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WMU hockey coach to kick off Keystone speaker series

KALAMAZOO—Head coach of the Western Michigan University men’s ice hockey program will discuss his experience leading the team when he speaks as part of the Keystone Community Bank Breakfast Speaker Series at Western Michigan University.

Andy Murray will speak at 8 a.m. Friday, Sept. 27, in the Dean’s Conference Room of Schneider Hall, home of the Haworth College of Business. He will deliver a presentation titled "WMU Hockey."

The event is free and open to the public and begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling (269) 387-5050. Free parking is available.

Andy Murray

Announced as the sixth head coach of WMU’s hockey team in 2011, Murray led the Broncos to the program’s first Central Collegiate Hockey Association Tournament championship in 25 years in the 2011-12 season. He also coached WMU to its second-straight, and fifth overall, NCAA Tournament appearance, marking the first time the Broncos have made the tournament in back-to-back seasons.

With an extensive resume, Murray came to WMU with a total of 20 years as either a head or assistant coach in the National Hockey League. He is one of only 39 coaches in NHL history to reach 300 wins with a career record of 333-278-58-71. He has 10 years of NHL head coaching experience, spending six seasons, 1999-2006, at the helm of the Los Angeles Kings and four seasons, 2006-10, with the St. Louis Blues. Along with his professional coaching background, Murray also brings international experience. He coached Team Canada to gold medals at the 2007, 2003 and 1997 World Hockey Championships and holds six Spengler Cup Titles—an annual tournament in Switzerland—for Team Canada. He was inducted into the International Ice Hockey Hall of Fame as a part of the 2012 class for his part in his three world championships.

A native of Souris, Manitoba, Murray and his wife have three children, all of whom play professional hockey in Switzerland.
Alumni to be Honored

An elite group of alumni and friends of the college of business will be honored at the Haworth College of Business Awards Ceremony during Homecoming week. Recognized for their outstanding career and service accomplishments, these individuals embody the values of the Haworth College of Business and provide an example for our students to aspire to in their own lives and careers.

Governor appoints accountancy professor to state board

by Mark Schwerin
August 28, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—Gov. Rick Snyder has named Dr. Ola Smith, associate professor of accountancy, to the State Board of Accountancy.

The nine-member board oversees licensure and certification requirements for certified public accountants and public accounting firms. She will represent certified public accountants and educators on the board.

Dr. Ola Smith

Smith has been on the WMU faculty for 13 years. Her research and teaching focuses on managerial accounting, performance measurement and accounting for government and nonprofit organizations. Previously, she worked for Ameritech Corp., Deloitte, Barrow, Aldridge & Co. and the Internal Revenue Service. Smith is also the 2013 recipient of a service award from the Diversity Section of the American Accounting Association.

She has previously been honored with the Platinum Award from the Division of Multicultural Affairs and the WMU Research Development Award.

Smith holds a bachelor’s of business administration in accounting from the University of Detroit, a master’s of business administration in finance from Mercy College of Detroit and a doctoral degree in accounting from Michigan State University as well as a CPA license.
Russ Hildensperger – University of Michigan Health System Intern

Hildensperger's academic experiences through the Haworth College of Business helped him land a coveted internship as a computer support specialist for the clinical staff at the University of Michigan Health System, as it transitions to a new electronic health record system. In his position, Hildensperger shadowed medical providers throughout their day and answered clinical support calls at the help desk.

After a phone and in-person interview, Hildensperger was offered the position and took the opportunity to learn and gain experience. Hildensperger says that the Haworth College of Business prepared him for this type of work in ways he could not have imagined; citing written and oral communication skills in addition to the technical skills required of the job.

“The communication skills that I obtained through the college really helped me to thrive in the fast-paced, hectic environment that one finds in a hospital,” says Hildensperger, noting that the integrated communication course, required of all business students, helped prepare him to handle situations such as communicating bad news to customers.

“I could not solve every problem that came my way while working at the help desk. I had to tell customers that I could not solve their problems and that I would have to get in touch with them later,” says Hildensperger. Learning to communicate effectively is something that Hildensperger caught on to but with effective communication there needs to be effective listening as well.

“You must be a great listener. What I have learned is that all of the knowledge in the world will not help you if you cannot effectively listen to the customer and fully understand the problem and what they want you to do about it,” says Hildensperger.

