

# Strategies for minimizing attrition and engaging respondents in the PSID and its supplemental studies

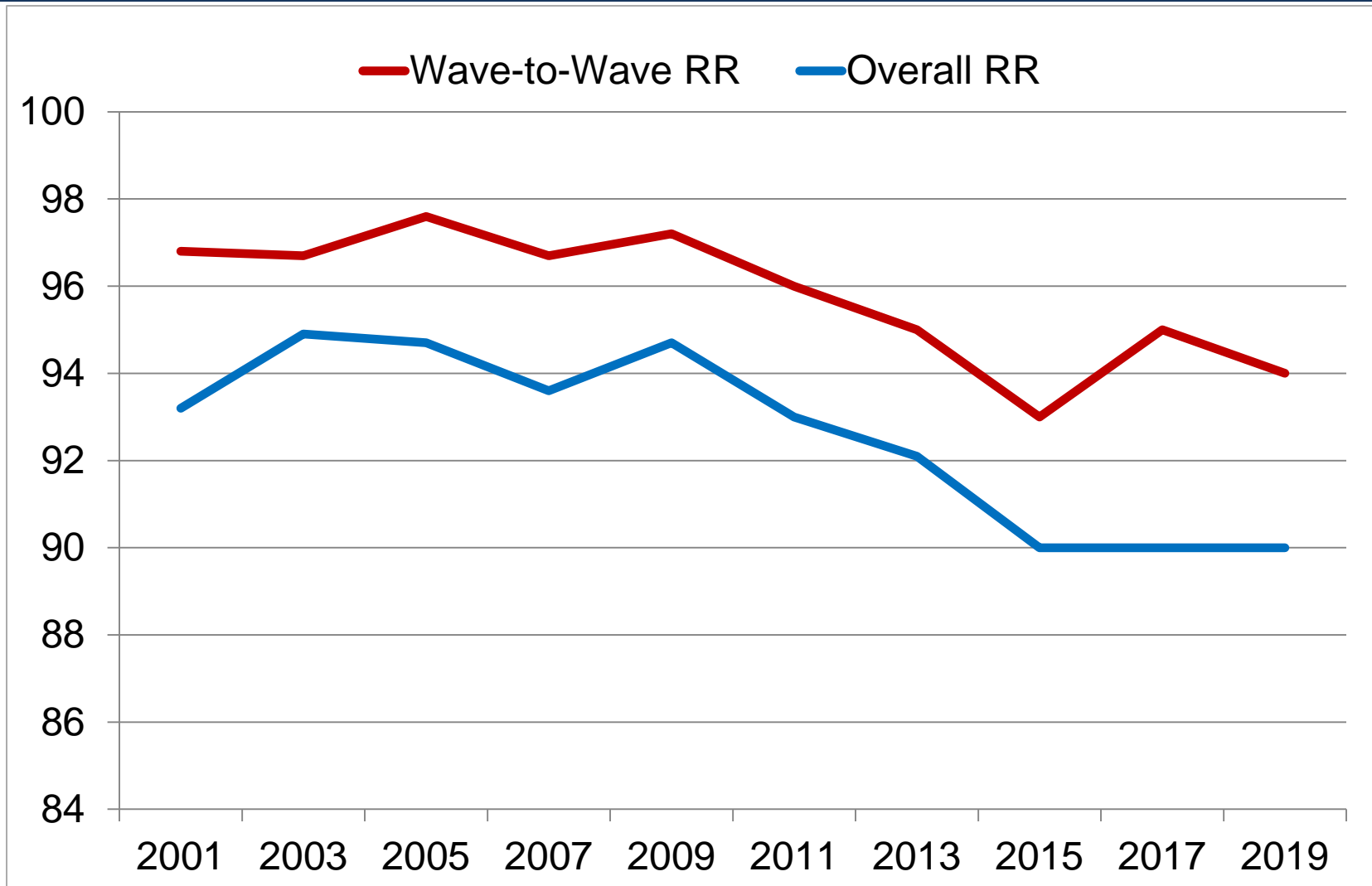
Kate McGonagle

CLOSER Conference: *Preparing for the future II: International  
approaches to challenges facing the longitudinal population studies*,  
London, January 16, 2020

