Sustainability

- Fostering success for vulnerable youth
- New medical school dean
- Broncos go Hollywood
Dear Friends:

In mid 2011, we shared information about campus research with you in a magazine format. Now, I’m pleased to bring you the first issue of our reinvigorated WMU Magazine. Our mission is simple: We want to keep you informed about the impact of Western Michigan University in a broad array of areas.

We want you to know about important developments at the University. We also hope to give you a taste of everyday life on campus, let you know what our alumni are accomplishing and invite you to share the excitement of being part of the Western Michigan University family.

Our cover story outlines the University’s role as a campus that is leading nationally in the areas of sustainability and conservation. We’re proud of our more than 30-year history of energy conservation as well as the fact that public- and private-sector facilities around the country have turned to us for advice and to emulate what we have established as best practices. There’s not a campus anywhere that can rival what we’re accomplishing, and we want you to share our pride—and spread the news.

In this issue you’ll also find a profile of the founding dean of the new WMU School of Medicine. You’ll be able to read about changes to our alumni and development initiatives, learn about changes in the Bronco hockey program and get a look at how WMU and Kalamazoo are portrayed in two movies attracted to our campus through the state film incentive.

Enjoy your reading and plan to visit sometime soon.

Best regards,

John M. Dunn
President
FED EX Express, black pilots group delivers Boeing 727 to aviation college

FedEx Express, a subsidiary of FedEx Corp. and the world's largest express transportation company, joined forces with the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals last fall to present a Boeing 727-200 freighter to Western Michigan University’s College of Aviation to support outreach efforts and training for aviation students.

“As we retire this 727 from our fleet, we are proud to give back to the aviation community,” said David Sutton, managing director of aircraft acquisition and sales for FedEx during the presentation ceremony.

New student apartment housing gets rave reviews

A new apartment complex on the west side of the campus is the first undergraduate student housing built on WMU’s campus in nearly half a century and it opened last fall to rave reviews from student residents.

Western View is the name of the development, and it is located on the west side of campus between Knollwood Avenue and Kohrman Hall. The one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom units are designed to house upperclassmen. They provide new on-campus housing to more than 300 students, and they opened with a 100 percent occupancy rate and a waiting list of nearly 200 students.

The new complex features three-story buildings with two-color brick facades and a traditional look similar to WMU’s East Campus. Parking for resident students is included as part of the complex.

by a crew of WMU-affiliated FedEx personnel.

University lauded for being veteran friendly school

For the second consecutive year, a national publication that serves all branches of the armed forces has identified Western Michigan University as Michigan’s top-ranked school for outreach and service to veterans.

Military Times’ EDGE magazine announced its annual list of the nation’s colleges and universities it calls “Best for Vets” in its November issue. WMU was ranked 33rd on the list of 59 schools nationally that earned the coveted designation. The only other Michigan school on the list is the University of Michigan-Flint, which came in at No. 43.

This is the second such ranking by the monthly publication, which is a supplement to the widely distributed Military Times publications — Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times. The magazine invited more than 4,000 of the nation’s college and universities to report on their programs, policies and resources for veterans.

Debel, Miller appointed by governor to Board of Trustees

Early last year, Gov. Rick Snyder appointed Dana Debel of Ann Arbor to the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees and reappointed Ken Miller of Kalamazoo.

Director of state and local government affairs for Delta Air Lines, Debel previously served as a policy director for former Gov. Jennifer Granholm from 2003 to 2007, primarily in the areas of environmental and energy policy. She earned both a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies and a Master of Business Administration from Michigan State University.

A trustee since 2002, Miller chaired the search that led to the 2007 appointment of President John M. Dunn and served as chair of the Board of Trustees in 2008 and 2009. He is a Kalamazoo business leader; principal partner in Havirco, an investment management firm; and owner of the Millennium Restaurant Group. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business and a Master of Business Administration from Michigan State University.

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State legislation makes Michigan Geological Survey a part of WMU

A state survey with data that can enhance economic development and job creation in Michigan has been transferred to Western Michigan University, making Michigan one of just a few states in the nation to tap a research university to direct the role of mapping, evaluating and researching critical geological resources.

State legislation sponsored by Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker and signed by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder transferred the Michigan Geological Survey from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to WMU. It has become part of the University’s acclaimed Department of Geosciences, which already is home to the Michigan Geological Repository for Research and Education.

Rapidly growing Lee Honors College expands to meet needs of growing student body

Even before its current $1.7 million renovation that will double its classrooms and add numerous major facility enhancements, WMU’s Lee Honors College was already among the country’s most highly regarded collegiate honors programs.

The upgrades, to be complete by fall 2012, will provide an additional 4,000 square feet to the 8,400-square-foot honors college home, as well as add state-of-the-art instructional technology throughout the facility, a seasonal outdoor classroom with amphitheatre-style seating, a renovated student lounge and a library.

The honors college was constructed in 1990 with $1.3 million in private funding and is named in honor of Carl Haenicke, a Kalamazoo native who graduated from the University of Texas, Stanford University and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Lee and his wife Winifred (Winnie) Lee who gave $500,000 toward the initial construction and an additional $1.125 million for the current renovation and addition. Carl Lee is former president, general manager and owner of Kalamazoo’s Fetzer Broadcasting Services Inc.

At a groundbreaking ceremony for the project in 2011, Carl Lee recounted how then-President Diether H. Haenicke approached the Lees in the late 1980s, indicating that he had a vision to build a permanent home for the honors college.

“We had a vision, too,” Lee said. “It was that this honors college would be the best in the nation. I think we’re at that point today.”

For incoming freshmen, admission to the Lee Honors College is by invitation only. Freshmen must have an ACT composite score of 26 and a high school GPA of 3.6 to receive an invitation.

Freshmen enrollment has skyrocketed in recent years, honors college enrollment has increased 15 percent, indicating that he had a vision to build a permanent home for the honors college.

WMU one of just 17 NCAA ‘clean’ FBS schools

A recent article published by The Wall Street Journal points to Western Michigan University as one of the entities that provide a silver lining in the often dark cloud of big-time college sports violations.

The article, “The NCAA’s Last Innocents,” notes that there are only 17 major athletic programs with football teams playing in the Football Bowl Subdivision that have never been found guilty of any major violation in any sport. WMU is listed among those “clean” programs. The NCAA first began tracking violations in 1953.

WMU is one of five Mid-American Conference schools on the “cleanest” list (Bowling Green, Central Michigan, Kent State and Ohio are the others). The MAC has its own infractions committee that reviews every violation, no matter how minor, by its member institutions. The committee meets in person twice a year, with a representative of each MAC school presenting the institution’s infractions for the previous half year.

