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College of Health and Human Services

CONNECTIONS

E-News

December 2014, issue #4

In this issue

College experiences busy, productive Homecoming weekend



Alumni return to present at a public forum and join Outstanding Alumni Academy

On Friday, Oct. 24, nine College of Health and Human Services graduates returned to join the college's Outstanding Alumni Academy and to share their experience and expertise. At 1 p.m. in room 1010, academy inductees presented and served as respondents at a public forum and conversational exchange on the importance of interprofessionism in creating effective public policy and improved health and human services provision—and outcomes—in all areas of society.

2014 Outstanding Alumni Academy inductees

- [John E. Crews '77](#)
- [Imelda Reyes '99](#)
- [Jane Vernon '06](#)
- [Amy L. Freeland '09](#)
- [Israil Ali '03](#)
- [Cynthia M. Bournazos '73](#)
- [Julie E. Shroyer '87](#)
- [Bradley A. Finegood '05](#)
- [Gyl A. Kasewurm '83](#)



Students, faculty and staff put on a health fair at Saturday Homecoming tailgate

On Saturday from 11 a.m. until game kick-off at 2 p.m., the WMU Alumni Homecoming Tailgate was a bustling festival full of food, live entertainment and fun family activities. Among those activities was the College of Health and Human Services Health Fair tent that was crowded with celebrants experiencing and learning about stress, relaxation, hearing health, blood sugar levels and computer use injury avoidance through exercise. Faculty and staff members joined over 30 college student volunteers in this effort, and all reported having a rewarding and enjoyable time.

Dean presents annual awards and state of the college address

Dean Earlie Washington's state of the college address on Friday Dec. 5, 2014 confirmed that the WMU College of Health and Human Services continues to be not only well and healthy, but thriving. She noted that even in the face of

challenges over the past several years, our response was not to reduce or shrink but to sustain and grow. She then covered data that showed a steady increase in student enrollment, credit hour production, academic programming and access to it, and research productivity over the past five years.

Along with quality, highly ranked academic programs, Dean Washington noted that excellent faculty and staff are essential to the college's health and success. At the 2014 Faculty and Staff Awards Celebration that followed her address, the faculty and staff members pictured below—with stories—were feted and presented with awards. Learn more about the awards and their criteria at www.wmich.edu/hhs/about/awards.



Kathy Gerow,
Outstanding
Customer Service
Award



Tracy Young,
Professional Instructor
Teaching Excellence
Award



Richard Long,
Research Excellence
Award



Diane Dirette,
Scholarship
Excellence Award



Mary Stahl, Faculty
Teaching Excellence
Award

Blindness and low vision awarded \$3.7 million

WMU awarded \$3.7 million for programs in blindness and low vision

Four recent grants totaling \$3.7 million have been awarded to WMU's Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies, and are aimed at filling a shortage of specialists trained to assist people with vision problems.

Interdisciplinary Doctoral Research Conference presents research and awards

Interdisciplinary health sciences conference presents research and awards

The 2014 biennial Interdisciplinary Doctoral Research Conference was held on Friday, July 25 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Health and Human Services Building. The conference, which originated in 2004, provides a venue for interdisciplinary health sciences doctoral students who have completed the required academic course sequence to make formal presentations on their research practicum studies. The student whose presentation is judged the strongest by a panel of judges receives the Pisaneschi Prize for the Best Scientific Presentation. Current students and alumni are also invited to present posters on any aspect of their research, and they are eligible to receive the R.C. Wardley Award for the Best Scientific Poster.



OT Professor Debra Lindstrom to receive national honor



OT professor to receive national honor

Congratulations to Department of Occupational Therapy Professor Debra Lindstrom, Ph.D., who has been chosen to receive an American Occupational Therapy Association's Roster of

Fellows Award at that organization's 2015 Annual Conference and Expo in Nashville, Tenn. on Saturday, April 18.

Departments sponsor annual scholarly events

Van Riper Lecture Series covers bilingualism and second language acquisition

This past Oct. 9 and 10, the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology presented the 32nd Van Riper Lecture Series on the topic of bilingualism and second language acquisition. Lecture speakers were University of Texas at Austin Professor Elizabeth Peña and University of Redlands Associate Professor Barbara Conboy.

Barbara Rider Colloquium discusses OT practice implications of the Affordable Care Act

For this year's Barbara Rider Colloquium on Friday, Oct. 3, the Department of Occupational Therapy invited American Occupational Therapy Association Chief Public Affairs Officer Christina A. Metzler to speak as keynote on the topic of the Affordable Health Care Act and Implications for OT Practice. Metzler has been with the association for 20 years and has worked for national associations in **health care, disability policy and long term service** issues for over 25 years.

