Cancer claims former President Elson Floyd

Elson S. Floyd, WMU’s sixth president and a nationally respected voice for affordable, accessible higher education, died in Washington June 20 after a battle with cancer. He was 59.

Floyd’s death was announced by Washington State University, where he had been serving as WSU’s 10th president since 2007. Just three weeks before, he had announced he was taking a leave to focus on cancer treatment.

Floyd was president of WMU from 1998 to 2003. His tenure was marked by a series of major developments that have had a lasting impact on the campus and community.

“I know I speak for the entire University community when I say the death of Dr. Floyd represents a profound loss for both Western Michigan University and higher education as a whole,” WMU President John M. Dunn said in a statement shortly after hearing of Floyd’s death. “Here at WMU, we are still building on some of the accomplishments of his presidency and the initiatives he launched.”

Dunn noted that one such effort—the establishment of the Business Technology and Research Park—has had a tremendous impact on Greater Kalamazoo’s economy and has meant hundreds of new jobs in dozens of high-tech businesses. Among several other major developments during Floyd’s tenure were acquiring 106 acres of Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital property, collaborating with area cities and communities to site the new engineering campus in Kalamazoo, elevating the aviation school in Battle Creek to WMU’s seventh college, and making the case to the Carnegie Foundation for raising WMU’s research classification and launching the successful Partnering for Success: The Centennial Campaign for WMU.

Memorial service details are pending and will be posted at wmich.edu/news when they become available.

Participation needed for WMU transformation

WMU is creating professional learning communities that focus on improving persistence toward graduation for all undergraduate students, particularly low-income students.

The learning communities are being set up through the Broncos FIRST program, which is being implemented by the new Center for Research on Instructional Change, a University-level research center that conducts and supports interdisciplinary research aimed at promoting transformative change in postsecondary education.

Broncos FIRST is looking to connect all the disparate initiatives aimed at student success at WMU and turn them into strong and successful efforts with the support of a more than $3.2 million grant that was received in 2014 from the U.S. Department of Education’s First in the World Grant program. Andrea Beach, education leadership, research and technology, and Charles Henderson, physics and the Mallinson Institute for Science Education, are co-directing the WMU grant.

The two wrote that grant proposal, and theirs was the only one from a Michigan institution to be funded in the grant program’s initial funding cycle.

The federal First in the World Grant seeks to create and validate, through ongoing research, student success programs that can tackle the problem of low rates of degree completion. The goal is to create programs that other universities can adopt, knowing there is sound research data behind the strategies embraced and replicated.

“You're invited to be a part of WMU's institutional change,” Beach says. “Actualizing student success requires integrated institutional transformation involving the whole campus.”

Learning community applications for the 2015-16 academic year are being accepted through Friday, July 24. All administrators and faculty and staff members who are researching or studying or who have an interest in student persistence are encouraged to apply.

Participants will make a two-year commitment to the project and meet with their groups
Around campus and beyond

BTR Park bike race marks 10th year
This year’s Miller Energy Criterion bike race at the Business Technology and Research Park will take place Saturday, July 11. This is the 10th anniversary of the event and will include state championship races for women, masters and juniors. Some $6,000 in prizes will be awarded.

Frankie Andreu will be the special guest race announcer for the criterium. Andreu competed in the Tour de France nine times and competed in two Olympic Games, placing eighth in 1988 and fourth in 1996.

Register online at usacycling.org or visit wmich.edu/btrrace for complete race information, including costs, full registration details, and special events slated for Friday, July 10, and Sunday, July 12.

Lee Honors College holding reunion
The Lee Honors College is hosting its second reunion from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, July 25. A dedication to honor the late John Martell, associate dean emeritus of the college, will close the day’s activities. Visit bit.ly/1CqGQV8 for more information on this free event.

OFD institute rescheduled for July
The Office of Faculty Development’s Flip Your Class Institute has been rescheduled for 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, July 28-30. Registration information can be found at wmich.edu/facultydevelopment.

Blood drive taking place on campus
A blood drive will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, July 30, in Miller Auditorium’s grand tier.

Osher Institute sets fall open house
Steve Thaxton, executive director of the Osher National Resource Center, will be a presenter during an event from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 20, in Miller Auditorium’s grand tier. The event will kick off the fall courses lineup for WMU’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Date selected for 35th Bronco Bash
Bronco Bash will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11, on the pedestrian mall in front of Sangren Hall. Visit wmich.edu/broncobash to apply for a booth, sign up as a volunteer or obtain more information.

Service anniversaries—June

Editor’s note: The July and August lists will be published in the first issue in September.

35 Years—Barbara K. Rhodes, admissions.

30 Years—Andrew C. Robins, WMUK Radio, and Toni Y. Woolfork-Barnes, First-Year Experience.

20 Years—Robyn C. Boyle, vice president for research’s office; Daniel R. Deatte, student financial aid; and Mark J. Delorey, student financial aid, will mark 20 years of service to the University during retirement reception from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Monday, July 6, in the Fetzer Center atrium lobby.

