Alumna Hether Frayer (BS ’00, Elementary Education) combines her love for education and her passion for healthy nutrition in order to teach children that fresh food is fun. Her persona, the Fresh Food Fairy, was launched in the fall of 2011 and is funded through a Good Neighbor Grant provided by the Kalamazoo Community Foundation.

With her kale wings and beet heart, the Fresh Food Fairy caters to elementary and middle schools in the Kalamazoo community. She works directly with the school teachers to develop a curriculum that is not only engaging, but age appropriate. Her students are asked to build positive associations with their food by making funny faces, and holding crunching competitions, among other activities.

In 2012, she began to incorporate a new element into the fourth and fifth grade classrooms she visits: her bicycle blender. Frayer uses a blender that is completely powered by her bike pedals in order to make healthy smoothies. The Fresh Food Fairy lets her students hop on the bicycle and pedal for themselves to see just how fun it can be to make your own smoothies out of fresh foods such as blueberries, strawberries, and honey.

Frayer has hopes to expand her Fresh Food Fairy persona as much as possible in the future by having more Fresh Food Fairies that can visit more schools. When talking about the future Frayer states, “I would love to visit more classes, inspire more people to eat more veggies and fruits, and teach about the food system and how it plays into our lives socially, politically and economically.”
Dear CEHD Friends,

With excitement and enthusiasm, I am presenting you with a special alumni edition of Professional Reflections, a magazine of the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at Western Michigan University (WMU). In this special edition, you will have the opportunity to witness the tremendous success of our alumni through a sample, who have distinguished themselves and become exceptional education and human development professionals.

Having existed for more than a century, the CEHD has the longest celebrated history among all the colleges at WMU. Our roots can be traced back to the establishment of Western State Normal School in 1903, the predecessor of WMU. To remind us of our roots and celebrated history, demonstrate our long lasting commitment to excellence, and exhibit our enduring desire to achieve success, our faculty adopted a motto: “Continuing the Tradition of Success.”

The brand promise of WMU states: “Our students are successful in life and in work because of our quality programs and commitment of its people. Alumni are our best evidence.” The success of the CEHD alumni captures this brand spirit. The continuous success of our alumni is reflected by their continuing accomplishments. These accomplishments validate the quality of education they received from our college.

Our alumni are making a significant impact on the global society in a variety of fields and professions of education and human development. Among them are presidents of universities and colleges, superintendents, principals, teachers, fashion designers, school counselors, athletic trainers, coaches, etc. Many of them use their CEHD education to successfully advance in their careers and quickly assume leadership positions after graduation.

The purpose of this special edition is not only to tell stories about our accomplished alumni but also to extend to you the opportunity to join us in celebrating the success of our alumni. The contents of this magazine are organized chronologically from the early years of the college to the present time. Each spotlight is presented throughout six different periods. Within each period, a number of accomplished alumni are listed accompanied by one or two detailed featured stories.

Enjoy your reading.

Thank you.

Ming Li, Ed.D.
Dean
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CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS
TRADITION OF SUCCESS

College of Education and Human Development
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

1903–1959 Alumni

1. Howard Chapel
   BS '37, Physical Education. Served as an ensign and coach for the U.S. Navy during World War II as well as a teacher and principal in Michigan schools.

2. Bill Lajoie
   BS '56, Physical Education. Former General Manager for Major League Baseball’s Detroit Tigers.

3. Pauline Dennert
   BS '49, Physical Education. Former All-American Girls Professional Baseball League left fielder and 1947 League Champion. Inspiration of hit movie, 'A League of Their Own.'

4. Homer Stryker
   BA '16, Certificate of Teaching. Orthopedic surgeon, inventor, and businessman. Founder of the Kalamazoo based Stryker Corporation, a medical supply corporation.

