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College of Arts and Sciences

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E-News Issue 6: Oct. 2013

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College of Arts and Sciences

CAS News

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Update your
information



WMU College of Arts and Sciences Dean Draws Standing Room Only Crowd

To a standing room only crowd, Western Michigan University Dean Alexander Enyedi offered a challenge he described as emerging from both hope and realism at last Friday's College of Arts and Sciences [State of the College Address](#). "This is a time to lead," he said, "and the people who need to lead are in this room right now. Let's be clear—no one else is going to do this for us. We are in this together, and there's a whole lot riding on it."

Enyedi urged constituents to do what liberal arts champions "do best," to ask hard questions of him, of one another and of their leaders, indicating that "this is what a liberal arts education is all about. Not about blind obedience to supposed intellectual authority, but about nurturing the intellectual lights that burn in all of us. Demanding accountability of ourselves, of one another, and of leadership is a duty we share."

"At an institution that values transparency and genuinely inclusive two-way communication, your questions—my questions, our questions—can't help but be welcomed with open arms," he continued, indicating that we should consider both what we are currently investing in as a university and "what we want to look like when the dust clears."

In addition, Enyedi challenged members of the College of Arts and Sciences community "to honestly assess the effectiveness and relevancy of what you provide to our students. Students and their families have choices—is your unit providing a world-class educational experience that makes you an obvious first choice?"

Enyedi gave a preview of the college recipients of the university-wide 2013 WMU Distinguished Achievement Award winners and the 2013 Make a Difference Award winner. He also reminded the audience of last year's CAS Faculty Achievement Award winners and CAS Staff Excellence Award winners.

After highlighting faculty and staff who have reached an impressive 40, 35, 30 and 25 years of service, Enyedi recognized the new faculty members, noting that they represent the "renewal" and "sustainability" of the college. "This is just a sample of the dedicated faculty and staff who comprise the great College of Arts and Sciences at WMU," he said proudly.

Enyedi concluded with an invitation for continued dialogue, announcing that the college will host an open forum at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17, in 2028 Brown Hall. He urged the audience to "take seriously the immense challenges that lay before us, exploring both the possibilities of action and the consequences of inaction. Go back to your buildings and your colleagues. Share your concerns with your fellow faculty, staff, and students."

Humanities center to tackle 'changing climates' in speaker series

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by Mark Schwerin
September 17, 2013 | WMU News



The 'Changing Climates' series begins Sept. 26.

KALAMAZOO—The Western Michigan University Center for the Humanities is bringing together scientists and humanists in its annual speaker series to consider how the world's temperature and social climates are changing and what the earth's inhabitants need to know and do about it.

The series will explore how scientific research is defining issues that concern everybody, including the warming of the globe, the toxicity of the environment and the fundamental changes mankind is making to the natural world. The intersection of these and other issues provides both an opportunity and a necessity to talk across the usual boundaries within academia and beyond.

The series begins with **Michele Oka Doner**, an internationally renowned artist whose production encompasses sculpture, furniture, jewelry, public art, functional objects and video, who will speak at **6:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 26**, at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park St.

In her talk, titled "The Ocean as Inspiration, the Ocean as Fabricator," she will discuss works of art, such as the mile-long bronze and terrazzo floor at the Miami International Airport, that have been inspired by walks on the beach and "Sargassum," a recently completed installation in glass at the Miami Intermodal Center.

Upcoming presentations

Other upcoming series presentation dates, speakers, times, locations and titles of their talks include:

- **Oct. 10: Bill McKibben**, author, activist and founder of 350.org, 7 p.m., Miller Auditorium, "Notes from the Front Lines of the Climate Fight."
- **Nov. 21: Kenneth Chang**, New York Times science reporter, 6 p.m., 2452 Knauss Hall, "News Judgment vs. Opinion: Do I have an Agenda when I Write about Global Warming?"
- **Feb. 20: Peggy Shepard**, cofounder and executive director of WE ACT for Environmental Justice in West Harlem, 6 p.m., 2452 Knauss Hall, "Advancing Environmental Health and Justice: A Community Perspective."