Hildensperger’s favorite parts of this internship were the numerous opportunities to practice with the EPIC software that is used by the hospital. He worked with countless people who have showed him the dedication it takes to maintain the system. This internship has opened up many opportunities for Hildensperger and sparked an interest in the health care field, whether it is as an EPIC contractor or in a health informatics and information management-related field. After he completes his B.B.A. degree with a major in computer information systems, he plans to pursue a graduate degree in health informatics. (See related article announcing new MBA concentration in health care at WMU.)
Hildensperger realizes that one of the biggest challenges for students is being aware of amazing internship opportunities. By being proactive, he landed an internship that has already taught him valuable lessons and experience for his intended career, and this Bronco is on his way to a bright future.

Dell financial executive to speak at business college

KALAMAZOO—A financial expert for Dell will be featured in the next Western Michigan University Distinguished Speaker Series, hosted by the Haworth College of Business.

Thomas Sweet, vice president of corporate finance, controller and chief accounting officer of Dell, will present “Business Models and Leadership: What WMU did and did not teach me” at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 16, in 2000 Schneider Hall. The talk will be followed by a question-and-answer period.

**Thomas Sweet**

Sweet began at Dell in 1997 as vice president of finance, responsible for the education, government and health care units, along with holding several other positions in the company, including vice president of internal audit and chief financial officer of the corporate sales division. He has also provided leadership in a number of sales roles.

As Dell’s lead financial expert in global technology markets and trends, Sweet’s responsibilities range from global accounting, tax, treasury and investor relations to global financial services.

After receiving his bachelor’s in business administration from WMU and becoming a certified public accountant, Sweet spent 13 years with Price Waterhouse, providing audit and accounting services to the technology industry. He later went on to serve as vice president of accounting and finance for Telos Corporation.

As a company deeply committed to innovation and responsibility, Dell is one of the largest technological corporations in the world, employing more than 100,000 people worldwide. Integrated into more than 400,000 classrooms across the globe and handling millions of customer interactions per day, Dell has become a leader in achieving balanced, sustainable growth on a global scale.
Starting Gate launches cohort

Aspiring student entrepreneurs are taking part in a new business accelerator at Western Michigan University that will help them grow their innovative business ideas.

Starting Gate is a new student business accelerator that will test students' business ideas and models, provide mentorship from faculty and members of the business community, and help them build a network of contacts to support their burgeoning businesses.

The student business accelerator is located in WMU's Business Technology and Research Park and operated by the Haworth College of Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in partnership with the WMU Office of Community Outreach. The accelerator is open to all WMU students through a competitive application process in which students must demonstrate a promising idea for a product or service, which can be launched within a short period of time. Starting Gate provides a fast-track to business launch.

Business advice and more

Open 24 hours a day, the mentor-based accelerator offers an array of resources. Student entrepreneurs will:

- Participate in regular update nights to help define the scope of their companies, adjusting business models and plans and gaining feedback.

- Interact with key mentors, including faculty members, successful entrepreneurs from the local community, investors and experts in areas of interest such as manufacturing, technology, intellectual property law, venture capital and others.

- Have access to the full complement of resources available through WMU, such as the Small Business and Technology Development Center, WMU Business Connection, Haworth College of Business experts and WMU faculty expertise from across campus.

- Develop a robust network of contacts and connections within the local business community to aid in the success of their ventures.

"Starting Gate is an exciting opportunity for WMU students," says Dr. Kay Palan, dean of the Haworth College of Business. "Western students are very entrepreneurial in nature, and we see many students begin businesses while they are here. We are excited to provide yet another avenue to support and nourish our students' passion for entrepreneurship."

Student applications for the accelerator’s fall cohort are currently being reviewed. Members of the business community who are interested in serving as mentors to the students in the accelerator should email wmu-startinggate@wmich.edu or contact Dr. Robert Landeros, chair of the Department of Management and interim director of the Haworth College of Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, at (269) 387-5802 or Bob Miller, associate vice president, WMU Office of Community Outreach, at (269) 387-2073.
Kellogg internship program emphasizes relationships

As part of their internships at Kellogg, WMU students Jordan Kuhl, Conor Hamilton and Ryan Kohler planned a Lunch with Leaders program, bringing executives and student interns together to discuss career options and plans. They decided to go to the top and invite Kellogg CEO John Bryant. "Mr. Bryant was 'all in' from the start. He loved the idea of meeting with the young talent of Kellogg and helping us find our path," says Kuhl, a WMU senior. Tom Monette, a WMU senior who attended the lunch with Bryant, notes what he learned. "My biggest take-away from the John Bryant meeting was the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and strong family life in our busy lives," says Monette, who transferred to WMU from Macomb Community College last year. "Mr. Bryant was very welcoming and gave us not only sound professional advice but personal advice as well."

