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Connections, 05/2016

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COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Connections

A newsletter from the College of Health and Human Services

May 2016

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[Grant funds study of food selectivity in children](#)

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation has awarded a grant of more than \$56,000 for a study of treatment of children with food selectivity. **Dr. Michelle Suarez**, assistant professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, will lead the project, which begins July 2016.



[Alumna receives Faculty Mentor of the Year Award at NIU](#)

Dr. Patricia Tattersall, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program alumna, received the 2016 NIU Research Mentor Award at NIU's seventh annual Undergraduate Research and Artistry Day. Tattersall received the annual award for embodying the qualities of an effective and influential mentorship.



[New OT grad cert in low vision rehabilitation to launch fall 2016](#)

The WMU Department of Occupational Therapy will offer a new graduate certificate in low vision rehabilitation beginning this fall. The program will provide training on the unique needs of individuals with vision loss. Students will learn about the impact vision loss has on occupational performance as well as compensatory techniques to help a person adapt.



[Congratulations to 2015-16 CHHS retirees](#)

Congratulations to the CHHS faculty and staff members retiring during the 2015-16 academic year!



[Sammons Center grants support OT advancement through technology](#)

Dr. Fred Sammons, an internationally known occupational therapist recognized as a highly accomplished clinician, inventor, and philanthropist whose contributions span several decades, has established an endowment to support the Sammons Center for Innovation and Research in Occupation Based Technology.



[Clinics now accepting applications for fall](#)

Applications for fall 2016 speech and language services and/or therapy at the Western Michigan University Charles Van Riper Language, Speech and Hearing Clinic are now being accepted for adults and children. The deadline for all applications is Aug. 19.



In other news

Here are some other WMU news articles you might be interested in:

- [WMU jazz studies students rack up five DownBeat Awards](#)
- [Eleven incoming students earn \\$60,000 Foundation Scholarships](#)
- [Fifty seniors receive WMU's top undergraduate honor](#)

[New Facebook page](#)

The College of Health and Human Services has a Facebook page! Please take a moment to "like" our page to stay in the loop.



Grant funded project to improve care and training in nursing facilities

Dr. Janet Hahn, from the [Center for Gerontology](#) and the [School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs](#), is leading a project totaling nearly \$325,000 that will provide behavioral consultation and services to aging people with cognitive impairment at skilled nursing facilities in Michigan.



The goal of the project is to use behavioral analysis to help older adults with cognitive impairment improve their quality of life and to reduce the use of medication to manage BPSD - the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia, which include wandering, agitation, disruptive vocalizations, etc. Other goals include improving nursing facility staff knowledge and abilities, and developing training modules and leadership support that can be used by other skilled nursing facilities.

"Training the staff at these locations is key to the sustainability of the outcomes," said Hahn. "Utilizing a 'train the trainer' approach, we can train supervisors at these facilities so they can train their staff effectively, and show them skills like data collection and effective implementation of behavior protocols which can help maintain the effects."

Once the trainings implemented through the study are proven effective, they will be expanded and adopted at other sites to create sustainable opportunities to provide quality care.

The project is led by Dr. Hahn, a social gerontologist with extensive experience studying nursing home culture change and the quality of long term care services. The project team consists of doctoral, masters and undergraduate level behavior analysts with advanced training in working with aging populations, under the direction of **Dr. Jonathan Baker** from the [Department of Psychology](#).



The goals of the project are a 50 percent decrease in verbal and non-verbal agitation, a 50% decrease in BPSD as measured through direct observation, and reductions in dosage or number of psychotropic medications.

This will be a three year project. In year one, the intervention will be implemented in one skilled nursing facility. In years two and three, four other facilities will be added to implement the program. Project staff will evaluate effective training tools and evaluate the aspects of organizational culture that lead to effective implementation of the program.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1987 included the nursing home reform act, which mandated that behavioral interventions be used before chemical or physical restraints

when dealing with behavioral issues in long-term care settings serving older adults. However, staff in skilled nursing facilities still struggle to develop appropriate behavioral interventions and evaluate the effectiveness of such techniques.

Participants in this study will directly benefit from receiving state of the art, non-pharmacological interventions that have been shown to reduce the need for and use of psychotropic medications.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services awarded the grant for \$324,830 as part of its Civil Monetary Penalty program, which uses a portion of funds collected from facilities that do not maintain compliance with certain federal requirements. The CMP program aims to improve the quality of life for individuals living in nursing facilities.

Grant funds study of food selectivity in children

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation has awarded a grant of more than \$56,000 for a study of treatment of children with food selectivity. **Dr. Michelle Suarez**, assistant professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, will lead the project, which begins July 2016.

Dr. Suarez is already involved in the [Finicky Feeders](#) program at the Western Michigan University Pediatric Occupational Therapy Clinic. This project and grant are an extension of the work she has pursued over the last five years.

Children with food selectivity often have unpleasant physiological responses and severe, disruptive behavior when presented with non-preferred foods. It can be a challenge for the child and for the whole family at mealtime.

The study will use a multi-component treatment protocol to increase the number of healthy whole foods in the diet of food selective children, which would improve nutrition and simply make family meals better. The grant will fund a full-time occupational therapist to oversee the study. OT students will be able to observe and work with the occupational therapist throughout the yearlong study.

"I think it's a great opportunity for students to get one-on-one time with an OT professional," said Dr. Suarez. "Their other level I placements are supervised by WMU faculty, but this will give them a chance to see an occupational therapist work at this level. It should help our students' skills progress quickly."

Both the new study and the Finicky Feeders program are located in the [Marion R. Spear OT Clinic](#), which is part of WMU's Unified Clinics. While the new study will only include subjects



with developmental disabilities, the Finicky Feeders program is open to children with a variety of medical diagnoses. Both programs are accepting new clients/subjects.

For more information, contact the clinic at (269) 387-7074 or by email at ot-clinic@wmich.edu.

Alumna receives Faculty Mentor of the Year Award at NIU

Dr. Patricia Tattersall, graduate of the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program at WMU and associate professor in the School of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders at Northern Illinois University, received the 2016 NIU Research Mentor Award at NIU's seventh annual Undergraduate Research and Artistry Day. Tattersall received the annual award for embodying the qualities of an effective and influential mentorship.

“What has made Dr. Tattersall’s mentorship so valuable is her ability to provide the perfect amount of support so that I’m within reaching distance of my goals, but just far enough that I have to jump off on my own to reach them,” her nominator wrote. “She has challenged me, encouraged me, and gently corrected me as I’ve carried out my project. Dr. Tattersall’s advocacy has launched me into a rigorous season of professional development.”

Dr. Tattersall was humbled with the recognition. "There are SO many great people in and outside of the university that mentor students in so many initiatives," she said. "I was blown away."

She also expressed gratitude for the mentorship she received while in WMU's [Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D.](#) program. "Without your mentorship," Tattersall said. "I would not be impacting students in the way I have been fortunate to do, and I would never have received this honor."

In addition to the mentor award, [Undergraduate Research and Artistry Day](#) at NIU features hundreds of student poster and platform presentations from a variety of disciplines.



New OT grad cert in low vision rehabilitation to launch fall 2016

The WMU Department of Occupational Therapy will offer a [new graduate certificate in low vision rehabilitation](#) beginning this fall.

"The new certificate program will provide training on the unique needs of individuals with vision loss," said **Dr. Ben Atchison**, chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy. "Students will also learn about the impact vision loss has on occupational performance as well as compensatory techniques to help a person adapt."



Depiction of macular degeneration

Courses will be offered in a hybrid format.

Students will complete most coursework online. In addition, they will spend time over two weekends at the Henry Ford Health System's [Center for Vision and Neuro Rehabilitation and Research](#) in metro-Detroit to complete training and labs for skill competency.

The program, developed in coordination with the Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies, will target practicing occupational therapists who wish to specialize in the field of vision rehabilitation. Although students completing their graduate training in occupational therapy could take courses in the certificate program as electives, most coursework would likely be completed after graduation and after working in field.

Through the graduate certificate program, occupational therapy clinicians will be trained in assessment and intervention principles for clients with low vision while incorporating OT theory and evidence-based research from the vision rehabilitation field.

Students enrolled in the program could decide to continue on for a Master's Degree in Orientation & Mobility or Vision Rehabilitation Therapy.

For more information, visit the [OT department website](#).

Congratulations to 2015-16 CHHS retirees

Congratulations to the CHHS employees retiring during the 2015-16 academic year!

Mary Patricia Fuehr, WMU Bronson School of Nursing
Retired Dec. 31, 2015

Patricia spent more than 37 years as a RN and family nurse practitioner in Lansing, Kalamazoo and surrounding areas. She came to WMU as an instructor in 2003, but spent more than 20 years teaching at several colleges and universities. When she retired, Patricia was a master faculty specialist for the WMU Bronson School of Nursing.



Gwen Thomas, Office of Advising
Retiring June 30

Gwen has worked at WMU for 19 years, including 16 years as assistant director of admissions and three years as an academic advisor for the College of Health and Human Services. She has advised for our Interdisciplinary Health Services program, SPADA, Integrative Holistic Health and Wellness and Gerontology certificate programs.



Nicki Nelson, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program director
Retiring Aug. 31

Nickola "Nicki" Nelson has been a member of the faculty at Western Michigan University since 1981 and director of the Ph.D. program in interdisciplinary health sciences since 2004. She was named the Charles Van Riper Professor in the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology for 2005 to 2008.