BRAIN lab in the news

BRAIN Lab: Putting scholarship and hearts in the right place

Together experts in occupational therapy, psychology, social work, exercise physiology, neuroscience, biological sciences, and medicine neurology and music therapy are learning how music can help those with neurological disorders

2014 Outstanding Alumni



John E. Crews '77

Department of Blindness and Low Vision studies

Dr. John Crews has almost 40 years of experience in vision rehabilitation, disability and vision research. While managing a rehabilitation program for older adults with visual impairments, he completed a Doctor of Public Administration degree at WMU in 1990. He went on to serve in a variety of research, teaching, clinical and administration positions before joining the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Ga. in 1998. Since 2009, he has served as a health scientist with the center's Vision Health

Initiative in the Division of Diabetes Translation.

Crews' research specialties include vision impairment and aging, caregiving and disability. He has over 100 publications, including papers in the American Journal of Public Health, Annual Review of Public Health, American Journal of Ophthalmology, and Ophthalmic Epidemiology. His first book, "Vision Loss in an Aging Society," was published in 2000 and translated and published in Japan in 2003. His second book, "The Multiple Dimensions of Caregiving and Disability," was released in 2012, the same year he co-edited a supplement to the American Journal of Ophthalmology on vision surveillance.

Crews currently serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness and the board of the College of Health Sciences at Salus University. He is also chair-elect of the Vision Care Section of the American Public Health Association, and his honours included receiving the WMU College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award in 2007.



Imelda Reyes '99

Bronson School of Nursing

The year Dr. Imelda Reyes earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, she was honored as WMU's Student Employee of the Year. She went on to earn a master's degree in public health in 2001 and then entered the U.S. Navy as an officer, serving as a health care administrator for five years—including her final command as the chief financial officer for Naval Hospital Cherry Point in North Carolina—and earning commendation medals in 2004 and 2006.

In 2007, Reyes continued her education, earning credentials as both a family and pediatric nurse practitioner and completing a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree by 2012. Currently, she serves as assistant clinical professor and coordinator of the highly ranked pediatric nurse practitioner program at Emory University. She also provides pediatric primary health care at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, strengthening critical clinical partnerships, and is a speaker for Strong4Life, a statewide training campaign to prevent childhood obesity.

Through teaching, leadership and scholarship, Reyes is influencing child and adolescent health in Georgia and beyond. She is active on the national level with the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and is president-elect for the Georgia chapter. Her current memberships also include the Association of Faculties of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.



Jane Vernon '06

Integrative Holistic Health and Wellness Program

Jane Vernon is a lifelong learner, educator, mentor, facilitator, and leader who has spent almost 40 years in the area of human potential in secular, religious and spiritual settings. Her creative and innovative endeavors have set her apart in these areas.

Prior to moving to Kalamazoo and earning her graduate certificate in holistic health, Vernon attended other universities, receiving a bachelor's degree in education, a master's in classroom teaching, and certification in gifted education.

For 25 years Vernon worked with elementary age children as a classroom teacher, gifted education consultant, curriculum coordinator and director of children and family ministries. Over the last 14 years she has worked primarily with adults as a group spiritual formation director. She is also a Veriditas Certified Labyrinth Facilitator and continues to create opportunities for institutions, communities, and individuals of all ages to experience the labyrinth as a tool for healing and wholeness.



Amy L. Freeland '09

Interdisciplinary Health Sciences, Ph.D.

Dr. Amy Freeland is a lieutenant commander with the United States Public Health Service and an epidemiologist and senior research scientist officer with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vessel Sanitation Program. In that role, she serves as the program's sole epidemiologist and subject matter expert on cruise ship enteric disease outbreaks. Her duties include conducting epidemio-logic investigations and crafting public health

recommendations for out- break management and control to reduce disease transmission.

Prior to earning her doctoral degree, Freeland earned two master's degrees through the WMU Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies, and she has extensive experience as a therapist, instructor, administrator, and policy and research analyst in that field. She has been with the CDC since 2009 and serves on the Vulnerable Populations Sub-Committee there, advising as to the needs of people with visual impairments during emergencies.

Among her honors, Freeland has received an Outstanding Unit Commendation, for outstanding achievement in updating the Vessel Sanitation Program and operations manual and an Achievement Medal for excellence in service and work completed as an epidemic intelligence service officer. She maintains several professional memberships and avidly pursues ongoing education opportunities to enhance her service and effectiveness.



Israil Ali '03

Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Health Services

After earning his bachelor's degree, Israil Ali went on to earn a master's degree in public affairs and administration from Western in 2006. A year later, he was selected for the Emerging Leaders Program—a competitive, two-year fellowship which provided opportunities to develop analytical and critical executive leadership skills—with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ali worked within the Office of the Secretary as a budget analyst and human resource specialist, primarily focused on

workforce development.

Since then, Ali has continued leading change, building coalitions and stimulating a results-driven environment with the department. He has served as a program specialist, assisting with the leveraging of social media platforms and HIV/AIDS policy; conducted an efficiency analysis on a new senior management position in the department's Food and Drug Administration; and supervised projects providing incentives to highly qualified physicians and nurses to continue providing health care to under-served populations, improving the shortage ratios in these professions.

