Stay abreast of administrator searches

Provost search listening sessions are slated in the Bernhard Center from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and 3 to 4:30 p.m. today in Room 157 and 10 to 11:30 a.m. and noon to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 12, in Room 210. Visit wmich.edu/news/2017/12/44165 for details.

A search also is underway for a new health and human services dean. The position profile and other details are online at wmich.edu/provost/administrative-searches.

Board of Trustees meeting scheduled

The next meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, in Heritage Hall. Information about the agenda will be posted online at wmich.edu/news closer to the meeting date.

Short-term housing made available

Several furnished one- and two-bedroom apartments are available as short-term housing for visiting scholars. The apartments may be rented until May 1. For more information, contact Alice Molvaren in the Haenicke Institute for Global Education at (269) 387-3965.

APA scholarship deadline coming up

The application deadline for a $500 scholarship to be awarded to a WMU undergraduate or graduate student who is the child of an active member of the Administrative Professional Association. The award will be announced at the APA general membership meeting from noon to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 23, in the Bernhard Center. Eligibility requirements and an application form are available at wmich.edu/apa/awards.

Apply now for 2018-19 faculty funding

The application deadline for the 2018-19 Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award cycle is 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 5. For details, visit wmich.edu/research/funding/faculty/fracaw. Contact Kay Mortellaro with questions at (269) 387-8204.

Libraries improve computer access

University Libraries has installed Non-Visual Desktop Access on all 240 public computers in Waldo Library, the Swan Education and Mayberry Music and Dance libraries, and the Zhang Legacy Collections Center. NVDA is a screen reader that provides computer access to people who identify as having blindness, low vision or print disabilities. Headphones are available for checkout at all but the Zhang Center.

Become a WMU brand ambassador

There are still seats open for those who want to sign up for the three-part Behind the W training and earn a WMU Brand Ambassador certificate. Register for February’s three workshops by visiting wmich.edu/behindthew.

High percentage of grads finding success

Postgraduate success data for new WMU graduates shows that 91 percent of these new alumni are actively engaged in the next steps of their career paths within three months of their graduation.

The 2016-17 version of WMU’s annual Postgraduation Success Survey—the most comprehensive such data gathered and published by any public university in Michigan—defines active engagement as being employed full or part time, serving in the military, or attending graduate school.

“This report captures the fact that WMU graduates are well prepared for future success and are in great demand by employers within the state and across the world,” says WMU President Edward Montgomery. “I am proud of our staff for using the data in this report to create a tool that can be helpful to prospective students and their families as they make decisions about their own career paths.”

The data is based on responses from a record 77 percent of WMU’s 5,205 graduates during the 2016-17 academic year. This is the eighth year the survey has been completed, and it reflects responses from former students in the University’s more than 250 undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Since 2010, Ewa Urban, Career and Student Employment Services, has been coordinating data collection and crafting an annual report. The reports have attracted attention for both the high response rate and the short, three-month time frame between graduation and the student success outcomes recorded.

Urban’s most recent report shows that 85 percent of those who entered the labor force improve campus life and service to our students, and simply need to be implemented.” Five of those will be implemented, though funded separately by campus leadership.

Success@WMU

This initiative is a large-scale campus commitment to build on past WMU success with small learning communities. It ensures that all new undergraduate students have access to a learning community led by a peer leader assisted by faculty and staff. The learning communities are intended to not only help welcome and orient new students, but also aid them in building skills essential for success in college.

Two ideas being funded to transform student life

WMU President Edward Montgomery has announced that funding has been granted for two initiatives that will begin in the fall and help to build a stronger sense of belonging and community among all students.

In a message to the campus community Jan. 9, Montgomery unveiled the endeavors that he will fund through the Transformational Initiatives Fund he set up last fall. Matching dollars will be added by WMU vice presidents of the relevant areas.

During the review process for 60-plus proposals submitted for funding, a number of additional ideas were described by Montgomery as “good, solid concepts that will

University names new business dean, research vice president

Following national searches, longtime WMU administrator and professor of management Satish Deshpande has been named dean of the Haworth College of Business while Terri Goss Kinzy of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has been named vice president for research.

