Matthew Burian joined the Millennium Restaurant Group in 2003 as an executive chef. Since then, Millennium has grown from four concepts to eleven and employs over 250 people in the Kalamazoo, Portage and South Haven areas.

Prior to joining Millennium, Matthew and his wife of 21 years, Karen Mazei, lived in the Seattle area where Matthew worked as a sous chef. A proud WMU alumnus, Matthew double majored in philosophy and English. He planned to pursue a legal profession, but discovered that his education would be best applied to his passion—restaurants.

In addition to his role at Millennium, Matthew also serves his community. Among other involvements, Matthew is a board member of Discover Kalamazoo and the Education for Employment, culinary and hospitality program.
Mary Burke started the graduate program at Mallinson after being a veteran science teacher at Vicksburg Community Schools since 1996. Mary is a true science teacher who is well acquainted with both the challenges and rewards that come with teaching middle school science. Mary quickly assesses her students’ needs and how to individually help them successfully accomplish the tasks of learning science.

Mary has helped to organize the Vicksburg Middle School Science Night and 2003 to 2005, Mary served as Teacher in Residence at WMU where she worked with Mallinson colleagues to promote middle school science teacher education. The WMU College of Education and Human Development sought Mary out to help with their course on elementary science teaching. Vicksburg district officials called on Mary for help during a crisis, given their deep respect for her years of experience, expertise and interpersonal communication skills. Whether at Vicksburg Community Schools, the community of Vicksburg or amongst her friends and colleagues at WMU, Mary is admired, loved, and highly respected by all.
After receiving his bachelor's degree in chemistry from Western Michigan University Dr. George Cooper was a National Research Council (NRC) Postdoctoral Fellow within the Exobiology Branch of NASA-Ames Research Center, and from 1995-1998 he was a Principal Investigator at the SETI Institute. He is now a principal investigator at NASA-Ames doing molecular and stable isotope analysis of meteoritic organic compounds to determine their cosmo-chemical origins. Using these rocks that have fallen from space, his research seeks to understand early Solar System organic chemistry and the possible contribution of extraterrestrial organic compounds to the origin of life on earth.

In his time at NASA-Ames, Dr. Cooper has mentored several students from underrepresented groups and has scientific collaborations with historically black universities and colleges. He is also interested in exploring areas in which a chemistry background may contribute to improving scientific infrastructure in developing countries to promote sustainable development.
Monique Coyne (née Jako) was born and grew up in Lille, France. She received her bachelor’s degree in French and earned her master’s in English. She recalls with great appreciation the teaching of Mademoiselle Marion Tamin as well as that of Dr. Russell Seibert, her history professor.

Her lifelong commitment to teaching—spanning a remarkable 58 years—encompassed all levels of French instruction with the conviction that learning other languages enriches life at all stages and ages. In addition to having taught at local high schools and Western Michigan University, she also taught at Albion College and Kalamazoo College.

In the late 1980s, Monique became involved with the Gagie School and developed the fledgling French program into a full curriculum, teaching students from pre-school through eighth grade. Since retirement Monique has remained actively involved with Alliance Francaise, and she continues to teach. She recently taught a course for WMU’s Lifelong Learning Academy called “How do you say it in French?” Monique and her husband Tom continue to live in Kalamazoo. They have raised four sons, two of whom have careers in education.
Dr. Kimberly Crimin graduated from Western Michigan University with a Ph.D. in statistics in 2002. Her dissertation was in the area of robust visualization procedures for multivariate predictors with discrete or continuous responses. This research allowed her to combine her talents in statistical software development and robust statistical procedures. Her development on these procedures led to her co-authoring several articles in peer-reviewed statistical journals.

While at WMU Kimberly co-directed the Statistical Consulting Center and served as an intern at Pharmacia on micro-array analysis. Upon graduation, she accepted a position as a biostatistician at Pharmacia and, subsequently, Pfizer. She then took a position at Wyeth Research and eventually held the title of senior principal biostatistician II. She is currently director statistical scientist at Novartis. Kimberly has over 12 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, consulting with scientists in supporting drug discovery, including ADME, SAR and toxicology and consulting with clinicians in supporting drug development through all phases of clinical development. Besides her work at Novartis, she still pursues an active role in research in applied statistics, giving technical talks at statistical conferences and publishing in statistical journals.
Founding Partner,
Cobalt International Energy,
Houston, Texas

Jim Farnsworth has more than 30 years of experience in the international oil and gas industry, the last 15 years of which he has held executive positions. Jim is a founding partner in Cobalt International Energy, an independent, oil-focused exploration and production company. Since its founding, Jim has served as Cobalt's Chief Exploration Officer, responsible for all exploration activities. Cobalt, which has an active drilling program in deep water Gulf of Mexico, Angola and Gabon, has pioneered the exploration of sub-salt and pre-salt reservoirs.

