Employee mixer scheduled for Oct. 4

A Fridays with Friends mixer and reception will be held immediately following the Academic Convocation until 6 p.m. in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts lobby.

Road closures part of homecoming

Campus road closures related to the Homecoming Campus Classic will begin at 8 a.m. and continue until 10:15 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 12. Roads affected are Oliver Street from Stadium Drive to Western Avenue, 8 to 10:15 a.m.; West Michigan Avenue from Western Avenue to Sangren Hall, and Gilkison Avenue from Western Avenue to North Dormitory Road, 9 to 9:45 a.m.; and Valley Drive, Rankin Avenue at Business Court and Western Avenue leading toward the Student Recreation Center, 9 to 10:15 a.m.

Gymnastics school accepting students

Registration continues for the final session of the 2013 Bronco Gymnastics School, which is open to recreational gymnasts of all ages and skill levels. The session meets from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursdays starting today and running through Nov. 21. The cost is $115, with children of WMU employees receiving a $10 discount. Visit http://bit.ly/156lgrl for details.

LBGTA career mentors being sought

Local professionals supportive of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students and their allies are encouraged to participate in WMU's new LBGTA Career Mentorship Program. The program officially kicks off Friday, Oct. 18. Mentors must be able to meet with their mentees one or two times a month from October 2013 through April 2014. For more information, visit wmich.edu/diversityandinclusion/lgbt to apply.

Global engagement fund available

The WMU Global Engagement Fund offers co-funding for activities that enhance global engagement on campus. Activities include visiting scholar events and conferences or workshops. Applications are due Nov. 1 and April 1. For details, visit wmich.edu/international/funding/gef. Direct questions to Michelle Metro-Roland, Haenicke Institute, at michelle.metro-roland@wmich.edu or (269) 387-3908.

Center offers back-up child care

Recognizing that care needs can be unpredictable, the Children’s Place Learning Center now offers back-up child care. Parents can pre-register their children for back-up care and, when the occasion arises, call the center to arrange for care and to ensure there is adequate space. Back-up care is not a drop-off service. For more information, visit wmich.edu/childcare or call (269) 387-2277.

WMU celebrates 90 years of homecoming

With two of the University’s most festive occasions just around the corner, there’s a flurry of activity on campus.

Homecoming week runs from Monday through Sunday, Oct. 7-13, while family weekend takes place Friday through Sunday, Oct. 11-13, to coincide with homecoming’s biggest events.

And many of those events are free or offered at a low cost and open to the public.

Three anniversaries being celebrated

This year, WMU is celebrating its 90th homecoming and 75th year of hosting football games in Waldo Stadium. It’s also marking the 50th year of the Distinguished Alumni Awards program.

In honor of the latter milestone, a public reception will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 11, in the Bernhard Center’s East Ballroom. During the ticketed event, the WMU Alumni Association will recognize all past recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award. In addition to entertainment and refreshments, the event will feature a short program.

Search underway to find associate dean for honors college

A search to find a new associate dean for the Lee Honors College is underway. The position has been posted under faculty and staff positions on the WMU Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/jobs. The posting includes a complete job description.

Edwin Martini, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, is leading the search committee.

Academic convocation gets 2013-14 off to good start

WMU will formally kick off the new academic year Friday, Oct. 4, with an Academic Convocation that will honor standout faculty and staff members and provide a platform for President John M. Dunn to present his seventh State of the University address. During the event, which begins at 2 p.m. in the Dalton Center Recital Hall, Dunn will review the University’s accomplishments, outline upcoming opportunities and initiatives, and set the direction for the coming year. The traditional gathering will also celebrate 13 faculty and staff members for outstanding service and achievement. The employees will receive some of WMU’s most prestigious accolades: the Distinguished Faculty Scholar, Distinguished Service, Distinguished Teaching, Emerging Faculty Scholars and Make a Difference awards. Held during the opening weeks of fall semester classes, the annual convocation is a signature event to welcome faculty, staff and students back to campus. A reception, which also doubles as a campuswide gathering for employees called Fridays With Friends, will be held immediately following the convocation in the adjacent Richmond Center for Visual Arts.
Around campus and beyond

Editor's note: Visit wmich.edu/events for details and more event news.

Speakers addressing climate change
About 20 public presentations and other activities related to climate change are being held on and off campus this fall. Now underway, this series of free public events is part of an interdisciplinary effort to raise awareness about the consequences of climate change and ways of responding to these consequences. Visit wmich.edu/news/2013/09/9603 for details.