Deshpande, whose appointment was effective Jan. 1, has served as the interim dean of the college since July 2016 and was the college’s associate dean for operations and graduate programs from 2011 to 2016.

A faculty member since 1990, Deshpande specializes in teaching supply chain management. His research has focused on managerial decision making and ethics, health care management, and applied psychology. He is widely published on such topics as labor negotiations and unions, personnel management in health care, small business labor issues, and ethical conduct in workforce management.

Kinzy, formerly vice president for research at Rutgers, took the reins of WMU’s research enterprise Jan. 8. She replaces Daniel Litvynski, who returned to the engineering faculty, and Sherine Obare, who had been serving as interim vice president since his departure.
Events to focus on gender inequality

The College of Arts and Sciences Women’s Caucus will host a book discussion of “Disrupting the Culture of Silence: Confronting Gender Inequality and Making Change in Higher Education” from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 19, in Bevan Hall’s second floor in the Clifford Media Center. Co-editor Kristine DeWelde will present an ethics talk on “The Relevance, Reward and Risk of Feminist Activism in the Academy” at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, in 1910 Sangren Hall.

Next two breakfast talks slated

Well-known community members will present the next two 8 a.m. talks in the Mercantile Bank of Michigan Breakfast Speaker Series. Peter Gistelinck, president and CEO of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, will speak Friday, Jan. 26, and Tim Lester, WMU’s head football coach, will speak Friday, Feb. 23. For more information or to register, visit wmich.edu/business/mercantile-rsvp or call (269) 387-6059.

Communitywide expo scheduled

The Fetter Center will host the WMU Connect Business Expo from 2 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16, in the Fetter Center. The free event will give attendees a chance to learn about a wide range of business opportunities and get help in starting or expanding a business. Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP at wmich.edu/fetter/wmu-connect-events.

Lifelong learning activities set

The Other Lifelong Learning Institute at WMU will hold its January thaw event from 2 to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 17, in the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts building. For this event, nonmembers should call (269) 387-4200 and members should respond via their email invitation. OLLI members may register for winter/spring courses now and nonmembers starting Tuesday, Jan. 23. For details about new courses and trips, visit wmich.edu/olli/courses or call (269) 387-4200.

Olde Towne Commons event

Lifelong learning activities set

WMU continues its tradition of honoring students at its annual Olde Towne Commons event, which will be held Thursday, Jan. 25, in the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts building. The Olde Towne Commons is a formal spring-time dinner and dance that will bring together faculty, staff and other honored guests. Olde Towne Commons is intended to honor students for their academic achievement.

Martin Luther King celebration events kick off Monday

WMU continues its tradition of honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. with campus events beginning today and others planned here and across the broader Kalamazoo community on and around MLK Day Monday, Jan. 15.

“What is your position in times of challenge and controversy?” is this year’s theme. Free public events include a convocation, march, day of service, educational programs and presentations.

This year’s on-campus events include a teach-in for community members as well as WMU students and employees. The event features speakers from the community and WMU presenting sessions that combine short inspirational speeches and focused discussion.

Visit wmich.edu/mlk for more information about MLK Celebration events.

Service-January

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 45, 40, 25, 20, 10 and five years of service during January.

45 years—Robin A. Williams, University Libraries.
40 years—C. Dennis Simpson, physician assistant.
25 years—Kathleen Cain-Babbitt, landscape services; Carrie A. Cuming, Registrar’s Office; Doris N. Ohler, cash operations; and Martha M. Szotek, Davis Dining Services.
20 years—Sarah Curry, development and alumni relations.
10 years—Tim Bearish, Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations, and Kim Teament, psychology.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/jobs. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

Economist edits new Sichel series book


It is a compilation of papers originally presented during WMU’s 51st annual Werner Sichel Lecture Series, which is co-sponsored by the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research and WMU Department of Economics. The papers are written by several notable economists who describe the perils the economy faced after the Great Recession and the policies—some successful, others not so much—that were implemented and why.

Alvi’s teaching areas include macroeconomics, development economics and monetary economics. His research areas include economic growth and development, asymmetric information theory, macroeconomics, micro-foundations, principal-agent problems, and financial economics.
Program is now globally certified

The master's degree in engineering management has passed its initial certification, becoming one of just six programs in the world to be certified by the American Society for Engineering Education—ASEM.