Prior to founding Cobalt, Jim was the Sr. Vice President of World-Wide Exploration and Technology at BP, a global energy company. Jim has a Bachelor of Science degree in geology from Indiana University and a Master of Science degree from Western Michigan University.

Jim serves on and is the former chairman of the advisory board/foundation of the Jackson School of Geosciences at the University of Texas-Austin. Jim has also served on the Advisory Board of Indiana University's School of International Studies and on a number of non-profit boards. Jim has two grown children living in the Houston area. He and his wife Carol are avid skiers and cyclists and also enjoy spending time in their vacation home in Colorado.
Richard Ferguson joined Iowa City-based ACT (formerly known as American College Testing) in 1972 and served as Chief Executive Officer starting in 1988 for 22 years. In 2002, he assumed the additional role of Chairman. After retiring from ACT in 2010, he joined Best Associates as Vice Chairman. In September 2012, Dr. Ferguson retired from Best Associates but continues to chair the board of one of its companies—Higher Education Holdings.

He has held an adjunct appointment in the Psychological and Quantitative Foundations Department, College of Education, the University of Iowa since 1975. Prior to that, he held concurrent appointments at the University of Pittsburgh.

He is actively engaged in community service agencies. He has served on and chaired numerous boards including Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the United Way of Johnson County, Mercy Hospital, and the Iowa City Area Development Council. He is currently on the Advisory Board of the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa, the Executive Committee of the University of Iowa Medical Center Council, the Iowa Wesleyan College Board of Directors, and the Kirkwood (Community College) Foundation. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of Iowa Wesleyan College, which recognized him with an honorary doctorate degree in 2004. Nationally, he is a member of the board of the James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy.
Jim Griffioen is a writer, photographer, and community activist at the forefront in the reinvention and revitalization of Detroit. A 1999 Western Michigan University Department of English graduate, Jim went on to receive his J.D. at the University of Michigan Law School. Following several years practicing law as a corporate litigator in San Francisco, Jim and his wife relocated to Detroit, where they now live, work, and raise their children.

Since his career shift, Jim has become one of the most recognized and poignant chroniclers of contemporary Detroit—both through his popular blog, Sweet-Juniper.com, and through his photography, advocacy, and writing. He has been interviewed and featured on venues including NPR, BBC, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Rachel Maddow Show, and multiple other local, regional, and national outlets. His photography has been seen in Time, O: The Oprah Magazine, and many others. “Feral Houses,” a photo-essay of buildings being overtaken by nature, has received national attention. Oprah.com has featured Jim in a column titled, “What Inspires the Most Creative People We Know” and profiled his creativity.

His written voice—like his photos—is clear and humanistic. Where others see only decay, he is able to see beauty. He is not reporting on Detroit—he is reporting in it—and living it. His powerful photo essays provide context, empathy, and hope while chronicling current decay and past mistakes—abandoned schools, prairies that were once thriving neighborhoods, and other similar scenes. In Sweet-Juniper, he intimately chronicles his own family’s life and all the joys and adventures that they have in a supposedly ruined city—building crafts, exploring vacant lots, and embarking on trips throughout town. In doing so, he provides a powerful counter-narrative to the stories of bankruptcy, corruption, and neglect portrayed in national and international media.

Habra is the recipient of Western Michigan's All-University Research and Creative Scholar Award and a Doctoral Dissertation Completion Fellowship Award. She was the first Ph.D. graduate from WMU’s Spanish doctoral program and has published more than 27 refereed articles on numerous Spanish and Latin American writers. Her critical work has appeared in literary reviews such as *Latin American Literary Review, Chasqui, Explicación de textos literarios, Hispanófila, Revista de Estudios Hispánicos, Confluencia, Hispanic Journal, Alba de América* and *Inti*.

Habra writes poetry and fiction in French, Spanish and English and has published more than 160 poems and short stories in journals and anthologies, including *Drunken Boat, Cutthroat, Nimrod, Bitter Oleander, Puerto del Sol, The New York Quarterly, Cider Press Review, Poet Lore, Letras Femeninas, Poetic Voices Without Borders 2, Inclined to Speak* and *Dinarzad’s Children Second Edition*. 
Susanne Homant is President and CEO of The Able Trust, a statewide foundation dedicated to creating opportunities for successful employment for people with disabilities. Sue has been with The Able Trust since 2007, and is responsible for the operations of the organization. She has over 25 years of experience with statewide organizations dealing with health care, public policy, advocacy, fundraising, and public awareness and education.