5. Merze Tate
   BA '25, Certificate of Teaching. Innovator, barrier breaker, world traveler, author, and teacher.

6. John Pruis
   BS '47, Education. Former WMU vice president and administrator. Former President of Ball State University from 1968-1978.
AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE
A close look at TLES alumna Merze Tate

The influence left behind by Western Michigan University alumna Merze Tate ('25, Certificate of Teaching; BA '27, History) is one of remarkable significance. She has received international recognition for her accomplishments and now, 18 years after her death, she is going to be honored once more by her hometown.

Upon completion of renovations in September 2014, the Rolland Township Library in Blanchard was rededicated as the Tate Memorial Library. Dan Shaw, a school teacher at Blanchard High School, was a strong promoter for the preservation of Tate's memory. Shaw has been involved with providing a headstone at her burial site, as well as her nomination into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

For many years, Tate was one of Kalamazoo's best kept secrets. Her extraordinary life was uncovered by Kalamazoo Gazette reporter Sonya Bernard-Hollins, when she found her unique name on a list of alumni provided by the University. Bernard-Hollins was doing a story on WMU's African American Firsts, and when she came across Tate she realized that she had found a true gem.

Tate has held many titles over the years; inventor, world traveler, journalist, and author being just the tip of the iceberg. Tate was the first African American to graduate from Oxford University in London, as well as the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University and Radcliffe College. Tate was also named as WMU's first African American Distinguished Alumna. When she graduated from the University in 1927, Tate held the school's highest academic record at that time with all A's and only three B's.

As an educator, Tate wanted to give her students the best experience possible. As someone who loved to travel, she circled the globe not once, but twice, and created a school Travel Club which took dozens of her students across the country. Upon her death in 1996, she left millions of dollars to various universities across the country for continued support of higher education.
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

1960’s Alumni

1. Leta Schoenhals
BA ’42, Education, MA ’58, Education, PhD ’65, Educational Specialist. Served as a high school counselor in the Portage school system for many years.

2. Eugene Thompson
BA ’63, Elementary Education. Managing Partner, Saturn International Education Group.

3. Robert Bruininks
BS ’64, Special Education. Former President of the University of Minnesota.

4. Daniel Morgan
BA ’68, Special Education. Western Michigan University and CEHD Chair, Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies.

5. Dennis Archer
BA ’65, Special Education. Former Detroit Mayor, Michigan Supreme Court Justice, and Chair of WMU Board of Trustees.

6. Loretta Long
BA ’60, Education. Actress. Has appeared as host of Soul!, a variety series, and as Miss Susan on Sesame Street.
Dr. Dan Morgan, chair of the Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies and a 1968 graduate of the program, decided to attend WMU in 1963 after a conversation with his high school counselor Richard Patterson. Morgan attended East Detroit High School and was inspired by a career advising appointment he had with the counselor to go into the special education field and to enroll at WMU in the fall of 1964. Morgan was awarded a full-ride tuition scholarship, $300 for each full academic year, from the Kalamazoo Chapter of Michigan Association of Emotionally Disturbed Teachers (MAEDT).

It took Dr. Morgan four and a half years to finish his undergraduate degree. He graduated in December 1968 with several teaching offers. One was from Detroit Public Schools as a teacher of 35 socially maladjusted elementary students.

“I had recently read Jonathan Kozol’s *Death at an Early Age* and, while inspiring, I didn’t think I had what it would take to survive that assignment as a brand new teacher who really didn’t know what he was doing,” Morgan states. Instead, he accepted an offer to be the crisis teacher at Ottawa Junior High School in the Lakeview School District in St. Clair Shores.

Dr. Morgan taught at Ottawa for a year and a half, leaving for a full-ride masters fellowship at Michigan State University (MSU) during the 1971-72 academic year. Following MSU, he accepted a job as a teacher consultant in Mt. Pleasant where he worked until resigning at the end of the school year in 1974 to work on his Ph.D. at Florida State University. Dr. Morgan accepted a position as an Assistant Professor at Utah State University in Logan, UT where he served as a member of the faculty and as department head for over 30 years.

Dr. Morgan returned to WMU and is now chair of the Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies.