Entrepreneurs to make presentation
Andrew and Kathleen Widner, owners of The Spirit of Kalamazoo, will speak at 8 a.m. Friday, Oct. 4, in 2150 Schneider Hall. The Entrepreneurship Forum event is free and open to the public and begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Reservations are required and can be made at wmich.edu/business/e-resv or (269) 387-5050.

Event supports writing award
Eleven poets and writers with ties to Michigan will come together Saturday, Oct. 5, to read their work and celebrate the life and contributions of author, editor and publisher Robert J. Bixby, a WMU alumnus who died last October. The event will be held at 2 p.m. in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. Refreshments will be served, and a book signing will follow the reading. All of the participating writers will donate the proceeds from sales of their books to help fund the Robert J. Bixby Award in Creative Writing, established this spring with a gift from Bixby's widow.

WMUK starts fall fundraising campaign Oct. 12
The University’s public radio station WMUK-FM will begin its annual fall campaign Saturday, Oct. 12, with a goal of raising $160,000.

The radio station, located at 102.1 on the FM dial, uses membership contributions and additional gifts to produce local programs and purchase programs such as “Morning Edition,” “AIB Things Considered,” “Wait...Don’t Tell Me” and “From the Top.” WMUK encourages members to take a pledge or give a gift online or calling in a pledge during the live portion of the pledge campaign, Oct. 3 to 4, or in 3 to 4 p.m. on the second floor of the Bernhard Center near the fair’s main exhibit hall. No registration is required for the workshops. Visit wmich.edu/career/events for more information.

Slavery specialist to present talk
Brett Rushforth, a prize-winning expert on slavery in the Great Lakes region, will speak at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, in 1035 Fetzer Center. The talk is titled "Making Slavery Work: Ideologies, Economies, States, and Communities in the French Atlantic World." A free reception starting at 5:15 p.m. will precede the talk.

Race relations expert to visit campus
Visiting artist David Pilgrim will make a presentation at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17, in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. Pilgrim is vice president for diversity and inclusion at Ferris State University and an expert on multiculturalism, diversity and race relations. He is the founder and curator of the Jim Crow Museum of Racism Memorabilia—a 7,000-piece collection of racist artifacts at Ferris that is used to teach tolerance.

Physicist leads NSF-funded project
Manuel Baustista is heading an innovative astrophysics project being funded by a $602,000 National Science Foundation grant. The project will contribute to understanding various galactic and extragalactic objects. It aims to develop reliable, quantitative modeling of opacity and spectra of singly ionized iron-like species, an effort of paramount importance for 21st-century astrophysics because numerous galactic research areas depend on such modeling. Baustista developed the compelling grant proposal with Thomas Gorczyca, physics, and researchers from NASA, the University of Mön in Belgium, the Lund Observatory in Sweden, the Max Planck Institute in Germany and the Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research. His team will be expanded from its original 11 members to include a postdoctoral student, a graduate student and several undergraduates, all from WMU.

Translation is focus of new journal
David Kutzko and Molly Lynde-Recchia, world languages and literatures, are playing an instrumental role in the launch of a new WMU journal, Tidal Transference, the annual publication translates poetry that has been written in languages other than English. Kutzko and Lynde-Recchia, who are in-chief and department colleague Jenaba D. Waggy provides editorial assistance. The translations were done by people from across the country, each of whom presents a commentary on the art and process of translating.

The first Transference issue came out this summer and is posted at scholarworks.wmich.edu/articles. This initial offering will also be available as a print publication. Submissions for the second issue are being accepted through Jan. 5.

Professor co-edits new volume
Andrew Targowski, business information systems, has co-edited "Spirituality and Civilization Sustainability in the 21st Century" with Marek J. Celinski, a Toronto psychologist.

The book was published in August by Nova Science Publishers. It investigates the state of civilization in the 21st century, which is characterized by Western civilization transforming into global civilization and the Great Recession triggered by the U.S. financial crisis in 2008. Twenty authors, some WMU faculty members and all members of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, investigate human spirituality and whether its actual log of development is able to steer the sustainable development of civilization.

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Leading faculty members earn Universitywide scholar awards

Four outstanding faculty members will receive WMU’s 2012-13 Distinguished Emerging Scholar and Distinguished Faculty Scholar awards.

They will be honored during the Academic Convocation at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall.