- **March 13: Sandra Steingraber**, ecologist, author, cancer survivor and internationally recognized expert on the environmental links to cancer, 8 p.m., Dalton Theatre, Light Fine Arts Building, Kalamazoo College, "A Reading from 'Raising Elijah: Protecting Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis.'"
- **May 15: Osama Mandany**, professor of English literature and chair of the Department of English, faculty of arts, Menoufiya University, Egypt, 6 p.m., 2452 Knauss Hall, "No Country for Old Men: Shifting Cultural Borders in Egypt."

Jennifer Morrow Earns Make a Difference Award



Jennifer Morrow, office associate for the departments of Spanish and World Languages and Literatures has been selected as one of four WMU Make a Difference Award recipients. This award is the highest honor WMU bestows upon non-faculty employees for service excellence.

Morrow joined the staff in 2010, initially working for a short time in the Department of Geography. As the main contact person for the departments of Spanish and of World Languages and Literature, she serves some 2,800 enrolled students, scores of faculty and countless members of the public.

Morrow was touted for her professionalism, self-motivation, can-do attitude, and talent for multitasking as well as innovating. In addition, nominators often commented on her outstanding customer service and uncanny ability to handle the demands of two departments with calm

efficiency.

"[Jennifer] serves two departments with more than 80 faculty representing over 10 cultures," one administrator wrote. "All of us marvel at the effective way in which [she] tackles jobs and conducts business, changing hats constantly while maintaining her professional demeanor and a smile."

As one faculty colleague put it: "She is knowledgeable, computer-savvy, sharp, witty and able to solve all problems she runs into. When faced with problems that do not seem to have an outcome, she...makes use of her connections and simply goes out of her way to locate or create a solution."

Meanwhile, a former supervisor characterized Morrow as one of the University's best staff members—gracious, patient, intelligent, energetic and efficient. To illustrate her uncompromising customer service, the supervisor noted that Morrow routinely interrupts her tasks and projects to provide special assistance, such as escorting people to rooms they are trying to find or demonstrating how to use office equipment.

"These may seem like small things," the nominator wrote, "but they are what makes for a positive work environment and what gives WMU a positive face to those outside, including potential students, alumni and friends."

Three faculty members honored as academia's rising stars

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by Cheryl Roland

October 1, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—An internationally known evaluation specialist, an expert in nuclear and astrophysics and an anthropologist whose focus on linguistics has attracted global attention have been named Western Michigan University's 2013-14 Emerging Scholars.

Drs. Chris L.S. Coryn, associate professor and director of WMU's Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation; **Michael A. Famiano**, associate professor of physics; and **Kristina Wirtz**, associate professor of anthropology, will be presented the Emerging Faculty Scholar Award during WMU's Academic Convocation at **2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall**. Convocation activities also will include WMU President John M. Dunn's State of the University address and the presentation of several other Universitywide faculty, teaching and service awards.



Chris L.S. Coryn

Lauded by colleagues for "modeling what it is to be a scholar" and for having amassed an international record of accomplishment, Coryn is an experienced research leader in such fields as education, science and technology, health and medicine, community and international development, and social and human services. He has led or been the methodologist for grants and contracts totaling nearly \$5 million.

"I know of no other young emerging evaluation scholar in the world with the record of scholarly contribution that comes close to Dr. Coryn's record," noted a colleague at another university.

Coryn has published more than 80 scholarly peer-reviewed papers in a number of top journals in the evaluation field. He is the executive editor of the *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, and since 2010, he has been invited to lecture at The Evaluators' Institute, a prestigious national venue for workshops on evaluation. His scholarly contributions led to him winning the 2008 American Evaluation Association's Marcia Guttentag Award.

Coryn earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University and came to WMU in 2003 as a research associate in evaluation. He earned his Ph.D. in evaluation theory and methodology from WMU in 2007 and became director of that doctoral program in interdisciplinary evaluation in 2008. In that capacity, he serves as advisor for as many as 13 students and dissertation chair for nine.

"Western Michigan University is fortunate to have an emerging scholar of this caliber on the faculty," said an evaluation expert at another university in supporting Coryn's nomination. "I have no doubt Dr. Coryn will continue to be one of the top scholars in evaluation for many years to come."



Michael A. Famiano

During the eight years he spent at WMU before recently moving to the private sector, Famiano's reputation in the fields of astrophysics and nuclear physics revolved around answering questions about how nuclear isotopes are created in the Universe and determining the nuclear equation of state. His work, one nominator noted, is internationally recognized and "shows outstanding promise to attain even greater heights."