‘Epic Broncos’ stampede into Grand Rapids art event

WMU made its presence known in last fall’s Grand Rapids ArtPrize event by deciding to go big. An 8,500-square-foot mural wrapping two sides of Western Michigan University’s downtown Grand Rapids facility was unveiled to the cheers of hundreds of WMU alumni, friends and fans during a gala ArtPrize party in September.

“The Epic Broncos,” a four-story-by-160-foot piece of art by North Carolina-based artist Revere La Noue was part of a package of multiple Bronco installations, including “The Bronco Epic,” La Noue’s official ArtPrize entry.

La Noue is widely known for creating fine art based on the stories behind the mascots of some of the nation’s top universities, including Duke University, University of Notre Dame, University of Texas, Stanford University and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. WMU is the first Michigan university to work with him, and the “Epic Broncos” art is now featured on his gallery’s website, mascotgallery.com.

The artist spent several days in Kalamazoo learning about the University and its history and traditions. He met with more than 80 members of the WMU community, including faculty, staff, alumni, students and friends. He then combined that input with his own research on endangered wild horses in North Carolina.

“When it came time to put brush to canvas, I was loaded with ideas about what it is to be a Bronco,” La Noue told the unveiling crowd, noting WMU’s strengths and the unique position it occupies in a number of areas. “You have a lot to be proud about.”

The La Noue artwork is serving as the basis for a fundraising campaign aimed at raising money for student scholarships. Visit mywmu.com and click on “store” to learn more or make a purchase.

New center puts academic focus on human element behind complex issues

The Center for Humanities celebrated its grand opening last fall when it invited the campus and surrounding communities to Knauss Hall, where visitors saw the results of an initiative that was conceived five years ago and reborn only recently.

That effort has turned a dingy, dark storage room into a sparkling new center with a full slate of activities that will shed light on today’s complex issues through lectures, readings and other events.

The grand opening came just one week after the WMU Board of Trustees officially approved the center. The opening event was billed as “Barbecue and Books,” with WMU humanities scholars and writers donating signed copies of their books and articles for the center’s collection. The event was in keeping with the center’s mission of fostering discussion and stimulating thought.

“We want the center to be an incubator for ideas and projects,” says its founding director, Dr. Katherine Jaslin, longtime WMU professor of English. “It’s like an industrial park for the mind. We want this space to generate and nurture ideas across colleges and across disciplines and, at the intersection of those, to stimulate new thinking.”
**Gift is largest ever to an occupational therapy program**

The gift provides:

- $1.5 million for the Frederic W. Sammons Endowed Chair in Occupational Therapy,
- $250,000 for innovative projects in the Department of Occupational Therapy such as development of the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy, and
- $250,000 for the Barbara A. Rider Endowed Distinguished Professorship in Occupational Therapy.

“I’ve grown to feel like I’m part of the department, and I think at this time, with so many seniors, so many children with autism, so many problems, it’s important that I direct my resources in this way,” Sammons says. “I’m sure it will have a big impact in the future and over the years.”

Sammons is the founder of Sammons Preston Inc., the largest, worldwide distributor of rehabilitation equipment and supplies. Rider is professor emerita and past chair of WMU’s Department of Occupational Therapy.

**Bronco hockey has new coach, 2013 conference change and a CCHA championship**

WMU’s hockey program moved into the 2011-12 season with two major changes—a new coach and the decision to head for a new conference a year from now.

The season ended with a Central Collegiate Hockey Association championship and a NCAA tournament berth.

In August, the University announced the hiring of NHL coaching veteran Andy Murray as the new head coach. Murray signed a five-year contract becoming the sixth head coach in the program’s 39-year history.

Just weeks later, on Sept. 23, WMU announced it accepted an invitation to join the National Collegiate Hockey Conference—The National—which begins play in the fall of 2013. The Broncos join a competitive group of 15 programs, including Colorado College, University of Denver, Miami University, University of Minnesota Duluth, University of Nebraska Omaha, University of North Dakota and St. Cloud State University.

Murray came to WMU with an extensive resume earned at the highest level of professional hockey. He is one of only 39 coaches in NHL history to reach 300 wins with a career record of 327-278-58-71. He has 10 years of NHL head coaching experience, spending six seasons, 1999-2006, at the helm of the Los Angeles Kings and four, 2006-10, with the St. Louis Blues. Murray replaced Jeff Blashill, who was recruited to serve as assistant coach for the NHL’s RedWings.

The National is only the second conference in which WMU hockey has been a member during its 39-year history.

**Football All-American Jordan White makes records fall in Dec. bowl game appearance**

The football Broncos went to the Little Caesar’s Pizza Bowl, their first bowl game in five years, with a not-so-secret weapon—senior wide receiver Jordan White, who was one of 25 student-athletes to be named to the American Football Coaches Association All-America Team this year.

In the Dec. 21 bowl game in Detroit, the Broncos fell to the Purdue Boilermakers 37-32, but during the third quarter, White set two Mid-American Conference records and one WMU record. White became the MAC’s all-time leader in receiving yards for a career, set the MAC record for receiving yards in a season, and tied the MAC record for career receptions. White also passed Jamarko Simmons for most receiving yards by a Bronco in a bowl game. His yardage total broke Cory Alyston’s single-game record (263) set against Eastern Michigan in 1997.

**Restored grandeur, adapted reuse planned for WMU’s East Campus birthplace**

If plans outlined recently come to fruition, Western Michigan University’s historic East Hall will regain its earlier grandeur and the University’s Prospect Hill birthplace will become home to a boutique hotel, commercial office space and a variety of residential living options.

“Without tax credits, it becomes very difficult to make financial sense of a development like this,” Doran said. “It would mean hotel rooms and apartment rentals would need to be at about twice the rate for similar properties in the area.”

Because cars were not part of the equation when East Campus was built, Doran explained that preliminary plans call for a 450-stall parking structure to be built into the east side of Prospect Hill.

Doran also said plans call for the existing columns on the original building to be retained and the other two sets of columns, removed over the years, would be restored.

“Putting those columns back up and restoring East Hall to its original design has been part of every set of plans during the process,” Doran said. “This will be something short of a top-down historical renovation, but we can confidently say the public and the University will be well pleased by the final product.”
Growing ever greener

Some three decades of conservation efforts, combined with a new focus on building a healthy learning environment, have positioned WMU as a green leader.

Imagine that you increased the size of your 2,000-square-foot home to more than 2,300 square feet and cut your utility bill by 19 percent. That, in essence, is what Western Michigan University has done over the past 20 years through a dedicated and award-winning effort to not just conserve energy, but to make the University more efficient and sustainable in scores of other ways.