Since 2012, Ali has been the supervisory public health analyst/ branch chief with the Health Resources and Services Administration/ Bureau of Health Workforce with HHS. This year he was part of a team that was honored as a winner of the department's "HHS Ignites" program, the HHS secretary's internal innovation incubator.



Cynthia M. Bournazos '73

Department of Occupational Therapy

Dr. Cynthia Bournazos is a senior-level health care provider consultant with extensive experience in analytics, organizational redesign and process optimization. She is passionate about improving the information available to providers to effect change that drives improved quality, greater efficiency and improved outcomes.

After earning her bachelor's degree, Bournazos went on to earn a Master of Science degree in occupational therapy from Sargent College at Boston University and a doctoral degree from New York University's Department of Applied Psychology, Research Design and Methodology Program. Her research focused on collaborative practice in the acute hospital setting. Remaining in New York, her professional experiences include serving as a Principal within the Clinical Transformation service lines

of several leading strategic consulting firms. Among her many accomplishments, Bournazos also has experience developing process assessment and Meaningful Use readiness assessment and gap analysis tools and has successfully led multi-disciplinary teams serving clients in process optimization and organization change management engagements.

In 2014, Bournazos joined the Advisory Board Company in Washington, D.C. She serves as Crimson Executive Partner there, and is responsible as a strategic thought partner and content matter expert to non-profit and for-profit health systems on issues related to accountable care, physician alignment and care transformation. She also maintains active membership with several professional organizations, including the American Medical Informatics Association, the Healthcare Information Management Systems Society and the American Psychological Association.



Julie E. Shroyer '87

School of Social Work

While earning her master's degree in social work in 1989, Julie Shroyer was selected as the first University of Michigan Wilbur Cohen Human Service Intern and spent a semester working for what is now called the American Public Human Services Association. That was the start of her successful, influential career working on national policy in the U.S. Capitol, first as a professional staff member with the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families.

Shroyer then spent six years as deputy director of congressional affairs at the American Psychiatric Association and was instrumental in winning the passage of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 among other achievements. She then spent 12 years as senior vice president and chief operating officer of Wheat Government Relations and headed up the health care practice of the firm.

Shroyer is currently senior policy advisor and shareholder with Polsinelli in Washington, D.C. that ranks as the second largest health care law firm in the country. With 25 years of experience on health care issues, she is in daily contact with leading health care experts, regulatory agencies, national organizations and advocacy coalitions. She is also proud to include the National Association of Social Workers among her roster of clients. She is known for her ability to work across party lines to accomplish numerous legislative victories, policy initiatives and appropriation successes.



Bradley A. Finegood '05

Speciality Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Bradley Finegood already had extensive experience in the field of addiction and substance abuse when he earned a Master of Arts in counselor education psychology and a specialty program in alcohol and drug abuse graduate certificate concurrently from WMU in 2005. Since then, he has served continuously as a consultant and grant reviewer for the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration/Bureau of Justice Assistance in Washington D.C. and as adjunct faculty with specialty program in alcohol and drug abuse, while holding administrative positions.

In May 2014, Finegood took on his current position as assistant division director and substance abuse prevention and treatment coordinator with Washington's King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division. Prior to that, he served as therapeutic specialty courts coordinator with Clark County Superior Court in Vancouver, Wash. for over six years.

Finegood contributed to the 2011 edition of the Encyclopedia of Drug Policy and has presented and consulted widely on substance abuse and drug court issues. He was named Washington State Drug Court Practitioner of the Year in 2012 and currently serves on the board of directors of Second Step Housing and the Washington State Association of Drug Court Professionals. In June 2014, he was named chair of the Chemical Dependency Integration work group of Washington's Behavioral Health Legislative Task Force, charged with examining reform of the adult behavioral health system toward the integration of mental health and chemical dependency.



Gyl A. Kasewurm '83

Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology

Dr. Gyl Kasewurm started Professional Hearing Services in Saint Joseph, Mich. in 1983 immediately following graduation from WMU with a master's degree. She then went on to earn her Doctor of Audiology degree from Central Michigan University. The practice has become a bench- mark in the industry for its innovative approach to the patient experience and commitment to customer service and was featured on a PBS documentary sponsored by the Better Hearing Institute.

Kasewurm is a past president of the Michigan Academy of Audiology and served on the Executive Board of the American Academy of Audiology; that organization honored her innovations and contributions to the profession by presenting her with a Distinguished Achievement Award in 2007. Last year, she was awarded The Merlin Hanson Exemplary Business Leader award by the Southwest Michigan Cornerstone Alliance and Chamber of Commerce.

Kasewurm is a well-known author and sought after speaker in the U.S. and abroad. She advises and presents on providing quality services and building a solid business practice, with many presentations in Europe and across the globe to her credit.