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Brimmer, maintenance services; Kristel E. Ehrhardt, special education and literacy studies; Michael L. Glenn, building custodial and support services; John Mackenzie, information technology; and Karen Stokes Chapo, University Assessment.

15 Years—Joshua Grant, information technology; Jennifer Wending Holm, Graduate College; Sally A. Laws, accounts receivable; Dennis M. McFall, College of Aviation; Tracie N. Sams, Residence Life; Dawn Wessaw, vice president for research’s office; and Daoli Zheng, information technology.

10 Years—James A. Hopfenberger, art, and Katie M. John, government affairs.

Five Years—Rachel M. Carlson, College of Education and Human Development, and William M. Germon II, intercollegiate athletics.

Exchange


Jobs

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

Department chair’s book wins award
Susan Freeman, chair of gender and women’s studies, is the co-author of a book that has won the prestigious 2015 Lambda Literary Award. “Understanding and Teaching U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History” was co-written with Leila J. Rupp from the University of California, Santa Barbara and was published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

The book was recognized in the LGBT Anthology category during the 27th Lambda Literary Awards celebration June 1 in New York. The event honors the year’s best gay, lesbian and transgender books. Actors, celebrities and activists presented the awards. It is believed that Freeman and Rupp’s book is the first designed for university and high school teachers who want to integrate LGBT history into the curriculum. Its inspiring stories and classroom-tested advice offer a valuable resource for those who think history should be an inclusive story.

Counselor reappointed to board
Patrick H. Munley, chair of counselor education and counseling psychology, was reappointed to the Michigan Board of Counseling. Gov. Rick Snyder announced June 5. The nine-member board assists the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs with the licensing and oversight of more than 9,000 counselors in Michigan and consists of counselors, public members and a mental health professional.

Munley will finish his current four-year term on the board at the end of this month and will continue to represent individuals engaged in teaching, training or research in counseling. Then, pending advice and consent of the state Senate, he will serve another four-year term that expires in 2019.

A licensed professional counselor and psychologist, Munley has more than 40 years of experience in the mental health field, including 26 with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dean elevated in rank by France
Joseph G. Reish, dean of University Libraries, has again been recognized by the French government for his “meritorious service to French education and contributions to the prestige of French culture.”

After an extensive review of his credentials, it was decided that Reish should be an all-inclusive story. It is believed that Freeman and Rupp’s book is the first designed for university and high school teachers who want to integrate LGBT history into the curriculum. Its inspiring stories and classroom-tested advice offer a valuable resource for those who think history should be an inclusive story.

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Foster youths to benefit from partnership

With the aid of a $75,000 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation grant, an interdisciplinary research team from Wayne State University and WMU will determine whether Michigan’s foster youth are receiving adequate preventive, dental and prenatal health care services.

Leading the project is Angela Day from WSU. Day, a WMU alumna, will collaborate with graduate students from both universities and with WMU’s Amy Curtis, physician assistant; Rajib Paul; statistics; and Kathleen Baker, geography. They will analyze Medicaid and foster youth casework data in order to track county-by-county utilization.

University launches new online application process

For students who want to pursue a bachelor’s degree at WMU, the University community has one overriding piece of advice: "Apply Yourself!"

That’s the name of an online application system the University has just activated and will use for applicants headed to WMU in 2016 and beyond. The new, comprehensive system replaces the one the University had been using for 10 years. It offers potential students a seamless application experience with all of WMU’s application forms, including speciality forms, completely online.

"There are some terrific built-in conveniences,” says Dachea Hill, director of admissions, "like the fact that the application can be stopped and restarted without losing data and the ability to select links during the process to get questions answered that apply to individual situations.”

Added elements to the online application include special questions that focus on international, military, dual-enrolled or early/accelerated high school students, foster youth and other students with disabilities.

Access to health care services is critically important to foster care youth. As many as 95 percent of this population has at least one physical health condition, and more than 50 percent of this population experiences two or more, due in large part to childhood abuse and neglect.

Welcome pack donations sought

Donations are needed to fill more than 40 welcome packs for WMU’s Seita Scholars. Many of these former foster care youth will arrive in September without basic items to help make their school year successful.

For details, including a list of item drop-off dates, visit wmich.edu/fosteringsuccess/seita and click Seita Scholars Program, then Volunteering followed by Welcome Pack.

The study builds upon WSU-funded research conducted last year by Day and Curtis to gauge adherence to a requirement—imposed in 2010 when Michigan converted most foster youth health care administration from a fee-for-service model to a managed care system—that youth entering the system have a well visit within 30 days.

Associate dean appointed for College of Fine Arts

Scott R. Irelan has been appointed associate dean of the College of Fine Arts, effective July 6.

Irelan comes to WMU from Youngstown State University, where he has been serving as associate professor and chairperson of its theatre and dance department.

He has taught and directed for many youth theatre projects and won the 2007 Robert A. Schumke Award from the Mid-America Theatre Conference.