The global certification is designed to recognize master's programs that meet the rigorous standards of the society, and represent "outstanding achievement in quality and content," according to ASEM.

ASEM evaluators visited campus in October and reported being impressed with what they observed and noted the rigor of WMU's program. The recent certification means graduates of the program will now earn the Certified Associate in Engineering Management credential.

David Lyth and Larry Mallak, industrial and entrepreneurial engineering and engineering management, lead the program, which bridges the gap between engineering and business.

Time to review winter weather procedures

This time of year is a good time to review WMU's closure policy and snow-and-ice removal procedures.

Key facts to remember include:
• The University rarely closes but when it does, the closure is announced on the WMU home page at wmich.edu, WMU Alert system, area radio and television stations, and the WMU emergency information line at (269) 387-1001.
• When the University’s campuses in Kalamazoo close, the WMU-Battle Creek regional location as well as the College of Aviation at Battle Creek also close. To learn if another regional location is closed, visit wmich.edu/extended.
• In the event of a weather closure, all events on the University’s events calendar at wmich.edu/news/events will be marked as canceled. Area hosting events that will continue despite a weather closure should notify university relations by sending an email to university-relations@wmich.edu.
• All snow removal needs and requests for special activities or weekend events should go to landscape services, conveyed via a Facility Event Service Request form or by calling (269) 387-8514.
• Accommodation requests related to mobility issues as well as reports of unsafe areas should be directed to the facilities management service center at (269) 387-8514.
• Snow- and ice-removal questions or concerns after normal business hours should be directed to the public safety at (269) 387-5555.

For more information, visit wmich.edu/news/2017/12/44064. To review WMU’s Closure Policy, visit wmich.edu/policies/a-z.

Team of WMU ROTC cadets brings home 7 gold medals

Nine Army ROTC program cadets competed for the German Armed Forces Badge at Toledo University Oct. 27-28.

The team was matched against other soldiers of allied countries as well as the German Army, and competed for the German Armed Forces Badge of Excellence, effective July 1, 2018; Barbara Liggett, professor of dance, effective May 14, 2023; and John Weitzel, master faculty specialist of marketing, effective May 14, 2023.

Staff retirements: Arlene Buchanan, carpet cleaner in building custodial and support services, date rescinded; Charlotte Thralls, professor of English, effective April 30, 2023; and John Weitzel, master faculty specialist of marketing, effective May 14, 2023.

Obituaries

Laurel A. Grotzinger, a former administrator and professor emeritus of University Libraries, died Dec. 15. She was 82. Grotzinger joined the WMU faculty in 1964 and retired in 2015 after nearly 51 years of service. She held several administrative posts, including that of dean of the Graduate College, which made her the first woman to be appointed an academic dean at WMU.

Vow renewal is in Guinness book

The latest edition of the Guinness World Records book is out, featuring WMU on Page 161 for the largest marriage vow renewal ceremony. On Oct. 8, 2016, 1,201 couples renewed their vows on East Campus in an event organized by development and alumni relations.

Trusted to approve retirements of 14 faculty, 4 staff members

The WMU Board of Trustees at its Dec. 12 meeting signed off on the retirements of 14 faculty members and four staff members as well as the resignations of two faculty members and one staff member.

The employees’ names, positions, and effective dates of retirement are as follows.

Faculty retirements with emeritus status: Jane Bass, professor of dance, effective June 30, 2018; David Curwen, professor of dance, effective May 14, 2023; Richard de Peaux, professor of art, effective April 30, 2018; Dennis McCrum, faculty specialist II-lecturer of educational leadership, research and technology, effective Dec. 31, 2018; Nina Nelson, professor of dance, effective July 1, 2020; Shaila Ras, professor of special education and literacy studies, date rescinded; Charlotte Thralls, professor of English, effective April 30, 2023; and John Weitzel, master faculty specialist of marketing, effective May 14, 2023.

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On Campus with David Dakin

A clear career goal, six years of advanced education and a two-year required internship plus passage of a licensing exam have led to David Dakin spending the past 25 years helping to build or renovate some of the University’s biggest buildings.

Dakin completed his program’s required internship at WMU in 1992 and was immediately hired full time as a project manager. Subsequent promotions resulted in him being named director of the Campus Planning, Space Management and Capital Projects unit in facilities management.