# PSID - Key design features

- Ongoing panel study of U.S. families
  - Began in 1968; 41 waves as of 2019 with ~11,000 families
  - Genealogic panel – Adult children of original sample followed at economic independence
- CATI / FTF interviewing
  - Lengthy and complex interview: ~75 minutes
  - Post-paid monetary incentive – 2019, \$75 baseline incentive
- Long field period:
  - 9 months, March 1 – December 31, biennially
- Major ongoing supplements:
  - Child Development Supplement (PSID-CDS) – 5 waves, 1997-2019
  - Transition into Adulthood Supplement (PSID-TAS) – 8 waves, 2005-2019

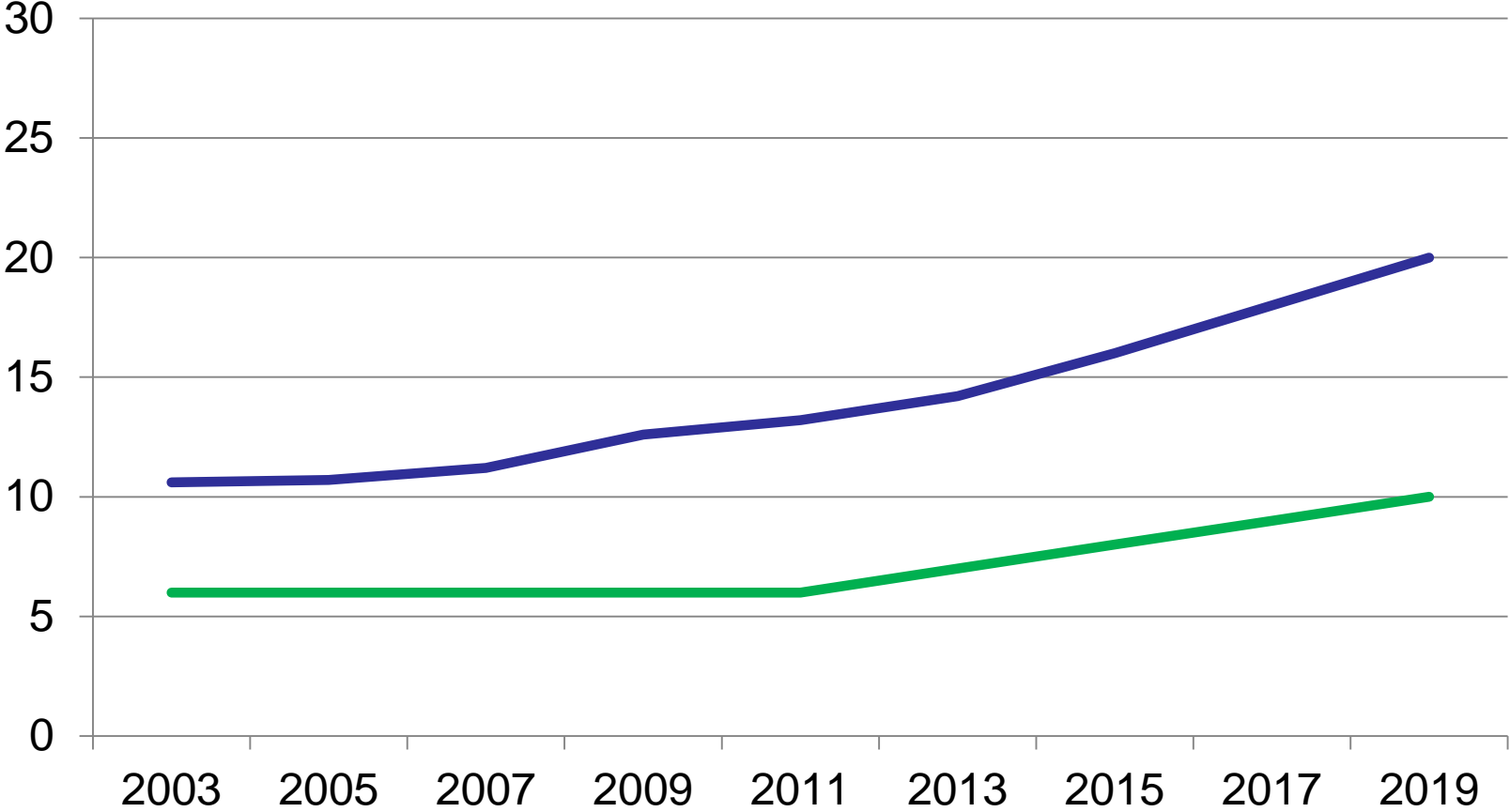
# Recent challenges: PSID response rates trending down (but now stable?)