The effort has led to energy savings and cost avoidance that now totals $120 million and has turned the campus into a national model, triggering visits from other universities and private-sector businesses to find out just how WMU does it. Visitors from Purdue University, University of Notre Dame and the University of Michigan have joined those from Wells Fargo, Pfizer and 2008 Olympics planner Beijing Acorp Engineering to see:

• WMU’s computer-run command center, from which energy usage is tracked on a room-by-room basis in many of 151 buildings campuswide,
• a highly regarded stormwater management system that is attracting attention and accolades as a national model, and
• higher education’s first major facility to achieve LEED Gold certification for existing buildings. (See related story on page 10.)

This spring, WMU’s green credentials dramatically expanded with the addition of a massive solar array that is powering the largest electric vehicle charging capability of any campus in the nation. (See related story on page 11.)

1980 financing model set standard for nation

While sustainability and energy conservation initiatives are common today on campuses nationwide, WMU began its concerted efforts early—in 1980—launching a quasi-green revolving fund to capture energy savings from each project completed and funneling the savings back into additional energy initiatives. The effort started small but has grown and added to the overall energy savings tally.

The University, for instance, invested $5.85 million in individual energy efficiency projects between 1996 and 2011, realizing cost avoidance and savings of nearly $17 million. The average time to recoup the original cost of a campus energy project was 2.1 years, and the annual rate of return on investment was 47 percent.

More than 20 years after WMU, Harvard University created a formal green revolving fund that set aside a fixed amount of money to support energy conservation and other sustainability initiatives. The effort started small but has grown and added to the overall energy savings tally.

Harvard-style GRFs are now common on campuses that are green leaders. Last year, the Sustainable Endowment Institute, a national arbiter of campus sustainability initiatives, praised WMU’s method of financing green projects and highlighted the University’s efforts and leadership.

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Measuring the outcomes

During the same period that WMU added new buildings and cut our energy costs, the University focused on the metrics of energy consumption. It cut regulated emissions, such as sulfur dioxide, at the Beam Power Plant by 96 percent and cut water consumption in half for the entire campus.

“Years ago we talked about energy conservation and being green,” says Peter Strazdas, associate vice president for Facilities Management. “Now we talk about sustainability, which includes more than just energy conservation. I think about sustainability in the broadest context of how we act and do things on our campus. Everything we do should result in a campus that is in a better condition than when we found it. It’s not just about more trees and grass and less asphalt. That’s part of it. But it’s also about efficiencies in spending and spending resources on the right things.”

Rebuilding the campus energy infrastructure

In the early 1990s, WMU switched its source of fuel for the central power plant from coal to natural gas, a move that Strazdas says dramatically reduced the University’s contribution of regulated emissions to the atmosphere, and added a co-generation system for a combined heat and power plant.

WMU invested in heat recovery systems, sensors that turn down the heat and lights in unoccupied rooms, thousands of efficient light bulbs, low-flow shower heads, chemical-free water treatment, auto-flush toilets and waterless urinals, electric vehicles, preventive maintenance, LED lighting and even parking spaces reserved specifically for alternative-fuel vehicles.

All those efforts altered a course of increased consumption that would have forced an expansion of the power plant. Over the past 17 years, WMU avoided spending $120 million—money that would have been spent, Strazdas says, “if we had stuck our heads in the sand and done nothing.” Every reduction in energy use has a major impact on costs and WMU’s annual $21 million utility bill.

‘Healthy’ WMU building sets campus, state and national standard for sustainability

WMU’s College of Health and Human Services Building has become one of the nation’s benchmarks for creating sustainable environments in existing campus buildings. It is also setting the standard for five additional campus facilities about to achieve similar recognition.

The high-tech, 200,000-square-foot HHS Building completed in summer 2005 has since become the first structure in southwest Michigan and one of only a handful in the state to meet national energy and environmental standards for existing buildings.

It earned gold-level status in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—LEED—rating system for existing buildings that may become a new benchmark for five additional building projects on campus since 1996 that have a longer payback—things like more efficient electrical and mechanical devices to save money in the long run.

All fourteen new building projects on campus since 1996 have used LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—principals, adding about 1 million square feet of energy-efficient building space. Currently, five existing buildings are going through the process to meet LEED’s arduous existing-building requirements for certification.

WMU’s Facilities Management staff is taking these best practices used on the certified buildings and leveraging them across all campus buildings. This has caught the eye of the U.S. Green Building Council, and it has asked WMU to pilot a campus portfolio project for existing buildings that may become a new tool for the USGBC to use with other large campus owners across the United States.

Making it personal

While energy conservation on the operations level has been a generation in the making, it’s the past decade that has seen an explosion in the number of initiatives aimed at WMU’s core mission—preparing the next generation of national leaders. In rapid succession, campus green advocates:

• adopted both the Talloires Declaration and the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment,
• established a comprehensive website—wmich.edu/sustainability—to detail sustainability efforts on campus,
• became the only campus in Michigan with students committed enough to sustainability efforts to vote to fund green initiatives with a dedicated student fee,
• secured funding to establish an Office of Sustainability with a full-time executive director and a coordinator of sustainability projects,
• became a member the Southwest Michigan Regional Sustainability Covenant,
• created an internship program that has seen more than 30 student interns focusing on sustainability initiatives,
• established a Student Sustainability Grants Program that disperses as much as $45,000 per semester to fund student-led initiatives,
• earned WMU a designation as one of 80 national Campus Sustainability Leaders by the Sustainable Endowments Institute,
• constructed a campuswide inventory of sustainability initiatives, resources and faculty interests, and
• set up a green learning community involving committed faculty members from disciplines across the campus.

WMU electric vehicle infrastructure most extensive of any campus in United States

A $700,000 grant from the Clean Energy Coalition is making Western Michigan University’s electric vehicle capabilities the new standard for campuses nationwide.

In February, 15 new electric vehicle charging stations opened to the public. Added to four stations activated last year and a fifth recently installed near Wellborn Hall, the new stations will allow some 20 EVs to be charged on campus simultaneously—the most for any college or university campus in the United States.

The 19 new charging stations are located near the Miller Auditorium parking ramp and adjacent to a massive new 90 kW, grid-tied solar array that provides a significant portion of the EV charging stations’ energy demand. The full system of charging stations and solar array are meant to serve as a visual symbol of the way forward for a clean transportation future.

The WMU network of stations has been linked to the ChargePoint America system, which is helping to build a much-needed national infrastructure for electric cars by providing some 5,000 networked stations free of charge to organizational and residential applicants in 10 U.S. regions, including Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. Michigan now has more public charging stations than most other states in the Midwest. WMU’s 20 Kalamazoo states represent 20 percent of charging stations on the state’s west side.

