



This News In Education program features inspiring stories of young people aspiring to stay in school, impact their communities and achieve their dreams!

# ASPIRE

*Be inspired. Achieve your dreams.*



## MOTIVATE

**State Senator  
Hoon-Yung Hopgood**  
(Democrat, Taylor)

*“From the Dean’s List to Student of the Year honors, Nico Mitchell-Garcia’s list of accomplishments is a mile long. Forget about high school students—Nico’s set a pretty high bar for any of us to hurdle.”*

## USE THE NEWS

Look through the newspaper for ads or articles about products using new technology, such as cars, mobile devices or other commonly used items. How many instances of new technology can you identify? How have these products changed how people live and do business? Which new technology do you think has had or will have the most significant impact on people’s lives?

## Grand Rapids senior has his goals pinned firmly to the mat

He’s a wrestler who loves AP Calculus. That alone makes Nico Mitchell-Garcia unusual. His high school accomplishments — a 3.79 GPA, volunteer service, MVP designation and ranking of fourth in his class — make him exceptional.

From helping eighth graders make the transition to Grand Rapids’ Creston High School to serving as a tutor and mentor, Mitchell-Garcia has already positively affected his community. He said his drive to succeed stems from watching his mom try to make ends meet.

“It was a struggle, at first, just getting by from month to month,” he said. “I just realized that I didn’t want to live like that. I wanted to make a better life for my family.”

That’s why, in sixth grade, he

buckled down, aiming to graduate high school with good enough grades to get into college. Realizing that his biggest obstacle is procrastination, Mitchell-Garcia worked daily to stay on task, remain focused and avoid slacking off.

He credits his acceptance to the University of Michigan, in part, to his AP English teacher, Mr. Lyons. “He was a U of M grad and he kind of persuaded me in that direction,” he said. Mitchell-Garcia, who plans to major in athletic training and nutrition, realized becoming a Wolverine was possible during his junior year.

“I did a lot of things I didn’t



**Senior Nico Mitchell-Garcia ranks fourth in his class at Creston High School in Grand Rapids and has been accepted at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.**

PHOTO/DANIEL E. JOHNSON

know I could do,” he said, “like writing longer papers. It was a confidence booster.”

Finding fulfillment in a job, and not just a paycheck, is a major focus for the 17-year-old.

“I want to wake up every morning and enjoy going to work instead of dreading what I’m doing,” he said.

Now working at overcoming his latest challenge — applying for scholarships — Mitchell-Garcia believes, “If your heart is in the right place, then your habits will just carry you through.”

~ By Deborah J. Cook

## INNOVATE

**Jim Murray, President  
of AT&T Michigan**



“Innovation” is a big word that describes a simple concept—identifying things that can be done to make life more simple. For the last two years as president of AT&T Michigan, Jim Murray has made innovation his goal – pushing forward new technologies for Michigan, working with elected leaders to modernize public policy and encouraging others to think big and aspire to be their best!

Have you ever been in your car and wondered when someone would figure out how to connect a car to the Internet? I have. Well, now we know.

Ford and AT&T announced last month they would team up so that drivers of the new Ford Focus Electric could connect their car to the AT&T wireless network.

That will allow drivers to control their car settings, send and receive data about their car and provide command and control of vehicle settings while away from it.

Pretty amazing, and even better, the new Focus Electric enters production at a Michigan Assembly Plant in late 2011.



Sponsored by

**at&t**