Nominations due for annual awards

The nomination deadline is Monday, April 1, for some of WMU’s most prestigious faculty and staff awards presented during the annual Academic Convocation: the Distinguished Service Award, Distinguished Teaching Award and Emerging Scholar Award. Visit wmich.edu/provost and click 2013 Faculty and Staff Awards for eligibility, criteria and nomination guidelines.

 WMU plans first Lavender Graduation

Nominations are being accepted through Friday, April 5, for campuswide awards that will be presented during the Lavender Graduation ceremony, set for 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, April 25, in the Fetzer Center in honor of WMU’s lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and ally students. Visit wmich.edu/diversityandinclusion/thgt for award guidelines and an online nomination form.

Part-time faculty contract approved

By unanimous vote during a special conference-call meeting March 20, trustees approved a new three-year contract with the Professional Instructors Organization, a union representing about 650 non-tenure-track part-time instructors. The contract will go into effect Aug. 21 and run through Aug. 20, 2016.

The agreement provides for a minimum per-credit-hour rate of $800 in year one, $825 in year two and $850 in year three of the contract. The compensation base increases 3.16 percent over the contract life. Other contract adjustments include eliminating continuing pay and senior status.

Cousins, Hearit named to prestigious fellows program

Linwood Cousins, director of the School of Social Work, and Keith M. Hearit, communication, have been named American Council on Education Fellows for 2013-14. They were among just 50 senior faculty members and administrators from around the nation named to be part of the prestigious program. Fellows are nominated by their presidents and chancellors and selected in a rigorous application process. The only schools having two of its faculty members selected are WMU, Purdue and Ohio State universities, and the University of Texas at Arlington.

Each ACE Fellow will focus on an issue of concern to their home institution while spending the next academic year working with a college or university president and other senior officers at a host institution. Established in 1965, the ACE Fellows Program strengthens institutions and leadership in American higher education by identifying and preparing promising senior faculty and administrators for responsible positions in college and university administration.

Cousins is an expert in family and community practice as well as culture and human diversity. He taught social work at WMU from 1994 to 1999. Before returning in 2009, he was an associate professor of anthropol-
Event to benefit honors students studying off campus

Honors students studying abroad or in locations around the nation will benefit from the Scholar Scamper Thursday, April 4.

The event features a 5K run and walk at 6 p.m. and a 1K kids’ fun run at 5:30 p.m., all of which will start in front of the Lee Honors College building and follow courses laid out to showcase the WMU campus.

Intended to be an annual event, the scamper will raise funds for scholarships to help defray costs for students who study abroad or take part in the honors college’s Study in Washington, D.C., for the championship event May 20-22.

This will be the National Geographic Bee’s 25th anniversary and the sixth time WMU has hosted the Michigan Geographic Bee. The competition begins with preliminary rounds at 12:30 p.m., followed by the competition finals at 2:15 p.m. The public is invited to attend the competition’s finals portion only.

Climate, energy policy is talk topic

Two speakers will be featured in the next Lee Honors College Lyceum Lecture, set for noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, in the Lee Honors College Lounge.

Mark Schauer, a Democrat and former U.S. Representative for Michigan, will speak on “A Democratic Perspective on the Politics of Clean Energy Policy.” Rob Sisson, a Republican and Concern America president, will speak on “A Call for Republican Leadership on Climate: the Conservative Case of Climate Action.”

APA event to honor staff members

The Administrative Professional Association will recognize the 2013 recipients of its annual awards during a Pillars of Support event at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 18, in the Ferret Center.

The event will begin with socializing and appetizers and be followed at 5:30 p.m. by an awards ceremony. Door prizes will be drawn at 6 p.m. To register, send your name, title and department by Thursday, April 11, to lynda.hunt@wmich.edu or via fax to (269) 387-8770.

Choreographer takes top award

Poet is next Frostic Series presenter

Professor receives Google grant

Pulsa Ari-Gur, mechanical and aerospace engineering, has won a grant from Google to teach skills in 3-D computer modeling and game design to high school computer science instructors. Equipped with these new skills, the high school instructors can then teach the computer applications to their own students.