The infusion of EV charging technology was funded by a $700,000 grant last year from the Clean Energy Coalition. The successful grant proposal was written by Dr. Harold Glasser, executive director for campus sustainability.

It also allowed WMU to acquire five all-electric Ford Transit Connect service vehicles as well as a large electric hybrid-hydraulic bucket truck. The new electric vehicles also put WMU among the nation’s leaders in the number of such service vehicles on a single campus.

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In February, 15 new electric vehicle charging stations opened to the public.
Glasser views the University as a key player in changing not just attitudes and actions on campus, but society in general. He has even coined the term ecocultural sustainability to reflect the need to create a social process that is both desirable and ecologically sound.

He cites “three pillars” outlined by Dunn early in his days at WMU. The pillars were identified as a way to make incremental social and culturally beneficial changes—to literally build a more vital and flourishing campus by focusing on health and wellness, diversity and inclusivity, and sustainability.

“The University is not just talking about the three pillars,” Glasser said, “but trying to model them in all of its actions.”

Glasser says that the latter benefit reflects one of the University’s broader goals: to bring the campus and the community together to share in greater sustainability efforts.

Creating cultural change

Glasser and others on campus are also looking at the curriculum and how more sustainability offerings may influence a student’s decisions after graduation. Initiatives under way include creating more opportunities for structured internships, projects and discussions that will encourage students to collaborate with staff, administrators and faculty to address key campus sustainability issues.

“Many times we inadvertently model assumptions that perpetuate unsustainable behaviors and policies,” Glasser says. “Students should be encouraged to think about how their values, hopes and dreams for the future can shape society. Too often, there is a gap between what many of us hold as aspirations for a better future and our individual and collective actions.

“If we are more aware of how our actions generate upstream and downstream consequences, will that change our behavior? We don’t know. But when we poll our students, they tell us that they care not just about themselves but also about a sense of community. They want a better life for their children and they care about the nonhuman world. ‘We have to help them realize that their dreams are achievable.’

Glasser, who travels widely nationally and internationally lecturing on the sustainability efforts at WMU, says the changes on campus are the direct result of an administration with foresight, and a faculty, staff and students all getting onboard the sustainability express.

Strazdas, the facilities expert, says that a major source of pride is a steady stream of magazine writers from professional organizations as well as visitors from other universities and communities who want to know how WMU accomplished the changes. “Were enormously proud of the campus environment we’ve built,” Dunn said in a recent speech, “but we recognize that we are only at the beginning of this journey of creating a culture of sustainability.”

Implementing the initiatives

A turning point in campus sustainability efforts came in 2010, when students conceived and supported an initiative that led to the student body’s approval of an $8 per semester sustainability fee that would provide funding to support the Office for Sustainability and generate a funding stream for grants to support student research projects as well as green jobs program for students.

Those projects are now being funded with about $45,000 in grants each semester. They have provided the resources for such initiatives as:

- using waste vegetable oil from dining services to power campus lawn mowers,
- creating a Bronco “stable” by rehabbing abandoned bicycles and making them part of a bicycle share program,
- establishing a student farm on campus, and
- developing, The Campus Beet, a café designed to offer fresh, delicious and ecologically sound food, to build the local economy and to support the WMU community.

Family connection puts focus on local natural environment

WMU’s Environmental Studies Program home in Wood Hall is now home to a mural by landscape painter and muralist Conrad Kaufman, son of Dr. Maynard Kaufman, the program’s founder.

The younger Kaufman, who earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from WMU in 1986, became a full-time artist in 1989. Now a widely admired painter of landscapes and murals, he spent eight weeks on campus as a visiting artist-in-residence while he completed a major mural project in the Environmental Studies suite on the third floor of Wood Hall. The mural features a continuum of landscapes in the Kalamazoo area, from wilderness to urban.

Kaufman’s father, Maynard, taught comparative religion and environmental studies at the University from 1963 to 1987. The elder Kaufman co-founded the Environmental Studies Program in 1972 and served as its first director. He and his wife, Barbara, make up “off the grid” in an independently sustained home in Bangor, Mich.

Conrad Kaufman’s murals can be found throughout the Kalamazoo area and elsewhere in Michigan on the walls of public places, private businesses and more than 180 residential buildings. His work adorns such area buildings as the Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Portage and Kalamazoo Public Libraries, West Michigan Cancer Center and Food Dance Café. Other examples of his work can be seen at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Battle Creek’s industrial park, Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor and the farmer’s market in South Haven.
The founding dean of the WMU School of Medicine is a caring pediatrician and scientist with a business degree and a finger on the pulse of an entrepreneurial community.

By any stretch of the imagination, it was an extraordinary first day on the job. Dr. Hal B. Jenson, founding dean of the Western Michigan University School of Medicine, began his tenure at WMU on March 22, 2011. He spent that day surrounded by news cameras, costumed promotional gold men and hundreds of community members breathless to hear a highly anticipated news announcement.

That day’s announcement by WMU President John M. Dunn was quick, electrifying and transformational. Anonymous donors had committed $100 million to establish the School of Medicine. It was the largest cash gift to a college or university in Michigan’s history—and among the 10 largest ever made to an American public university.

“It was a great day for Kalamazoo, but it was also a great day for me, personally,” says Jenson, whose professional colleagues across the nation had openly wondered about the wisdom of someone pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school. “That gift really makes the pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school. “That gift really makes the pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school. “That gift really makes the pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school. “That gift really makes the pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school. “That gift really makes the pulling up stakes and heading to Michigan in a down economy to help start a medical school.

Under Jenson’s guidance, they’re working at an accelerated pace to submit accreditation materials to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education in spring 2012, with a goal of securing initial accreditation and welcoming the first class of 40 to 50 students in the fall of 2014. Before becoming a contender for the deanship, Jenson knew little of Kalamazoo or WMU. His background was in medical education, and with no medical school in place, Kalamazoo was off his personal radar.

Jenson is an alumnus of Brigham Young University who earned a medical degree from George Washington University and later earned a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He completed a residency in pediatrics at Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital at Case Western Reserve University and a fellowship in pediatric infectious diseases at the Yale University School of Medicine. He also was a visiting fellow in molecular biology at the University of Cambridge’s Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research.

He does recall as a youth watching his mother, a registered nurse, work with medications produced by the Upjohn Co. in someplace called Kalamazoo. More recently, he learned of the Kalamazoo Promise.

“When it was announced, I remember thinking what a wonderful place Kalamazoo must be to be so committed to its youth. That gave me a favorable impression of this community that’s been borne out by my own experiences meeting with people in Kalamazoo.”