She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in economics and general business and her Master of Business Administration degree in marketing and finance at Northern Michigan University, and her Doctorate in Public Administration at Western Michigan University. She currently serves as Chair of the Governor’s Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities, and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation. She has served on the Governor’s Task Force on Autism, the Florida Chamber’s Six Pillars Collaborative, national committees of the National Hospice Organization, and several committees and task forces related to her work.

Sue was raised in a home that included three people with disabilities – a brother with polio, a mother with Parkinson’s, and a father with muscular atrophy. She has a nephew who was born deaf, and a close relative with a mental illness. All of these individuals have very successful lives, providing Sue with the unique experience of personally seeing how abilities overcome disabilities, and giving her daily inspiration and passion for her work.
Dr. Mark LeSage is a graduate of WMU’s behavior analysis doctoral program where he studied with Dr. Alan Poling. He moved to Bethesda, MD to begin a postdoctoral fellowship studying the behavioral pharmacology of cocaine and other abused stimulants with Dr. John Glowa at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He completed his postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center.

Following his fellowship, he accepted an associate investigator position in the Department of Medicine at the Minneapolis Medical Research Foundation (MMRF) and an adjunct Assistant Professor appointment in the Department of Medicine at the University of Minnesota (UMN). He is currently a senior investigator at MMRF, and was recently appointed adjunct professor in the Department of Psychology and promoted to adjunct full professor at UMN.

As a member of the UMN Tobacco Research Center, Dr. LeSage is internationally recognized for his scholarship on the behavioral pharmacology of nicotine and tobacco. Other major themes of his work include use of nonhuman drug self-administration models to address vital questions related to FDA regulation of tobacco products and development of nonhuman animal models of contingency management interventions for drug abuse. He has independently received funding from NIH since 2002 and published over 50 peer-reviewed research and review articles in leading psychopharmacology journals. He has co-authored one textbook with Dr. Poling and is on the editorial board for the journal International Scholarly Research Network and provides consultation to the FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products.
Kate McCallum brings unique and diverse professional experience to her work as a producer, writer, transmedia consultant, and entertainment and arts professional. She spent 10 years at Universal Studios in television and feature production apprenticing with some of the top content creators contributing to “Equalizer,” “Miami Vice,” “Law & Order” and sitcoms such as “Charles In Charge” and “Gimme A Break.”

In 2005, Kate was hired as VP of Programming to launch The Harmony Channel, an innovative visual music channel for Comcast On Demand. Kate’s next stint took her back to her early roots in classical music when she was hired to serve as Board Liaison and Executive Administrator to Placido Domingo and the LA Opera. Kate founded her own transmedia company in 2005, Bridge Arts Media LLC, through which she has created and developed several IP properties including a boutique music-arts label, The Art of Sound, which specializes in 360 immersive dome experiences. Kate has provided transmedia consulting services and was hired by Createasphere to chair and co-develop a transmedia conference.

Kate’s passion for the study of human potential inspired her to create the c3: Center for Conscious Creativity, a 501(c)(3), as a think tank for socially beneficial storytelling and media creation in 2004, through which she and an evolving creative collective have produced several events dedicated to creating a better future through arts and media. Kate holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Western Michigan University and a Master of Arts in Consciousness Studies from the University of Philosophical Research. She often speaks on the transformational power of media and the arts and recently presented a keynote speech in Singapore at the Asian Children’s Content Conference on “Transmedia, Transformation and the Future of Content.”
Richelle Mead is a New York Times and USA Today best selling author. She credits her experience studying Comparative Religion at Western Michigan University with letting her explore in depth many of the ideas that she had long been interested in. She initially pursued a degree in education and began teaching 8th grade social studies and English. After her first book sold, she became a full-time author. Though she considered a different career path, she decided writing was her ultimate career, but believes her education prepared her for it.

She is the author of the Georgina Kincaid Series, Dark Swan Series, Vampire Academy Series, and the Bloodlines Series. She has been nominated for the Goodreads Choice Awards multiple times and has won twice. She has also won the Teen Read Award for best teen series. Filming on a movie based on her Vampire Academy Series is currently underway.