He carried out much of his research at the National Superconducting Cyclotron Lab at Michigan State University, often taking students he was mentoring to assist in the work. He also spent extensive time in Japan, collaborating there with that nation's leaders in the field of nuclear astrophysics.

An American astrophysicist who has known Famiano for years wrote in support of his nomination. He lauded a recent breakthrough discovery made by Famiano and four colleagues. The work, he said, "represents an important advance on our understanding of how the first stars in the Universe evolved and produced heavy elements, a topic that has perplexed astrophysicists for more than two decades."

Famiano is the author of 47 refereed publications and has been the recipient of more than \$2 million in research grants and contracts to support his work. The most recent such support is a \$240,000 award from the National Science Foundation.

He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and a doctoral degree in physics from Ohio State University. Famiano joined the WMU faculty in 2005 after being a visiting research associate at the MSU national lab. He also held a research position in Japan and held teaching and research positions at OSU.



Kristina Wirtz

Scholars around the globe who wrote in support of Wirtz's nomination noted that for someone with an academic career that is "just getting started," her academic record is already "what many scholars could hope to accomplish in a satisfying career."

An anthropologist with a focus in linguistics, Wirtz is the author of two books, with a third one in progress. She also has published book chapters, book reviews and peer- and editor-reviewed articles in her profession's most prestigious journals. In addition, she has given invited presentations, seminars and lectures around the world.

An international colleague noted the impact of her first book "Ritual, Discourse and Community in Cuban Santeria: Speaking a Sacred World" and praised her for refusing to take the "easy option" of staying in Havana to do fieldwork as most western anthropologists do. The 2007 book that focused on eastern Cuba, that supporter said, "suggests new directions for the study of religion more broadly and for our understanding of the relationships between religious communities and their larger national and transnational contexts."

Wirtz has been a faculty member at WMU since 2005 and came to the University from the University of Pennsylvania, where she taught a course on qualitative research for a year after earning her Ph.D. in anthropology there. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Cornell University.

At WMU, she has, as one colleague noted, been "among a growing number of anthropologists and social scientists who aim to put their scholarly research into practice...in an effort to transform the inequities of our world toward conditions of social justice." As part of that commitment, he said, she was instrumental in bringing the American Anthropological Association's Race Exhibit to Kalamazoo in 2010.

About the Emerging Scholar Award program

The Emerging Scholar Award program was launched late in 2006 to acknowledge the accomplishments of WMU faculty members who are among the rising stars in U.S. higher education. It is designed to celebrate the contributions of faculty who are in the first decade of their careers at WMU and who, by virtue of their contributions to scholarship or creative activity, have achieved national recognition and demonstrated outstanding promise to achieve renown in their continuing work. The award goes to scholars nominated for consideration through a campuswide selection process and carries a \$2,000 cash prize for each recipient.

Two honored with WMU's Distinguished Service Award

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by Paula M. Davis
September 26, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—A Western Michigan University administrator who oversees programs for first-year students and a faculty member in geosciences, both of whom have been at the University for nearly 30 years, are the recipients of the 2012-13 Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Alan E. Kehew, professor of geosciences and director of the Michigan Geological Survey, and Dr. Toni Woolfork-Barnes, director of First-Year Experience programs, will be honored during the University's annual Academic Convocation set for **2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4**, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall.

Since the award was established in 1980, more than 50 faculty and staff members have been honored for careers that exemplify exceptional service to the University and to the larger community. Recipients receive a plaque and a \$2,000 honorarium.



Alan E. Kehew

Dr. Kehew joined WMU in 1986 as an assistant professor of geology, and later earned promotion to full professor. He has twice served as chair of the Department of Geosciences.

During his career, Kehew has become distinguished as a leader in his field. He is a Geological Society of America fellow, and in 2007 was named Outstanding Geologist of the Year, by the Michigan Section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists, in recognition of his work.

A busy and productive researcher, Kehew is the recipient of 41 external research grants. He has authored 39 journal articles and other refereed papers and several textbooks.

Kehew says that his research interests are in hydrogeology and geomorphology, often focusing on the environmental aspects of these fields. He also has become heavily involved in mapping the glacial geology of southern Michigan.

