
Goodbye and Well Wishes!

Thank You, Sonya Koenig

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Hello, _____

As many of you know, I recently concluded my time as a Research Assistant at the Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED). As I move forward into new opportunities, I want to express my deepest gratitude for making my time at CCED such a rewarding and transformative experience. My journey into this work began during the summer of 2024, where I served as a Planning and Advocacy Intern at Communities First, Inc. in Flint, Michigan. There, I uncovered the troubling disconnect between the built environment, sustainability and social justice. Across the city, thousands of blighted structures were being demolished with taxpayer funds, their materials sent straight to landfills. Frustrated with this reality, I

started to research more sustainable alternatives. This is where I discovered Dr. Rex LaMore and his revolutionary field of Domicology.

Before long, I joined the Circular Economy and Community Benefits teams at the CCED, not realizing then just how profoundly this work would shape my professional and personal endeavors. From organizing events to advancing circular economy and community benefits, to conducting surveys and engaging with partners across the country and supporting legislation to raise Michigan's tipping fee to establish a Circular Economy Institute at MSU, then writing reports and championing student-led advocacy, plus so much more, this experience has broadened my skills and network while strengthening my commitment to building a more equitable and sustainable future.

As far as the future holds, I will be graduating from MSU this December with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Relations and Policy. I plan to attend graduate school in urban and regional planning in the fall of 2026 to continue this important work in municipal operations. Thank you again to everyone for your mentorship, collaboration, and shared commitment to this important work. I am deeply grateful for the experiences and relationships that will continue to inspire me moving forward. As always, please keep in touch! You can connect with me on LinkedIn and email me at sonyakoenig826@gmail.com, I look forward to crossing paths with you all in the future!