“My experiences as an undergraduate at WMU continue to significantly influence my professional goals. I want to do what I can do to ensure that students graduating as special education majors have a set of starter skills that will make their first year of teaching more successful and less stressful than my first years of teaching. That ten minute session with Mr. Patterson began my journey as a special educator and the clock is still running.”

*Photo Courtesy: Dr. Dan Morgan.*
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

1970’s Alumni

1. Lloyd Dean
   MA ’78, Educational Leadership. President and CEO of Dignity Health in San Francisco.

2. Linda Powell
   BS ’70, Secondary Education. Full-time faculty member in WMU’s Career and Technical Education program. 2013 CEHD Golden Apple Award winner.

3. Marilyn Schlack
   Ed.D. ’74, Counselor Education. President of Kalamazoo Valley Community College since 1982.

4. Richard Sanchez
   Ed.D. ’72, Educational Leadership. Former President of Navarro College in Corsicana, Texas.

5. Brent Knight

6. James Butlman
A creative voice
Art education alumna finds her passion

Mary Hatch, an art education graduate, taught briefly—three years to be exact—helping students to find their creative voice. She has also taught classes at Kellogg Community College and the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. Although she felt well prepared for teaching, she returned to the studio to focus on her own art.

“In 1975, I began working in my studio full time, but it is a slow process finding your voice, and I needed to begin marketing my work,” Hatch explained, and in 1980, she went to New York, Chicago, and various locations in Michigan to find a gallery.

“Working alone in your studio, you have no idea if anyone else will respond at all,” said Hatch. Take a look at her resume, though, and you will see that people in fact did respond—a lot. Over the years, she has been featured numerous times in many publications and her work is included in more than 300 public and private collections. “It does help to keep you going,” she added. Hatch’s work has been featured in more than 30 one-person exhibits, but when asked what made her most proud there was no competition, “It’s hard to beat being included in the inaugural show at the Richmond Center, which Don Desmett (founding Director of Exhibitions) hung so beautifully.”

“I loved every Art class I took,” said Hatch, “It was a wonderful opportunity to explore so many mediums – which was mandatory as an Art Education major.”

You can see some of Hatch’s artwork and get information about upcoming shows and exhibits by visiting her website maryhatch.com.

Photo Courtesy: Mary Hatch and MyWMU.com
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

1980’s

CONTINUING THE TRADITION
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

College of Education and Human Development
Bob Moss, an alumnus from the Department of Human Performance and Health Education was the 2014 inaugural Keystone Meritorious Achievement Award winner presented by the CEHD Alumni Society. Moss received his BS in 1975, majoring in Mathematics and Physical Education, and minoring in Health Education. After teaching high school math and coaching for four years at Shelby High School in Michigan, he returned to WMU and earned his MA in Physical Education - Athletic Training in 1980.

In the fall of 1984, he took a teaching position at the University of Illinois only to leave in January of 1985 to begin 15 years of teaching at WMU and heading up the graduate program in Athletic Training. In the fall of 2000 he departed WMU to create an undergraduate major in Athletic Training at Albion College. He currently chairs the Kinesiology Department and directs the Athletic Training major at Albion.

While his degree is in Biomechanics, most of his professional service and teaching have been in Athletic Training education. He has served on the three major committees in Athletic Training education: the National Athletic Trainers’ Association Research and Education Foundation, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, and the Board of Certification in Athletic Training on which he still serves. He identifies his two largest career highlights as being involved with mission work and “sports medicine” talks off the coast of Madagascar in 2002 with his family and college roommate as well as attending the 2012 London Olympics as a “sports medicine” chaplain.

Photo Courtesy: Bob Moss.
Bronco to Raven
HPHE alumnus John Harbaugh in the NFL

John Harbaugh has many ties to Western Michigan University. Harbaugh, who graduated with a masters degree in physical education in 1989, began his career as a graduate assistant coaching the Bronco football team under his father, then head coach, Jack Harbaugh.

Upon graduation from WMU, Harbaugh went on to become an assistant coach at many different universities including University of Pittsburgh, Morehead State University, University of Cincinnati, and Indiana University.

