



# Western News

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For and about WMU faculty and staff

## Dunn continues donation tradition

Trustees approved a 3 percent raise for President John M. Dunn Dec. 13, increasing his salary for his final year and triggering a \$65,000 gift from WMU's first couple to boost funds for scholarships and other student needs. The raise is the same rate used to increase pay for WMU nonbargaining employee groups July 1, 2016. It will be retroactive to that date and takes the president's annual salary from \$398,241 to \$410,189. Since the start of his presidency in 2007, Dunn has donated back to WMU each year the cumulative amount of his pay increases.

## APA membership drive announced

The Administrative Professional Association is holding its annual membership drive and has set its next general membership meeting for noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25, in 157-159 Bernhard Center. As a whole, members provide the strength needed to explore policies and benefits with WMU's administration as well as to communicate concerns and help resolve issues. APA is only as effective as it is strong—membership counts. Sign up at [wmich.edu/apa](http://wmich.edu/apa).

## Investment reps to visit campus

Consultations with Fidelity advisors are available Friday, Feb. 10. To schedule an appointment, call (800) 642-7131 from 8 a.m. to midnight Monday through Friday or visit [fidelity.com/atwork/reservations](http://fidelity.com/atwork/reservations). Consultations with TIAA advisors are available Tuesday, Feb. 14, 21 and 28. To schedule an appointment, visit [tiaa.org](http://tiaa.org) and click Consultations and Seminars under Support.

## Several deadlines coming up soon

The deadlines for a variety of awards and program registrations are coming up soon. Among them is the Sunday, Jan. 15, application deadline for a \$500 Administrative Professional Association Scholarship ([wmich.edu/apa/awards](http://wmich.edu/apa/awards)).

Other applications of note are for the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award, due 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20 ([wmich.edu/research/funding/internal/fracaa](http://wmich.edu/research/funding/internal/fracaa)); Support for Faculty Scholars Award and Undergraduate Research Excellence Award, due Tuesday, Jan. 31 ([wmich.edu/research/funding/internal](http://wmich.edu/research/funding/internal)); and Assessment Excellence Individual and Unit awards, due Friday, Feb. 10 ([wmich.edu/assessment/grants](http://wmich.edu/assessment/grants)).

In addition, nominations are due Wednesday, Feb. 1, for the Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award ([wmich.edu/facultydevelopment/awards](http://wmich.edu/facultydevelopment/awards)). Also, registration is open for the spring Cool Tools for Teaching workshops ([wmich.edu/facultydevelopment/programs/cooltools](http://wmich.edu/facultydevelopment/programs/cooltools)). Now underway, the workshops cover a variety of topics, have varying registration deadlines and run through Friday, March 31.

## Governor appoints two new WMU trustees

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder has appointed Ron Kitchens of Portage and Shani Penn of Detroit as new members of the WMU Board of Trustees.

Kitchens, chief executive officer of economic development agency Southwest Michigan First, will serve an eight-year term ending in 2024. He replaces James Hettinger, whose term expired at the end of 2016.

Penn is chief of staff to Chancellor Veronica Conformer of the Education Achievement Authority of Michigan. She will serve a term ending in 2024 and replaces Mary Asmonga-Knapp, whose term also expired at the end of 2016.



Kitchens



Penn

Kitchens has led Southwest Michigan First since 2005. In addition, he serves on the Collaborative Development Council for the Michigan Economic Development Corp. Prior to taking the reins at SWMF, he was CEO for six years of the Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corp. His background includes experience as a consultant and in local and national politics.

Penn, a 2000 alumna of WMU, has served in her current position with the EAA since 2015. Before that, she was senior strategy advisor to Gov. Snyder for three years. Her background

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## Product design program is object of \$3 million gift

A Kalamazoo couple with a passion for the arts and a history of executive leadership in the community has given \$3 million to support the creation of a new product design and innovation facility at WMU.



James and Lois Richmond (File photo)

The gift from James and Lois Richmond will make possible the new interdisciplinary entity that will be named for them. The Richmond Product Design and Innovation Institute will combine the resources of WMU's colleges of Fine Arts and Engineering and Applied Sciences as well as the Haworth College of Business. Industry involvement includes some of the top names

in southwest Michigan manufacturing.

The institute will house the new Bachelor of Fine Arts in product design announced this past fall. It also will serve as a base around which key southwest Michigan corporate partners can focus their product design and development needs.