We wish them well in their retirement. We thank our retirees for their dedicated service to the college and to the University. They will be sorely missed.

Sammons Center grants support OT advancement through technology

Dr. Fred Sammons, an occupational therapist who received national and international recognition as a highly accomplished clinician, inventor, and philanthropist, has established an endowment to support the [Sammons Center for Innovation and Research in Occupation Based Technology](#).

This center is under the co-direction of **Dr. Ben Atchison**, chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy, and Dr. Sammons, along with a skilled group of board members who have been instrumental in shaping the mission, philosophy, and direction of the center.

"The philosophy of the Sammons Center is that the ability to participate and engage in everyday occupation is a fundamental goal and basic right for all persons," said Dr. Atchison. "We believe that innovation and research in technology must be transformative so that the outcome enables a better way to live, with or without a disability."

The center's mission is to provide a platform for visionaries to promote progress in occupation through technology. This is accomplished by bringing together an interprofessional team of people and organizations with the interest and expertise to support visionaries to create, design, develop, disseminate, and evaluate specific products to enable better occupation through technology.

The center accepts proposals from innovators with ideas for designs for occupation-based technology to help people participate more effectively or independently. Interested parties simply complete a [Request for proposals](#) form and [submit it to the center](#). Deadlines are Feb. 1, June 1 and Oct. 1 each year.

To date, three grants have been awarded:

- **Carolyn Sithong** - [The Home for Life Home Assessment](#) app is being used by 10 universities and about 50 individual users since it launched at AOTA last year. It is being piloted at Mary Free Bed in their home and community practice. An online training system is being refined and a psychometric study for the validity and reliability of the app is underway.
- **Ann Chapleau** - [GAS App](#) will be in app stores by January 2017. The project represents the second interprofessional collaboration between the CHHS and the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences - a model for advancing healthcare through technology. Dr. Chapleau is



Dr. Fred Sammons continues to collaborate on designs for adapted bicycles and tricycles (AmTrykes) for people with disabilities.

currently establishing external beta testing sites for fall semester, both clinical and academic, to assist in further app refinement prior to commercial release.

- **Delana Honaker** - [KidLife Apps](#) - The grant will support video recording costs for an inter-rater reliability study, which should take place June 2016. Since receiving the award from the Sammons Center, Dr. Honaker has also applied for two federal Small Business Innovations Research Phase I grants which have previously awarded funds for mobile apps that benefit education and pediatric services.

More information about the Sammons Center can be found on the center's website: wmich.edu/occupationtechnologycenter.

Fall Speech and Language Services

Applications for fall 2016 [speech and language services and/or therapy](#) at the Western Michigan University Charles Van Riper Language, Speech and Hearing Clinic are now being accepted for adults and children. The deadline for all applications is Aug. 19.

The fall semester will run from Thursday, Sept. 15 to Tuesday, Nov. 29.

*Please note that the Charles Van Riper Language, Speech and Hearing Clinic is a teaching clinic with limited availability of student clinicians and supervisors. Completing an application for therapy does not guarantee that services will be provided in a given semester.

Forms

Please fill out the appropriate forms below by submitting them to [Laura Hoskins](#) via email or by mailing them to:

Western Michigan University Unified Clinics
Attn: Laura Hoskins
1000 Oakland Dr. 3rd floor
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5361

For speech and language evaluations:

- [Adult application for speech and language evaluation](#)
- [Child Spanish application for speech and language evaluation](#)
- [Child application for speech and language evaluation](#)

For therapy services:

[Client availability for therapy form](#)

Please also submit documentation of recent evaluation(s) if available. Speech evaluation or treatment must have been provided within the last year.

For voice, respiration and resonance:

Call (269) 387-8047

For more information please email [Laura Hoskins](mailto:Laura.Hoskins@wmu.edu) or call her at (269) 387-7059.

WMU jazz studies students rack up five DownBeat Awards

by Mark Schwerin

May 17, 2016 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University jazz studies students continue their streak of winning multiple awards in DownBeat's annual Student Music Awards, taking five prizes in this year's contest.

The multiple wins put WMU in the company of such esteemed music schools as the University of Miami and the University of North Texas. No other Michigan university received an award. WMU tied for fourth in this year's contest with the University of Northern Colorado and Sacramento State University.

Quality, dedication

"Though it has become an expectation to hear such news, it never gets old and it certainly does not diminish our understanding of the quality and dedication it takes to sustain such consistency," says **Daniel Guyette**, dean of the WMU College of Fine Arts.

WMU students won seven awards last year and six awards in each of the previous three years. WMU's strong showing in the contest over the past several years places the University squarely among the top five award-winning programs in the world, says **Tom Knific**, professor of music and director of the WMU Jazz Studies Program.



WMU won a total of five awards this year.

"The results speak to the talent and hard work of the program's students and dedication of the faculty," Knific says. WMU is pushing 170 in total DownBeat awards.

The awards

This year's WMU honorees, the category of their award and their director or professor, are:

- **James Richardson**, Vocal Jazz Soloist, College Winners, **Gregory Jasperse**, professor.
- **Gold Company**, Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble, College Outstanding Performances, **Gregory Jasperse**, professor.
- **Andrew Saliba**, Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist, College Outstanding Performances, **Tom Knific**, professor.
- **Sam Alhadid**, Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist, College Outstanding Performances, voice, **Gregory Jasperse**, professor.
- **Mas Que Nada**, Latin Group, College Winner, **Tom Knific**, professor.

For more news, arts and events, visit wmich.edu/news.

Eleven incoming students earn \$60,000 Foundation Scholarships

by Jeanne Baron

May 17, 2016 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Eleven high-achieving high school students have earned \$60,000 Foundation Scholarships to begin their studies at Western Michigan University this fall.

Foundation Scholarships are worth \$15,000 annually over four years and are based on academic performance and demonstrated financial need. They are part of WMU's mix of [top scholarship programs for beginning students](#).

This year's Foundation Scholars were selected from a pool of more than 100 applicants. To be eligible for the award, they had to have a high school grade point average of 3.7 or higher at the end of their junior year.

The 2016 award recipients have a 4.1 average high school GPA, and many are class valedictorians or salutatorians. All are from Michigan and will graduate from high school this June. They are scheduled to graduate from WMU during the 2019-20 academic year.

2016 Foundation Scholars

- **Cara Connor** is from Flint and will graduate from Flint Southwestern Academy. She plans to study fashion merchandising and design at WMU.
- **Shaylee Faught** is from Grand Rapids and will graduate from City High-Middle School in Grand Rapids. She plans to study music at WMU.
- **Angelene Green** is from Mesick and will graduate from Mesick Junior/Senior High School. She plans to study psychology at WMU.
- **Taria James** is from Muskegon and will graduate from Muskegon High School. She plans to study marketing at WMU.
- **Fawad Karim** is from Portage and will graduate from Portage Central High School. He plans to study biomedical sciences at WMU.
- **Austin Lambert** is from Flint and will graduate from Beecher High School in Mt. Morris. He plans to major in mechanical engineering at WMU.
- **Laura Lynn-Lee** is from Dowagiac and will graduate from Dowagiac Union High School. She plans to study psychology at WMU.
- **Valeria Marin** is from Wyoming and will graduate from Lee High School in Wyoming. She plans to study elementary education at WMU.
- **Marques Smalley** is from Grand Rapids and will graduate from Ottawa Hills High School in Grand Rapids. He plans to study business at WMU.
- **Rebecca Stierly** is from Vandercook Lake and will graduate from Vandercook Lake High School in Jackson. She plans to study nursing at WMU.
- **Nicholas Talamantez** is from Kalkaska and will graduate from Kalkaska High School. He plans to study English at WMU.

Foundation Scholarship program

WMU established the Foundation Scholarship program in 2015 to expand college access for new first-year students. The scholarship is based on both merit and financial need, and is designed to provide a financial "foundation" to the recipients so they can focus on their academic studies.

The 10-member founding class performed exceptionally well during its freshman year. Each Foundation Scholar was named to WMU's dean's list and together, they finished the 2015-16 academic year with a 3.8 collective GPA.

In addition to the \$60,000 monetary award, Foundation Scholars become members of WMU's Lee Honors College. The college, one of the oldest honors programs in the nation, enhances the undergraduate learning experience by providing such benefits as smaller class sizes, individualized academic advising and a freshman mentoring program.

Foundation Scholars who complete their bachelor's degrees in fewer than four years can apply the rest of their award toward graduate school. All semifinalists who do not receive the Foundation Scholarship receive a minimum of \$3,000 in scholarships to attend WMU.

The Foundation Scholarship fund is set up in the WMU Foundation. Donations to the fund can be made at mywmu.com by clicking Giving, followed by Make a Gift, and typing Foundation Scholarship in the giving form's special instructions box for designations.

For more news, arts and events, visit wmich.edu/news.

Fifty seniors receive WMU's top undergraduate honor

by Jeanne Baron

May 5, 2016 | WMU News



WMU's 2016 Presidential Scholars

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Fifty students in Western Michigan University's 6,500-member senior class have been named a 2016 Presidential Scholar.

The annual Presidential Scholar designation is the highest honor WMU can bestow on an undergraduate. The award goes to the most outstanding seniors in each of the University's academic schools, departments and specialty programs.

Only the highest caliber of students receive the award. They are selected on the basis of their general academic excellence, academic and artistic excellence in their majors, and intellectual and artistic promise.