His first NFL hire came in 1998, with the Philadelphia Eagles as a Special Teams Coordinator, a position he held for nine years. In 2007, Harbaugh became the team’s Defensive Back Coach at the request of then head coach Andy Reid.

Harbaugh caught his big break on January 19, 2008 when he was named the new head coach of the Baltimore Ravens. It is with the Ravens that Harbaugh began to make a lot of noise, as he has led his team to the second highest number of wins in the NFL in a ten year span. He has led his team into the playoffs every year since his arrival. His 9 playoff wins are the most by any head coach in the NFL since 2008.

In 2012, Harbaugh and the Baltimore Ravens defeated the San Francisco 49ers, with a score of 34-31 in Super Bowl XLVII. His brother, Jim Harbaugh, was the head coach of the 49ers leading the event to be nicknamed the “Harbowl” by media and fans. This was the Ravens second Super Bowl win in franchise history.

Photo Courtesy: MyWMU.com
Fritz Erickson, President of Northern Michigan University (NMU), graduated from Western Michigan University in 1980 with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education.

Dr. Erickson grew up in a family of both educators and Broncos. His father was a faculty member in WMU’s College of Education and Human Development, his mother was a literacy educator for KRESA (Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency), and his two brothers and sister are WMU alumni.

Although his family was full of Broncos, Dr. Erickson originally attended Central Michigan University (CMU). While attending CMU, Dr. Erickson had two great years, and as he describes it, “maybe too good.” It was then that Dr. Erickson realized that although CMU was very a very fun place to be, it was not the right fit for him and left the university.

After deciding to move back to Kalamazoo, where he had grown up, he began work in a local print shop and quickly realized that he wanted to head back to school and earn his degree from Western Michigan University.

Erickson walked into WMU’s Office of Admissions and asked to be admitted to the University. He found that it was not so easy to simply pick up where he left off and was told by an admissions advisor to take a year and attend Kalamazoo Valley Community College and “show me you can do it.”

Dr. Erickson did just that and spent some time at Kalamazoo Valley Community College in order to get his grades up. He was able to transfer into WMU and begin his journey here in 1976. He decided to follow in his family’s footsteps and earn a degree in education. He went on to receive his master’s in curriculum and instruction and an interdisciplinary Ed.D. in educational psychology, technology, and research methodology, both from the University of Northern Colorado.

Dr. Erickson has since held many administrative roles. He previously served as dean of the College of Professional and Graduate Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, dean and professor in the College of Education and Human Development at Eastern Washington University, and chair of the Department of Education, as well as professor of education and psychology at Michigan Technological University.

His most recent position prior to his Presidency at NMU, was at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan, where he served as provost and vice president for academic affairs. Dr. Erickson was in the role from 2009 until 2013 before accepting the position at NMU.

Dr. Erickson became the 15th president of Northern Michigan University on July 1, 2014. The NMU board of Trustees unanimously voted in favor of the appointment at a public session held on April 22, 2014. He was one of four candidates for the position. Dean Li, along with Amy Routhier (pictured below), the college engagement officer recently had a chance to visit Dr. Erickson at NMU and personally congratulate him on his new role!

Due to his hard work and dedication, Dr. Erickson was able to prove himself, like many Broncos do. He took his second chance by the reins and is now one of our most successful alumni.
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

1990’s

CONTINUING THE TRADITION
TRADITION OF SUCCESS

College of Education and Human Development
Golden Apple Award Winners
Two empowering women in education receive the Golden Apple Award

A Venezuelan-American citizen, tenured Professor at Northeastern Illinois University, author, esteemed community leader, and forerunning advocate for educational leaders, Dr. Ana Gil-Garcia is a four-time Fulbright US Scholar (Venezuela, Middle East, Armenia, and Georgia) and one of this year’s Golden Apple Award winner. Gil-Garcia received her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from WMU in 1991 and has had continuous success:

Gil Garcia is one of the 30 outstanding visionary women in higher education in 2014 awarded by the Diverse Issues in Higher Education Magazine. She served 10-years as a member of the Advisory Council on Latino Affairs of the City of Chicago and on national and international organization boards. In October 2010, the Hispanic Business Magazine named her as one of the “100 Most Influential Hispanics in the USA” and in June 2009, was named as one of the “Top Ten Chicago Latinos”. In 2007, she received the “Dare to Be Great” Award by the Illinois Women Administrators Association; the “Education for the Hispanic Communities” Award from the Secretary of the State of Illinois, and was nominated as the Chicago Latina Professional of the Year.