Distinguished Emerging Scholar Award

This award acknowledges the accomplishments of WMU faculty members who are among the rising stars in U.S. higher education. It celebrates the contributions of those who are in the first decade of their WMU careers and have achieved national recognition and demonstrated outstanding promise to achieve renown in their continuing work.

• Michael A. Famiano is an associate professor of physics and an expert in nuclear and astrophysics. Famiano joined the faculty in 2005 and recently entered the private sector after eight years at WMU. He has written 47 refereed publications and has been the recipient of more than $2 million in research grants and contracts to support his work.

• Dameen Wardrop is a professor of English and an internationally known post-secularist. Wardrop joined the faculty in 1990 and has paired research and creative writing throughout her career. She has written three scholarly books focusing on major 18th-century literary figures and has finished a book-length research project concerning Civil War narratives.

• Kristina Wirtz is an associate professor of anthropology and a linguistic and cultural anthropologist whose focus on linguistics has attracted global attention. Wirtz joined the faculty in 2005 and emphasizes Cuba, the Caribbean, Latin America and African diaspora in her work. She is the author of two books, with a third one in progress, as well as book chapters, book reviews and peer- and editor-reviewed journal articles.

 Scholars around the globe lauded Wirtz for having an enviable academic record even though she is in the early stages of her academic career. They noted that her book suggests new directions for the broad study of religion and understanding the relationships between religious communities and their larger national and transnational contexts.

Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award

This is the University’s highest annual award for a faculty member. It pays tribute to an individual whose work constitutes a significant body of achievement that is widely recognized within the national and international academic communities.

• Daneen Wardrop is a professor of English and an internationally known post-secularist. Wardrop joined the faculty in 1990 and has paired research and creative writing throughout her career. She has written three scholarly books focusing on major 18th-century literary figures and has finished a book-length research project concerning Civil War narratives.

The winner of a National Endowment for the Arts creative writing fellowship, Wardrop was cited by her nominators as a talented poet, an excellent teacher and an internationally recognized scholar whose work has been vastly influential. Her contributions have been so great that one literary journal editor categorized her WMU award as a long-deserved acknowledgement of her significance to her field.

Where are you going?

WMU students and the public can take their first step toward planning an overseas learning experience as part of their degree program by attending the annual Study Abroad Fair.

“Where are you going?” is the theme for the 2013 fair, which is set for noon to 4 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 9, on campus in the Bernhard Center’s East Ballroom. It will showcase the more than 70 programs WMU offers in some 38 countries.

“Each year, the Study Abroad Fair enables more than 800 students and community members to explore the study abroad opportunities available to them worldwide,” says Jane Blyth, WMU director of study abroad. “It is a popular event that has influenced many to embark on a study abroad course. In fact, our study abroad fair is often the first step in a life-altering journey of exploration and discovery for many of our students.”

On hand to answer questions will be students who have studied abroad as well as internship, professors and others who coordinate programs and courses around the globe, and study abroad specialists from WMU Study Abroad.
Confucius Center offers classes, welcomes new teachers

The Confucius Institute at WMU is accepting registrations for fall Chinese culture courses that begin the week of Oct. 14.

The low-cost courses are open to the public. A half-price discount is offered to senior citizens and WMU students; WMU employees attend tuition free. A materials fee applies to some courses. For details or to register, visit wmuconfucius.org/cultureclass, write wmu-confucius-cc@wmich.edu or call (269) 387-3784.

Meanwhile, the institute recently welcomed a new group of Chinese teachers and volunteers to provide language, history and culture courses in the Forest Hills and Portage public schools as well as the Kalamazoo Montessori School. The Chinese teachers and volunteers, all of whom come from Beijing Language and Culture University, will be in Michigan for periods ranging from one to three years and all are formally trained to teach Chinese as a second language.

They represent the continuation of WMU’s program that began in 2009 and today reaches several thousand students across Southwest Michigan.

Clinic slates drop-in events

Employees, students and area residents can get expert advice about injury treatment and rehabilitation during drop-in events being sponsored by the Sports Medicine Clinic in the Sindecuse Health Center. From 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, clinic staffers will be in the Student Recreation Center’s lobby Oct. 16, College of Health and Human Services Building’s student commons Nov. 13, and Bernhard Center’s Bronco Mall near PNC Bank Dec. 4.

They will answer people’s questions about training aches and pains as well as other issues, including how a sports medicine approach to treatment allows people to return to activity as soon as possible after an injury. No appointment is needed. For more information, call (269) 387-3248 or visit wmich.edu/healthcenter/sportsmedicine.