This year's scholars were recognized during the 36th annual Presidential Scholars Convocation, held on campus **March 29**. During the event, the students received certificates from two University dignitaries: **Dr. John M. Dunn**, WMU president, and **Dr. C. Dennis Simpson**, Faculty Senate president.

The convocation, which also celebrates the overall excellence of the University's students, includes a program and closing reception. The event is co-sponsored by the Office of the President and Faculty Senate.

The 2016 Presidential Scholars come from across Michigan as well as other U.S. states. Some of them graduated from WMU in December 2015 and several more graduated April 30, during spring commencement exercises. They are listed by state, with Michigan recipients appearing first, then by hometown. Their biographies reflect information obtained earlier this spring.

Michigan scholars

Alpena

- **Matthew J. Baird** is the Presidential Scholar in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. Baird is from Alpena, Michigan, and a graduate of Alpena High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in mechanical engineering and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, Baird plans to obtain a doctoral degree with a focus on electric propulsion and plasma dynamics. His ultimate goal is to find employment in research and development in the field of electric propulsion. While working in WMU's Aerospace Laboratory for Plasma Experiments, he was introduced to electric propulsion and decided to design his own Hall Effect Thruster for his senior design project. The project has involved collaboration with NASA and has been a highlight of his studies at WMU. Baird is scheduled to participate in a 10-week internship this summer at the Air Force Research Laboratory in California, during which he will gain hands-on experience with high-speed plasma diagnostics in preparation for pursuing his doctoral degree. He already is a co-author of the published article, "Experimental Vaporization of Hydroxylammonium Nitrate in Vacuum Conditions." Baird has been on the dean's list throughout his undergraduate career. In addition, he has received the Knight Scholarship and is a two-time recipient of a WMU Undergraduate Research Excellence Award. He has volunteered to tutor elementary and middle school students in mathematics as well as tutor students at a local school's summer science camps. His hobbies include working on machining, electrical and woodworking projects, and he has designed and built computers, automated camera sliders and a CNC router as well as furniture.

Baroda

- **Ian S. Brown** is the Presidential Scholar in Physics. Brown is from Baroda, Michigan, and a graduate of Lakeshore High School in Stevensville, Michigan. He majored in physics with an electrical engineering option and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he

plans to pursue a doctoral degree in physics with a specialization in gravity, general relativity and cosmology. His recent research into the cosmic microwave background led to an interest in the areas of space-time geometry and the nature of dark matter and dark energy. Brown is currently working on a radio telescope designed to measure the earliest light from the big bang using electronic components designed for devices like wireless routers and cell phones. He also has spent time working on two projects for the WMU Tandem Van de Graaff accelerator. He received the WMU physics department Nichols Merit Scholarship for the 2015-16 school year. Outside of the classroom, Brown spent time locally at the Milwood Animal Clinic helping sick and injured animals and educating animal owners on proper care of their pets. Whether at work or school, he thinks it is important to continue learning, which is why, after 13 years in the workforce, he decided to return to WMU to finish his degree and live a life in pursuit of new science.

Battle Creek

- **Jordan S. Berning** is the Presidential Scholar in Integrated Supply Management. Berning is from Battle Creek, Michigan, and a graduate of Harper Creek High School in Battle Creek. He is majoring in integrated supply management and expects to graduate in December 2016. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a career in the supply chain field for the automotive industry. Berning also is looking forward in the next few years to beginning work toward obtaining a master's degree with a concentration in finance. He has had a number of internships in the automotive industry, including General Motors, MANN+HUMMEL, American Axle and the RockTenn paper mill. He is now working for Bronco Force as a student supply chain consultant and deployed at Impact Label, and will be returning to General Motors this summer. Berning has been a dean's list recipient every semester at WMU and received scholarships from the Haworth College of Business and the integrated supply management program. He participated in the International General Motors/Wayne State Supply Chain case competition this past fall, and participated in the APICS case competition this spring. Berning is a member of the local student chapter of APICS, a member of the Institute for Supply Management and a volunteer for Project Lead the Way.

Cadillac

- **Elizabeth A. King** is the Presidential Scholar in Spanish. King is from Cadillac, Michigan, and a graduate of Cadillac High School who attended Kalamazoo College. She is majoring in Spanish as well as in global and international studies and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a law degree and hopes to focus on international law. King gives credit to her first WMU teachers in Spanish, **Michael Braun**, master faculty specialist, and **Dr. Pablo Pastrana-Pérez**, associate professor of Spanish, for her success in the program and for urging her to study abroad. In 2014, she studied in Burgos, Spain, and notes that WMU "makes studying abroad extremely accessible through scholarships and funding." In 2015, King worked for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center. There she developed a better understanding of immigration law, and she used her skills in Spanish language and dialects to translate documents and communicate with clients. She also uses her language and other skills as a peer academic success coach through the WMU Center for Academic Success Programs.

Cass City

- **McKensie S. Ward** is the Presidential Scholar in Occupational Therapy. Ward is from Cass City, Michigan, and a graduate of Cass City High School who attended St. Clair County Community College in Port Huron, Michigan. She is majoring in interdisciplinary health services with a concentration in occupational therapy. A member of the four-plus-one undergraduate-graduate program, she expects to graduate in April 2016 with a bachelor's degree and continue pursuing a master's degree with planned graduation in June 2017. Ward is in her second of four fieldwork experiences and plans to study abroad in March on a faculty-led trip to Jamaica with fellow occupational therapy students. She has been named a member of the dean's list every semester, has worked as a research assistant for an occupational therapy professor, and has increased participation in WMU's chapter of AMBUCS, an organization that provides therapeutic bicycles to individuals who cannot ride traditional bicycles. Ward enjoys working with the pediatric population, has a growing interest in research, and can see herself contributing to the evidence-base for occupational therapy in the future.

Clio

- **Aaron J. Huntoon** is the Presidential Scholar in Engineering Design, Manufacturing and Management Systems. Huntoon is from Clio, Michigan, and a graduate of Clio Area High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in engineering management technology and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a career in the defense industry, specifically at the Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. where he has worked as an intern. After working for a couple of years, Huntoon would like to return to school to earn a master's degree in engineering management or a related field. His academic interests involve the study and application of both art and science perspectives to successfully lead an engineering project team. During summer 2015, Huntoon worked at his internship for Sikorsky, where he was involved in the Combat Rescue Helicopter program for the U.S. Air Force and performed various technical and managerial functions to support the integrated product team. At WMU, he has consistently been on the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences dean's list; and he received the Engineering Design, Manufacturing and Management Systems retention scholarship. Huntoon is an active member of various student organizations, including Epsilon Mu Eta, Alpha Lambda Delta, the American Society for Engineering Management, the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and Tau Alpha Pi. He also served as a fall welcome ambassador and a first-year experience student instructor.

Constantine

- **Kevin A. Anderson** is the Presidential Scholar in Psychology. Anderson is from Constantine, Michigan, and a graduate of Constantine High School as well as of Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac. He is majoring in behavioral science as well as in chemistry and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to continue his studies in graduate school and obtain a doctoral degree in behavioral neuroscience while training in psychopharmacology and performing research related to the treatment of neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease and multiple sclerosis. After obtaining his doctoral degree, Anderson intends to conduct postdoctoral research and eventually to seek a teaching position at a university, where he will continue with his research while educating new scientists.

He is the co-author of two manuscripts for two different studies in behavioral research. One study involves implementation of cotinine chromatography strips in a contingency management program for smoking cessation and the other concerns behavioral momentum. The manuscripts will likely be finished this summer, at which point he will seek to have them published. Anderson already has authored a poster presentation for the results of the smoking cessation study for the Association for Behavior Analysis International conference in San Antonio, and he orally presented the same study at WMU in February. In addition, he is creating a poster for the behavioral momentum study that will be presented during the Society for Quantitative Analyses of Behavior annual meeting in May.

Detroit

- **Ciera L. McCrory** is the Presidential Scholar in Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies. McCrory is from Detroit and a graduate of Cass Technical High School in Detroit. She is majoring in early childhood and elementary education and minoring in elementary mathematics and language arts and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she will travel overseas to teach English in a Shanghai preschool for a year. When McCrory returns, she plans to teach at the elementary or middle school level while pursuing a master's degree in human development or in the mathematics field. Currently, she is a student teacher in the Kalamazoo Public Schools and is teaching first-graders at the Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School. She previously has interned in kindergarten and toddler classrooms. McCrory is a five-time recipient of the Dean's List Award. Among the several scholarships she has received are awards from former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer and from WMU's College of Education and Human Development. She is vice president of Redemption Dance Team, a hip-hop dance group on campus. She and the group are active in volunteer efforts, including collecting water for families in Flint, passing out personal care packages to the homeless and adopting a family during the holidays. Later in life, McCrory would like to establish and operate a child care facility and teach at the college level.
- **J. Gabriel Ware** is the Presidential Scholar in Communication. Ware is from Detroit and a graduate of Redford High School in Detroit as well as a summa cum laude graduate of the Wayne County Community College District in Detroit, where he earned an Associate of Arts. He is majoring in journalism at WMU and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to become a journalist as well as a novelist and screenwriter. Ware has chosen to enroll in the accelerated graduate degree program in communication, which allows undergraduate students to complete a bachelor's degree while accumulating credits toward a master's degree. His current academic interests are multimedia/convergence journalism and mass communication. While at WMU, Ware has worked as a news reporter for WMU's student newspaper, the Western Herald, and now is a feature writer for Encore Magazine, one of Southwest Michigan's largest magazines. He was awarded a Michigan Press Association Foundation Scholarship in 2016 and prior to that, received several WMU scholarships, including the McKee Scholarship, Simon Memorial Scholarship, Northouse Leadership Scholarship and Distinguished Community College Honors Award. Ware has been inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa International Honors Association and will be inducted into the Lambda Pi Eta communication honor society in April. He participates in the University's Seita Scholars Program and TRiO Student Success program.

