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President's Perspective (September 2012)

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President's Perspective

Sept. 4, 2012

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the fall 2012 semester and the start of what will be another exciting year full of accomplishments!

We've spent the past week helping new freshman, transfer, international and graduate students become familiar with the campus and community. Today, they're ready to launch their academic careers alongside our returning students.

We won't be able to share our fall numbers with you for a few weeks, but early analysis suggests that while admission numbers are up, our overall enrollment will show a slight decrease. This is consistent with our projections as reported to the campus community earlier. In the meantime, our focus has to be on making sure the academic year gets off to a great start for all of our students, so that next year at this time, we are celebrating their progress toward achieving their academic, social, personal and professional goals.

The coming weeks are packed full of events

Before your calendar is completely filled, take a few moments to block off some time and plan to join us in celebrating some of this month's signature events.

- This week includes traditional events that mark the start of every fall semester—the **Bronco Bash** at Miller on Friday evening, the CommUniverCity luncheon on Friday at the Radisson and the **CommUniverCity** football game at Waldo Stadium Saturday night. You owe it to yourself to take part in all of these events, and I am looking forward to seeing you there.
- **Academic Convocation** has been set for Friday, Sept. 21, at 2 p.m. in the Dalton Center. That formal kickoff for the academic year will feature the presentation of 11 all-University awards to standout members of our faculty and staff—the colleagues you work with every day. Those awards will be announced in the coming days. Plan to be at convocation and help us celebrate the award winners' achievements.



Sangren Hall

The official opening of the new **Sangren Hall** and the renovated **Lee Honors College** is slated for 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 28. This will be a celebration of an instructional enhancement for our campus that has been decades in the making. I assure you the celebration will be commensurate with that fact. There will be building tours and a communitywide party featuring the Bronco Marching Band on the beautiful

pedestrian mall in front of the new building.

Celebrating WMU's legacy

This coming academic year will also launch several important anniversary celebrations on campus. We've just concluded our celebration of our Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology's 75th anniversary, the 90th anniversary celebration for the Department of Occupational Therapy and 40th anniversary of our Department of Physician Assistant. In 2013, we will mark such marquee milestones as:



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- the 100th anniversary of our world-renowned **School of Music**,
- the 50th anniversary of the **Lee Honors College**, and
- the 50th anniversary of **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**'s appearance and major address on our campus

Be sure to be on the lookout for events that will help us appropriately note and celebrate our University's place in the history of this state, nation and world.

Recent news

Even as many of you were making your plans to return to campus, we were learning of news coverage of recent faculty accomplishments and the quality of our University.



Henderson

In this week's Chronicle of Higher Education, there is an article in the "Teaching" section that is an account of recent research by our own **Dr. Charles Henderson**, associate professor of physics.

The Chronicle story, and similar stories in a number of online and print professional publications, details Dr. Henderson's examination of how willing physics professors are to try new teaching strategies, but then quickly abandon them.

- Last week, we learned that Western Michigan University has been named one of the country's top 100 national universities in a ranking released by **Washington Monthly**. WMU is among five Michigan universities to make the 2012 list, which the popular Washington, D.C., magazine has published annually since 2005. The list is based on three factors the publication characterizes as college qualities that are good for the nation: producing cutting-edge research and new Ph.D.s.; encouraging students to give back to the nation through service; and promoting social mobility by recruiting and graduating low-income students.
- International press in August covered research done by **Lori Brown**, professor and research scientist in the College of Aviation, on using light therapy as a form of fatigue risk management. And

Professor Emeritus **Clifford Davidson**'s scholarship on the topic of sacred street theatre in Medieval England spread worldwide after appearing in the National Endowment for the Humanities' magazine.



Bischof



Fuqua

Also over the summer, Gov. Rick Snyder announced the appointment of two Western Michigan University faculty members to influential state boards.

Dr. Gary Bischof, interim chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, was named to the Michigan Board of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Dr. Wayne Fuqua, chair of the Department of Psychology was one of 12 appointees named to the newly created Michigan Autism Council.

Looking ahead



Les Miserables
Jan.29 - Feb. 3
[Order tickets](#)

Keep watching wmich.edu to learn of a wealth of opportunities heading your way in the coming months. They range from a visit by the U.S. Poet Laureate Philip Levine on Sept. 28. to our Oct. 6 Homecoming celebration and a spectacular season of Miller Auditorium performances that will include such Broadway hits as "Wicked," "West Side Story" and "Les Misérables."

Again, welcome to the new academic year. We encourage you to help implement our university strategic plan and to speak with pride that WMU is a learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged university. I look forward to working with every member of our campus community to make this a year that will be long remembered.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John M. Dunn'.

John M. Dunn, President