One of his recent accomplishments includes being tapped to lead the Michigan Geological Survey. This formerly state-run survey—now based in the WMU Department of Geosciences—maps, evaluates and researches the state of Michigan's critical geological resources.

Kehew "has distinguished himself and elevated our department and Western Michigan University by his service, his research and his accomplishment," one longtime colleague remarked. Another

supporter from outside the University wrote that Kehew is "viewed by his peers as a preeminent glacial geologist, not just within the state of Michigan, but throughout North America."

Kehew holds a bachelor's degree in geology from Bucknell University and a master's degree in Earth science from Montana State University. He earned his doctorate in geology from the University of Idaho.



Toni Woolfork-Barnes

Dr. Woolfork-Barnes, a three-time alumna of WMU, is known as a tireless advocate and supporter of students. During her tenure as a University employee, which began in 1984, she has served as assistant director of Upward Bound, director of the King-Chavez Parks Program and a research associate in science education. She also held the top leadership post in Upward Bound before being tapped for her latest role as director of First-Year Experience programs.

When Woolfork-Barnes became its director in 2005, First-Year Experience was a new program designed to prepare students for academic achievement and social success while at WMU. FYE continues to put students on a firm foundation during their critical first year at the University, but the program's reach has extended dramatically, growing from serving some 600 students in its pilot year to today serving more than 3,000 first-year and transfer students through three components—new student orientation, Fall Welcome and FYE Seminar.

A colleague noted that Woolfork-Barnes understands that First-Year Experience is more than a welcome and transition program, but one that engenders a "college-success culture" on campus and contributes to the University's overall distinguishing points of pride.

Another supporter remarked that, "Dr. Barnes has shaped FYE into the student-centered, well-rounded and effective program it is today."

Several of Woolfork-Barnes' colleagues spoke of her caring nature and genuine desire to help students succeed.

"I have witnessed, first-hand, many a time when a student has come into our office and asked to have a quick word with Dr. Barnes. It does not matter if she has her coat on and is on the way out the door, Dr. Barnes never turns away a student in need," one co-worker said.

Woolfork-Barnes has been a student herself at WMU, earning a bachelor's degree in applied behavioral analysis, a master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology and a doctor of education in educational leadership, with an emphasis in human resource development.

University to honor three for teaching excellence at annual convocation

by Deanne Puca
September 28, 2013 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO—Western Michigan University is honoring **Dr. Holly J. Nibert**, associate professor of Spanish, **Paul R. Solomon**, associate professor of art, and **Dr. Sarah E. Summy**, associate professor of special education and literacy, for being exceptional educators and mentors and demonstrating outstanding dedication in their work.

They will be recognized as recipients of Distinguished Teaching Awards during WMU's Academic Convocation at **2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4**, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. The annual event includes WMU President John M. Dunn's State of the University address along with the presentation of other campuswide awards honoring this year's Emerging Scholars, Distinguished Faculty Scholar and the recipients of the Distinguished Service and Make a Difference awards.

Initiated in 2006, the Distinguished Teaching Award is the highest honor given by the University to recognize faculty members for their work. Nibert, Solomon and Summy join 16 other faculty members who have been honored since the start of the award program. A similar program, the WMU Alumni Association Teaching Excellence Award, was conducted between 1966 and 2001 and honored 131 faculty members.



Holly J. Nibert

Nibert began her WMU career in 1999 as an instructor. She became an assistant professor a year later and is now an associate professor in the Department of Spanish. She also has taught at Pennsylvania State University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

At WMU, she was lauded by former students and co-workers for her commitment to the department, the Spanish program and the success of her students.

"Her ample knowledge of the subject matter and countless hours of work in these endeavors make her one of the most successful instructors in a department already filled with remarkable and committed professors," wrote a former student.

Another former student noted she has a set of materials specifically written for her classes to supplement the textbook and make sure students understand concepts.

"Dr. Nibert is clearly in the top 1 percent in terms of her teaching. I know of no other professor who has so well committed herself to taking her own scholarship into the classroom and teaching students in a way that they will understand and be able to apply what they have learned," that former student said.

She is a mentor and role model for teaching assistants and has been instrumental in making changes to the Spanish program, according to a colleague.

"Professor Nibert has been the principal architect of the two-year language curriculum that we now follow for our basic language instruction, an essential piece in the strength of our unit," the co-worker said.

