Olsen wins coveted Guggenheim Fellowship

Dr. William Olsen, professor of English, has been awarded a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship to write poetry. He is one of 186 artists, scholars, and scientists awarded 2005 Guggenheim Fellowships out of the more than 3,000 who applied. Decisions are based on recommendations from hundreds of expert advisors and are approved by the foundation’s board of trustees.

“I’m delighted with receiving this honor,” Dr. Olsen says. “It’s what every writer wants the most—free time to write. Beyond that, recognitions of this sort are few and far between. It’s a little humbling, actually.”

The fellowship and $50,000 cash award that it carries will let Dr. Olsen concentrate on writing for up to a year. Guggenheim Fellowships are awarded based on past achievement and exceptional promise for future accomplishment. The fellowships are grants, this year totaling $7,112,000, to selected individuals to help provide them with blocks of time in which they can work with as much creative freedom as possible. The fellowships represent some of the most competitive awards made in the arts and humanities.

What distinguishes the Guggenheim Fellowship program from others is the wide range in interest, age, geography, and institution of those it selects as it considers applications in 79 different fields from the natural sciences to the creative arts.
Film highlights student’s research in Malaysia

In 2002, Tristan Brown studied abroad at Sunway College in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Now, the senior environmental studies major has filmed and produced “Jaunt to Malaysia: an Encounter with ‘Developed’ Malaysia.” The 40-minute film, cut from more than 11 hours of raw footage, depicts Brown’s preconceptions about traveling to Malaysia, his reactions while getting acquainted with the foreign land, as well as his reactions to the “unexpected.” The film also highlights the effects of development on the Temuan people—a native tribe of Malaysia. Specifically, the film documents the effects of a large state-sponsored dam on the sacred land and culture of the Temuan. Brown says the film is educational, entertaining, and “includes a great soundtrack.”

“Jaunt to Malaysia” was funded by undergraduate student research grants from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Lee Honors College. Dr. Lynne Heasley, assistant professor of history and environmental studies, was Brown’s faculty mentor for his research in Malaysia and for the subsequent film project at WMU.

Brown was also named to USA Today’s All-USA College Academic Team, the members of which represent the nation’s most outstanding students. The criteria are designed to find students who excel not only in scholarship, but also in leadership roles on and off campus. A key element given most weight by the judges was a student’s outstanding original academic or intellectual product. Brown was singled out for producing the documentary “Jaunt to Malaysia.”

Eighth annual Celebration of Research and Creative Activities

The College of Arts and Sciences is now in its 8th year of formally recognizing the amazing work of its student scholars through the annual Celebration of Research and Creative Activities. Since the College officially came into being in 1970, it has developed a rich tradition of encouraging student academic development. This year’s reception, held on April 1, culminated a weeklong celebration that embodied this tradition by honoring many of the College’s brightest scholars for their recent studies in varied academic disciplines.

The students received support from either a Monroe-Brown Foundation Life Sciences Research Award or a College of Arts and Sciences Research and Creative Activities Award. For some of the projects, additional support was provided by individual departments, faculty research grants, or the Lee Honors College. Each student also enlisted the help of a College of Arts and Sciences faculty member who served as a mentor and advisor throughout the project.

Through their individual studies, the students have reinforced WMU’s commitment to being a student centered research university. Each scholar has also contributed to the advancement of his or her particular field of study.

The College of Arts and Sciences congratulates the following students for their outstanding work:

Monroe-Brown Foundation Life Sciences Award Winners
Brendan Earl                  Cheri Bell                       Leighann Lesley
Cynthia Fuller                Greg Delgoffe               Nicole Scanland
Chin-ju Hsiao                 Shannyn Fowl              Walton Yeboah-
Laura Nejedlik                Emily Freeman                 Amoako
Amy Taipei Young           Theresa Kerr

Tristan Brown lived in an apartment in Bandar Sunway, Malaysia during his trip.
The following books were published in 2004 by Humanities faculty:


“The Double Content of Art”

“Streets in Their Own Ink”
Stuart Dybek. Farrar.

“With C.S. Nicolaescu Plopisor Through the Ages”

“Jane Addams, A Writer’s Life”

“Prague Winter”

“Dardasha: Egyptian Arabic”

“Holy Rocks”

“Black Puritan, Black Republican”

“Allerlei zum Lesen”

“Will”
Grace Tiffany. NY: Berkley.

“Integrated Chinese: Character Book, Level 1-1”
“Integrated Chinese: Character Book, Level 1-2”

NEW STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM ANNOUNCED
The Department of Spanish is pleased to announce its first summer study abroad program at the Universidad de Cantabria in Santander, Spain, between June 3 and July 28. This program will complement the successful fall-semester program in Burgos, Spain, and the equally popular spring-semester program in Quere’taro, Mexico. The Santander program is open to WMU students who have completed the course Spanish 316. Students will take a class in Spanish culture offered by Professor Mercedes Tasende, as well as advanced courses in Spanish language taught by faculty from the Universidad de Cantabria. They will live with local families, one student per household.