"WMU is uniquely positioned to prepare the next generation of product designers," says WMU President John M. Dunn. "Jim and Lois Richmond, through their generosity, have made an investment in this region's future by helping us create an innovative industrial design program that will combine form, function and manufacturing. This is the latest chapter in their long, thoughtful commitment to strengthening the ties that bind our campus and our community."

The Richmond gift will be used for renovations to 28,000 square feet on the first and third floors of Kohrman Hall. The renovations will include studios, presentation spaces and laboratories dedicated to innovation, fabrication, rapid prototyping, 3D printing, and woodworking and metalworking. Architectural work already is underway, and the

*Continued on page 4*

## WMU employee wins regional United Way sweepstakes

Kim LaViolette, landscap services, won a new automobile up to a value of \$30,000 through a sweepstakes run by the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region.

WMU President John M. Dunn surprised her with the announcement Dec. 14 by driving up in a sponsor's car outside of the Bernhard Center and holding up a set of keys. According to the United Way, 6,801 contributors qualified for this year's sweepstakes drawing.

A longtime donor, LaViolette said she's glad to make a difference through United Way and "it's important to help people who need help."



The United Way's Cathi Mohan congratulates a stunned LaViolette, right. (Photo by Deanne Puca)

# Around campus and beyond

## Ethics Center offers book club events

The Center for the Study of Ethics in Society is sponsoring four book clubs during the spring semester, starting Friday, Jan. 13, to encourage discussion about ethics. Leading the book clubs are Ashley Atkins, philosophy; Tyler Gibb, Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine; Kathy Purnell, research office; and William Santiago-Valles, emeritus in Africana studies.

All book clubs are open to the general public as well as the WMU community. People may sign up by sending an email to [ethicscenter@wmich.edu](mailto:ethicscenter@wmich.edu). The Ethics Center will supply the books. For details, visit [wmich.edu/ethics](http://wmich.edu/ethics).

## MLK celebration already underway

Campus and community events continue this month and into March to honor Martin Luther King Jr. Major activities occur Monday, Jan. 16, and were announced in December. Also Monday, a series of nine sessions on addressing threats to justice will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in 208-210 Bernhard Center. For details, visit [organizewmu.info](http://organizewmu.info).

Events continue throughout the week and include the first installment of WMU's spring Lyceum Lecture Series Wednesday, Jan. 18. The series has an overall theme this semester of "Fulfilling America's Promise: Racial Equity and Justice." For a complete, up-to-date list of MLK-related events, visit [wmich.edu/mlk](http://wmich.edu/mlk).

## Get involved in global engagement

WMU is offering numerous global engagement opportunities this month for members of the campus and surrounding communities. Highlights include study abroad expos and the grand opening of the Global Lounge in the Bernhard Center. For details, visit [wmich.edu/news/2017/01/37213](http://wmich.edu/news/2017/01/37213).

## Equity, learning spaces is event topic

The next Educational Community Credit Union Forum will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24, in 1920 Sangren Hall. Register at [mywmu.com/edforum](http://mywmu.com/edforum). Details are available at [wmich.edu/education/eccu-forum](http://wmich.edu/education/eccu-forum).

## Learn about lifelong learning classes

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at WMU will kick off its winter/spring semester during its annual January Thaw from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18, in the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. The event is open to area residents who want to learn more about this semester's 51 courses and six trips. To register, call (269) 387-4200. Course registration for institute nonmembers will start Wednesday, Jan. 18.

## Next employee mixer scheduled

A free Gold Gathering lunch buffet for WMU employees has been set for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 26, in the President's Dining Room of the Bernhard Center. RSVPs are requested at [wmich.edu/provost/goldgatherings](http://wmich.edu/provost/goldgatherings).

## Historian co-edits text on U.S. sport

Linda Borish, history, is the lead editor of a new book on American sport history, "The Routledge History of American Sport." The book is co-edited with David Wiggins from George Mason University, and Gerald Gems, vice president of the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport.



Borish

The book provides the first comprehensive overview of historical research in American sport from the early Colonial period to the present day. It considers sport through innovative themes and topics, such as the business of sport, material culture and sport, the political uses of sport, and gender and American sport.

The text offers an interdisciplinary analysis of American leisure. Those topics are dealt with in thematic chapters, emphasizing the influence of sport on American society.

## Administrator writes new book

James P. Cousins, history and College of Arts and Sciences, is the author of "Horace Holley: Transylvania University and the Making of Liberal Education in the Early American Republic," published by the University Press of Kentucky in October.