Nibert earned bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in Spanish from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has studied abroad in Madrid and Barcelona and attended the Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute at Ohio State University.



Paul R. Solomon

Solomon has been a member of the WMU faculty since 1995 and is an associate professor of art and director of Direct Encounter with the Arts. As an artist, Solomon works as a writer, producer, videographer and post-production editor. His performance credits include "Aching To Go Home," a script and theatrical piece performed at The Epic Center in Kalamazoo in 2004; and videography, research and taped interviews during 2002 to 2004 in several countries which resulted in a two-hour DVD and videotape production.

He earned praise from his former students for his attention and dedication to each student's success, despite the fact that he often teaches in a large lecture class.

He "teaches his students to have the confidence to share their views and become involved in the culture of their world," a former student wrote. He "is a dedicated, attentive instructor. In the short time that he spends with any of his students, his way of teaching has a lasting impact."

Solomon "constantly strives for a fresh, contemporary rigorous academic schedule" by using a wide variety of methods in class," another former student noted.

He "is always looking for fresh talent, new experiences and the latest technology that will make his art experiences a contemporary assault on your eyes."

A colleague added that Solomon promotes an "open and supportive" classroom environment.

"Even in the large format of the DEArts program, Professor Solomon has profoundly affected the lives of countless WMU students over the years," the co-worker said.

Solomon holds a bachelor's degree in photography from the Rhode Island School of Design and a master's degree in media arts from the Ohio State University.

Sarah E. Summy

Summy joined WMU in 1998 as an assistant professor and is now an associate professor in the Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies, also serving as Special Education Program Coordinator. She came to WMU from Central Michigan University, where she held a faculty position.



At WMU, she has been co-director of two U.S. Department of Education grants to prepare highly qualified special education teachers in the K-12 schools. The grants have affected a total of 68 WMU students.

One of the students who benefited from the grant program said her first impression of Summy was that she possessed an "amazing wealth of knowledge" in her area of study, and that she was always available and approachable."

Summy spent three weeks in Dakar, Senegal, for a study abroad program with students.

"She leads her faculty and is continuously expanding her knowledge by attending numerous conferences and meetings," a former student said. "She challenges her colleagues to think outside the box and collaborates and works together to make our program better."

Another former student noted Summy cares about student success and noted she is willing to work weekends and come in after her designated office house to meet with students and make sure they get the help they need.

"She is an all-around great teacher. She cares about her students and whether they succeed or not," the student said. "If she cannot help you, she will guide you to where you need to go for it."

Summy earned her bachelor's degree in therapeutic recreation from the University of Iowa, and her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Northern Colorado in special education for severe needs and special education, respectively.

Daneen Wardrop named WMU's 2013 Distinguished Faculty Scholar

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by Mark Schwerin
September 28, 2013 | WMU News



KALAMAZOO—An internationally known poet-scholar has been named Western Michigan University's 2013 Distinguished Faculty Scholar. **Dr. Daneen Wardrop has been selected to receive WMU's highest award for a faculty member** and will be honored at the University's Academic Convocation at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4, in Dalton Center Recital Hall.

A WMU faculty member since 1990, Wardrop has paired the twin pillars of research and creative writing throughout her career, believing that the process of writing poetry is inextricable from the process of writing academic prose, as each refreshes and reinforces the other.

Much of her early research centered on the luminary Amherst, Mass., poet Emily Dickinson, the subject of two of Wardrop's books. A third brought Dickinson together with two other major 19th century literary figures—Poe and Whitman.

The parallel influences of research and creative writing have become even more evident with her recent involvement in Civil War studies. In the past two years, Wardrop has finished a book-length research project concerning Civil War narratives and was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for Creative Writing involving Civil War testimonies.

Daneen Wardrop

Wardrop holds two master's degrees from WMU and a doctoral degree from the University of Virginia. In addition to her three major academic texts, she has published one book of poetry, "The Odds of Being," which received positive reviews, as well as 27 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in her area of expertise. Her poems have been published in nearly 60 different publications in addition to winning her the coveted \$25,000 National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship, for which she was chosen from among 1,063 poetry applicants. She also has been published widely in major journals in her field.

"Daneen Wardrop is an internationally recognized scholar whose work has been vastly influential," writes one nominator. "She is also a wonderful and talented poet. All of this belies the fact that she is also an excellent teacher-scholar, dedicating much of her professional energy to pass on her passion for reading, writing and literature." Another nominator singles out a review of "The Odds of Being" in which the reviewer proclaims "Nobody writes like that."