Note: Excludes 2017-19 immigrant refresher sample

# Increasing effort needed to schedule & complete PSID interviews

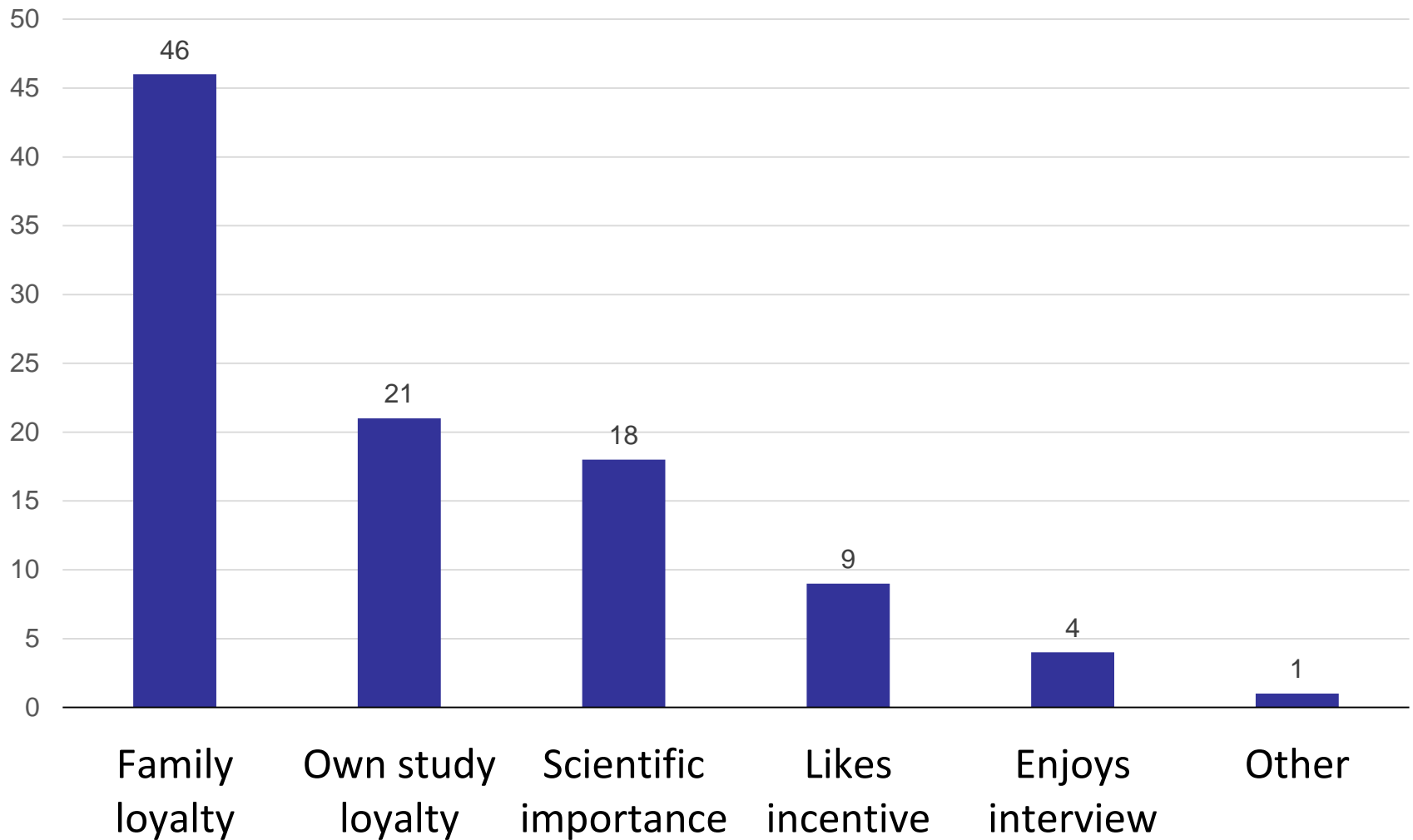
— Interviewer attempts (median)  
— Interviewer attempts (mean)