The $13,500 award is from Google’s Computer Science for High School program, or Chrome initiative to promote computer science and computational thinking in high school and middle school curricula.

As principal investigator, Ari-Gur will lead a team of three other WMU faculty members. They will offer two- to three-day workshops July 1, 2 and on campus to 25 high school computer science instructors from around the country.

Emeritus invited to national workshop

Philip Micklin, emeritus in geography, was one of six U.S. water management specialists invited by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences to participate in a March 4-9 workshop devoted to water management issues in the United States, Europe and Iran.

In addition to the U.S. participants, there were three scientists from France and six water management experts from the Islamic Republic of Iran. The meeting was hosted by the Foundation les Treilles of Paris. Plans are to hold a follow-up meeting in Iran sometime next year.

Workshop participants made presentations on global water management issues as well as water management issues in Iran, the Mediterranean Basin, the U.S. southwest and Central Asia. Micklin gave a talk on the Aral Sea, a formerly very large lake in Central Asia that has been experiencing rapid desiccation since the early 1960s. The lake and water management issues more generally in Central Asia have been major research foci for him since the early 1980s.
Cuming named to lead Registrar’s Office

Carrie Cuming has been named to the position of registrar, effective March 11.

Cuming has the post on an interim basis since late 2010. As head of the Registrar’s Office, she is responsible for the accuracy and security of all student records as well as course registration, class and facility scheduling, graduation audits, the preparation of transcripts and oversight of federal student privacy law compliance.

Cuming has already been leading efforts to increase the use of new technology in areas that the Registrar’s Office oversees. That includes providing mobile technology that allows students to access their schedules, grades and University catalogs on a smartphone; developing a new textbook requisition process; and implementing a new electronic transcript processing system that allows 24/7 online transcript requests and tracking.

She has helped select a new diploma vendor offering more options and reduced costs and helped implement reverse transfer agreements with seven community colleges. She is currently leading the implementation of Degree Works, a Web-based tool that helps students monitor progress toward degree completion. That large project is scheduled to go live in May.

Cuming, who earned her bachelor’s degree from WMU in 1994, is currently working on a master’s degree. She joined the University as a staff member in the Registrar’s Office in 1993 and became a supervisor of academic records in 1996. She was named associate registrar in 2003 and senior associate registrar in 2007.

Dinosaurs, spaceships part of Children’s Place camps

The Children’s Place Learning Center is enrolling school-aged children for its 2013 Campus Kids summer theme camp that begins June 3 and continues through Aug. 30. WMU employees who sign up children until Sunday, March 31, will receive 10 percent off summer tuition.

Parents may sign up children by the week, or for the entire summer. Weekly rates are $188. Enrollment is limited, so those interested are urged to register early while space is available. Children who have completed kindergarten through age 9 are eligible.

Campus Kids focuses on a different theme each week. During the week, the children work on projects related to that theme.

Summer themes include learning about dinosaurs, blasting off into space, creating a Campus Kids museum and more. Supplemental to the projects are a variety of field trips and activities on campus.

Children’s Place hours are 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Special childcare arrangements are available before and after the summer program start date, and regular learning programs are available for children age 18 months to 5 years. Hourly rates are $5.16 for WMU students, $6.20 for faculty and staff, and $6.70 for others. To register or for more information, call (269) 387-2277.

Film, discussion focus on sexual assault in military

WMU will host a free screening and panel discussion of “The Invisible War,” a documentary about sexual assault in the U.S. military, at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 15, in the Little Theatre.

It is being spearheaded by WMU Trustee Mary Asmonga-Knapp and Angela Moe, sociology, and is part of the local observance of April as National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

Counselors will be available on site throughout the evening, and informational displays and literature along with complimentary refreshments will be available in the theatre lobby.