"That astonishing singularity of style is as true of professor Wardrop's prose as it is of her poetry—and it is never mere adornment," the nominator continues. "It is instead the audacious means of original thought coming into being and of an unforgettable voice entering, expanding, shifting and enriching

the conversation among scholars." A colleague from another institution noted how, as an editor of a literary journal, she has had the opportunity to observe Wardrop's writing first-hand for a number of years and has included her work on her journal's pages on a regular basis.

"I have followed Daneen's work for some time," she writes. "Almost since the moment I began reading her work, I was struck by both its honesty and its experimental quality."

She adds that she is not alone, noting Wardrop's NEA poetry fellowship, as well as her publication in the finest literary magazines, as "long-deserved acknowledgement of her significance in the field."

Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award

Established in 1978, the Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award recognizes those whose work constitutes a significant body of achievement, most of which has been accomplished while a faculty member at WMU. Nominations are sought campuswide for recipients, who also must be widely recognized beyond the University. The award includes a plaque and a \$2,000 cash award. As an award recipient, she also will have \$2,000 added to her base salary.

2013 Alumni Achievement Awards Winners Announced



College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award Reception
Friday, Oct. 11 (as part of WMU's Homecoming celebration weekend)
Bernhard Center 4:30 p.m.

The College of Arts and Sciences at Western Michigan University is proud to announce the 2013 Alumni Achievement Award winners. This year's impressive group of alumni represent 22 CAS academic units and have 28 degrees from WMU. Their expertise expands between leadership in legal, scientific and education fields and they are bestselling authors, culinary experts, executives, community leaders and artists. This year's worthy recipients prove that with an educational background in liberal arts, WMU graduates are able to make an impact in any industry. For full biographies and pictures please visit the Alumni Achievement Award [printable booklet](#).

Matthew Burian '92 (Philosophy), President and Partner, Millennium Restaurant Group, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Mary Burke '00 (Mallinson Institute for Science Education), 7th grade Instructional Specialist, Vicksburg Community Schools, Vicksburg, Michigan.

Dr. George Cooper '82 (Chemistry), Principal Investigator, NASA-Ames Research Center, Mountain View, California.

Monique Coyne '55 '66 (French), Educator, retired, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Dr. Kimberly Crimin '93 '02 (Statistics), Director Statistical Scientist, Novartis, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Jim Farnsworth '80 (Geosciences), Cobalt International Energy, Houston, Texas.

Dr. Richard Ferguson '66 (Mathematics), Chairman, Higher Education Holdings, Iowa City, Iowa.

James Griffioen '99 (English), freelance writer and photographer, Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. Hedy Habra '84 '89 '93 '07 (Spanish), Instructor, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Dr. Susanne Homant '06 (Public Administration), President and CEO, The Able Trust, Tallahassee, Florida.

Dr. Mark LeSage '92 '96 (Psychology), Senior Investigator, Department of Medicine, Minneapolis Medical Research Foundation, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Kate McCallum '80 (Communication), Producer, Transmedia Consultant, Writer, Founder of Conscious Creativity, Los Angeles, California.

Richelle Mead '01 (Comparative Religion), Author, Seattle, Washington.

Cara Mroczek '02 (Environmental Studies), Trial Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, District of Columbia.

Shirley Ort '78 (History), Associate Provost and Director, Scholarships and Student Aid, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Morella Petrozzi '89 (Gender and Women's Studies) Dancer, choreographer, teacher, and director, Lima, Peru.

Jon Robinson '74 (Economics), Vice President and Deputy Counsel, Consumers Energy, Jackson, Michigan.

Dr. Barbara Romzek '72 (Political Science), Dean of the School of Public Affairs at American University, District of Columbia.

Dr. Daniel Sayers '95 '99 (Anthropology), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, American University, District of Columbia.

Major General Richard Stone '73 (Biology) Deputy Surgeon General, U.S. Army, Arlington, Virginia.

Hugh Van Brimer '52 (Physics), Founder, Trident Inc., retired, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Dr. Kris Wernstedt '80 (Geography), Associate Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Capital Region campus, Alexandria, Virginia.

Max is Back!