Kalamazoo, he’s learned, is exceptional in several areas. The prospect for success in building the medical school, he says, is enhanced by the presence of a Carnegie-designated “high research” university, two very good health systems and the willingness of all three to work together to give birth to a medical school.

But it’s something more intangible that permeates the place that will give the school and the doctors it produces an edge.

“There’s an entrepreneurial spirit and legacy that permeates all of Kalamazoo,” he notes. “The legacy of (W. E.) Upjohn and (Homer) Stryker is very deep and very broad. That’s unusual. Part of that legacy is an environment where entrepreneurship and discovery can thrive, and it’s that spirit of discovery that will lead to the success of the medical school.”

The school is being launched at a time when a physician shortage is looming, when the science of medicine is changing and when the way medicine is taught is about to undergo a revolution.

Building a medical school from the ground up has its advantages in such a climate, Jenson says.

“We have the opportunity here to develop a new structure that is based on what the current environment is, rather than trying to change an environment that was based on 15 or 20 years ago,” he notes.

The curriculum being built will focus on the early introduction of clinical experiences and having students learn to work in interdisciplinary medical teams from their earliest days as caregivers. A research emphasis and the use of simulation technology for training are two additional ingredients that will be part of medical education at WMU. But it’s perhaps the two new competencies the WMU curriculum will add to the six universal themes of graduate medical education that has Jenson most excited. As a former medical school faculty member at Tufts, Yale, the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and Eastern Virginia Medical School, he knows the two new competencies can make a difference in the caliber of graduates produced.

“The first six competencies are based on patient care,” Jenson says. “We’ve added a seventh competency that is self-care and personal development.”

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Continued on page 31
Oprah calls WMU grad her favorite guest

America’s most celebrated talk-show host, Oprah Winfrey, identified a 2009 Western Michigan University alumna as her “all time favorite guest” during one of the moving final episodes of the “Oprah Show,” reprising the story of “the woman who buried her dreams.”

Tererai Trent—Dr. Tererai Trent—is from Zimbabwe. She started her adult life as an impoverished cattle-herder who defied a culture that places little value on the contributions of women. She educated herself, setting a path and an example for her own five children and for other women in similar circumstances. Trent’s story, which includes earning a doctoral degree from WMU, was retold on the episode in which the host identified her favorite guest—someone Winfrey said “epitomizes everything I’ve been trying to say on this show for 25 years.”

The original 2009 episode of “Oprah” placed Trent on the national stage, where she became known as the woman who “buried her dreams.” Trent’s story was first chronicled on the pages of the New York Times, and in a book, “Half the Sky,” by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Both the book and the “Oprah” show detailed how Trent, a very young woman living in a rural village, developed a list of goals for herself as a career as an international scholar who holds a Ph.D., and has extensive expertise on the evaluation of AIDS-prevention efforts.

When she crossed the Miller Auditorium stage Dec. 17, 2009, to receive her degree in interdisciplinary evaluation, Trent carried the small tin in which she had buried her list of goals, along with the list itself. Following the ceremony, she asked WMU President John M. Dunn to add his signature to the 20-year-old document.

Over the next 20 years, she accomplished each goal. She traveled to America and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees. When she returned to Zimbabwe, she would dig the list up, cross off the achieved goal and move on to the next one.

Two months after her first appearance on the “Oprah Show,” Trent graduated from WMU, completing her journey from life as an impoverished African child bride to a career as an international scholar who holds a Ph.D., and has extensive expertise on the evaluation of AIDS-prevention efforts.

A redesigned website is the latest sign that activity in the WMU Office of Development and Alumni Relations is anything but routine. New priorities, new technologies and new assignments have repositioned the office to more actively engage and serve alumni, donors and friends of the University.

“Throughout history, stories have connected person to person, tribe to tribe, culture to culture. They teach us about our differences and our commonalities. They inspire and prompt actions that change lives,” says Jim Thomas, vice president for development and alumni relations. “There are so many people who want to help make WMU great, and each has a story to tell.”

That conviction prompted Thomas and his team to launch MyWMU.com—an interactive, user-friendly site that is designed to share compelling WMU stories and serve as a portal to access events, experiences and a new array of services. One such service is the new MyWMU Concierge.

The MyWMU Concierge service is available seven days a week by calling (269) 387-8746. It is designed to provide personal assistance with all things WMU.

A corresponding MyWMU Concierge Card, providing access to a variety of benefits and services, is being offered free of charge through the new website. Membership dues to the WMU Alumni Association have been eliminated to ensure that this assistance and service is available to all.

The website has also been redesigned to simplify online giving. Substantially increased fundraising and an enhanced reputation among the entire WMU family already points to the success of MyWMU.com and the department’s reorganization. Roy E. Marts, senior consultant with New Jersey-based Marts & Lundy, has called the WMU focus on service and engagement a “new model” in higher education.

Thomas stresses the importance of the human element of this model. “While the tools of service and storytelling have changed with new technologies, communication is a two-way street that requires engagement and time spent face-to-face. Some of our staff assignments have shifted to ensure that our team is prepared to engage, to serve and to listen to the WMU family, every single day.”

Colleen Lewis, former WMU director of internal audit, was hired last year to serve as executive director of administration. M. Jamie Jeremy, who has led WMU’s alumni relations programs since 1984, has been promoted to the role of chief relationship officer.

Placing greater emphasis on telling the WMU story and serving the WMU family, the Office of Development and Alumni Relations has a new focus.

Left to right, Heifer International President Jo Lach, Winfrey and Trent

Trent with President John M. Dunn during her January visit to campus
Fostering Success

Support and coaching spell success for foster youth on campus

For a program that started with little funding and quite a few naysayers, WMU's Fostering Success Initiative has done very, very well.

It started with the seed of an idea after a fortuitous meeting between a WMU foster youth alumnus and University administrators. In less than four years, that seed has flowered into what is believed to be the country's largest and most inclusive foster-youth specific higher education program.

Participants in the program are called Seita Scholars—after three-time WMU alumnus John Seita, a product of the foster care system who became a nationally renowned advocate for foster youth. WMU's Fostering initiative debuted in fall 2008 with 52 students and grew to a contingent of 140 last fall. The program is designed to provide an academic and social support network for young people coming out of the foster care program—the kind of network that families usually provide.

Now in its fourth year, the Seita Scholars program welcomes approximately 50 new students each fall. Enrollees must meet standard WMU admissions requirements and receive full tuition support from the University. With state funding typically covering most living expenses, the program predicts that many Seita Scholars will graduate with little or no debt.