A former professional theatre worker, Irelan has an extensive background in dramaturgy and grant writing as well as in scholarly publications.

His writings include three books: "Experiencing Theatre" and "The Process of Dramaturgy," which he co-wrote, and "Enacting Nationhood," which he edited.

Irelan’s work also has appeared in Modernism/Modernity, Shakespeare Bulletin, Journal of American Drama and Theatre, Theatre Annual, and Theatre History Studies, among other publications.

He earned both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from Bowling Green State University. He also earned a doctoral degree in theatre history, criticism, literature and performance studies from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

Soga Japan Center receives local Champs award

The Soga Japan Center is one of eight recipients of 2015 Champs awards from Communities in Schools of Kalamazoos.

The award recognizes CIS’ partners as well as individual volunteers, teachers and other Kalamazoo Public Schools staff members who help the district create successful collaborations.

The national organization and its Kalamazoo and other local affiliates surround students with a community of supportive resources, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

CIS of Kalamazoo presented this year’s Champs awards during a May 19 ceremony.

At the same ceremony, the local CIS group presented its annual Diether Haenicke Promise of Excellence Award to the late James A. Harrington, a longtime member of its board of directors and a past president of both KPS and the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency.

Obituary

George W. Hobbs, former coach and health, physical education and recreation professor, died March 12. He was 75.


Ground-breaking

"Selfie”—Director Judy Gipper, far left, and other staffers in Dining Services commemorated the official groundbreaking ceremony for the Valley Dining Center by gathering together for a cell phone photo. During the June 12 event, Gipper told the crowd that the center celebrates the visible beginning of a tremendous step forward to provide contemporary and high-quality dining services to students, employees, guests and the public.

During his remarks, WMU President John M. Dunn called the new center a “game changer” in terms of the life of the University. “Dunn also noted that the University has set LEED Silver certification as a minimum goal for the center and that the facility will be sustainable and truly integrated into its beautiful setting. (Photo by Mike Lanka)

Oasis Japan Center receives local Champs award

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WMU trustees approve retirements of 7 faculty, 13 staff members during their June meeting

The director of Facilities Management's architecture and design division, Eleonora Philopoulos, oversees architectural and interior design work for non-capital building projects at the University. In that role, she must consider all the angles when clients want a space reconfigured or renovated or a recently constructed building furnished.

"I love my job. Working in a facilities management design department has always been my dream. You work with clients and get to know them and understand their needs. You start with a vision and have it in your mind three dimensionally—how is this space going to look and function," she says. "It's very rewarding to see if all come together. It's something that enhances the students' experience, and everyone can see, use and enjoy it." Philopoulos supervises a professional staff of interior designers, a project architect and project manager, and the WMU Sign Shop, as well as interior design students who annually conduct a building interior condition analysis audit. She also provides oversight for projects involving outside contractors.

"Design can be subjective, but there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. We have to be able to work with the solutions that we make. Projects have to be cohesive, functional and sustainable, and meet codes for things like life safety. They have to be aesthetically pleasing while promoting University branding and culture," Philopoulos notes. "We're always juggling those things. I am very lucky to work for such a great institution and with talented professionals who are passionate about what we do."

A Kalamazoo native and first generation Greek, Philopoulos has family members in Kalamazoo and Greece. She earned a bachelor's degree in interior design from WMU, and her father and brother are alumni of the University. After graduating, Philopoulos spent several years working in Europe as an interior designer and retail development manager for large companies like Nike and Harley Davidson. She returned home in 2006, joined WMU's staff and was promoted to her current post in 2015.

Philopoulos loves to travel and to work with her hands doing crafts and home renovations. She is fluent in Greek, visits Greece frequently and has taught part time for eight years in WMU's interior design program. This year, as director for the Greece study abroad course, she piloted the interior design program's first study aboard course, taking students to Greece to study classic Greek design. "I really enjoy being with the students and seeing things through their perspective," says Philopoulos, who has won several national design awards. "It truly is inspiring."

Twenty employee retirements, one faculty resignation and other personnel changes were approved during the WMU Board of Trustees meeting June 3.

All of the faculty members who are retiring are doing so with emeritus status. Their names, positions, years of continuous service and effective dates of retirement are: Hans Dyckhoorn, accountancy, effective Aug. 14, 2016; Lauren Freedman, special education and literacy studies, effective May 1, 2016; Mark Kerstetter, computer science, effective Dec. 31; Christopher Korth, finance and commercial law, effective July 1; and a sabbatical leave for faculty of Gene Freudenburg, mathematics, effective May 1.

The faculty member resigning is Christopher Pearl, biological sciences, effective Aug. 16. In other personnel moves, trustees OK'd Jonathan Bush stepping down as chair of the Board of Trustees, effective July 31; Gaylene Luhman, information technology, 33 years, effective May 31; Donald VanderRoest, maintenance services, 25 years, effective April 30; and Margaret J. Watson, information technology, 33 years, effective May 15.

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