Grand Rapids

- **Conor T. O'Donnell** is the Presidential Scholar in Philosophy. O'Donnell is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a graduate of Grand Rapids City High School who has attended Grand Rapids Community College. He is majoring in philosophy as well as in political science with a concentration in public law and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he hopes to soon earn a juris doctor degree and pursue ambitions of becoming a lawyer and politician. O'Donnell plans to practice law as either a prosecutor or civil rights attorney and eventually to run for Congress. That career direction was honed after studying the philosophy of such great thinkers as John Locke and Niccolo Machiavelli, philosophies that fueled his passion for social justice and democratic governance. In addition, his courses in logic and epistemology armed him with a skeptical worldview and a logical way of thinking that before long, clarified that he should practice law in order to fight for the common good. O'Donnell serves as head captain of the Mock Trial Team, president of the Pre-law Society, speaker of the Western Student Association and founding president of the Theta Chi fraternity. He has earned the Multiculturalism and Leadership Scholarship and Rochon Philosophy Scholarship, consistently appears on the dean's list, and was inducted into the Order of Omega, signifying his place among the top 3 percent of all Greek students nationwide. Through his positions in student government and his fraternity, O'Donnell sits on several University committees and is involved with multiple nonprofit organizations, including the American Red Cross and United Service Organizations. He also works as a manager in WMU's Bernhard Center and as an intern for Hills at Law P.C., where he has gained hands-on experience in preparation for law school.

Jenison

- **Courtney M. Wright** is the Presidential Scholar in Geosciences. Wright is from Jenison, Michigan, and a graduate of Jenison High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in hydrogeology and environmental studies and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, Wright plans to work as an environmental consultant dealing with remediation projects. Her numerous accomplishments include receiving the Lee Honors College Research and Creative Activities Scholarship to help fund her thesis project titled "Patterns in the Abundance of Benthic Algae in Streams." She has appeared on the dean's list many times and is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society. Outside of the classroom, she was a founding member of the Western Swing Society, a registered student organization at WMU dedicated to teaching and performing the art of swing dance. Wright was the organization's first president and served for two years. She also has volunteered with the University's Office for Sustainability and, in her spare time, is a competitive gymnastics coach.

Kalamazoo

- **Joseph D. Barnett** is the Presidential Scholar in Biological Sciences. Barnett is from Kalamazoo and was home-schooled. He is a graduate of Kalamazoo Valley Community College, where he earned an associate of arts. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he majored in biological sciences with a research emphasis in neurobiology and alternative respiratory therapies and graduated in December 2015. Barnett developed the career goal of becoming a physician after 11 years of traveling around Central America, Asia and the Middle East, many times interacting with patients during volunteer trips and seeing extreme poverty and suffering as well as

witnessing firsthand people requiring care for easily preventable sicknesses and injuries. Now, as a Fulbright Scholar semifinalist, he intends to pursue a one-year program in public health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine before attending medical school. Barnett wants to learn to develop and implement measures that will improve community public health in low- and middle-income countries. While at WMU, he partnered with fellow student **Stephen John** to design a low-cost device to treat infants suffering from respiratory distress called the NeoVent. The product, which has earned several national innovation prizes, was designed in the laboratory of **Dr. Peter Gustafson**. Barnett and John recently filed a utility patent for their prototype. They plan to conduct pilot studies on it in Nepal this year, expanding to Kenya and Uganda in 2017. The trials will help clinicians in these regions to meet a critical need in neonatal health and could save thousands of lives. Barnett's honors college thesis, "A Consideration of Healthcare in Honduras," was done under the mentorship of **Dr. Nicholas Andreadis**, and also has given him new insights into the complex issues facing health care systems worldwide. In addition, he began to investigate a neuroprotective drug with **Dr. Cindy Linn** in 2014. Their research led to an important scientific discovery—the ability of neurons to regenerate—and will lay the groundwork for the development of a cure to neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Schizophrenia. Barnett has co-authored a paper that has been submitted to Science to report the findings from that research.

- **Kelsey A. Berry** is the Presidential Scholar in Human Performance and Health Education. Berry is from Kalamazoo, and a graduate of nearby Mattawan High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in athletic training and expects to graduate in December 2016. Following graduation, she plans to continue in a graduate school for physical therapy, and obtain her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. The title of her honors college thesis is "The Implementation of Athletic Trainers in Youth Travel Hockey." The thesis considers why athletic trainers should be involved in travel youth hockey and how they can be incorporated into those travel programs in Michigan. Berry has been on the dean's list every semester. She is a member of the Michigan Athletic Trainers' Society and the National Athletic Trainers' Association and has worked in several clinical rotations through her program, including women's basketball, women's tennis, women's track and WMU football. She currently works at Agility Sports Physical Therapy, and she enjoys making people healthier, happier and able to enjoy their lives better through physical therapy. Through the Lee Honors College, she has volunteered for several projects on and off campus. They include Red Cross blood drives, highway clean-ups, Habitat for Humanity, Bronco Buddies and many others. Berry is involved with the Christian group Campus Crusade for Christ at WMU, and last year, she led Bible studies on campus for freshmen and female transfer students.
- **Keshia D. Driscoll-Cook** is the Presidential Scholar in Anthropology. Driscoll-Cook is from Kalamazoo and a graduate of the Kalamazoo Adult Education program who has attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College. She is majoring in anthropology, minoring in Asian studies and expects to graduate in April 2016. Her anthropological focus so far has been based mostly on osteology and ethnography because she enjoys studying bones as well as the cultural aspects of anthropology. Following graduation, Driscoll-Cook plans to continue her education to allow for a multifaceted career. She also intends to travel to a South Asian country after the 2016 spring semester to teach English, then head to graduate school, where she will pursue a Master of Fine Arts in a low-residency, nonfiction creative writing program. This will allow her time to gain various life experiences before starting to write a novel. Driscoll-Cook spent the summer of 2015 in Beijing through merit-based study abroad scholarships from WMU's Haenicke Institute for Global Education and College of Arts and Sciences. While there, she honed her Mandarin Chinese language skills and immersed herself in Chinese culture. She is a proud

wife and mother of four boys, ages 14, 11 and 10 (twins). She went back to school after starting her family and has thrived as a nontraditional student. Driscoll-Cook worked days at a full-time job, took a full course load in the afternoons and did homework at night—next to her children. Now, she expects to graduate from WMU with honors.

- **Nathalie E. Hanson** is the Presidential Scholar in Special Education and Literacy Studies. Hanson is from Kalamazoo, Michigan, and a graduate of Kalamazoo Central High School who attended Grand Valley State University and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. She is majoring in special education and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a teaching position in the Kalamazoo community. Hanson has had a variety of internships, including a 2014 internship at the Kalamazoo Juvenile Home School, where she taught mathematics and developed a self-determination plan for students related to employment preparation. She also interned at the Kalamazoo Public Schools' Milwood Elementary School and at 12th Street Elementary in the Portage (Michigan) Public Schools. At WMU's McGinnis Reading Center and Clinic, she served as a third-grade literacy tutor in 2013, an upper elementary teacher for the center's Summer Reading Camp in 2014 and an upper elementary curriculum writer for the reading camp in 2015. Hanson is a recipient of a Kalamazoo Promise scholarship. She also was nominated for and received the Kalamazoo Area Retired School Personnel Scholarship. Nominated by former literacy studies instructor Nancy Lechota, Hanson received the Alpha Delta Kappa Future Educator Award in 2014. In 2015, she was honored with the Dr. Charles Van Riper Outstanding College Student Award at the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children Conference. For the nomination, she thanks **Dr. Luchara Wallace**, assistant professor of special education and literacy studies, and the special education program faculty and staff. In 2015, she also received a Jones Endowment Award and a Haines Education Award. Hanson gives thanks to **Dr. Sarah Summy**, associate professor of special education and literacy, and members of the committee for the College of Education and Human Development scholarships. In addition to her internships at schools, Hanson has frequently volunteered as a teacher assistant in several Kalamazoo schools. She also has coached for Girls on the Run, the Special Olympics and the Portage Aquatic Club.
- **Maija E. Paldan** is the Presidential Scholar in Nursing. Paldan is from Kalamazoo and a graduate of nearby Mattawan High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in nursing and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to move to the Detroit area and apply at local hospitals. Paldan hopes to work at the University of Michigan Health System and practice on units that promote primary nursing, a model of care that supports the therapeutic relationship between a nurse and a patient throughout the health care experience. She hopes to continue her education and become a nurse practitioner and American Sign Language interpreter. Throughout her nursing career, Paldan plans to blend her passion for holistic health and American Sign Language to provide quality nursing care to the deaf community. She is currently completing her thesis project, titled "The Effect of Bedside Handoffs on Patients' Perceived Fear." Paldan is a member of the Midwest Nursing Research Society and presented her findings at the 40th annual Research Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During her college career, she volunteered locally at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission and Friendship Village, an assisted living facility. She also traveled to Atlanta with the Alternative Spring Break student organization to volunteer with the YWCA and women who have suffered from domestic violence. Additionally, Paldan has enjoyed working as a chiropractic assistant for the past four years and being a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, WMU's chapter of the Student Nurses Association and the American Sign Language Club at WMU.
- **Mari B. Tobin** is the Presidential Scholar in Accountancy. Tobin is from Kalamazoo and a graduate of Potterville High School in Michigan. She has attended Kalamazoo Valley Community

College, Lansing Community College in Michigan and Lone Star College in Texas. She is majoring in accountancy at WMU as well as in finance and expects to graduate in April 2016. In the near future, Tobin will take the Certified Public Account examination, as she plans to become a CPA following graduation. She hopes to use her accounting and finance education to pursue opportunities in small business accounting or with nonprofit and governmental agencies. Tobin is a part-time staff accountant with Valley Oak, a local CPA firm and had a previous tax internship with Jansen Valk Thompson Rheam PC. She was a prize winner in the 2015 Risk Management Association Commercial Credit Analysis Competition and was her high school's valedictorian in 1991. Tobin has enjoyed a 12-year career in banking. She left the field in 2004 as a lending assistant in a private banking division. A full-time single mother of two young children, she was out of the workforce for eight years before deciding to return to school to pursue a degree in accounting. She is a coach for her youngest child's Battle of the Books team and has volunteered in different ministries at Radiant Church.

