junior to realize MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon wasn't kidding when she informed Makotoj that yes, she really was a Truman Scholar for 2007. Simon and other MSU faculty joined in a surprise scholarship announcement with Makotoj March 16.

"This scholarship is a recognition of the work I do now, and the work I will do following graduation," Makotoj said.

She is pursuing degrees in international relations and psychology at the James Madison College and College of Social Sciences, respectively. The Haines College student is the daughter of Rahul and Indira Makotoj, and is a 2004 graduate of Salina High School. She is one of 70 college juniors nationwide to be named a Truman Scholar this year. Makotoj is MSU's 15th Truman Scholar.

Makotoj is passionate about her plans to give voice to those who can't make policies that affect or guide their lives.

Her volunteer service as a social activist and ethics counselor at the Learning for Crisis Intervention Center in Lansing and as a medical advocate at the Sparrow Hospital's Breast Assault Nurse Examination Program, combined with her MSU studies and international research, helped her define her chosen path.

"I first came to MSU and the James Madison College to study international relations because I was interested in the topic of conflict and war," she said. "I was shocked to learn in my first year about the sexual exploitation of refugees and women and what happens to them during war time."

"I also was interested in psychology. MSU faculty pushed my interests and helped me make connections between my divergent interests and connect the dots from a multidisciplinary perspective."

Although gender is increasingly being addressed in international development, women continue to suffer devastating social inequalities that stem from violations of human rights, Makotoj said.

Through the Ronald E. Miller Research and Fine

Baccalaureate Achievement Program at MSU, she developed a typology, or systematic classification, as to how actual violence is used as a weapon of war in international conflicts and applied it to her studies on the Sudan, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly known as Zaire.

"By labeling and characterizing various types of sexual violence, my method of case categorization draws communication while distinguishing differences of type in conflicts," she said.

She will use her research techniques in her studies of the psychological effects of rape and violence victims by working in Sri Lanka refugee camps and governmental organizations for those who in India this summer.

"Monica is dedicated to improving the status of women around the world," said Haines College Dean Ronald Fisher. "Because of her strong academic record, extensive work studying gender and violence and practical, personal experience as a sexual assault counselor, she has almost boundless potential to become an important leader advocating for improvement of human rights for women and others affected by conflict and war."

Her MSU activities include Alternative Spring Break programs in Puerto Rico, Jamaica and St. John Island, N.Y. She was a member of the International Relations Organization, which comprises the collegiate Model United Nations, and the MSU Model United Nations conference for high school delegates. She also is a member of SCOUTS AMERICA, a Serving Citizens of Uganda Today, Because Africa Needs an Ambulance, an Ivy Makotoj group in the Peace Corps following college and pursues her master's degree in public policy, concentrating on international, economic development and improvement of human rights for women. Her career objectives are to work with a governmental organization to address economic development and other gender-based inequalities and violence.

The Truman Scholarship honors former President Harry S. Truman. Students who show exceptional leadership potential and are committed to a career in public service are selected by the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation for this award. Scholars receive a \$20,000 scholarship toward graduate study and participate in several policy and leadership activities organized by the foundation.