WMU’s showing of “The Invisible War” will be followed by a short intermission and a panel discussion featuring Asmonga-Knapp, manager of the Family Advocacy Program for the Department of Defense’s Defense Logistics Agency in Battle Creek, Mich.; Joetta Carr, a WMU counselor specializing in sexual assault recovery; and Malcolm Marson, U.S. Air Force Vietnam veteran and retired civilian contractor for the USO.

Kelle Brooks, a YWCA crisis response volunteer and army veteran, will also participate.

Time fading to respond to Chronicle survey

With the Chronicle of Higher Education relying on faculty and staff feedback to determine which of the nation’s schools are “America’s Great Colleges to Work For,” WMU employees who have been invited to weigh in have until April 15 to share their views about the University as a workplace.

An anonymous email survey was sent to a randomly selected number of employees the week of March 16-17. Those invited to participate in the survey have until April 15 to reply. This is the fifth year the University has participated in the survey.

The Chronicle’s Great Colleges to Work For program recognizes small groups of colleges (based on enrollment size) for specific best practices and policies, such as compensation and benefits, faculty-administration relations, and confidence in senior leadership. The Chronicle bases its assessments on the random survey as well as an institutional audit that captured demographics, and workplace policies and practices.

In 2009, the first year the University participated in the Chronicle initiative, WMU was named one of the top-10 large colleges in the nation in five separate categories: providing health care benefits, tuition remission, life insurance, disability insurance and post-retirement benefits.

Graduate, faculty research showcased at daylong event

Graduate students and faculty members who have previously received a Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award will showcase their scholarly work Friday, April 5, in the East Ballroom of the Bernhard Center as part of the seventh annual WMU Research and Creative Activities Poster Day.

The free public event includes poster presentations of research from 9 to 11 a.m. Keynote addresses will follow from 11 a.m. to noon from 2012 Emerging Scholars Award winners Jeffrey Angles, world languages and literatures, and Sherine Obare, chemistry.

Lunch begins at noon with an awards presentation from 12:45 to 1 p.m. Awards recognizing the outstanding graduate student and faculty poster presentations will be announced.

For more information, contact Allison Weiner at (269) 387-8376.

Obituaries

Editor’s Note: Visit umich.edu/news/obituaries for full obituaries.

James W. “Bill” Armstrong, emeritus in education and professional development, died Feb. 23. He was 85. A memorial service will be held Saturday, June 22, in Portage, Mich. Memorial gifts may be made to the memorial garden at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1515 Helen Ave., Portage, MI 49020.

Windellin S. Ashbrook, a retired assistant baker in Burnham Dining Services, died Jan. 2. She was 77. Memorial gifts may be made to the memorial garden at Westminster Presbyterian Church as part of the seventh annual WMU Bookstore, died Jan. 8 at age 89.

Clyde Gillette, a retired assistant manager in building custodial and support services, died March 5. He was 81.

Jerome G. Manis, emeritus in sociology, died Feb. 23. He was 99. Memorial gifts may be made to the Kokua Council, c/o Harris Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 96813.

Jame Nichols, a retired finance clerk for the WMU Bookstore, died Jan. 8 at age 89.
Twelve staff members will be honored as outstanding employees during a reception at 2 p.m. Monday, April 15, in 157 Bernhard Center.

The University community is invited to attend the event, which recognizes the spring 2013 recipients of WMU’s semiannual Make a Difference award. They are:

- Donna DeVries, landscape services
- Jeannine Hamilton, Registrar’s Office
- Fatima Haq, University Libraries
- Karen Lamons, Residence Life
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Several academic-related actions were taken by the WMU Board of Trustees during its Feb. 27 meeting.

Two new programs were approved. They are a Graduate Certificate Program in Bioinformatics and a Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering.

Also, six existing programs were deleted.

They are: aviation flight science major—option A to aviation science and technology option; and manufacturing science and technology major.

In addition, three department or program name changes were approved. They are: Department of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering to Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Department of Gender and Women’s Studies to Department of Gender and Women’s Studies; and Department of Military Science to Department of Military Science and Leadership.

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