Laingsburg

- **Sarah N. Spohn** is the Presidential Scholar in Art. Spohn is from Laingsburg, Michigan, and a graduate of Laingsburg High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Studio Art Centers International in Florence, Italy. She is majoring in art with an emphasis on photography and intermedia and expects to graduate in December 2016. Following graduation, she plans to continue creating her own artwork and to obtain a gallery or museum position, specializing in collections and archives of artwork. However, Spohn's passion for alternative photographic processes and the history of photography also has piqued her interest in teaching and assisting with workshops at the collegiate level. Her most recent body of work relates landscape to spirituality and how people implement and document self-reflection. The preliminary stages of this work were created during her study in Florence during fall 2015. The work will now be converted from black and white film to alternative, historical process photographs. Spohn has exhibited and curated work at Studio Art Centers International as well as at WMU galleries and other Michigan venues, including ArtPrize Grand Rapids. Her work also has been published by online sites as well as WMU's magazine and student newspaper. She has been on the dean's list for seven semesters and has received such accolades as the Gayman Carmer Scholarship, Carney Scholarship, multiple Enrichment grants and awards of merit for work in WMU's Annual Student Exhibition. Spohn is a member of the Photography and Intermedia Collective at WMU and the national organization, Society for Photographic Education. In addition to previous jobs, she works as a gallery assistant and manager in WMU's Richmond Center for Visual Arts and has been a freelance and portrait photographer for the past five years. She is a part of His House Christian Fellowship on campus and a student representative for the Student Investment Projects board for the College of Fine Arts as well as the University Art Collection.

Livonia

- **Alexandra C. Ferguson** is the Presidential Scholar in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Ferguson is from Livonia, Michigan, and a graduate of Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Livonia. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in electrical engineering and expects to graduate in April 2016. She came to WMU on a Medallion Scholarship, the most prestigious honor the University can bestow on an incoming freshman. Ferguson is enrolled in the

accelerated graduate program in electrical engineering, which allows undergraduate students to complete a bachelor's degree while accumulating credits toward a master's degree. Following graduation, she plans to complete her master's degree and pursue a doctoral degree in electrical engineering. Ferguson is conducting research in the Neurobiology Engineering Laboratory, where she works on applying optimal control techniques to biological neurons and neural systems. She co-presented a poster about this work at a Society for Neuroscience Conference in Chicago. She also has participated in a National Science Foundation-funded research program in Boulder, Colorado, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Summer Research Program. Her senior engineering design project, "Solar Tracking and Lighting Design for a Multimedia Sculpture," is being done in collaboration with Coloma High School in Coloma, Michigan. Ferguson has received scholarships from the Society of Women Engineers, the Michigan Space Grant Consortium and Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society. She is president of WMU's chapter of the Society of Women Engineers and volunteers to promote the advancement of women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields. She also is active with the Bronco Marching Band, and has served as a drill instructor for the past three years. In addition, Ferguson has participated in WMU's Alternative Bronco Breaks and volunteers monthly at one of the University's nature preserves.

Midland

- **Kelsey E. Ennis** is the Presidential Scholar in History. Ennis is from Midland, Michigan, and a graduate of Midland High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in public history and expects to graduate in June or August 2017. Following graduation, she plans to work in a museum or interpretive center in Michigan or another state. Her areas of academic interest include focusing on late 18th- to mid-19th-century U.S. history and the global context of changes. Ennis interned for the Music House Museum in Traverse City, Michigan, in 2016. She is a recipient of the History Fellowship Award and has appeared on the dean's list. She studied in New York in 2014 and plans to travel abroad to study at Bonn University in Germany in 2017. Her extracurricular activities and volunteer services include participation in the WMU Collegiate Singers as a member and secretary for two years and the Phi Alpha Theta honor society as a member and treasurer. Ennis also has been involved with Habitat for Humanity, Bronco Buddies, the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society, her church choir, and the Air Zoo of Kalamazoo aviation and science center and museum.

Muskegon

- **Amber M. Herr** is the Presidential Scholar in Family and Consumer Sciences. Herr is from Muskegon, Michigan, and a graduate of Reeths-Puffer High School in Muskegon who attended Grand Valley State University. She is majoring in dietetics and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to become a registered dietitian and work in the community or an outpatient facility to provide others with nutrition education. Herr is working on application materials to apply to several accredited dietetic internships that will serve as the first step toward becoming a registered dietitian. She sees challenges with the media's focus on health and diet trends that make it harder for society to understand what a healthy diet looks like. Her goal is to educate people about food and nutrition so they can get the most out of their lives, whether it is postoperative healing, sustaining energy for a marathon or managing chronic illness. Herr has appeared on the dean's list seven out of nine semesters at GVSU and WMU,

achieving a 4.0 grade point average the past four semesters at WMU. Her work in the dietetics field has continued while attending both universities. She was a dietary aide at Friendship Village's long-term care facility, a camp cook at YMCA Camp Pinewood and has worked with various other organizations.

New Baltimore

- **Kate E. Meyer** is the Presidential Scholar in Geography. Meyer is from New Baltimore, Michigan, and a graduate of Anchor Bay High School in Fair Haven, Michigan. She is majoring in geography and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to attend graduate school to further her education and then pursue a career related to the field. Meyer came to WMU with the intent of learning to pilot an airplane. Through the College of Aviation, she accomplished this lifelong goal her freshman year, receiving her private pilot license. She went on to study geography and aviation, eventually earning her instrument rating. Along the way, she developed a strong interest in geography and focused her efforts on remote sensing and geographic information system classes. While at WMU, Meyer has volunteered for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, doing fieldwork and entering the data for eastern box turtle research. She also has volunteered at the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center in Augusta, Michigan, and abroad at primary schools in Costa Rica, an experience that helped her understand how her personal experiences connect with the world.
- **Casey E. Wright** is the Presidential Scholar in Chemistry. Wright is from New Baltimore and Chesterfield, Michigan, and a graduate of Anchor Bay High School in Fair Haven, Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in biochemistry and expects to graduate in April 2016. She came to WMU on a Medallion Scholarship, the most prestigious honor the University can bestow on an incoming freshman. Following graduation, Wright plans to spend a year abroad teaching English as a foreign language, then obtain a doctoral degree in chemical education and become a professor. Her academic interests lie in the accessibility of science and how it is taught. Her honors college thesis is on "A Guided Inquiry Approach to Enforce Student Understanding of Thin Layer Chromatography in the Organic Chemistry I Laboratory Course." Wright is an undergraduate research assistant studying under the direction of **Dr. James Kiddle** and **Dr. Megan Grunert Kowalske**. Her research has focused on organic synthesis, the undergraduate laboratory curriculum and underrepresented groups in the sciences. Some of that work was presented at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society earlier this month. Wright has received the Burns Scholarship, plus an Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award as well as a Student Sustainability Grant for working to improve laboratory curricula and decrease the environmental impacts of chemistry labs at WMU. She has taught chemistry laboratories at the University, serves as president of the WMU Chemistry Club and has been a leadership programming intern with LeadCorp for the past three years.

Otsego

- **Jennifer L. Townsend** is the Presidential Scholar in Political Science. Townsend is from Otsego, Michigan, and a graduate of Otsego High School who attended Michigan State University and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in student integrated curriculum with an emphasis on political science and expects to graduate in August 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue graduate studies focusing on libertarian political theory and the foundations of the American Constitution, which is in line

with her current research interests. Townsend completed a summer-long independent study under the guidance of **Dr. Denise Keele** that culminated in a small treatise on libertarianism. Her Lee Honors College thesis is an, as yet untitled, photographic series of portraits of the women of her family and their words of wisdom to future generations of women—a project that is ultimately a matrilineal history for her daughter. As a nontraditional student raising a family while working full time and pursuing her degree, Townsend brings a unique perspective to her education as well as considerable life experience, which includes a variety of jobs and travel. She is a member of the National Honor Society, made the dean's list at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and has been inducted into the honors fraternity Phi Kappa Phi. She is a volunteer for Kalamazoo County 4H and the Invisible Need Project at WMU. Townsend also places flags at gravesites in nearby Fort Custer National Cemetery for Memorial Day services and works on behalf of veterans through a variety of means and organizations.