Cousins

The book focuses on Transylvania University, the first college established west of the Allegheny Mountains, and Horace Holley, its unlikely president. Cousins, who was a 2012 scholar-in-residence at Transylvania, says the project was an outgrowth of his interests in the history of American intellectualism.

"The confluence of education, populism, credit economies and nationalism makes this period particularly interesting," Cousins says.

## Physician pens realistic novel

Richard R. Roach, Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, is the author of three self-published novels, all through iUniverse. His most recent book, "Never a Woman,"



Roach

came out last year and is a story about the power of the human spirit as a Kenyan teenager attempts to overcome seemingly insurmountable anguish in order to find love, success and joy.

The protagonist is a Kisii girl from western Kenya who refused female genital mutilation as part of her tribe's puberty rites and survives an attempt from her father to kill her. Tribal prejudice, AIDs, human trafficking and higher education are some of the topics covered in the book.

Roach, an associate professor of internal medicine, based the main character on interviews of hundreds of women when he previously worked in Kenya and Rwanda.

He has been teaching in the medical school since its inception and has direct contact with patients in his role supervising internal medicine and medicine/pediatric residency students. His other two books are "Releasing Lisa" and "Saving Skunk."

## College of Aviation's gift-giving elves still flying high

Pilots from the College of Aviation helped make Christmas merrier for more than 5,000 children and adults in foster care around the state.

Some 200 Michigan pilots participated Dec. 3 in Operation Good Cheer, a statewide effort begun in 1971 by caring individuals to distribute donated Christmas gifts to fostered adults with disabilities as well as

infants, children and teenagers.

Volunteering from the College of Aviation were flight instructors Adam Chamberlain, Collin Kearney and Seth Nabozny. Mitchell Blankenheim, a sophomore in aviation flight sciences from Hartland, Wisconsin, also participated.

This is the 12th consecutive year WMU pilots have participated in the initiative, which is sponsored and coordinated by Child and Family Services of Michigan. More than 5,000 people received some 16,000 gifts through the initiative in 2015. To learn more about Operation Good Cheer, visit [cfsm.org/operation-good-cheer](http://cfsm.org/operation-good-cheer).

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

## Exchange

**For sale**—Three-bedroom ranch house, 7 miles from campus in Oshtemo on 3.5 acres of trees. Built for a person in a wheelchair: roll-in shower, no steps. On a slab with many updates and oversized two-car garage. Contact: [emily.hoffman@wmich.edu](mailto:emily.hoffman@wmich.edu) or (269) 779-9306.

## Jobs

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

# New appointments to key leadership positions announced

Four WMU employees recently were named to new leadership positions.

Sherine O. Obare, chemistry and formerly interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was appointed the associate vice president for research, effective Dec. 1. She replaces Paula D. Kohler, who retired from the University at the end of June.

Obare, who has been a key player in numerous campus initiatives, has garnered more than \$4.5 million in external funding for her research, particularly efforts that focus on developing novel materials and technologies with environmental applications.

She had served as interim associate dean of arts and sciences since February 2015, served as chemistry associate chair and graduate advisor prior to that, and was an acting director of the Africana studies program.

Two of the new appointments are to

## Grad student research published in top journal

An unusual examination of the practical therapeutic applications of mindfulness combined with a senior faculty member's commitment to community service has led seven graduate social work students to have their first professional paper accepted for publication in one of their discipline's most prestigious journals.

"An Environmental Scan of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on University and College Campuses" was published in the December 2016 issue of the internationally acclaimed *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*. The newly published researchers are Kaley J. Cieslak, Lehanna E. Hardy, Natalie S. Kyles, Erika L. Miller, Becky L. Mullins, Katelyn M. Root and Christina M. Smith.

The students undertook and completed their original research project in addition to their regular coursework in a section of Evaluation of Social Work Practice taught by Rick Grinnell. Grinnell says it is rare for social work students to be published in a refereed journal, and their success in doing so indicates the importance of their topic in addition to their commitment to advancing social work practice through research.

the College of Arts and Sciences leadership team. Both were effective Jan. 1.

James P. Cousins, history, was appointed associate dean of the college after serving in the position on an interim basis for the past year. Heather L. Petcovic, geosciences and the Mallinson Institute for Science Education, was appointed an interim associate dean in the college.