Richelle’s YA series, Vampire Academy, is published by Razorbill Books (Penguin) and thus far contains Vampire Academy, Frostbite, Shadow Kiss, Blood Promise, and Spirit Bound. This New York Times and USA Today bestselling series has won honors from the American Library Association and been translated into 30 languages.
As a trial attorney in the Environmental Enforcement Section of the United States Department of Justice, Cara Mroczek represents federal agencies in civil actions to enforce federal laws enacted to protect public health and the environment from the adverse effects of pollution. She has provided enforcement of federal laws for the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Oil Pollution Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Superfund Law (CERCLA). Cara joined the department through the Attorney General Honors program in September 2006, and since then has received a number of awards for exemplary service.

Cara has worked on a broad range of matters seeking compliance with environmental laws. She secured significant injunctive relief and penalties from entities including power plants, oil and natural gas companies, industrial and chemical manufacturers and municipal sewer authorities. She has also resolved many cases under the superfund program to compel responsible parties to clean up hazardous waste sites or to reimburse the United States for the cost of cleanup, while also obtaining damages for injury to natural resources that are under the trusteeship of federal agencies.

Ms. Mroczek received a Juris Doctor degree, magna cum laude, from Michigan State University School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, from Western Michigan University with co-majors in political science and environmental studies. She credits her professors at WMU with providing opportunities, such as government internships, mock trial and model diplomacy teams, and thesis mentoring which helped to develop her interest in environmental advocacy. While at WMU, she was also a member of the Lee Honors College. She lives in Arlington, Virginia with her husband, Shane Waller, an Assistant United States Attorney. They enjoy running, traveling, hiking and wine tasting.
Shirley Ort administers a comprehensive program of $375 million in student aid funds to 20,500 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She advises campus administrators on matters related to tuition, student aid policy, student aid research, and national issues related to the role of student aid in higher education finance. Prior to joining Chapel Hill in 1997, Shirley served as deputy director for student financial aid at the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board for 18 years.

Shirley is the author of the Carolina Covenant®, a “no loans” program of financial, academic and personal support made available by the University to high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds which has served nearly 4,100 students since its inception in 2004.

In 2005 Shirley was awarded the C. Knox Massey Distinguished Service Award on campus and was admitted to the Order of the Golden Fleece, the highest honorary at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 2012 she was given The Ned Brooks Award for Public Service, and also awarded a Distinguished Service Medal by the UNC General Alumni Association in recognition of outstanding service to the University. A native of Hillsdale County, Michigan, Shirley holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Spring Arbor University, a Master of Arts in medieval history from Western Michigan University, and a Juris Doctor degree from Seattle University School of Law.
A dancer, choreographer, teacher, and director, Morella Petrozzi has dedicated forty years to creative expression about women’s lives. Born in Lima, Perú, she is the daughter of the acclaimed Peruvian dancer Ducelia Woll. In 1983, she came to study in the United States, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance and gender and women’s studies from Western Michigan University in 1989 before relocating to New York, where she completed a Master of Fine Arts in dance at Sarah Lawrence College in 1991.

Serving as co-director of the Danza Viva School and Dance Company in Lima since 1993, Petrozzi has taught at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (1999-2006) and was part of the directive Consejo de Danza Lima, Perú from 2003-2005. Since 2008 she has been a member of the jury for the television program El Gran Show (Dancing with the Stars).

A prolific composer of contemporary dance, Morella’s work has been performed at numerous national and international dance festivals. Gender, sexuality, and the body are central themes in her sixteen performances. Off stage, her work has invigorated various feminist projects, including DEMOS (Estudio para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer), the Flora Tristán Centro de la Mujer Peruano, and the V-Day Global Campaign to End Violence against Women. She has also published three books, including the best-selling 56 Días en la Vida de un Frik (Ediciones Santo Oficio, 1996). Her essay “La Danza Moderna Más Allá de los Géneros Masculino y Femenino: Hacia el Descubrimiento de un Lenguaje Corporal para la Mujer” (1996) received a national award, and she is regularly sought for interviews by television, magazines, newspapers and other media.
Jon R. Robinson is vice president and deputy counsel—utility law and regulation for Consumers Energy, with responsibility for all legal issues related to public utility law and regulation before the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the appellate courts. He was elected in 2004.

Robinson was previously assistant general counsel and was responsible for supervising legal work before the MPSC and FERC. He joined Consumers Energy in 1977, and left for private practice in 1983. He returned to Consumers Energy in 1990. A graduate of Western Michigan University with a degree in economics, Robinson earned his law degree from the University of Notre Dame. He is a member of the Jackson County, Michigan Bar Association and the American Bar Association.
Dr. Barbara Romzek is recognized for her expertise in the area of public management and accountability with emphases on government reform, contracting, and network service delivery. Her research has encompassed complex work settings, including NASA, Congress, and the Air Force, as well as state agencies, local governments, and nonprofit agencies. Building upon her research on formal accountability, her recent work focuses on informal accountability in collaborative network settings.