- **Megan E. Voisard** is the Presidential Scholar in Aviation Sciences. Voisard is from Otsego, Michigan, and a graduate of Otsego High School. She is majoring in aviation management and operations and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, She would like to obtain a job in airport operations, and eventually to become the director of an airport. Voisard has maintained a 3.8 grade point average and has completed internships at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, Southwest Florida International Airport in Fort Myers and the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport. Voisard has made the dean's list every semester. In addition, she works in the College of Arts and Sciences Office of the Dean and was nominated for WMU Student Employee of the Year in 2014. Outside of school, she participates in intramural sports as well as serves as treasurer of Women in Aviation, is a major liaison of the Aviation Student Council and is a member of the American Association of Airport Executives. Voisard also volunteers at the Air Zoo of Kalamazoo aviation and science center and museum.

Pinckney

- **Brianna M. Amat** is the Presidential Scholar in Marketing. Amat is from Pinckney, Michigan, and a graduate of Pinckney Community High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in food and consumer package goods marketing and expects to graduate in April 2016. Amat came to the University on a Medallion Scholarship, the most prestigious honor the University can bestow on an incoming freshman. Following graduation, she plans to join S.C. Johnson's Category and Trade Solutions team on the Wal-Mart account in Arkansas as a senior associate analyst. Amat has earned various scholarships from organizations such as the Network of Executive Women and the Grocery Manufacturers' Representative. In 2015, she was named the Haworth College of Business Trailblazer of the Year, an honor awarded based on academic performance, leadership, community involvement and campus involvement. Amat is working with Constellation Brands and **Dr. Marcel Zondag** to complete her Lee Honors College thesis titled "Anxiety in the Aisle," which examines the incongruences between wine consumption and wine shopping. Her internships include working at the J.M. Smucker Co. and the Kraft Heinz Co., both in the companies' category management departments. Amat also participated in a three-week study abroad program in Thailand and Japan. Additionally, she is president of the Food Marketing Association and also has been a part of the team that represented WMU in the National Grocers' Association University Case Competition for the past three years, including the team that won first place in 2014.

Plymouth

- **Matthew T. Bracey** is the Presidential Scholar in Industrial and Entrepreneurial Engineering and Engineering Management. Bracey is from Plymouth, Michigan, and a graduate of Plymouth High School who attended Grand Rapids Community College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is majoring in industrial and entrepreneurial engineering and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a career in quality and process control as well as to pursue a master's degree at WMU. Bracey came to the University with an ambition to get an education in engineering to make an impact on the world. During his time at WMU, he gained systems knowledge through the industrial and entrepreneurial engineering program. Bracey has interned at the University of Michigan Health System and Eaton Corp. He also honed his leadership skills while being active in the Tau Beta Pi and Alpha Pi Mu honor societies, and the Institute of Industrial Engineers. Bracey enjoys sailing and ultimate Frisbee, which have taught him to work with a team to navigate problems as well as learn from others, and have fun while doing so.

Portage

- **Erika R. Camarillo** is the Presidential Scholar in Social Work. Camarillo is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Northern High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College. She is majoring in social work and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to seek a position working with refugee minors. Her ultimate career goal is to travel the world and provide relief work in underdeveloped countries. Camarillo also wants to obtain a master's degree in social work and, after some years of field experience, to obtain a doctoral degree in the field. Her current areas of academic interest include policy and clinical social work. Camarillo's field placement in Transitional Foster Care at Bethany Christian Services, where she worked with refugee minors, educated her firsthand about policies and how they affect those youths and limit them from many opportunities. While working in Transitional Foster Care, she witnessed the trauma and fear that many of the youth experience. She also says the work was a learning and growing opportunity for her that opened her eyes to the strength and perseverance of youths that allow them to make the journey to another country in hopes of a better life. Camarillo has volunteered for the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission and Communities in Schools, choosing to work at organizations in her local community. Working with those organizations helped lead her into the social work field. It also helped her understand the struggles people face in her community and the changes that need to be made to create a better society for future youth.
- **Rachel E. Guenther** is the Presidential Scholar in Management. Guenther is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Central High School in Portage who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College. She is majoring in human resource management and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a role in either, or both, recruitment and compensation in human resources. Guenther has been an intern at MPI Research Inc., Bronson Healthcare Group and MANN+HUMMEL. Her internship at Bronson was tied into a scholarship program in which 42 candidates out of 734 applications were awarded the Monroe-Brown Scholarship. As a member of WMU's Student Leadership Advisory Board, Guenther was the Business Bash chair during 2015 and gained leadership experience along with event planning experience through the implementation of one of the biggest events for the

Haworth College of Business every semester. She also was a member of the Society of Excellence in Human Resources at the University.

- **Scott B. Linder** is the Presidential Scholar in Computer Science. Linder is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Central High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in computer science and expects to graduate in December 2016. He is enrolled in the accelerated graduate program in computer science, which allows undergraduate students to complete a bachelor's degree while accumulating credits toward a master's degree. Following graduation, Linder plans to complete his master's degree and begin working in an area that juxtaposes both computers and chemistry. He is participating in undergraduate research in adaptive memory resource management with the Department of Computer Science and hopes to continue this research during his graduate studies. In his freshman year, he was a software development intern in the animal health area of the Zoetis pharmaceutical company in Kalamazoo. Linder has been on the dean's list for the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences each year of his undergraduate career and has received the chemistry department's awards for scholastic achievement in both general and organic chemistry. He devotes much of his free time to WMU's Computer Club, which he previously served as webmaster and now serves as president and system administrator.

Sanford

- **Zachary M. Buchalski** is the Presidential Scholar in Statistics. Buchalski is from Sanford, Michigan, and a graduate of Nouvel Catholic Central High School in Saginaw, Michigan, who attended Delta College in University Center, Michigan. He is majoring in statistics as well as in general mathematics and minoring in biology. He expects to graduate in April 2017. Following graduation, Buchalski plans to pursue a graduate degree in biostatistics. He is interested in applying statistical techniques to the field of population and quantitative genetics. On campus, Buchalski works as a tutor, helping his peers grasp mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology. In his free time, he enjoys playing piano.

St. Johns

- **Kelsey E. Bowles** is the Presidential Scholar in Speech Pathology and Audiology. Bowles is from St. Johns, Michigan, and a graduate of St. Johns High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in speech pathology and audiology and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to begin a graduate program in the fall. Currently, Bowles is conducting research on the middle ear, examining how its reflexes can be influenced to better protect the ear. For her related Lee Honors College thesis, she is studying the muscles involved in the chewing process. Bowles says WMU has offered her a variety of opportunities and experiences that have helped shape her as a person and burgeoning professional. One of the most influential experiences involved working with triplets with autism. She learned how to successfully communicate with the children, remaining patient and using quick thinking to meet their needs. A civic-minded individual, Bowles served as president of the student organization Alternative Bronco Breaks, which sends WMU students around the United States to take part in various volunteer efforts. She says the experience underscored the difficulties and rewards of leadership.

St. Joseph

- **Virginia M. Privett** is the Presidential Scholar in Global and International Studies. Privett is from St. Joseph, Michigan, and a graduate of St. Joseph High School as well as of Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor, from which she received an Associate of Arts with highest honors in 2011 and an Associate of Business Administration with highest honors in 2012. Privett is majoring in global and international studies as well as in economics at WMU and expects to graduate in June 2016. A member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, she has a 4.0 grade point average and routinely appears on the dean's list. While at LMC, she had her research paper selected and published by the Lake Michigan College Journal of Undergraduate Research in 2010. In addition, Privett was a tutor with the LMC Learning Assistance Center and the Student Resource Center. Her activities with the centers included helping students one-on-one and in small and large groups as well as helping students with special needs and students enrolled in English as a Second Language. Her expertise covered a wide variety of subjects, including economics, accounting, statistics, computer programming and applications, chemistry, biology, anatomy, physiology, emergency medical technician, English, and mathematics. Privett's college activities have included participating in recycling awareness, voter registration drives, food collection drives, the annual Hospitality Management Scholarship fundraising dinner, a Save the Moat campaign and the college newspaper. She also participated as a volunteer in a variety of community-based organizations, such as the Literacy Council and Community Family Services.
- **Steven R. Ross** is the Presidential Scholar in Finance and Commercial Law. Ross is from St. Joseph, Michigan, and a graduate of St. Joseph High School. He majored in finance and graduated summa cum laude from WMU in December 2015 with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Following graduation, he began a full-time position in General Motors' financial services rotational program, where he works in functions including the design, build and sell aspects of the business. During his first rotation, Ross will be functioning as a portfolio strategy analyst in Global Product Development examining future GM vehicles. In the future, he plans to continue his education by pursuing a master's degree in finance. At WMU, Ross was on the dean's list every semester while pursuing a major in finance and a triple-minor in accountancy, economics and general business. He was the finance chair for the Designed to Lead Conference Committee, during which he led a team in managing the budget and forecasting for conference costs. A member of the Beta Gamma Sigma Honors Society, Ross received two scholarships through the Haworth College of Business. During his internship as a financial analyst with GM, he joined the North American Financial Planning and Analysis team working on competitive analysis projects that he presented to the chief financial officer of North America.
- **Sarah A. Wirth** is the Presidential Scholar in Sociology. Wirth is from St. Joseph, Michigan, and a graduate of St. Joseph High School as well as of Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in behavioral science as well as in criminal justice and minoring in legal studies and general business. She expects to graduate in May 2017. Following graduation, Wirth plans to apply to programs that offer dual degrees in law and psychology. She is currently interning with the WMU Cooley Law School Innocence Project. She previously served as a research assistant for three studies in the Department of Psychology, working in the Trauma Research lab, the Industrial/Organizational Psychology lab and the Human Operant and Behavioral Pharmacology Research lab. Wirth also was once a teaching assistant for the Behavior Analysis Training System and a research assistant in the Department of Sociology for **Dr. Patrick Cundiff**, assistant professor of sociology. Through her part-time job, she earned a second-place Kendall Electric Axel Johnson Memorial Scholarship. Her busy schedule also includes serving as general officer for Psi Chi, a national honor society, and during

the most recent winter break, Wirth was an Alternative Bronco Breaks co-site leader on a service trip to Philadelphia.

