WMU Welcomes its 8th President

Dr. John M. Dunn became the University's 8th president on July 1. Before arriving on campus Dunn and his wife, Linda, demonstrated their eagerness to be part of the WMU family by joining the WMU Alumni Association as life members.

We would also like to thank former President Diether Haenicke and his wife, Carol, for their leadership and service to the university during its time of transition.

WMU Alumnus Receives Honorary Degree

During the University's April 28 commencement ceremonies, alumnus James F. Hettinger was awarded an honorary doctor of public service degree. Hettinger, who has served as president and CEO of Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU) since 1979, has, in the words of Interim WMU President Diether H. Haenicke, "set a sterling example in the role of community economic developer."

Under his leadership, BCU’s long list of success stories has had a significant impact on the economic vitality of Battle Creek and the surrounding region. One of the most notable is the Fort Custer Industrial Park. Once an abandoned military base, the land is now home to a modern global industrial and business park with investments from Japan, Germany, Austria, Denmark and the United States and provides employment for more than 8,000 people.

Shown here with Haenicke (left) and WMU Trustee Ken Miller (right), BBA, '69, MBA, '70, Hettinger (middle) accepted his honorary degree with "honor and extreme humility." He then directed some brief remarks to the new graduates, beginning with some practical advice which drew laughter from his audience, “You have to be over fifty to fully appreciate the substance of this piece of advice, but if you are under thirty please resolve today and each day to come that you will take care of your teeth and you will take care of your feet.” He continued with his remarks which drew close attention from the audience.

- There is a real good chance you are going to look at yourself in the mirror at least once a day for many years, make sure you can respect and love that visage that peers back at you
- Take time to travel and be gracious and humble to different people you meet
- Go, learn, and come back to Michigan enriched with life’s experiences
- Whatever you do, do it well. What you do well is what will define you
- Be optimistic, be innovative and always have a sense of art of the possible

Hettinger grew up in Albion, MI and earned both bachelor’s and master's degrees in political science from WMU in 1971 and 1973, respectively. He went on to pursue a doctoral degree in public administration from the University of Missouri.

The WMU Alumni Association looks forward to the arrival of the class of 2011. They will arrive on campus this fall, excited about starting their lifelong relationship with this great University!

The Association also applauds and thanks the more than 520 alumni volunteers who served this past year as Alumni Admissions Ambassadors. These ambassadors, who represent five decades of WMU classes and live across the nation, had a positive impact on WMU’s enrollment efforts by sending notes of congratulations and sharing their own Bronco pride with over 8,000 admitted students.

The WMU Alumni Association continues to look for proud, enthusiastic alumni to serve as Alumni Admissions Ambassadors. Visit www.wmich.edu/alumni/aaa.html to volunteer.
A New Face Joins the WMUAA Staff

The WMU Alumni Association recently welcomed the newest member of its staff, Sara Dillon. A two time WMU graduate, Dillon assumed the marketing director position replacing Sarah Papke, BBA, ’03, who moved onto a new role in the WMU Development Office.

Dillon received her BA from WMU in communication with a minor in philosophy and her MA in organizational communication. Most recently she worked at Biggs Gilmore as an associate account executive where she worked with a team to manage Web site development projects. She has spent the majority of her career working in advertising and marketing and has also worked as a freelance writer and radio news anchor. In welcoming Dillon, Alumni Association Executive Director Jamie Jeremy says “we are looking forward to Sara’s leadership as she brings her skills to the strategic direction of the Association’s member program, including the continued increase in the number of dues paying members.” She will also direct the Association’s marketing and communication initiatives as well as oversee member services and benefits. “I am so excited to be back on the campus of my alma mater working with a fabulous team of dedicated professionals in the WMU Alumni Association.” Dillon joined the staff on Monday, June 4.

WMU Alumni Association Welcomes Four New Board Members

Twelve officers, executive committee members and directors have been elected to terms on the 2007-08 Western Michigan University Alumni Association Board of Directors, effective July 1.

Serving one-year terms as officers are:

President—Kirk Hoffman of Jackson, Mich., vice president of planning services King Trust Company in Spring Arbor, Mich. Hoffman earned a bachelor of business administration degree from WMU in 1986. First elected to the board in 2001, he is serving a second term as president. He has also served as treasurer, vice president and has been chairperson of the Finance Committee as well as a member of the Executive and Scholarship Committees.

Vice president—Richard D. Bailey II, executive vice president/chief lending officer at Community National Bank of the South, Lake Mary, Florida. Bailey earned a master of business administration in 1985. First elected to the board in 2003, he has served two terms as treasurer, and has been on the Executive, Finance and Scholarship committees.

Treasurer—Philip Chludzinski of Kalamazoo, Mich., CPA and partner of Brink & Chludzinski, PC. in Kalamazoo. First elected to the board in 2005, he has served on the Scholarship and Marketing committees.