FOX 17 GIVES STUDENTS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE
FOX 17, West Michigan’s FOX affiliate, partnered with high schools and universities in the area to launch FOX 17 Student News, a program offering students hands-on experience in broadcasting. Fifteen students from WMU were handpicked by a committee composed of communication professors for a COM 398 independent study course associated with the program. Selected students were in charge of producing their own 30-minute public affairs program, which aired at 6 a.m., March 8, on FOX. Those involved focused on details particular to WMU. The students decided what stories to cover, did the legwork to get stories done, and did the editing.

Philosophy department focuses on the history and philosophy of science
The students are clustered near one end of the darkened room where the red light of a laser is playing on a screen, illuminating a circle about a centimeter wide. Slowly, a darker circle eclipses the laser’s light, the shadow of a tiny ball in the laser’s path suspended from a magnetized needle. A pause, then: “There, can you see the bright spot?” Students crane forward, looking at a tiny and utterly unexpected dot of red at the heart of the shadow.

Another day in the physics lab? No, this is a scene from one of Dr. Tim McGrew’s classes in the Philosophy Department where students are studying the history and philosophy of science. “We’re not interested in the philosophy of toy science,” Dr. McGrew, associate professor, explains. “In order to understand the history, you have to do some of the experiments yourself.”

The philosophy of science is one of this department’s strengths. Dr. Quentin Smith, a distinguished university professor in philosophy, is intrigued by the philosophical issues involved in the search for quantum gravity and is editing a collection of papers by physicists and philosophers on the topic.

“Our department has an international reputation in the philosophy of science,” Dr. Smith says. “And we’re looking to expand on this strength in the near future.”
Berrah gets DOE funding for nanosystems research

A WMU physics professor will continue her research at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory using a $564,000 federal grant that will help her unravel the mysteries of nanosystems that are the bridge between gas-phase matter and solid-state matter.

Dr. Nora Berrah will use the U.S. Department of Energy funding to conduct her research over the next three years at the Advanced Light Source, a research facility located at the Berkeley laboratory in California. She has been working at the facility for a number of years and led a team of international scientists who developed a sophisticated experimental research center there.

Her new funding will allow her to lead a WMU-centered team of postdoctoral students including Dr. Rene Bilodeau and Dr. Mark Perri, Ph.D. graduate students including Ximao Feng, Iliana Dimitriu, Huazhen Zhang, Susanta Das, and Samah Abu-Haja, and undergraduate student Gabe Herdia as they use the Advanced Light Source photon beam as a probing agent in an effort to understand the electronic and magnetic properties present in a relatively new area of study-metal clusters and their ions. The properties of those clusters change as a function of cluster size, Dr. Berrah says, and little is currently known about them.

“A fundamental understanding of those clusters will ultimately allow us to manipulate their properties and make systems that can be tailored to our needs,” she says.

Dr. Berrah, a faculty member at WMU since 1991, has garnered more than $4.3 million in external research funding during her time at the University. In addition to her current work at the Berkeley Advanced Light Source, she has been named to the scientific advisory committee for a new $500 million research facility being built at Stanford University.

HIRSCH HONORED WITH NAMED PROFESSORSHIP
Dr. Christian Hirsch, a national leader in the field of mathematics education, has been named the James H. Powell Professor of Mathematics. He has been a WMU faculty member since 1973, and is the director of the Core-Plus Mathematics Project, a research and development project launched in 1992 with funding from the National Science Foundation that has now exceeded $10 million. The professorship he was appointed to bears the name of Dr. James Powell, professor emeritus of mathematics and statistics. Powell was a 33-year member of the faculty. Named professors receive an annual stipend of at least $12,500 for the first three years following their appointments.

THE MICHIGAN HERITAGE WATER TRAIL PROGRAM
Dr. David Lemberg, associate professor of geography, has been creating a Heritage Water Trail Program for the state of Michigan. Fifty miles of trail was completed in the pilot project in St. Joseph County last summer, thanks in large part to graduate student Tim Peterson. This year, two other graduate students are now doing research on Heritage Water Trails: Ben Skarp is working on a trail on Nottawa and Pine Creeks in Calhoun and Branch Counties, and Todd Norwood is starting research on a coastal water trail on the shore of Lake Superior. Refer to the webpage at www.wmich.edu/glcms/watertrails for more information.
The following books were published in 2004 by Social Sciences faculty:

“Day of Reckoning: Power and Accountability in Medieval France”

“Hatunqolla: Una perspectiva sobre el imperio incaico desde la región del lago Titicaca”
Catherine Julien. La Paz: Producciones CIMA.