# Respondent engagement strategies

- Maintain contact with respondents through between-wave mailings
  - contact update postcard, small incentive
  - R newsletter describing results and upcoming data collection via postal mail
- R website
- Use MM approaches to engage different subgroups:
  - email, text, telephone, postal mail
- Tailored messages, e.g., highlighting motivation to participate

# Tailoring respondent messages - New question: Main reason you participate in PSID



# Respondent mailing to highlight motivation of family-loyalty

“I remember watching my **grandma** complete this survey!”

“After every interview, my husband and I use the money we receive to go out to a nice dinner.”

“The U of M study is a **family tradition!**”

“I want **my family’s experiences** on the table when policy is being made.”

“I **enjoy** talking with the interviewer about how things have changed over the last two years.”

# Incentives strategies to minimize attrition & field effort

- Variety of incentive modes:
  - Check (slow), E-pay to accelerate incentive
  - Cash & non-monetary incentives for FTF interviews
- One-time extra \$ for families at high risk of NR:
  - Prior-wave NR:  
“Welcome Back!”
  - New sample members: “Welcome to the Study!”


**We value your time:**

When you complete your interview we will send you...

**[\$70]** in appreciation of your time  
**+ \$30** as a one-time “welcome back” special  
**= [\$100]** to welcome you back and hear your story\*

\* We also offer \$10 to reimburse your use of a cell phone. **You can receive [\$110] for about an hour of conversation.**

**Call or text us today to schedule your interview:**

-  Text or Call 866-796-5166
-  [uofmsurvey@umich.edu](mailto:uofmsurvey@umich.edu)
-  [[www.flexbooker.com/FES](http://www.flexbooker.com/FES)]

Call, text, or email us soon to make sure your story is included.



# Incentive strategies to minimize attrition & field effort

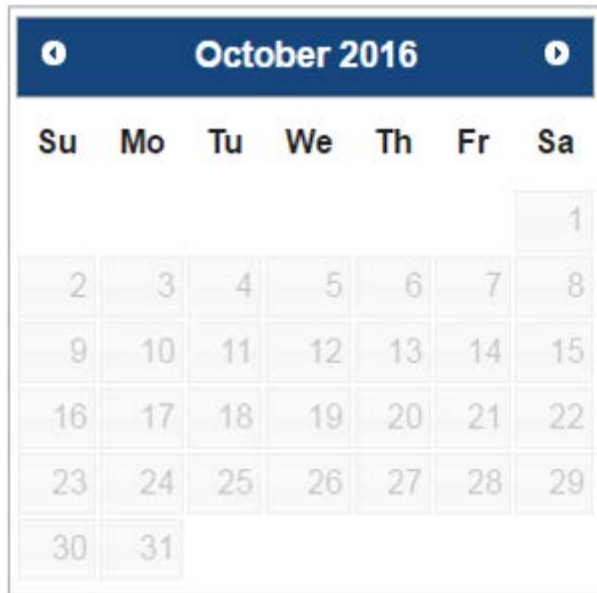
- Incentive Boosts to achieve RR, doubling incentive for “Difficult cases”:
  - Final 6 weeks of production
  - 2019: time-limited offer during 1<sup>st</sup> month of production
    - “Early-Bird” experiment



# New approach: Online appointment scheduler experiment

## What date and time would you like to book your interview?

Interviews last approximately one hour. Select the date you would like to see available times for.