From the very beginning, WMU President John Dunn has served as the No. 1 spokesperson, advocate and cheerleader for the Seita Scholars. "When I was first approached, my immediate reaction was, 'Let's do it,'" says Dunn. "The idea was just too compelling not to follow through."

Of course, starting the program took more than just a presidential thumbs up. When Dunn was asked how it would be funded.

"I have no idea," he responded.

In its first years, the program has garnered support from a number of foundations, including the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Guido and Elizabeth Binda Foundation, Kalamazoo Community Foundation, Harold and Grace Upjohn Foundation, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and the Speckhard-Knight Charitable Foundation. Most recently, the Kresge Foundation awarded the University $700,000 to help spread the lessons learned and best practices throughout the state of Michigan.

In addition to financing, there were other initial obstacles. For example, several observers familiar with foster care systems predicted that very few entering the Seita Scholars program would actually graduate.

In fact, statistics show that retention among the student population is quite comparable to WMU's overall retention rate. Approximately 75 percent of incoming Seita Scholars complete their fall semester and return for the subsequent spring semester.

Continued on page 30
Return flight to WMU triggers Sky Bronco fertilizer pilot

It’s always nice to travel in style when you drop to visit your alma mater.

Jeff Dougherty, a 2002 aviation flight sciences alum, did just that when he arrived on campus last fall as a WMU flight.

Dougherty, the proud new WMU employee, called the opportunity to return to WMU “a fantastic experience,” and one that allowed him to show how proud he is to have used his WMU flight training to land a job at the world’s largest expression transport company.

The former Sky Bronco and Libertyville, Ill., native began his studies at WMU in 1999, earned his Certified Flight Instructor rating in 2001, and began instruction for specialist flight shortly thereafter. He earned his degree in summer 2002 and began looking for his place in an industry that was still struggling to recover from the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

“The regional airline industry began to rebound around 2004, and I offered a job at SkyWest Airlines,” Dougherty says. He spent the next seven years at SkyWest, starting as a first officer, then rising through the ranks to become a captain, line check airman, flight operations supervisor and a member of the company’s pilot-interview team. When he left SkyWest last June to take the WMU job, he was the person designated by the FAA to conduct initial check rides on new captains.

As a SkyWest employee in Chicago, and now as a Memphis, Tenn.-based FedEx pilot, Dougherty has been active in local alumni chapters and has worked to stay in touch with his former classmates—especially his former Sky Bronco teammates. He’s committed to supporting that celebrated competitive part of a flight program that helped build the skills he needed.

“WMU could not have prepared me better for a challenging industry,” Dougherty says. “I had the opportunity to go through the college’s B737 simulator program when it was being tailored for the U.S. pilot option. That 737 sim is since been replaced by a CRJ Flight Training Device, which I think could be extremely valuable to students. Having any type of experience to fall back on is priceless.”

Knowing that the college now has access to the FedEx B727 to help train current students and recruits to attract new students is especially gratifying, Dougherty notes.

“I loved setting records and breaking the flight record,” he says. “It was a thrill to be on board and answer their questions as they began to explore and check out the ride.”

Express delegation traveling in a B727-200 freighter that was being donated to Western Michigan University.

(See story on Page 2)

Dougherty, hired last summer by FedEx as a B727 first officer, was invited by FedEx Vice President James Gorman to be part of a team charged with delivering the aircraft to its new home. In addition to Dougherty, the group included two more Bronco alumni who piloted the aircraft. Capt. Ron Pizziard and Second Officer Jason Redenuis.

Dougherty’s new employer, the company decided to return to WMU’s flight training program.

(See story on Page 2)
Stories behind Michigan's history told by three-degree alum

From prehistoric Native American traditions to local efforts to keep sailors aloft during World War II, noted Michigan historian and Western Michigan University graduate Larry B. Massie has a passion for his beloved state's rich and colorful history.

He has authored 20 popular Michigan books, including one that traced the life and career of his alma mater's first 100 years, "Blown and Golden Memories."

His work also won him state and local recognition in 2007 as the recipient of the first Lifetime Achievement Award by the Historical Society of Michigan.

"Writing is the hardest thing I do," says Massie who despite the availability of computers still feels compelled to scrawl out his first draft in long hand on a legal pad. "Staring at that blank page can be really hard because I want to write so people want to read it."

His latest book, "Two Tracks to Michigan's Past," appeared in 2009. It includes such human-interest topics as Michigan's first Christmas celebration in 1679, Mackinac Island in the heyday of the fur trade, Underground Railroad conductors, Civil War heroes, and an array of strange but true Michigan characters including those who talked to the dead, rode the rags on people's heads, and pulled the roads across the state.

"When I write articles, I try to make them timely, so looking at Native American gambling as part of the culture here since the 1600s and the issues with casinos today," Massie says. Besides being an author, he is also an antiquarian book appraiser, a member of museums exhibitions, public speaker, a presenter/storyteller for hundreds of schools and a teacher and volunteer.

Born in Grand Rapids, Massie grew up in Allegan, where he now lives with his wife Pracilla and daughters Maureen and Autumn in a restored 1800s school house. The home also served as their library until their personal collection of more than 40,000 historical volumes grew so large that he began leasing a separate library and office nearby.

Massie served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam as a paratrooper, and played college football for Broad Street State before returning to attend WMU. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1972, master's degree in 1974 and specialist in arts degree in 1977. Massie worked for eight years with WMU's archives before launching his own business in 1983. He always works as a team with his wife. The couple co-authored an award-winning cookbook on Michigan's culinary heritage, "Walnut Fields & Watermelon Cake: A Century of Michigan Cookery." They say their lifelong zeal has been to "spread the gospel of Michigan's colorful past" through their varied activities.

"I've resisted writing about my own family history," Massie says, noting his family's Scottish roots. "I tend to think about something that happened in my lifetime as not history, but as I grow older that's becoming harder and harder.

Current projects include producing a book celebrating the 125th Anniversary of Borgess Hospital, compiling oral histories for the Michigan Historical Society and editing and writing articles for the first issue of an encore Magazine available at Auditorium Performance.

Jeffry D. Wagner, BS 1981, MS 1983
Arlene A. Rosenthal, BS 1959
Andrew B. Perry, BS 1994
S.L. Blackmore, BS 1971
Erica A. Durance, BBA 1997
Angela R. Bench, BS 1994
Toby Eddy Marie Jackson, BBA 2009
Jennifer L. Barbour, BS 2011
Angela A. Honig, BAA 2010
Barbara A. McNally, BS 1984
Mark P. Purcell, BS 1983
Barbara D. Puterbaugh, BS 1983
Robert C. Patock, BS 1982
James Simon Hendrik Ter Aa, BBA 2000
Cherene Tongo, BS 1931, MS 1935
Richard E. Tietz, BS 1992
Steve A. Veltkamp, BS 1987
Charles C. Zeng, BS 1987
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Haworth College of Business
Supply management program grabs national No. 12 ranking
Making its debut in a national ranking, WMU’s Integrated Supply Management program has been named 12th among the nation’s best undergraduate supply chain management programs, sharing the slot with the University of Maryland and Stanford University.