“For Shade and For Comfort: Democratizing Horticulture in the Nineteenth-Century Midwest”
Cheryl Lyon-Jenness. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press.

“The DaVinci Code: Fact or Fiction?”
Hank Hannegraaff and Paul L. Maier. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale.


POZO DOES RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL REMITTANCES
Dr. Susan Pozo, professor of economics, has spent five years doing research on international remittances, which are earnings that immigrant workers in the United States send home to their families. She is currently working with Ph.D. student Seife Dendir on the influence of remittances on child labor and education in Ethiopia. In addition, Pozo is working with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes, a WMU graduate, on how remittances from the U.S. affect employment patterns of family members who have remained in Mexico. The research is funded by the National Institutes of Health and by the Inter-American Development Bank.

BORISH SUPPORTED FOR HER PROJECT CHRONICLING JEWISH WOMEN IN SPORTS
Dr. Linda Borish, associate professor of history, has been selected to receive funding in the amount of $3,500 from the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute for her project chronicling American Jewish women in sports history. Titled “Not Merely Confined to the Gymnasium: Jewish Women in American Sport,” the effort will culminate in the publication of a book. “This is a very prestigious external funding group, and it is wonderful news to have the support of this organization for my research and book project,” Dr. Borish says. “The applicants are from the United States and other countries, and I am very pleased to receive this grant almost at the maximum to advance my research.”

African Studies-Black Love Week includes many activities

African Studies-Black Love Week took place February 14 through 18. Activities included an open house, a quiz bowl competition, a forum, and a debate. In addition, the end of the week was topped off with a conference on race entitled, “Clarence, Condoleezza, and Colin: Dismantling the House that Race Built.”

Dr. Karla Holloway—William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of English, professor of African and African American Studies, and the dean of humanities and social sciences at Duke University—was the luncheon keynote speaker for the conference. She is a former WMU professor of English and Black Americana Studies. Holloway’s most recent publication, “Passed On: African-American Mourning Stories,” is a cultural and historic look at bereavement, death, dying, and burial in twentieth century African America.

In addition, a roundtable discussion at the conference gave the audience the opportunity to learn about the politics of being an African American female faculty member at a predominantly White institution and, in some cases, in a male-dominated discipline. Also, a panel discussion engaged the audience regarding the status of racial minorities in graduate studies. Other sessions discussed topics including race and politics, race and the law, race and community, and race and media. A poetry reading was also part of the conference.
His areas of specialization are money and banking and economic development. Dr. Harik earned a bachelor’s degree from the American University of Beirut in 1970, and masters and doctoral degrees from Wayne State University in 1973 and 1978, respectively.

Dr. Wendy Ford has been an associate dean for the College of Arts and Science since February 2003. Her primary focus is on planning, and she also serves as Executive Associate Dean. Dr. Ford is responsible for leading the College through compact planning and integrating this process with other planning efforts. She received a bachelor’s degree from The University of Texas in 1986, and masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Maryland in 1989 and 1992, respectively.

In addition to her role as associate dean, she is a professor of communication and an adjunct professor of women’s studies. Dr. Ford has been a faculty member since 1993. Prior to coming to WMU, she was an assistant professor of organizational communication at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She is actively engaged in applied research that addresses significant internal communication problems faced by organizational leaders, while making theoretical contributions to the discipline. Dr. Ford is most recognized for her work examining communication processes and outcomes in customer service contexts.

These three deans perform a tremendous service both to our faculty and to our students, and I am fortunate as well as delighted to work with each of them. If you should have questions or concerns about an issue that falls under the charge of one of these deans, please do not hesitate to contact either Alex, Bassam, or Wendy. And, of course, you may always contact me as well about any aspect of our duties here in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Brown, a member of the WMU Lee Honor's College, was among 20 students nationwide named to the Third Team. Brown was joined by other Third Team members from such institutions as Harvard, Boston College, Penn State, and Georgetown. Students’ names were published in the February 17 edition of USA Today. The All-USA College Academic Team program honors 60 undergraduates as representatives of outstanding students at the nation's colleges and universities. In addition to the 20 students named to the Third Team, 40 more were chosen for the First and Second teams. Only one other student at a Michigan college or university was selected. Any full-time undergraduate of at least sophomore standing at a four-year institution in the United States or its territories was eligible.

Brown, who plans to graduate in April, was WMU’s first Lloyd Meeds Policy Fellow, an honor that included a paid summer internship in Washington, D.C., at one of the nation’s top lobbying firms. In addition, he was selected in 2004 for the prestigious Udall scholarship for environmental studies from the Morris K. Udall Foundation.

### Research and Creative Activities Award Winners

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YEAR OF GRADUATION / DEGREE EARNED

ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE GRADUATION FROM WMU

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