Cousins, who also is anthropology chair, serves the College of Arts and Sciences by overseeing activities such as student and faculty engagement and enrollment management. Petcovic's role includes responsibility for research, graduate student success, and diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The fourth appointment elevated veteran staff member Ronicka D. Hamilton to head



Obare



Cousins



Petcovic



Hamilton

of the Seita Scholars support program for former foster youth.

Hamilton, senior campus coach for the program, took over as its director Jan. 3. She replaces Chris Harris-Wimsatt, who has assumed leadership of the Kalamazoo Boys and Girls Club.

She spent nearly a decade of her WMU career in the Division of Multicultural Affairs before joining the Seita program in 2009. In her new role, she is promoting other programs that are a part of the Center for Fostering Success as well as overseeing the Seita Scholars program.

## Longtime employees feted during annual 25 Year Club gala

WMU inducted 41 people into the 25 Year Club during a Dec. 1 gala induction and dinner that celebrates employees who have built their careers at WMU by working at the University for 25 years. In addition, WMU President John M. Dunn presented special mementos to club members who have been employed at the institution for



50 years. They are (top left photo, at left) Richard W. Malott, psychology, and (top right photo, at left) James VanDePolder, engineering design, manufacturing and management systems. In what is scheduled to be his final participation in the event as WMU's president, Dunn also presented certificates to each of the 25 Year Club inductees. The 2016 class of inductees began their service to WMU in 1991. Counting these faculty and staff members, the club has an unofficial total of 1,213 members. Of these, 475 are active employees and 738 are retirees. (Photos by Mike Lanka)

## Search committee releases presidential profile

The Presidential Search Advisory Committee has completed a critical document in its work to find WMU's ninth president.

Armed with feedback from 17 campus community forums, the committee has developed a Presidential Profile that describes

the campus' goal of finding "a courageous, visionary and resourceful academic leader who will enable us to leverage our strengths, advance our stature and help us shape an enduring identity."

The committee's profile outlines the opportunities and challenges the University's next president will encounter as well as the personal and professional qualities the campus wants that person to possess.

It has been published on the committee's website, [wmich.edu/presidentialsearch](http://wmich.edu/presidentialsearch).

The document includes a description of the University and community as well as a list of 10 critical duties and responsibilities and 16 important characteristics and qualifications the successful candidate should possess.

Trustee William Johnston, who chairs the search committee, noted in a Dec. 13 report that the committee is the largest and most diverse group ever put in place to serve the campus community by identifying a new president.

Members of the committee, he said, used the community forums to gather "front-end" input. Committee members and consultants were listening carefully to the feedback.

The committee hopes to identify a candidate to recommend to the Board of Trustees by the end of the academic year. The interview round is expected to begin by late February or early March.

## Obituaries—[wmich.edu/news/obituaries](http://wmich.edu/news/obituaries)

**Chuck Comer**, emeritus in health, physical education and recreation and a former assistant football coach, died Dec. 13. He was 79. Comer joined the faculty in 1968 and retired in 1997 after 29 years.

**George M. Dennison**, a former provost, died Jan. 3. He was 81. Dennison came to WMU in 1987 and left in 1990 to head his alma mater, the University of Montana.

**Charlie H. Harris**, a former member of landscape services, died Sept. 21, 2015. He was 91. Harris joined the staff in 1981 and retired in 1991 after 10 years.

**Kandeiss-Toi Ross**, a Human Resources assistant senior, died Dec. 29. She was 60. Ross joined the staff in 1989 and had been employed in Human Resources 27 years.

**Kamlesh Sharma**, emerita in biological sciences, died Dec. 21. She was 78. Sharma joined the faculty in 1981 and retired in 2003 after 22 years. Survivors include her husband, Visho B.L. Sharma, professor emeritus of arts and sciences.

**John F. Walker**, a former industrial design teacher, died Dec. 27. He was 76. Survivors include Gay S. Walker, interdisciplinary health programs. A memorial service is set for 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 15, in Kalamazoo's People's Church.



Comer



Dennison



Harris



Ross



Sharma

## On Campus with Sheneeka Skinner



**NURSING A DREAM**  
(Photo by Deanne Puca)

At a very young age, Sheneeka Skinner dreamed of being a registered nurse. But she started her career in the Sincdecuse Health Center as a certified medical assistant in 2004.

Skinner, the oldest of three children who grew up in a single-parent home, has always thought of herself as a determined person who sets goals, follows through and does not give up easily.

So after nearly five years at WMU, she went back to school. Skinner graduated from Kalamazoo Valley Community College's RN completion program in 2010, then worked in the Kalamazoo area as a nurse. She returned to Sincdecuse in 2015, this time as a nurse.

