

## Back to School: Author Steve Lopez welcomes MSU freshmen

**Contact:** Kristen Parker, University Relations, Office: (517) 353-8942, Cell: (517) 980-0709, [Kristen.Parker@ur.msu.edu](mailto:Kristen.Parker@ur.msu.edu); Denise Maybank, Student Affairs, Office: (517) 355-7535, [maybank@msu.edu](mailto:maybank@msu.edu)

**Published:** Aug. 26, 2009 [E-mail Editor](#)

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Michigan State University and the city of East Lansing will come together this fall with a series of events surrounding the 2009 One Book, One Community selection, "The Soloist," by Steve Lopez.

The book is a New York Times and Los Angeles Times best-seller; the motion picture was released April 24, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx. "The Soloist" tells the true story of the friendship between two gifted men — Los Angeles Times journalist Steve Lopez meets Nathaniel Anthony Ayers, a Juilliard-trained musician who is homeless.

The annual One Book, One Community program, sponsored by MSU and the city of East Lansing, encourages the community to read the same book and discuss it in a variety of settings. The book is an assigned reading for all incoming MSU freshmen.

Lopez will visit East Lansing to kick off the month-long program at 7 p.m. Aug. 30 at the East Lansing High School auditorium and also will welcome incoming MSU freshmen at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Aug. 31. During the University Welcome, cellist Ping-Chieh Huang, a master's of music performance student, will play a piece highlighted in "The Soloist."

A series of community and campus events are planned around the themes in "The Soloist." The book also has sparked a musical instrument donation drive to benefit MSU's new Community Music School in Detroit. For more information about events or the donation program, visit [www.onebook.msu.edu](http://www.onebook.msu.edu) [<http://www.onebook.msu.edu/>]

### Other Fall Welcome Events

Following the University Welcome, MSU will host the first Cultural Engagement Showcase, an exhibition of opportunities for cultural engagement on campus. Designed to encourage students to explore out-of-classroom education, the event will take place at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center.

At its booth, MSU's Office of International Studies and Programs will conduct a personalized direct mail campaign. Students will select a study abroad location and staff will create a postcard with a country-specific background and the student's photograph. Students will then send the postcard home.

The final Fall Welcome activity will engage students while fostering a sense of community. The first Fall Welcome Spartan Spectacular, which will be held 4:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sept. 1 at Munn Field, will combine food, music and fireworks.

"It is the coming together of various aspects of the social strands of the Michigan State University experience," said Denise Maybank, senior associate vice president for student affairs. "The intertwining of traditional activities, such as Sparticulation and Spartan Spirit, with food, music and fireworks, has created a high-energy experience that we hope will show students the many ways in which learning, living and laughing all come together to make the college experience a well-rounded one."

The night will end with an illuminated sky as grand-finale fireworks transform into a glowing Spartan "S."

For a complete listing of Fall Welcome events, visit [www.fallwelcome.msu.edu](http://www.fallwelcome.msu.edu) [<http://www.fallwelcome.msu.edu/>].

###



Steve Lopez, LA Times columnist and author of "The Soloist," welcomes MSU freshmen.

Click on an image to view a larger or high-resolution version.

### Related Links

- [Fall Welcome Web site](http://fallwelcome.msu.edu) [<http://fallwelcome.msu.edu>]
- [One Book, One Community](http://onebook.msu.edu) [<http://onebook.msu.edu>]



[University Relations](#) • 403 Olds Hall • East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1047 • (517) 355-2281 • Fax: (517) 353-5368

© 2009 Michigan State University [Board of Trustees](#) East Lansing, MI 48824.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.