In this role, the licensed architect oversees the three project managers who handle WMU’s large capital projects, makes sure that projects stay in line with the campus master plan, and finds appropriate space on and off campus to meet the University’s facility needs. In addition, Dakin serves on various committees. He has been a nonfaculty member of the Campus Planning and Finance Council for about 10 years, and currently chairs the Space Allocation Committee and sits on the WMU Permanent Art Collection Committee.

“When I’ve enjoyed the most is that all of the capital projects I’ve been involved with have been different enough that it keeps the work new and exciting,” he says. “And when you think about it, I’ve been involved in one way or another in over a billion dollars’ worth of construction for Western. It’s been a very interesting career.”

Dakin says the hardest part of his job is managing funding because people have a vision for their space, but there’s rarely enough money to make that vision a reality. And he notes that buildings cost a lot to operate and maintain, especially older ones.

“Even if our student population increases, we see our square footage footprint shrinking because of the way education is going to be delivered. That’s why old Sangren Hall came down. We didn’t need that square footage, and now we’re saving in the neighborhood of $300,000 a year in operating costs,” he says. “I hope people see in the buildings that have been built since 1990, we try to make them only as large as we need to but make the quality at a higher level than you’ve seen in the past or maybe at other institutions.”

Dakin, lives in Portage, Michigan, with Monica. He has four grown children and one grandchild. He is a past president of his chapter of the American Institute of Architects and an officer of a charitable motorcycle riders club that raises money for various causes. Dakin enjoys engaging in new experiences, such as signing up to skydive indoors and to race a car around the Michigan International Speedway track at 180 miles per hour. But his favorite pastime is to take his bicycle out for the afternoon and ride trails in the area.

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High percentage of grads finding success

had a job related to their degree, 88 percent were satisfied with their job and 77 percent of the graduates who are employed full time were working in Michigan.

Median starting salaries were in the $40,000 to $45,000 range for those who earned a bachelor’s degree and $50,000 to $55,000 range for those with a graduate degree.

“This simple and complete data offers clear and compelling information for incoming students and their families that higher education pays off,” Montgomery notes. “The outcomes reflected here are immediate, but the real benefits of earning a degree will continue to play out over the course of our students’ entire careers.”

A key feature of the annual report is the easily searchable online data, found at wmich.edu/career/planning. The site breaks data out by college and by majors or programs of study within each college. Links on the site take viewers to a page that offers a discipline’s success rates, median salaries, sample employers and other data.

“Career exploration information for new and current students is part of the goal of this effort,” Urban says. “This year, we worked very hard to make that exploration easier and offer a detailed look at the types of jobs and names of employers for recent graduates.”

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Two ideas being funded to transform student life

Success@WMU is funded by Montgomery with $818,500 and matched with an equal amount from the leadership in academic affairs along with two other WMU areas. It will use the University’s successful track record in supporting such groups as student athletes, former foster care youth, honors students, first-generation college students and Kalamazoo Promise students.

The effort will dramatically expand the capacity of such groups—going from 1,650 currently served to 5,500 by this fall. It will offer every incoming undergraduate the benefits of a strong yearlong community connection within the University.

Success@WMU will apply the lessons already learned in a comprehensive way so the outcomes for all new undergraduates might mirror the higher retention and graduation rates experienced by students already served by WMU learning communities.

Esports@WMU

This initiative is a pilot effort that will extend the community-building effort to students’ recreational hours, with WMU becoming one of a relatively small number of colleges and universities nationwide to formally sponsor video gaming.

At WMU, video gaming will get a boost as the University designs an existing location to equip with 22 stations that can be used in the short term for competitions and skill development at the club sport level.

With 100 million monthly participants in games like “League of Legends” and a global audience expected to grow to $80 billion by 2020, this investment in a state-of-the-art esports facility represents an opportunity to enhance the out-of-class experience for students from around the world.

And it could potentially lead to the development of academic programming designed to meet the career demands of what is projected to become a $1.5 billion industry by 2020.

The intent is for the University to open its gaming facility this fall and make it available in the future to community groups. Montgomery will provide $250,000 for esports. The amount will be matched.