"I like to consider myself well-rounded in the health care field. I have experience as a certified medical assistant, licensed practical nurse and an RN," she says. "Every day is different in nursing. I enjoy working with the students, faculty, staff and individuals from the community, the overall environment, and how WMU has such a strong tie to the community."

Skinner interacts with patients directly, administering care to those who come to Sincdecuse for travel consultation visits. During these visits, she obtains the patient's health history, vaccination history and any other information, advises them on which immunizations or medications are recommended, and provides safety tips for international travel.

"We review the countries they're planning to visit, look at trends and recommendations, educate them, and administer recommended immunizations and medications at the time of their visit," she says. "These visits require a high level of critical thinking and organization on behalf of the nurse. Every patient is different, so it's important to know disease processes and contraindications when reviewing a patient's health history—as I do with every patient. I must be very thorough, and stay up to date on the latest recommendations because updates and recommendations change constantly."

In June 2016, Skinner was promoted to nursing supervisor. She handles a variety of nursing and administrative duties, including providing direct patient care, overseeing the nursing staff, coordinating several outreach activities, and reviewing and maintaining nursing processes, policies and procedures. She also serves on Sincdecuse's quality improvement committee and leadership team and works closely with the Kalamazoo County Health Department to help decrease the spread of communicable diseases through vaccination and education.

Skinner grew up in Kalamazoo and lives in the city with her college-age son and their dog. She's an active church member, big fan of football at all levels, and likes to craft, refurbish furniture and "live vicariously" through the people she advises on travel. She'd love to travel more, herself.

## Time to review winter weather policies, procedures

Winter hours are in effect for WMU's snow removal crews, who must plow, shovel, scrape and de-ice more than 26 miles of roads and 120 acres of parking area, 39 miles of walks, hundreds of doorways, and 200,000 square feet of steps and ramps.

Plow schedules cover snow and ice removal activities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Providing there is not a major storm, most main campus areas will be clear of snow and ice before the majority of students and employees arrive each day.

Any snow removal needs regarding special activities or weekend events should be relayed to the landscape services office with a Facilities Management event request form or by calling (269) 387-8514. Provide as much advance notice as possible.

Those with special needs when it comes to mobility on campus also should call (269) 387-8514. Questions or concerns after normal business hours should be directed to public safety at (269) 387-5555.

Helpful hints and guidelines for being safe while traversing campus during this time of year are available on the Environmental Health and Safety website. Go to [wmich.edu/ehs](http://wmich.edu/ehs) and click Resources for details.

Now also is a good time to review WMU's Closure Policy due to severe weather or emergency conditions. It is available on the Policies website at [wmich.edu/policies](http://wmich.edu/policies). For up-to-date closure information, read the story published in December at [wmich.edu/news/2016/12/36820](http://wmich.edu/news/2016/12/36820). The story includes a link to sign up for the WMU Alert system.

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## Product design program is object of \$3 million gift

goal is to begin construction in spring 2017 and have the facility open in summer 2018.

"We're so pleased to see the way the University, community and local corporations are coming together to build a program that fully leverages Kalamazoo's strengths in the arts and innovation," Jim Richmond says. "This program will be a leader in the growing fields of design and innovation nationally, and will prepare WMU students for these important careers for generations to come."

Jim and Lois Richmond are both WMU graduates and have a long history of community involvement and philanthropy, particularly in relation to the arts at WMU as well as in the Kalamazoo community.

Entities involved in the new institute project include Whirlpool, Tekna, Newell Brands, Stryker, FabriKal, Landscape Forms, Eaton and Southwest Michigan First. Bob Brown and the Monroe-Brown Foundation provided key initial funding.

## Energy savings reported



Consumers Energy Strategic Account Manager Todd R. Duncan, left, visited campus Dec. 16 to present President John M. Dunn with a \$69,000 check representing incentives WMU has earned through Consumers' Business Energy Efficiency Program. The University earned the rebates through capital investment and energy efficiency measures. About two-thirds of this year's rebate was the result of energy efficiency features in Heritage Hall. The annual holiday temperature setback also played a role. WMU's annual cost avoidance for that initiative has averaged \$165,000 over the past three years. (Photo by Mike Lanka)

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## Governor appoints new trustees

also includes work as advisor and chief of staff to Detroit Emergency Manager Kevin Orr and a series of positions of increasing responsibility with Daimler Chrysler Financial Services and Chrysler Financial.

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