The second Golden Apple Award winner this year is 1990 secondary education alumna Dr. Stephanie Burrage, President of Academic Redesign Solutions. She leads an innovative educational company which engages coherent, whole school reform efforts that integrates structural and programmatic interventions through a collaborative partnership with school staff and district leaders. Burrage is also the Chief School Reform Officer at Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency. A partner in the Michigan Department of Education Statewide System of Support to Wayne County Title I schools that are identified as Priority Schools.

Photo Courtesy: Dr. Ana Gil Garcia.
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INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

Two empowering women in education receive the Golden Apple Award

D.C. Public Schools recently hired TLES alumnus Robert Simmons for a new senior-level position as the system’s Chief of Innovation and Research. Simmons has chosen to take an indefinite sabbatical from his position as Director of the Center for Innovation in Urban Education at Loyola University Maryland where he is also a professor of urban education.

“I am excited to join the amazing educators in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Having spent my entire career focusing on urban education, I can think of no better place to learn and collaborate with courageous educators, led by Kaya Henderson, and the amazing community of Washington, D.C.,” Simmons states.

Simmons will be asked to co-lead an initiative hoping to improve the graduation rate of African American males in the District which is now only at 38 percent. He will also be conducting research leading to more effective initiatives to ensure academic success in an urban school setting.

Simmons graduated from WMU in 1997 with a bachelor’s degree in science education. He then went on to earn his masters from Lawrence Technological University in 2001 and his doctorate from Hamline University in 2007. Photo Courtesy: Robert Simmons III.
“Surround yourself with good people and good things will happen!”

- Brian Bailey
Following completion of his undergraduate degree at Western Michigan University, during which he focused on recreation and parks management, the Berrien County Parks Commission (BCPC) in St. Joseph, Michigan hired Brian Bailey. He began his career as Assistant Property Manager in 1990. After three years, he was promoted to the position of Property Manager. He was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Silver Beach County Park, which required supervision of 25 employees and collaboration with several external agencies such as St. Joseph Police Department, United States Coast Guard, and Berrien County Sheriff’s Department.

In 2008, Bailey was named the Director of the BCPC and since then the BCPC has been awarded over $1,300,000 in grant funding, including $50,000 from Pepsi for an exclusive five year beverage agreement. Funding has supported various projects and important land acquisition throughout the Berrien County park system.

In the summer of 2014, Phase I of Galien River County Park was completed. Special features of this marshland park include a spectacular 300’ long, five story tall “Tree Canopy Walkway” that offers incredible views of the Galien River valley and surrounding marsh land. There is also a 600’ long “marsh boardwalk” that terminates at a fishing and viewing platform overlooking the Galien River. There are fishing pole holders and benches built into the deck.

Also in the summer of 2014, several improvements were completed at Silver Beach County Park. These include a new pavilion, a restroom that includes a “green room,” a cement dune walkway with bench seating and electrical power “pedestals” located in the parking lots to support community events. The “green room” is a private room that provides wedding parties or family reunions a small private room in a very busy public Lake Michigan beach front park. Silver County Park was listed second behind Nice, France as one of six “Great Escapes” in the world by the Delta Airlines SKY MAGAZINE. Silver Beach is also highlighted in the September, 2014 issue of Coastal Living Magazine.

In late October of 2014, the Berrien County Parks Commission was notified that it will be receiving the 2015 Great Lakes Park, Facility, and Recreation Award for Galien River County Park. This award is given annually by the regents of Great Lakes Park Training Institutes and recognizes facilities and programs that represent the outstanding innovative ideas in the park and recreation profession in the United States.