Four new members have been elected to the 2007-2008 WMU Alumni Association Board of Directors. The new members include Charles E. Binder of Bay City, BA, ’72, U.S. Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan; Christopher J. LaLonde of Kalamazoo, BA, ’01, associate attorney at Willis & Willis, PLC; William E. Morden of Milford, BBA, ’74, managing partner, TMV Group, and Angela Davis Robinson of Chicago, BA, ’74, senior vice president, Administrative Services, Central Bank Services and Finance, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Their three-year terms were effective on July 1.

In addition to the officers, four other members of the Association’s Board serve on its Executive Committee. At large members are: Margean Gladysz, BS, ’75, Jonathan Knowles, BA, 03, James Koessel, BA, ’72 and Christopher Womack BS, ’79. Dale Tanis, BBA, ’74 and MBA, ’84 serves as the Association’s Past President.

Alumna Publishes Tactical Leadership Book

WMU Alumna Lynn (Templin) Townsend, BS ‘93, has co-written a leadership book, 50 DOs for Everyday Leadership: Practical Lessons Learned the Hard Way (So You Don’t Have To), (Humanergy, 2007). Drawing on their own extensive experience in leadership, Townsend and her co-authors, John Barrett and David Wheatley, gathered tips from effective leaders and managers in organizations around the country.

Readers of the book will find 50 DOs for Everyday Leadership full of tips on how to:

• Build trust and credibility
• Get people working together as a team
• Focus on what’s important
• Help people get the work done
• Do what’s best for the organization
• Reduce misunderstandings and get people on the same page
• Continue to improve what you and the team are doing

For more information on Lynn or her book, visit www.humanergy.com
Survey Says...

Earlier this year, the WMU Alumni Association received a comprehensive report detailing the findings of an alumni attitude study conducted on our behalf by Performance Enhancement Group in November 2006. The survey was distributed electronically to current Association members as well as non-members, or “not yet” members as we like to think of them. 2,073 alumni took the time to respond and 57 percent of the respondents were Association members. If you were among them, on behalf of the Association’s Board of Directors and the staff, I say thank you.

Seventy-eight (78) percent of all the respondents described the performance of the Alumni Association to be either good or excellent. Considering that almost 900 of respondents were not dues paying members of the Association, we were pleased with that rating. We do, however, believe we can do better and will strive to do so in order to report an increase in that percentage the next time the survey is conducted 2-3 years from now.

Our alumni also told us that they like to see that the WMU Alumni Association is supporting current WMU students. The first opportunity we had to support students this year was to give them a fashionable welcome by donating t-shirts to the 2007 orientation leaders.

We were also happy, but not surprised to see that more than ninety (90) percent of alumni responding to the survey described their experience as a student and their current opinion of the University to be either good or excellent. What did surprise us a bit, in light of your favorable responses to those two questions, was that only 52 percent indicated that they promoted WMU to others regularly or all the time. You are this University’s best ambassadors. I hope that you will take every opportunity you can to share your Bronco pride with your neighbors, your co-workers and most especially with prospective students.

In the study, you, our members, told us that providing the means for you to stay in touch with your friends and former classmates is an important reason why you joined the Alumni Association. In March, the Association launched a new on-line community. You, however, hold the key to the success of this community. If you have not already done so, I hope you will take the time to log-on to the community, update your personal profiles and become familiar with its many features. The article below tells you how to do just that.

It is not surprising that many of the respondents said they preferred for us to communicate with them electronically. In the coming months we will continue our efforts to increase the number of alumni for whom we have email addresses. The online community will certainly help with that effort.

In future issues of this publication and in @WMU, we will continue to share with you how we are using the information from the study to improve our service to current members and to entice others to join.

WMU Alumni Association Members Gather Online

Members of the Alumni Association are enjoying access to the WMU Alumni Association Online Community. Designed exclusively for WMU graduates and former students, the online community allows members to network with one another, find out about upcoming alumni events, maintain a personal profile page, and much more!

Not only does this community provide alumni with the means to stay connected and network with their fellow alumni, they can also maintain a personal profile as well as their own blog. Because the community is restricted, our alumni may take full advantage of its many features, knowing their information is not accessible to outside parties. And, they determine what may be viewed by other registered users of the community.

As with all Association sponsored programs and services, this community is made possible by the dues paying members of the WMU Alumni Association. To register, go to www.wmualumni.com and click on register. Enter your last name and the ID# printed on your membership card, including the zeros.
WMU graduates living in California gathered in Hollywood, Irvine and San Diego to share their Bronco pride with each other. They also had the opportunity to network with each other and WMU Alumni Association Executive Director, Jamie Jeremy. Many alumni attended Chicago’s annual spring event featuring David Shields, Dean of the Haworth College of Business.