Almost half of Western Michigan University students complete an internship before graduation; the number of internships business students hold is increasing, with students in some majors accepting two or more internships during their college careers. While students seek more experience, employers are expanding the nature of their internship programs, finding a process that works best to ensure top talent joins their organizations upon graduation.

Kellogg Company’s customer and logistics services department has developed an extensive rotational program that regularly hosts WMU students who are assigned the same duties as full-time employees with many opportunities to learn from senior leadership.

"WMU’s unique supply chain management and food marketing programs align well with our needs," says Gerardo Rincon, B.S.’86, M.S.’94, senior director of logistics innovation and technology. "We expect interns to have basic supply chain knowledge, strong systems aptitude and ability to manipulate data to support a business case."

Recognizing skills are not the only determining factor in recruiting top talent, Rincon’s team works to identify a fit for the student and the company.

"While in the program, students are coached and paired with intern buddies to help them integrate into the company culture," says Creighton Curtis, M.S.’10, senior manager of production planning and scheduling. According to Curtis, the customer and logistics services area hires between eight and 12 new interns each year. "Better than half of the interns have been offered full-time job opportunities with Kellogg’s," says Curtis.

Kellogg’s customer and logistics services area has had an internship program for many years and now regularly employs more than 20—typically, nearly 70 percent of these are from WMU. According to
Rincon, the program that once focused on a single, specific role for interns has changed into a full rotation program that offers students exposure to a range of functions.

"Interns gain a working knowledge of SAP, Microsoft Excel, verbal and written communication, conducting themselves in a professional environment and collaborating with co-workers," says Kelly Nagy, B.B.A.'06, MBA'08, supply chain innovation project manager. "And, they get firsthand working knowledge with other functional areas of the organization including sales, marketing, manufacturing and procurement."

The company works closely with the college faculty in finding the right interns for its program. "We are very proud of the program, and we value the relationship we have been able to develop between the WMU ISM program and Kellogg’s,” says Rincon.

GVSU, WMU join forces for study of family owned businesses

by Stacey Markin
August 7, 2013 | WMU News

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—The Seidman College of Business at Grand Valley State University and the Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University have launched a study to explore the magnitude of family owned businesses in the region. The study will involve a series of surveys sent to the approximately 12,000 family owned businesses in 28 counties on the west side of the state.

Nationally, only 30 percent of family owned businesses survive to the second generation. Family owned businesses have a great social and economic impact on the west side of the state, yet little data is available on the number, needs or impact of these businesses.

Evaluating impact on community

"Family owned businesses are unique," says Ellie Frey, director of the Family Owned Business Alliance in Grand Rapids. "For example, they are more philanthropic, slower to reduce their workforce in tough economic times and better environmental stewards. By creating a database of information we can do a better job of monitoring and improving the health of Michigan’s family owned businesses, while furthering research and program development."

Laurel Ofstein, assistant professor of management at the Haworth College of Business, agrees. "In family business, it’s not just about the bottom line," said Ofstein. "The leadership is also focused on the longevity of the organization as well as the industry in which it operates. This long-term focus is especially important for innovation, a theme we hear frequently in political speeches and at
educational institutions alike. Family firms are making a substantial economic contribution to the state of Michigan, yet we feel this contribution may be under-valued. We hope to highlight their positive impact through this research."

The study is being administered by the Family Owned Business Institute at Grand Valley with support from the Family Business Alliance in Grand Rapids. The study aims to provide a platform of tools and services to assist and eventually improve the health of family owned businesses. The initial survey data collection is expected to be completed by early November.

The survey will be sent to family owned businesses in the following counties: Allegan, Antrim, Barry, Benzie, Berrien, Cass, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Ottawa, St. Joseph, Van Buren and Wexford.

The survey can be found at gvsu.edu/fobi/survey.

For more information contact J. Kevin McCurren, executive director of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at GVSU, at (616) 331-7582; Ellie Frey, director of the Family Owned Business Alliance of Grand Rapids, at (616) 331-6827; or Laurel Ofstein, assistant professor of management at WMU at (269) 387-5417.

