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April 2017 issue



School of Social Work

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



WMU's **Fostering Success Michigan** initiative has been recognized for its leadership in the college access and success field. Dr. Yvonne Unrau, School of Social Work professor and director of the Center for Fostering Success, and

Brandon Youngblood, BSW student and Student Ambassador, accepted the award at the Michigan College Access Network Awards dinner in Lansing.

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Dr. Ineke Way will be retiring at the end of the spring semester, after teaching in the School of Social Work since 1991. The School of Social Work will be collecting non-perishable food items to be donated to Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes in her honor. Consider showing your appreciation for her service and accomplishments by bringing a donation to the SSW office during the week of May 8.

Considering a study abroad opportunity? There are openings in the **Social Justice and Sustainability in India** program, scheduled for fall 2017 - with travel to Bengaluru and Kochi, India from December 8-22. Click on the photo for a full program description.



CONGRATULATIONS

- **Dr. Susan Weinger** has retired from the School of Social Work after serving as a faculty member since 1993
- BSW student **Amal Mohamed** has received the Presidential Scholar Award
- NASW Michigan has recognized **BSW student John Pelletier** and **MSW student Kelsy Vining** as WMU's NASW Students of the Year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 27 - Hooding & Pinning Ceremony - Kalamazoo
 - May 8 - Summer I session begins
- June 23 - Grand Rapids MSW Graduation Celebration
 - June 25 - Hooding Ceremony - Southwest



WMU Fostering Success program saluted as a 'beacon' for college access

contact: Mark Schwerin
March 20, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University's Fostering Success Michigan initiative has been cited as a "beacon" for supporting increased college access.

The Michigan College Access Network has awarded Fostering Success Michigan with the 2017 Beacon Award, recognizing it for leadership in the college access and success field. The award recognizes the WMU-based, statewide initiative for supporting college access by strengthening success through partnerships, aligning organizational leaders in the college access and success field, and supporting a unified vision for progress toward the Lumina Foundation's Goal 2025, which calls for increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees or credentials to 60 percent by 2025.



Left to right: Christina Smith, graduate assistant; Brandon Youngblood, Seita Scholar; Karie Ward, sustainability coordinator; Yvonne Unrau, director; and Raschard France, Seita Scholar graduate.

Fostering Success Michigan

Fostering Success Michigan, operated by Western Michigan University's Center for Fostering Success, is focused on increasing postsecondary access and success for youth with experience in foster care. Founded in 2012 through generous support from The Kresge Foundation, WMU, the Havimill Foundation and others, the initiative was established to help increase college-going rates and successful transitions among Michigan's students from foster care by building a network of support on college campuses and within local communities.

Dr. Yvonne Unrau, director for the Center for Fostering Success, praised the efforts of team members and in particular **Maddy Day**, director of outreach and training.

"The Fostering Success Michigan team is making it possible for young people in foster care to actualize their dreams of college through collaborative work with partners across multiple sectors in communities across the state of Michigan," Unrau says. "Maddy Day and the Fostering Success Michigan team are true pioneers in this work and are changing the landscape of possibility for Michigan's most vulnerable youth."

Beacon Award

The Beacon Award is presented to organizations that have continually endeavored to unite programs, activities and operations in support of postsecondary attainment. Fostering Success Michigan was selected based on several factors, including strong partnerships with the network and a commitment to local college access networks. Fostering Success Michigan also was recognized for embracing collective impact, a strategy in which organizations from different sectors agree to solve a specific problem using a common agenda, aligning their efforts and using common measures of success.

The Michigan College Access Network is focused on increasing the number of Michigan students enrolling in, persisting through and completing postsecondary educational credentials. Organization officials say 38.4 percent of the state's residents have such credentials., and the network aims to increase the proportion to 60 percent by the year 2025 in keeping with Lumina Foundation's Goal 2025.

According to Lumina Foundation, the U.S. economy has added 11.5 million net new jobs for workers with postsecondary education since 2011, but only 80,000 for those with a high school diploma or less. As a result, recovery from the Great Recession has not been possible for the millions of Americans who lack postsecondary education and have limited options for employment and economic security.

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