Sterling Heights

- **Michael A. Hudson-Casanova** is the Presidential Scholar in Music. Hudson-Casanova is from Sterling Heights, Michigan, and a graduate of Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Sterling Heights. He is majoring in instrumental music education as well as in jazz studies and expects to graduate in December 2016. Following graduation, he plans to attend graduate school for music performance and composition after completing a music education degree. Hudson-Casanova then plans to teach music in secondary and postsecondary institutions and be actively involved in a creative music community. A multi-instrumentalist, he has studied saxophone and clarinet with School of Music faculty members and performs frequently on flute, as well. He especially values his studies in saxophone, composition and improvisation with **Dr. Andrew Rathbun**. In 2014, Hudson-Casanova, along with two other fine arts students, received the Ramon Zupko grant to create an original, interdisciplinary work. The result was "Who Killed Mr. Mason," an hour-long ballet with a 14-piece ensemble and six-piece band performing all original music and choreography. Collaborations such as this especially interest him, and he says he is grateful for these kinds of opportunities provided through the College of Fine Arts. Hudson-Casanova received the music school's Presser Scholarship in spring 2015, and he looks forward to recording with MNOE, a 14-piece chamber pop ensemble made up of music students, and a teaching internship in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His senior recital in March was at the Kalamazoo Piano Company and consisted of original music for his band, The Casanova Five, and a string quartet.
- **Alexa P. Morrison** is the Presidential Scholar in Gender and Women's Studies. Morrison is from Sterling Heights, Michigan, and a graduate of Warren Mott High School as well as of the Macomb Mathematics Science Technology Center, both in Warren, Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in gender and women's studies as well as in child and family development and expects to graduate in April 2016. Morrison came to WMU on a Medallion Scholarship, the most prestigious honor the University can bestow on an incoming freshman. Following graduation, she plans to continue working toward her goal of becoming a child life specialist by continuing her education in a child life master's program. She also is passionate about traveling the world, experiencing new cultures, connecting with diverse people and volunteering for global organizations. This is the second time WMU has selected Morrison as a Presidential Scholar. The first time was in 2015, when she was selected as the Presidential Scholar in Family and Consumer Sciences by the department that confers her second major in child and family development. Morrison is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, Iota Iota Iota Honor Society and Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. Her minors include anthropology and speech and hearing processes with a concentration in American Sign Language. Her interest in learning extends beyond the classroom, and she has worked to create an after-school tutoring program called Tutor Time for children from the Kalamazoo Public Schools. Morrison also has helped women and children through collaborations with the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission as secretary of the WMU Graphic Arts Society. In addition, she spent a summer interning at the education department of Binder Park Zoo, teaching children about animals and the environment, and completed a child life practicum through Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo. Morrison is currently volunteering at Metro Health Hospital in Wyoming, Michigan, in its child life department.

Traverse City

- **John R. Lutchko** is the Presidential Scholar in Environmental and Sustainability Studies. Lutchko is from Traverse City, Michigan, and a graduate of North High School in Phoenix, as well as of Northwestern Michigan College. He is majoring in freshwater science and sustainability and expects to graduate in August 2016. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a graduate degree in a water-related program. Lutchko grew up in West Grand Traverse Bay and visited his family's cottage on Lake Leelanau, both of which helped mold his deep appreciation for water, and it shaped his desire to study freshwater science and aquatic ecosystems. He has extensive firsthand experience using underwater remotely operated vehicles and numerous underwater sonar systems. During summer 2012, Lutchko took part in an internship working for the National Park Service and Northwestern Michigan College. He was awarded the Marine Technology Society Student Scholarship in 2012, the Marine Technology Society ROV Scholarship in 2013, and the Hydrographic Society of America National Scholarship in 2014 and 2015. He currently works at NMC as the marine technology laboratory coordinator and primary ROV pilot, and also holds the watershed technician position for the Lake Leelanau Lake Association.

Vicksburg

- **Kathryn S. Hillenbrand** is the Presidential Scholar in Mathematics. Hillenbrand is from Vicksburg, Michigan, and a graduate of Vicksburg High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College. She majored in hydrogeology as well as in applied mathematics and graduated from WMU in December 2015. She plans to continue working as a hydrogeologist at an environmental consulting company and use her training in mathematics to solve challenging problems relating to environmental contamination. Hillenbrand is especially interested in groundwater and soil quality remediation in southwest Michigan. During summer 2015, she completed an internship with Phillips Environmental Consulting Services Inc., where she is currently employed full time. The internship generally consisted of groundwater and soil sampling, hydrogeologic investigations and technical writing. She has presented several talks on how mathematicians can play an important role in protecting water resources. In 2015, Hillenbrand was named WMU's Presidential Scholar in Geosciences by the department that confers her second major. Her other previous awards include the Hughes Environmental Scholarship, Daniels Endowed Scholarship and Award, Grace Endowment Scholarship, and Leopold Award. Hillenbrand is a member of the Air and Waste Management Association, the National Ground Water Association, the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Beta Kappa. She also was a member and an undergraduate officer for Pi Mu Epsilon, a mathematics honors society, and a member of the WMU Math Club, which she served two semesters as president.

Warren

- **Andrew J. Bogan** is the Presidential Scholar in Chemical and Paper Engineering. Bogan is from Warren, Michigan, and a graduate of Warren Mott High School who attended Oakland University. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in graphic and printing science and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to attend the University of Missouri and enroll this fall in the Master of Business Administration with a concentration in consumer products marketing and brand management. Once Bogan has earned

that degree, he will pursue a career in the printing industry. He is completing the multimedia track of his undergraduate program at WMU. He has completed a marketing minor in addition to the track's built-in communication minor. Bogan is especially interested in digital media, multimedia, Web design and marketing. In addition, he has a significant interest in color theory and color management. He is working on his honors college thesis, which combines his undergraduate studies with his intended MBA. His project involves implementing spot colors into an extended color gamut, and evaluating the impact on brand management. During his time at WMU, Bogan has interned at Packaging Corp. of America, where he was the design intern, and the Home Builders Association of Western Michigan, where he was a graphic design/multimedia intern. He was selected as the 2014-15 Outstanding Student in Graphic and Printing Science and has worked as a lab assistant for the GPS 1500 class. In addition, Bogan is a four-year member of WMU's Graphic Arts Society, a student organization that prints shirts for local organizations, and has served three years on the executive board as treasurer.

- **Rachael J. Pulice** is the Presidential Scholar in Comparative Religion. Pulice is from Warren, Michigan, and a graduate of Lakeview High School in St. Clair Shores, Michigan, who attended Macomb Community College in Warren. She is majoring in comparative religion with a focus on the West as well as Islam in America and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a master's degree and hopes to work with an international population or with any organization giving a voice to the voiceless. Pulice is especially interested in Middle Eastern peoples and their struggles and the event coordination aspect of organizations. She enjoys working to promote understanding through education and communication as well as raising awareness and getting communities involved in important issues, be this in an educational or an entertaining way. Pulice received the 2015 Undergraduate Achievement Award from the Department of Comparative Religion. She assists with an advanced class for the Center for English Language and Culture for International Students, an intensive English language learning program for non-native speakers. She also serves on the Campus Activities Board's executive board as the cultural events coordinator and has been involved with other registered student organizations while at WMU.

Out-of-state scholars

Illinois

Libertyville

- **Audrey L. Johnston** is the Presidential Scholar in Music Theatre Performance. Johnston is from Libertyville, Illinois, and a graduate of Libertyville High School who also studied at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is majoring in music theatre performance with a minor in dance and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she hopes to perform professionally over the summer before auditioning for roles all across the country. Johnston sees herself starting her performance career on a cruise ship or national tour. Her dance training has introduced her to the study of various movement theories, including Laban and Bartenieff, and she hopes to become certified in Laban Movement Studies in the future. Johnston has performed in multiple shows at WMU and the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre and has enjoyed the offerings of the local theatre community. Over the summers, she also has performed in Illinois at the College of Lake County and professionally at the Timberlake Playhouse. Between rehearsals and continually making the dean's list, she has participated in numerous master classes with agents and Broadway professionals, including **Lillias White**, **Beth Leavel** and **Jeff Blumenkrantz**. WMU's program has helped her grow as a person and a performer. After being presented with

so many once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, Johnston says she's thrilled to call herself a WMU Bronco.