The award will be presented to Bailey at the 2015 Great Lakes Park Training Institute during an annual awards reception and dinner to be held in February of 2015.

Bailey’s exemplary performance has impacted the quality of life for the residents of Berrien County. His leadership facilitates the delivery of high caliber recreation services in communities across Michigan. A proud graduate of WMU, Bailey’s dedication and expertise is exemplary among his peers.

Photo Courtesy: Brian Bailey and Berrien County Parks Commission.
CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

21st Century

CONTINUING THE TRADITION
Continuing the Tradition of Success

College of Education and Human Development
Liza Nay graduated summa cum laude from CEHD’s Textile and Apparel Studies program with a concentration in Fashion Design in 2009, and is the 2014 inaugural Keystone Early Career Award winner. During her time at WMU, she was a member of the Lee Honor’s College and founder of Project Merchandising Opportunities and Design Association (MODA), a program that introduces high school students to the fashion industry by teaching them to sew in collaboration with WMU’s student organization MODA.

After continuing her studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology and interning at Temperley London, she began her career in New York City to pursue her dreams to be a designer. She was hired by Kay Unger, New York apparel design firm, and was quickly promoted to Senior Designer.

It was not long until Nay’s work received the attention of competitor Yoana Baraschi, who quickly hired her away. She currently develops and directs key product lines for the company, including managing and motivating a team of assistants and interns. She manages the company’s private label accounts for several major retailers, oversees public relations and corporate outreach, all while coordinating communication for the organization.

In addition to earning a prominent position with a major company just a few years after graduation, Nay’s designs have been featured in Women’s Wear Daily, Neiman Marcus Catalog, and Tantalum Magazine. Nay has mentored over 20 interns since graduation and volunteers at The Fashion Class once a week to teach young fashionistas how to sew.
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KCAD ART CHAIR WINS BIG

Alumna wins two top Michigan awards

Dr. Cindy Todd, an alumna of CEHD’s educational leadership doctoral program, has recently garnered not one, but two top awards from the Michigan Art Education Association (MAEA). It was announced in October of 2014, the MAEA has named Todd as its 2014 Educator of the Year and 2014 Higher Education Art Educator of the Year. These awards are two of the highest honors in Todd’s field and in the world of art education; winning both of them is truly an amazing accomplishment.

Todd’s current position is the Chair of the Art Education Program at Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University (KCAD), where she has been teaching since 2004. In previous roles, Todd taught at Cornerstone University and Oakland University, as well as at the high school and middle school levels.

"In the day-to-day life of an educator, you’re not thinking about an award or some other recognition for your work; you’re really just doing the work because it needs to be done,” said Todd. “When I was told I had been nominated for these honors, I was speechless, because you can’t expect something like this will happen. I tell my students all the time that if you’re not teaching because you want to make a difference in your students’ lives every day, then you need to go into something else.”

Todd has also built leadership experience through her various roles with MAEA. Todd has served as a member of MAEA’s Advocacy Committee and Conference Steering Committee. She also co-chaired the annual conference in 2013 and served as President of the organization from 2009-2011.

Todd also has done extensive work with the National Art Education Association (NAEA), currently serving as the Vice President Elect of the NAEAs Western Region, and will assume the role of Vice President in 2017. It is people like Todd that keep the profession moving forward in the school and organizational levels.

Photo Courtesy: Kendall College of Art and Design
“The focused instruction I received from faculty at WMU allowed me to confidently take on my first year of teaching. It is because of their support that I am able to make a difference in Head Start students’ lives.”

- Brianne Hayes

HEADING HEAD START

Graduating from the early childhood education program in 2013, alumna Brianne Hayes found her passion very quickly. Upon graduation, Hayes took a position as a Head Start Lead Teacher at Busy Bees Child Development Center in Chicago, Illinois.