Dr. Romzek, a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, has received research awards from the American Society for Public Administration and the American Political Science Association. She has served on the governing boards for the Academy of Management, American Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association, and the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. She currently serves on the Board of the Public Management Research Association. Prior to joining American University she held various academic leadership positions at the University of Kansas, including department chairperson, associate dean for social and behavioral sciences, interim dean of arts and sciences, and interim senior vice provost.
Dan Sayers earned his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in anthropology from Western Michigan University. He went on to receive his Ph.D. in historical archaeology and anthropology from the College of William and Mary, the first graduate of that doctoral program. Dan is wrapping up his fifth year as assistant professor of anthropology at American University in Washington, DC. His current work focuses on diasporic communities in the Great Dismal Swamp of Virginia and North Carolina that thrived between the settlement of Jamestown (1607) and the Civil War. Across those centuries, thousands of people settled the swamp including African American Maroons (people who permanently self-extricated from enslavement), Indigenous Americans and enslaved African Americans who worked in the swamp for logging and canal companies.

Through Dan’s Great Dismal Swamp archaeological work, the Diasporans who lived in the swamp have caught the attention of national and international professional and public audiences through numerous newspaper, filmic, television, and radio reports and will be permanently represented in the Smithsonian Museum of African American Culture and History when it opens in 2015. Dan has received several grants for this work, including a National Endowment for the Humanities “We the People” collaborative grant and it is the focus of several articles and his book, “Across the Dark Waters of the Desert: The Quiet Diasporic Revolution in the Great Dismal Swamp Before the Civil War” that is under contract and review with the University Press of Florida.
MG Richard A. Stone is currently serving as the U.S. Army Deputy Surgeon General, Deputy Commanding General for Support. He is a member of the Department of Defense’s Wounded Ill and Injured Task Force and a chairman of the Army Reserve Force Policy Committee. From October 2005 to March 2009, MG Stone served simultaneously as the Commanding General and Medical Readiness and Training Command in San Antonio, TX, and as Deputy Commander for Administration for the 3rd Medical Command in Forest Park, GA. From March 2009 to June 2011, he served as the Deputy Surgeon General for Mobilization, Readiness and Reserve Affairs.

MG Stone is a graduate of Western Michigan University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology. He graduated from the Wayne State University Medical School and earned his degree in medicine in 1977. He completed his internship in Internal Medicine and residency in Dermatology at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, and is certified by the American Board of Dermatology.

While serving as the 452d Combat Support Hospital Commander, MG Stone deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, and subsequently was selected to serve as Commander, Task Force 44 Medical (Forward), a multinational medical task force of more than 1000 medical service members from four nations. His military decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Silver Hourglass and M Device, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Medal, and the Combat Action Badge. He is also a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit.
Mr. R. Hugh Van Brimer is a Member of Advisory Board of Altus Capital Partners. He serves on the Board of Maxi Movies Pty, Ltd. and is the Chairman of the Board of SEFE Overseas Limited. Mr. Van Brimer founded Trident, Inc., and served as President and Chief Executive Officer. He has been involved in the development, manufacturing, and marketing of ink jet, electro-optical and other high technology products and systems for 35 years. Mr. Van Brimer many U.S. and foreign patents in the field of ink jet technology and electro-optical instrumentation. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and mathematics from Western Michigan University and is a graduate of the Advanced Management Program of the Harvard Business School.

An innovative group of research scientists and engineers led by Mr. Van Brimer, succeeded in inventing and widely patenting a new mode of droplet generation, as well as various ink delivery techniques for both solid (a wax-like material that is solid at room temperature but liquid in the heated printhead. It “freezes” on impact and instantaneously drying on any surface) and liquid inks.
Kris Wernstedt is an associate professor of urban affairs and planning at Virginia Tech’s National Capital Region campus in Alexandria, VA. Prior to joining Virginia Tech in 2006, he spent 15 years as a fellow at Resources for the Future, a non-profit organization in Washington, DC that conducts research and policy analysis on environmental quality and natural resources.

Wernstedt studies a variety of issues in environmental planning, management, and policy, with topical emphases on contaminated properties, water resources, and climate change and variability. His broad substantive interests include regulatory innovation, decision making under uncertainty, and institutional responses to risk. Research sponsors have included a range of foundations, think tanks, and federal agencies.

He holds both a Ph.D. and a master’s degree in regional planning in city and regional planning from Cornell University, a Master of Science in water resources management from the University of Wisconsin and a Bachelor of Science in geography from Western Michigan University.