Orland Park

- **Alec C. Kraus** is the Presidential Scholar in Economics. Kraus is from Orland Park, Illinois, and a graduate of Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in economics as well as in criminal justice and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to use the skills he has developed through the support of economics faculty members and his work in the classroom to build a career in economics and down the road, to continue his education. During his time at WMU, Kraus has taken advantage of many opportunities to prepare for that career. They include interning with the Michigan Intelligence Operations Center and with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. He also has developed his leadership skills through such experiences as serving as a First-Year Seminar intern with WMU's First-Year Experience program and earning the Leaders in Action Leadership Certificate from the Student Activities and Leadership Programs office. Kraus has been named to the dean's list every semester thus far and is a member of the Alpha Phi Sigma and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies. Through his membership in the Lee Honors College, he has done research on the perceived implications of right- to-refuse warnings when police seek voluntary consent to conduct searches and he has contributed to the local community by participating in numerous volunteer projects.

St. Charles

- **Maria V. Paterno** is the Presidential Scholar in World Languages and Literatures. Paterno is from St. Charles, Illinois, and a graduate of St. Charles East High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in German as well as in music composition and minoring in multimedia arts technology. She expects to graduate in December 2016. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a graduate degree in composition, musicology or German. Paterno is interested in studying how female composers in history influenced the music of their times, and she hopes to help edit the classical canon of music to demonstrate diverse representation. Next fall, she will present her senior thesis, a concert of original works. Paterno's wide variety of interests is exemplified by her studies and her various involvements at WMU. She came to the University on a Medallion Scholarship, the most prestigious honor the University can bestow on an incoming freshman. As a freshman, her facility for Italian earned her an Excellence in Italian Award from the Department of World Languages and Literatures. As a sophomore, Paterno began her German studies, leading to a semester abroad at the University of Bonn in Germany in 2015. As a music student, she was a member of the concert band and of the jazz choir Gold Company II during her freshman year. But her primary focuses in music are composition and music technology. During the 2014-15 academic year, she served as a composition studio technician assistant. Since 2014, Paterno has been an assistant in the School of Music's concerts office. She also has worked as a summer orientation mentor for the school, as a counselor for the SEMINAR music camp and as a member of the student advisory committee for the Student Investment Project within the College of Fine Arts.

Indiana

Dyer

- **Jenica D. Batt** is the Presidential Scholar in University Studies. Batt is from Dyer, Indiana, and a graduate of Lake Central High School in St. John, Indiana. She also attended Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, Indiana, and Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah, Georgia. Batt is majoring in university studies with a concentration on holistics and addiction studies and expects to graduate in May 2017. She returned to college to complete her degree after taking a decade-long hiatus that included marriage and motherhood. Though she had some anxiety about returning to learn, any angst was put to rest after her first appointment with an advisor. For her success so far, Batt credits advising help, the support of her family and the will to march through each semester.

Goshen

- **Daniel J. Neff** is the Presidential Scholar in English. Neff is from Goshen, Indiana, and was home-schooled as well as attended the University of Missouri and Glen Oaks Community College in Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in creative writing and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in fiction and, in time, work toward becoming a professor of creative writing and of literature while writing and publishing his own fiction and poetry. Neff's current area of academic interest revolves around the correlations and connections between formal aesthetics and conceptualization. Specifically, he is researching empathy through modes of emotional affectation and articulation of gesticular semblance within the imagery and psychological representations of contemporary short fiction and poetry. Neff was an intern with WMU's Third Coast literary journal last semester, making recommendations for publication after reviewing submissions for use of aesthetic, linguistic and conceptual writing prowess. He presented at the 2015 Midwest Writing Centers Association on the art of writing statement-of-purpose letters and collaboration within writing centers. He presented his poetry at the Prague Summer Writing Program's annual reading in 2015 and at the Writing Center Poetry Reading in 2016. Neff also has published two poems, "Jungian Life" and "Flying Naked with Herons," in the spring 2015 issue of Rainy Day Magazine, the undergraduate journal at Cornell University. In addition, he was a finalist for WMU's 2015 Gwen Frostic Creative Writing Awards in both fiction and poetry and has been on the dean's list every semester. He traveled abroad in the Czech Republic as a member of the Prague Summer Writing Program and also has traveled to Costa Rica. Neff is a student consultant in WMU's Writing Center as well as a member of WMU's University Writing Center registered student organization, the Michigan Writing Centers Association and the East Central Writing Centers Association. He has been a member of Kalamazoo Collective Housing and has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, Help-a-House and Soup for Success.

Warsaw

- **Sarah A. Mills** is the Presidential Scholar in Dance. Mills is from Warsaw, Indiana, and a graduate of Warsaw Community High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in dance and minoring in nonprofit leadership and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to move to Chicago to pursue a dance performance career and explore opportunities in the nonprofit field that combine dance and service. Mills was a member of

WMU's select performance company, the Western Dance Project, in the 2013-14 season. During her undergraduate career, she has performed works by **Ohad Naharin**, **Eddy Ocampo**, **Gabrielle Lamb** and WMU dance faculty. Her choreography was featured on campus in both the 2014 and 2015 Orchesis Dance concerts and restaged by members of the Western Dance Project both years. Mills has received several scholarships through the Department of Dance, including the Partners in Dance Endowed Scholarship and the Dalton Exceptional Dance Major Scholarship. Last summer, she also received a Kalamazoo Artistic Initiative Grant from the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo to teach dance in Panama City, Panama. She will return to Panama with a group of WMU students this May through a large grant from the Western Student Allocations Committee. This year, Mills founded Movement Exchange at WMU, a nonprofit, registered student organization committed to making dance accessible to all. She serves as president of Movement Exchange and is a member of the Orchesis Dance Society board. She also served as the Orchesis Dance Concert master in 2015.

Mississippi

Natchez

- **Carrie M. Renfrow** is the Presidential Scholar in Business Information Systems. Renfrow is from Natchez, Mississippi, and a graduate of Natchez High School who has attended Adrian College in Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in computer information systems and expects to graduate in April 2016. Following graduation, she plans to obtain a position in Kalamazoo or nearby Battle Creek and help an organization to apply technology to create solutions to business challenges. Renfrow's primary focus of study has been on data analytics and database management, but her interests in the field of information technology are vast. She is working 16 to 22 hours a week in a yearlong internship with the Kellogg Co. while attending school full time. She also volunteers with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Southwest Michigan. Renfrow is the student support person for Kellogg's Global Revenue Management team and assists the team in performing business analytics to determine promotional effectiveness. She has appeared on the dean's list several times and received WMU's Haworth College of Business Scholarship her junior and senior years and Business Information Systems Scholarship her senior year. A first-generation college student, Renfrow will be the first member of her family to earn a bachelor's degree. She says she benefited greatly from her family stressing the importance of education and the scholarships she received through the business college as well as the support of her business professors. Renfrow hopes that one day, just like those professors, she can be a positive influence on people's lives.

Missouri

St. Louis

- **Jason J. Grant** is the Presidential Scholar in Civil and Construction Engineering. Grant is from St. Louis and a graduate of St. John Vianney High School in Kirkwood, Missouri. He majored in civil engineering and graduated in December 2015. Following graduation, he has been pursuing his goal of working in the commercial construction industry. Grant started a job at the end of January as a project manager with ARCO National Construction in St. Louis. During his career at WMU, he focused his elective classes on the construction management area and participated in internships with four different companies. His diverse internship work included helping to determine the relative cost of multiple masonry wall systems, developing detailed floor plans for

office buildings using AutoCad, developing detailed masonry façade inspection reports, quality control for steel fabrication, designing, cost estimating, scheduling, purchasing and subcontractor coordination. Grant and a team of other students redesigned the I-94 and South 40th Street interchange near Galesburg, Michigan, for their senior engineering design project. The team developed and evaluated three alternatives as requested by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Grant has earned numerous accolades in the classroom as well as on the soccer field. He was on the dean's list every semester, on the 2012 and 2014 academic all-conference teams and received such honors as the 2015 Outstanding Student in Civil Engineering award, Boughner Engineering Student-Athlete Award, U.S. Army Reserve National Scholar Athlete Award and White House Gold Award for Educational Excellence. In addition to being on the soccer team, which he served as captain in 2013, Grant was involved with the Mid-American Conference Leaders. He also was a member of WMU's Civil and Construction Engineering Honor Society and student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Wisconsin

Middleton

- **Sarah M. Collins** is the Presidential Scholar in Theatre. Collins is from Middleton, Wisconsin, and a graduate of Middleton High School. She is majoring in stage management and expects to graduate in April 2016. She is at present a production assistant for Broadway In Chicago, completing her final WMU class online. Following graduation, her immediate plan is to remain in Chicago, but she also has aspirations to work in opera, touring with a theatrical production or a musical performer. Studying stage management at WMU, Collins has worked on such productions as "Spring Awakening," "9 to 5," "Kiss Me Kate," "Glengarry Glen Ross," "Gaslight" and "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." She has worked alongside several respected guest artists and directors, including **D. Terry Williams**, **David Allen George**, **Michael Fosberg** and **Edwin Lee Gibson**. As a University Theatre Guild assistant, Collins helped with special events for the Department of Theatre. As assistant to the production stage manager, she also planned and executed student auditions for the department. Over the years, she was busy with off-campus productions, as well. During her junior year, she was stage manager for the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra's production of "Otello," conducted by KSO Music Director **Raymond Harvey** and directed by **Vincent Liotta**. Collins interned several times for the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, including as its first-ever production administration intern and twice as a production assistant. She also served as an events intern for the Glimmerglass Festival in Cooperstown, New York.