The ranking by Gartner, the definitive professional organization dealing with the supply chain industry, was announced at Gartner’s annual conference in Scottsdale, Ariz. This is the first time the 19-year-old WMU program has made the top-25 list, having previously been listed in 2009 in the “honorable mention” category. Gartner’s ranking relied on evaluation of numerous factors, including industry partnerships, additional training required of graduates, curriculum and integration of information technology into the curriculum.

College of Health and Human Services
Historic milestones hit by two departments
Two of the College of Health and Human Services most celebrated programs are marking milestone anniversaries during this academic year.

Last fall, the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology celebrated 75 years of education and service as one of the nation’s earliest clinics for the study and treatment of speech disorders and the preparation of speech therapists. The department was founded by Dr. Charles Van Riper, a pioneer in the field. A stammerer himself, Van Riper was known worldwide for his innovative treatment of stuttering. The 75th anniversary celebration was centered around the 29th Annual Van Riper Lectures Oct. 20-21.

The 1922 start of the WMU Occupational Therapy program also will be noted with a 90th anniversary celebration in 2012.

College of Fine Arts
Scottish trip nets rave reviews for theatre troupe
A troupe from University Theatre returned from performing at Scotland’s prestigious Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2011 with a number of rave review from Scottish reviewers.

“It is extremely rare for me to shed a tear and even more rare to, God forbid, give a standing ovation at a Fringe show, particularly one as young and fresh looking as this. But tonight I saw near absolute perfection,” wrote EdinburghGuide.com reviewer Alex Eades about University Theatre’s original production, “Good Death: A Community Conversation.”

“Good Death,” which premiered in Kalamazoo in fall 2009, was created through a unique collaboration between WMU theatre students and members of the acclaimed Tectonic Theater Project. It confronts the decisions that govern the end of life.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
WMU wins Stryker Challenges for second year
A team of WMU engineering students captured its second consecutive Stryker Engineering Challenge recently, topping students from the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Notre Dame University and Purdue University.

Medical device manufacturer Stryker sponsors the competition as part of its efforts to strengthen ties with schools from which it recruits engineering talent. Students build “contraptions” to deliver balls of different sizes to scoring positions in a timed competition. Teams were provided with identical raw materials to build their machines. Each team completed the same five courses to test the ingenuity of their creations.

Mechanical engineering majors Avin Castelino and Benjamin VanDyken, joined electrical engineering majors Jolica Dias and Ria Periera to make up the WMU team.

College of Education and Human Development
Director named for McGinnis Reading Center
Deanna C. Roland was named the new director last fall of WMU’s renowned Dorothy J. McGinnis Reading Center. The reading clinic has earned recognition in both higher education and the Kalamazoo community for its service and quality. Roland is responsible for supervision of graduate and undergraduate training and research, the administration of program development, fiscal planning, grant seeking and community outreach.

She is a WMU graduate who earned a master’s degree in literacy studies. Her background includes more than seven years in the classroom for Kalamazoo Public Schools and certification as a Reading Recovery teacher. She also served for two years as coordinator of family programs for WMU’s Early Reading First Grant.

Lee Honors College
Honors theses being digitized
Some 2,200 senior theses completed over the years by members of the Lee Honors College are among the University assets that are being digitized by a University Libraries unit charged with creating a repository for WMU’s creative and scholarly products.

ScholarWorks at WMU serves as a permanent digital archive for such works. It already includes some honors theses as well as a number of other publications created by Lee Honors College are among the University assets that are being digitized by a University Libraries unit charged with creating a repository for WMU’s creative and scholarly products.

College of Aviation
Aviation students head for air traffic control futures
Fall 2011 marked the first time WMU offered its new air-traffic control program.

Developed in partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration, the training program is designed to prepare students to report directly to the FAA’s Oklahoma City academy and bypass a five-week basics course.

WMU was asked to join the FAA’s Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiative network in 2010, making it one of 36 schools in the nation—and the only one in Michigan—to offer AT-CTI training. To ensure the future success of its students, WMU is integrating the AT-CTI training with its existing four-year aviation degree programs. This gives graduates of WMU’s AT-CTI program the opportunity to follow multiple career paths without returning to the classroom.
Bronco film forays

Two new DVD releases show how Michigan’s fling at becoming a film-friendly state gave the WMU campus a shot at Hollywood fame, and students a chance to work behind the scenes.

Movie makers revel in look of WMU campus

The 2010 premier of the independent film “Cherry” at the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas, brought WMU’s Kalamazoo campus into sharp focus as an idyllic place to launch a college career.

For more than four weeks during late 2008, filmmakers used the campuses of WMU and Kalamazoo College and the city of Kalamazoo as the setting for the feature-length movie about a college freshman coming of age at an Ivy League university. The production crew used the WMU engineering campus and such settings as Vandercook Hall, the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Gabel Natatorium and Fountain Plaza.

The film by screenwriter and director Jeffrey Fine stars Kyle Gallner, of TV’s “Veronica Mars” and “CSI: NY;” Laura Allen, who’s appeared on TV’s “Criminal Minds” and “Grey’s Anatomy” as well as the film “Mona Lisa Smile;” and Brittany Robertson of the television hit “Life Unexpected” and the film “Dan in Real Life.”

“Cherry” is set in Providence, R.I., at Brown University. Fine and his brother and partner Matthew Fine looked at numerous campuses around the state before settling on WMU and K-College. “We needed a school that had an Ivy League feel,” Jeffrey Fine told the Kalamazoo Gazette. “The K-College quad and WMU’s East Campus fit that description.”

The film’s main character is torn between his engineering major and his love for art. Engineering classroom scenes included dozens of WMU engineering students pretending to be members of the fictional robotics class lecture. A climactic engineering project scene with many extras was shot at WMU’s Gabel Natatorium.

The movie had its campus premier in 2010 and was shown in a number of national film festivals throughout 2010 and 2011, garnering critical reviews. The New York Times calling it, “a wry and poignant sleeper like ‘Juno’ and ‘Little Miss Sunshine.’”

Now available on DVD, the film recently gained a Netflix following with more than 100,000 viewings.

Student filmmakers show their stuff

The Kalamazoo area and the West Michigan lakeshore served as the setting for another independent film shot in 2009 with the help of WMU students.