The image shows a screenshot of an online appointment scheduler interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the text "October 2016" in white, flanked by left and right navigation arrows. Below the header is a calendar grid with days of the week (Su, Mo, Tu, We, Th, Fr, Sa) as column headers. The dates 1 through 31 are arranged in a grid format, with the 1st of the month starting on a Saturday. The calendar is presented in a light gray, semi-transparent style, suggesting it is a background element in a larger interface.

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 2017 PSID Transition into Adulthood Supplement
- Offered some Rs use of scheduler that allows them to select day/time of interview without relying on an interviewer
  - Used frequently in daily life
  - Should save fieldwork effort, provide more positive R experience
  - Randomly assigned Rs to either “Scheduler-Group” & offered use of online scheduler or “Control-Group,” no offer

# Online appointment scheduler experiment

- Scheduler-Group:
  - Completed the interview significantly faster
  - Needed significantly fewer interviewer attempts to complete interview; cost per case was lower
  - About 1/3 of those in Scheduler-Group used it to set appointment
- Future waves:
  - Increase use of scheduler
  - Applicable in any study with interviewer-administered component

# Next steps

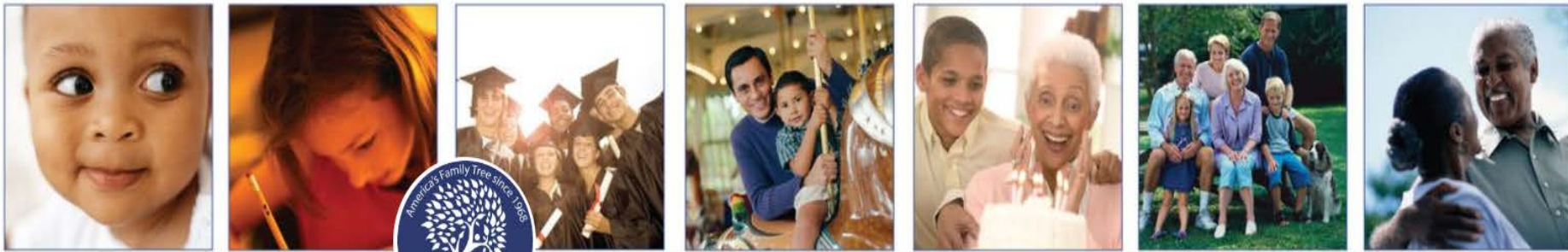
- Major transition Core PSID 2021 - adding “web” as mode
- Design & evaluate strategies to engage Rs and minimize attrition using MM approaches

# Primary Sponsors

- National Science Foundation
- *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- National Institute on Aging

# Thank you. Questions?

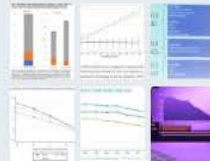
## M INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH • SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER PANEL STUDY OF INCOME DYNAMICS



Tweets 931 Following 983 Followers 1,246 Likes 479

Follow

**PSID**  
@umpsid  
Panel Study of Income Dynamics  
University of Michigan  
psid.org  
Joined February 2015  
327 Photos and videos

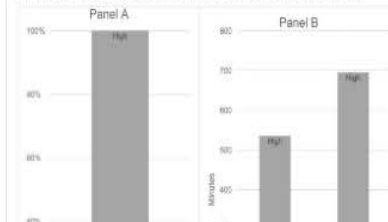


Tweets Tweets & replies Media

**PSID** @umpsid · Dec 20  
Wolfson (@umichsph), Inslerla (@UM\_SRC) and Cohen (@BrownUniversity) use 20 years of #CDS and #PSIDdata to examine childhood food involvement and food insecurity in young adulthood in the upcoming volume of @AmJPrevMed

Full Paper: [bit.ly/2sMQN6p](https://bit.ly/2sMQN6p)

Figure 1: Unrestricted of parental nutritional knowledge in 1997 (Panel A), 1975-2002 and weekly time spent in food preparation, food shopping between during childhood (ages 5-10 years old; measured in either 1997 or 2002) (Panel B), PSID Child Development Supplement (n=1,049)



Want to take advantage of all the new Twitter features?

It's simple - just log in.

Log in

Sign up

You may also like Refresh



kmcgon@umich.edu

Visit us at [psid.org](https://psid.org)

Follow us @umpsid