Busy Bees is part of the State of Illinois Head Start Program, a federal program that provides comprehensive early childhood education to low income families. Some key components to the Head Start learning curriculum are family relationships, emotional well-being, health, and nutrition, all of which were passionate topics for Hayes and served as a driving force in her choice to kick start her career in this position. Busy Bees Child Development Center is located in Chinatown and the majority of Hayes’ students are not fluent in English. This hurdle allows Hayes to be creative with her curriculum and forces her to find new and innovative ways to communicate and teach her students.

Within her first year, Hayes was asked to serve as a Part Time Director of the school on top of her role as Head Start Lead Teacher. She is currently in her second year at Busy Bees Child Development Center. Photo Courtesy: Brianne Hayes.
Shannon Hoffman, a 2006 graduate of CEHD’s textile and apparel studies program is the owner and president of Studio H Chicago. Her studio is a multi-line women’s contemporary showroom that brings the latest fashions to specialty stores, boutiques, and large retailers throughout the Midwest. After studying at Western Michigan University, she moved to Atlanta, Georgia. In Atlanta she worked for a smaller showroom at which point she realized that this was the area of the area of industry in which she aspired to have her career. A few years passed and the Midwest was calling. Hoffman decided to make the move back north, only this time her sights were set on Chicago, Illinois. After working for Chicago showrooms, traveling the Midwest and getting to know the market in this territory, the entrepreneur in her emerged and Studio H Chicago was born. At Studio H Chicago, Hoffman acts as the key representative for seven different clothing lines and even works internationally with lines from Germany and Australia. Photo Courtesy: Studio H Chicago.

“I continue to believe my business will grow and that there is no limit to my success.”

- Shannon Hoffman, Owner
"I truly appreciate and am so proud to be an alumna of Western Michigan University."

- Dr. Tererai Trent
Education is not something that was handed to Dr. Tererai Trent when she was growing up in rural Zimbabwe. Education was reserved and coveted for boys. It was when she began to teach herself to read and write using her brothers school books that Dr. Trent became enamored with the value of education. During a visit from Heifer International in 1991, Dr. Trent met Jo Luck, and with encouragement from her mother moved her family to America in 1998. In just five short years, Trent had earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agricultural education from Oklahoma State University (OSU), something not many from her hometown had achieved or supported.

Following her time at OSU, Trent decided returned to Zimbabwe to accomplish many of her short term goals. Subsequently, Dr. Trent decided to earn her doctorate at Western Michigan University in evaluation. Her thesis investigated HIV and AIDS prevention for women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa.

During an episode of the “Oprah Show” that aired in October 2009, a book titled “Half the Sky,” written by Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, was featured. It was in this book that Dr. Trent’s life story was chronicled and she became known as the “woman who buried her dreams.” During the segment, Dr. Trent can be seen traveling back to Zimbabwe, with members of Oprah’s crew, digging up a tin that had been buried containing a list of her goals for the future. Throughout her life, after each goal was completed, Dr. Trent traveled back to Zimbabwe to mark off her accomplishments. This was done after she earned each of her degrees.

In September of 2012, Trent founded the Tinogona Foundation. The foundation is devoted to rebuilding schools and improving and providing education to children in Zimbabwe schools. The success that the foundation had achieved in just its first two years was immense and the foundation showed no signs of stopping.

The foundation itself gained national attention when Trent was named as Oprah Winfrey’s “all-time favorite guest.” The Oprah Winfrey Foundation also made a donation of $1.5 million to the Tinogona Foundation, making it possible for Trent to build the Matau Primary School in her old village of Matau. Construction on the school was complete in early 2014 and is now serving thousands of students, many of whom are female.

The Foundation and its work has expanded greatly and has changed its name from Tinogona Foundation to Tererai Trent International (TTI) Foundation. The Foundation is a non-profit organization that works to build, repair and renovate schools and empower communities in rural Zimbabwe.

Through strategic partnerships with Oprah Winfrey and Save the Children, TTI Foundation is helping build ten schools, and improving learning for over 5,000 children so far. TTI completed its first school in 2013.

To learn more about Dr. Tererai Trent and the Tererai Trent International Foundation, visit their website at: tt-international.org.

Courtesy Photo: Tererai Trent International.