

## OHS '63 Alum to Receive MSU Com/Arts/Sci Award

Each year Michigan State University's College of Communication Arts and Sciences recognizes a new class of Outstanding Alumni Award honorees. In January 2020, the College announced its slate of six alumni to receive the Outstanding Alumni Award that recognizes the honoree's extraordinary achievement, professional success, and commitment to the greater good. On March 18, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the College announced cancellation of the April 18 Outstanding Alumni Award ceremony, advising that an alternate plan is underway to celebrate the 2020 class of honorees.

Among the six alumni to be honored is Okemos High Class of '63 graduate **Kerry J. Byrnes** - MSU B.A. '67 Sociology; MSU M.A. '68 Communication; Iowa State University Ph.D. '75; retired-Agriculture Development Officer, U.S. Agency for International Development.



Kerry worked 40 years as an applied social scientist supporting agricultural and rural development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. His employers and clients included organizations such as Michigan State University, International Fertilizer Development Center, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, World Bank, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and various consulting firms. Byrnes conducted hundreds of short-term assignments in developing countries, proving project design, evaluation, and oversight for research and training initiatives in fertilizer use/marketing; agricultural research, extension, and education; organizational management for sustainability; trade capacity building; and food security and food safety.

He authored hundreds of technical reports and publications, including *Sistemas de Información y Comunicación de Mercadeo en la Zona de Influencia de Cali*; *Diffusion and Adoption of Innovations in Fertilizer-Related Agricultural Production Technology in Developing Countries*; *Water Users Associations in World Bank-Assisted Irrigation Projects in Pakistan*; *Farmer Organizations: Tapping Their Potential as Catalysts for Change in Small-Farmer Agricultural Systems*; and "The Spirit Lives On: Communication Seminars as a Surprisingly Hardy, Valuable, and Promising Heritage of NPAC."

Kerry received several awards from USDA and USAID, including Meritorious Group Honor Awards, a Superior Group Award, and the Administrator's Outstanding Career Achievement Award upon retirement. [In 2018 he was honored with the Okemos Education Foundation's Distinguished Alumni Award.](#) He lives in Reston, Virginia with his wife, Sonia Byrnes. They have one son and one grandson.