9/22/2013



Anthony Majewski (*BS '00, Psychology; Alumni Association Board*) writes children's books, but for the last several months he's been working on something really big—his very first music album for children.

Max, of the award winning children's books series "Read With Max," has launched his first children's CD "Sing with Max" with the help of several award winning writers, composers, and artists. Max began his artistic career with Majewski in 2009. That's when Majewski and his wife

wrote their first "Read With Max" book, "Dogs Move Too!" The book, written from a canine's perspective, is about having to move to a new home.

The "Read With Max" series started out as a hobby, but has become more of a business and recognized brand. According to Majewski, Max's brand popularity has reached over 65,000 followers from all over the world on Twitter, "Kids and adults just love him."

In 2010, Center Sound Records, Inc. officially signed Max, their first dog, to the music label. Center Sound Records along with Emmy nominated music Producer & Composer, Craig Brandwynne initially produced songs one at a time, such as the pro-literacy song "Read a Book" performed by artist Marissa Begin.

Online demand eventually convinced the Studio and Max to work on compiling a full album. Max's initial musical popularity achieved the #1 ranking nationally and globally for the children's category, and #132 of all genres among over three million independent music artists on the popular website Reverberation.com. Max even won a 2013 People Choice Silver Telly award for his music promotional video.

Majewski is pictured with his twin boys (and future Broncos) Alexander and Nicholas.



Cynthia Ruoff (MA '73, *French*), instructor in the Department of World Languages and Literatures, is a local ambassador of French Culture in Kalamazoo. As the President of the Alliance Française de Kalamazoo, Dr. Ruoff is responsible for finding ways to bring all things French to the area and organizing events and activities for French speaking (and loving) Southwest Michigan residents.

The group is part of the larger Federation of Alliances Françaises, U.S.A. located in Chicago, which is part of the 130 year-old Alliance Française, headquartered in Paris. In addition to bringing all things French to Kalamazoo, Ruoff has the opportunity to travel to Paris for her position. While attending the International Colloquium of the Alliance Française in Paris in July, Dr. Ruoff had the opportunity to meet François Hollande, President of France.

Ruoff's interest in the French language began at a young age. When she started piano and ballet lessons, Ruoff took

notice of the French titles and terminology and they intrigued her. Later, while learning about science, Ruoff drew similarities between herself and Marie Curie. Both of Polish descent, the Nobel prize recipient Curie studied in France because she could speak the French language. In college, Ruoff decided she wanted to teach French and after graduating, she moved to the Kalamazoo area and taught at Loy Norrix High School for a few years.

Wondering if there was an Alliance in the area, Ruoff did some investigating and found that the local chapter was formed in 1912, and could boast continuous activity since its establishment.

Desiring to learn more of the French Language, Ruoff enrolled in the Masters program at WMU and became a teaching assistant. She later commuted to Michigan State University to earn a Ph.D.

As her knowledge of the language expanded, Ruoff became more involved with the Alliance at the local, national, and international levels. She has been the president of the Kalamazoo Alliance for five years and had served as Vice President previously. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Federation of Alliances Françaises, the national organization which includes more than 100 Alliances.

"I became involved to maintain contact with the French language, culture, and people. When you're teaching, it's extremely important, and as a high school teacher, it was an easy way to be in contact, " Ruoff said.

Locally, the Kalamazoo Alliance sponsors a prize for the World Languages and Literatures Department at WMU that honors an excellent student of French, it contributes to the Fort St. Joseph archaeological project, and supports the Francophone Film Festival through a donation and attendance. The group hosts monthly events and meetings and gives francophones and francophiles in the area the opportunity to practice speaking French and to enjoy French culture.

Dr. Ruoff has been teaching French at Western Michigan University since 1980, and she firmly believes that, "In today's world, in addition to studying a major field, it is increasingly important to have some experience in another language."

"When I started teaching, most people studying French were going to teach it. Today, many are majoring in another field, but they add a second major or a minor in French to broaden their experience and employment opportunities."

And she's right. French is spoken in 43 countries, second only to English (45 countries). French and English are the only two languages spoken on five continents and taught in every country, and French is widely used in Africa—a continent with increasing opportunities for both students, employees, and employers.

Dr. Ruoff holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mundelein College of Loyola University of Chicago and a Doctoral degree in French Language and Literature from Michigan State University.