“The Lake Effect” features a number of local haunts including the Heritage Guitar factory, Bell’s Brewery and Tot to Teen Village in Kalamazoo, as well as Sherman’s Ice Cream, Phoenix Street and the pier in South Haven.

The film stars Kay Panabaker from “Fame” and ABC’s “No Ordinary Family,” Ross Partridge from the Duplass Brothers’ film “Baghead” and Tara Summers from television’s “Boston Legal” and “Damages.”

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A cadre of interns from WMU’s film program provided the behind-scenes assistance.

Many were students of Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, WMU associate professor of communication in the film, video and media studies program, who acted as the film’s assistant director. Students worked as interns in pre-production and on the set as the film was being made. Students assisted in everything from casting and coordinating extras to working with sound and camera units.

“The Lake Effect,” produced by Kalamazoo native Jennifer Westin, is a comedy-drama about a couple who retreat to their cottage on Lake Michigan to reconnect. Natalie’s biological clock is ticking. Rob’s resistant to change. But their holiday is interrupted when Rob’s estranged and very pregnant teenage daughter Celia lands on their doorstep.

His marriage on the rocks and his daughter in need, Rob must embrace his role as a husband and father before he becomes a grandfather.

So far the film has won awards including Best Screenplay, Best Ensemble Acting and Audience Favorite from prestigious festivals including the Phoenix Film Festival and Moondance International. The Raindance Film Festival in London named writer/director Tara Miele “a Top Ten American Indie Filmmaker to Watch.” FilmThreat.com called the film “a well-acted and terrifically realized relationship dra­medy.”

“The Lake Effect” also became available on DVD in fall 2011.
Collaboration with the state

A unique collaboration with the Michigan Department of Human Services also keys the program’s success. Tim Lippins, a DHS caseworker, is physically stationed with the Seita Scholars office complex and readily available to assist students with the often complicated administrative process that accompanies the lives of foster youth, including eligibility for Medicaid and independent living stipends. Before the creation of the caseworker position, Seita Scholars were often forced, on a moment’s notice, to drive across the state to meet with their caseworker, disrupting the program’s goals of stability and continuity.

While many are proud of the program’s success to date, there is no one more pleased than President Dunn. Despite his career origins in working with children with disabilities and other disadvantaged youth populations, Dunn admits he had not previously given a great deal of consideration to the challenges facing foster youth before the Seita Scholars program surfaced.

“When you think about the precious human capital of these young people and their great accomplishments, you can’t help but smile,” Dunn notes. “It’s more than that, though. The Seita Scholars deliver so much more back to the University than anything they might receive. In our efforts to build a more caring, more compassionate student-oriented University, there is no better success indicator than our amazing Seita Scholars.”

Donated Kalamazoo facility will be School of Medicine’s home

Western Michigan University’s School of Medicine took another major step toward adding to Kalamazoo’s life sciences legacy when the University announced in December that the new school will be located on the same piece of land where Upjohn first built his pharmaceutical company.

The location for the school had been a topic of intense community speculation for months leading up to the Dec. 7 announcement that MPI Research of Mattawan, Mich., would donate a 330,000-square-foot structure in downtown Kalamazoo to become the home for the new school.

“The land has a lot of heritage associated with medicine,” said MPI research chairman and CEO William U. Parfet at an event announcing the gift. “In 1886, my great-grandfather moved from Hastings, Mich., to Kalamazoo, to start the Upjohn Co. and the first piece of land he bought is the land on which this building is located...”

The former Pfizer/Pharmacia/Upjohn research facility, located just off the northwest corner of Lovell and Portage streets is widely known as Building 207. It will be extensively renovated and slightly expanded to become the WMU School of Medicine campus. Renovations will begin later this year with a completion date of mid-2014, in time for the first entering class in August 2014.

“This is an extraordinary gift that will not only benefit our new medical school, but will also have a dramatic impact on our broader community and the two great hospitals—Borgess and Bronson—our partners in developing the School of Medicine,” says WMU President John M. Dunn. “The importance of this gift to the development of our school is immeasurable.”
Three executives earn highest alumni honors

Executives from broadcast, higher education and health care were selected by the WMU Alumni Association last fall to receive its most prestigious honor, the Distinguished Alumni Award.

The 2011 recipients of the award are: Morris C. Davenport of Avon, Conn., senior vice president and general manager of ESPN Radio; Keith A. Pretty of Midland, Mich., president and CEO of Northwood University; and Dr. Anthony R. Tersigni of St. Louis, president and CEO of Ascension Health Alliance.

This year’s recipients were honored during an on-campus dinner during Homecoming weekend.

Davenport, who earned a Bachelor of Arts from WMU in 1979, was a communication major and played on the Bronco football team from 1975 to 1979. Today, he is responsible for all aspects of ESPN Radio content, as well as distribution, advertising sales and marketing initiatives for ESPN Radio’s 700 affiliated stations and five owned stations.

Davenport has received two Emmys. His first—also ESPN’s first Emmy—recognized his work on animation. His other honors include being named one of the “Top 50 Most Influential Minorities in Cable” in 2007 by CableWorld Magazine.

Pretty, who earned a Bachelor of Science from WMU in 1973, is a former captain of the Bronco football team and was drafted by the Green Bay Packers. Today, he leads Northwood University, a private, nonprofit, accredited institution that specializes in managerial and entrepreneurial education. NU has full-service, residential campuses in Midland, Mich., West Palm Beach, Fla., and Cedar Hill, Texas.

An alumnus of Cooley Law School, Pretty is a former WMU vice president. He was chosen to head Walsh College as its president and CEO in 1999. In 2006, Pretty was appointed NU’s third president.

Tersigni, who earned a Doctor of Education from WMU in 1992, led Ascension Health, the third largest health care system in the country and a subsidiary of Ascension Health Alliance. In January, he became president and CEO of Ascension Health Alliance, the nation’s largest Catholic and nonprofit health care organization. Tersigni prides himself on transforming health care, with special attention to the poor and vulnerable.

Tersigni was named one of Modern Healthcare’s 100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare for six years and serves in leadership positions on several boards, including as chair of the Healthcare Leadership Council in Washington, D.C.

Wherever you are, WMU is there.
READY FOR REBIRTH—East Hall is at the heart of the 35-acre East Campus site that is the birthplace of Western Michigan University and was once dubbed "the Acropolis of Kalamazoo" by humorist Will Rogers. East Hall, the first campus building, and four other buildings on the site that are no longer in use may find new life as office and housing space, a boutique hotel and a conference center, thanks to a partnership between WMU and a private development company. (See story on Page 7)