Graduate College Announces Recipients of Fall 2014 Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowships

The Graduate College is pleased to announce that three WMU doctoral students have been named recipients of Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowships for the 2014–15 academic year. The Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowships are funded generously from an endowment made possible by the late poet, artist, and naturalist, Gwen Frostic, a WMU alumna, Class of 1929. Awards are given to assist recipients with the completion of the doctoral dissertation in all disciplines.

The Fall 2014 Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowships recipients are as follows:

Marlene Camacho-Ochoa – Department of Spanish: Ms. Camacho-Ochoa will receive the Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowship for her dissertation titled Continuity and Rupture in the Narrative of Augusto Roa Bastos. Her dissertation advisor is Dr. Benjamin Torres. This study examines the themes utilized by Paraguayan author, Augusto Roa Bastos in the first phase of his narrative work and the relations of continuity and rupture as they appear in his final creative works. The research will contribute to the scholarship and further understanding of the creative writing process of this author. Dr. Torres describes Marlene’s dissertation as “ambitious and terribly exciting research project.”

Abotalib Z. A. Farag – Department of Geosciences: Mr. Farag will receive the Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowship for his dissertation titled An Integrated Approach Towards a Better Understanding of the Paleohydrology and Landscape Evolution in the Sahara During the Previous Wet Climatic Periods. His dissertation advisor is Dr. Mohamed Sultan. This project
involves the implementation of cost effective, interdisciplinary, cutting edge, collaborative and innovative research approaches that provide a new clue for the role of groundwater on Mars. In addition it will assess the possibility of recent or ancient life on Mars by applying a comparative analysis between outflow channels on Mars and their terrestrial counterparts in the Sahara. Dr. Sultan describes Mr. Farag as a “very dedicated scientist who has a quest for knowledge and success.” Mr. Farag has co-authored various manuscripts and is actively engaged in publication and the dissemination of his research in professional venues.

**Christina M. Zumbrun** – Department of Mathematics: Mr. Zumbrun will receive the Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowship for her dissertation titled *Secondary Mathematics Teachers’ Attitudes and Beliefs toward Statistics: Developing and Initial Profile*. Her dissertation advisor is Dr. Christine Browning. This research is an investigation of the statistical content preparation background of secondary mathematics teachers who teach statistics at the high school level, either within existing mathematics courses, such as algebra or geometry, or as a stand-alone course, such as AP statistics. Ms. Zumbrun’s project involves the assessment of teachers’ attitudes and beliefs regarding the nature of statistics and its centrality within the high school curriculum. Dr. Browning describes Ms. Zumbrun as an “exceptional student” whose work will make a significant contribution to the field of mathematics education.