**Director of executive education named for ISM program**

by Cindy Wagner  
September 12, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—Western Michigan University’s Integrated Supply Management program has named Ken Jones its first director of executive education, highlighting the program’s commitment to providing expert training for industry partners.

"Initially, there isn’t any aspect of the program that I will not touch in some significant way," Jones says. "I truly look forward to that challenge."

In his new role, Jones will develop and implement a strategic plan for the integrated supply management executive education program, which is designed to identify the important problems that supply chain practitioners face and, through research and experience, determine the best methods to solve those problems in the workplace.

"A lot of managers are saying that most executive education programs offered by universities are nothing more than modified MBA lectures," says Dr. Sime Curkovic, director of the ISM program. "To
be effective, our program will leverage its industry contacts, application-oriented research and expertise in developing a unique curriculum for a series of executive education programs that generate results for employers."

Executive education is aimed at companies and managers who cannot support the development of supply chain professionals through internal training. Many of these companies cannot delay further training due to lack of resources.

"The executive education program will help keep supply chain professionals competitive," Curkovic says. "Its major benefit will be to develop professionals to meet the constantly changing supply chain environment."

The program plans executive certification and graduate programs that are critical to the industry, but also are properly developed and executed. "We will provide numerous benefits that go beyond just providing participants a certificate," Curkovic says.

**Ken Jones**

Jones has more than 14 years of supply management experience. Prior to joining the WMU team, Jones was a full-time operations and supply chain management faculty member at Indiana State University and has conducted more than 30 different training and personal development workshops for small business, Fortune 500 companies and government agencies.

Jones earned a bachelor's degree in business and a master's in business administration in marketing and finance from Indiana University. In addition, he holds Certified Professional in Supply Management and Certified Purchasing Manager designations with the Institute for Supply Management. In addition, Jones is a Six Sigma Black Belt, a specialized training certification that includes a set of tools and techniques used in a disciplined way to eliminate defects, not only in manufacturing, but also the service sectors.

With his expertise and experiences, Jones is focused and ready to launch the much-anticipated executive education program. He hopes to enhance the college's reputation while at the same time growing the already strong ISM program and alumni and student networks by offering a unique program that cannot be matched.

"We will offer an unrivaled educational experience that translates into an individual or organization recognizing an immediate, value-added return on their investment," Jones says.

**Integrated supply management program**

Ranked No. 12 in undergraduate supply chain education, WMU's integrated supply management program has been recognized nationally by several organizations and publications for its leadership in preparing students for careers in supply chain management.
Save the Date for the Haworth College of Business Homecoming Pancake Breakfast!

You are invited to join us for a complimentary pancake breakfast served by World Record Pancake Flippers, Chris Cakes, on Oct. 12 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Official WMU Tailgate Site, Lot 1 (next to Walwood Hall). Then, cheer on the Broncos as they take on the Buffalo Bulls at 2 p.m.

Employer registration underway for business career day

by Cindy Wagner
September 17, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—Companies seeking to hire talent from Western Michigan University’s Haworth College of Business still have time to reserve a spot at the annual Business Career Day, to be held next month at WMU.

More than 100 companies from throughout the nation are expected to attend the event from 1 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17, to promote their organizations as well as recruit and connect with WMU students for internships and full-time positions. Some on-campus interviewing space is also available Friday, October 18.

"Our employer partners recognize the talent available in the college and are actively seeking interns and full-time employees," says Geralyn Heystek, director of the Haworth College of Business Career Center. "There is an energy, excitement and positivity among employers attending our career events. We are looking forward to supporting their recruiting efforts."

Industry-specific events leading up to career day are also scheduled and include integrated supply management, food marketing and sales career networking nights, one on the evening before Business Career Day at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 16.

To register

Organizations that register by Sept. 20 will be included in the printed publicity booklet. The $550 registration fee includes promotion of your organization and job postings to qualified students in the printed booklet and online listings. Employers also have access to one table with space for up to four people, parking and shuttle service, assistance with loading and unloading materials, deli buffet lunch for all attendees and post-event mixer with Haworth College of Business faculty, staff and student leaders.

Employers can register for career day events through Oct. 8 at wmic.edu/business/career/employers/fall-events.
For more information, contact Kayla Burke, event planning and employer relations intern, at careercenter-ccd1@wmich.edu or (269) 387-2769.

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