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INQUIRY

Investigating Research, Outreach, and Education Activities at Western Michigan University

INQUIRY

is published monthly by the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Graduate College, for faculty and student researchers and graduate advisers.

OUR MISSION

- promote the alliance of research and education throughout the University
- nurture the development of research skills throughout the University
- encourage students, staff, and faculty to conduct research that will advance knowledge, learning, and discovery at Western Michigan University
- support outreach programs that use research to solve real-life problems throughout the world – in our community, the region, the state, the nation, and beyond

OUR WEBSITES

www.wmich.edu/research/
www.wmich.edu/grad/

FACES OF THE OVPR

Everybody's Link to the OVPR: Pamela Mottley

Pamela Mottley's warm smile is the first thing you'll notice as you step off the elevator onto the third floor of Walwood Hall, where Western Michigan University's Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) is located. You'll also notice that, no matter how busy Pamela is – answering phone calls, fielding questions from office staff and visitors, or preparing paperwork for the vice president himself – she always has time for a cheerful "hello," and she is always available to lend a helping hand, whether to off-campus visitors or to her fellow workers.

As head administrative assistant for the OVPR, Pamela not only serves as WMU's ambassador to the larger community but also provides administrative support for Dr. Donald E. Thompson, vice president for Research and dean of The Graduate College, as well as for other departments affiliated with the OVPR. These include The Graduate College, the OVPR offices of Research Administration in Sangren and Friedmann Halls, and the Center for Community Asset Building, located on the ground floor of Walwood Hall.

"I'm everybody's link to Dr. Thompson," Pamela says. Indeed, her proximity to the vice president's office makes communication with him much easier for faculty researchers and research officers who work across campus.

"If one of our research officers has correspondence that Dr. Thompson needs to sign," she explains, "they compose the letters in their office and forward them to me electronically; I then print the letters and pass them on to Dr. Thompson."

Pamela also works closely with the vice president to see that his busy schedule is well organized. She schedules all of his meetings and travel arrangements and ensures that he is prepared for his numerous speaking engagements, preparing his itineraries, forwarding important materials to him, and organizing handouts.

In addition, Pamela makes travel arrangements for incoming guests, such as grant-writing consultants who regularly come to WMU from across the country to assist in planning and writing research proposals.

On top of her duties at the OVPR, Pamela is working toward her degree in art education at WMU. How does she maintain such a positive attitude in the midst of all her responsibilities? It helps to know that she has a network of support from the other administrative assistants working for the OVPR. "We're always there to help each other," Pamela says. "And that makes a big difference." (Please read more about the faces of the OVPR on page 3.)



"Every person receives [Pamela's] undivided attention, no matter how hectic the day. . . . She's a key player in helping to link WMU with the larger community."

*– Dr. Eileen Evans,
associate dean,
The Graduate College*

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TRAINING & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NIH Requires Education on Protection of Human Subjects

On May 23, 2000, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala announced several new policies to strengthen the protection of human rights. Of particular importance to us at WMU is the requirement that researchers receive education on the protection of human subjects. After October 1, 2000, researchers submitting National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant applications or contract proposals, as well as those receiving new or non-competing research awards, must have this education. Similar regulations are being developed that will include a training requirement for researchers supported by all public health service agencies.

The Office of the Vice President for Research will provide human subjects protection training to ensure that WMU researchers meet these criteria, offering a three-hour training session for faculty and graduate student researchers in late September. Researchers who complete this training will receive a certificate that can be copied and submitted to NIH as evidence that they have met the training requirement.

If your research involves human subjects, please plan to attend one of the following training sessions:

- 9 A.M.–noon, Wednesday, September 27, 204 Bernhard Center
- 1–4 P.M., Wednesday, September 27, 204 Bernhard Center
- 9 A.M.–noon, Thursday, September 28, 204 Bernhard Center
- 1–4 P.M., Thursday, September 28, 204 Bernhard Center

Call Vicki Janson, Research Compliance Coordinator, at 387-8293 to reserve a seat. **I**

ACLS Announces Funding Opportunities

The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) has announced the opening of its 2000–2001 competition year for fellowships and grants.

New this year are the Library of Congress Fellowships in International Studies, which offer \$3,000 per month for four to nine months' residence at the Library of Congress to pursue research using the foreign language collections of the Library. A Ph.D. is required and preference will be given to scholars at an early stage of their careers.

Also, this will be the second competition year for the Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowships for Recently Tenured Scholars. The Burkhardt fellowships will support scholars tenured since October 1, 1996, who are engaged in long-term, unusually ambitious projects in the humanities and related social sciences. The \$65,000 fellowships may be used in 2001–2002, or in either of the two succeeding years, and provide for an academic year of residence at one of nine participating national research centers, plus support from the Fellow's institution for an additional period.

The deadline to post completed applications for both fellowships is October 2, 2000. Visit the ACLS Web site at <http://www.acls.org/ex-newcomp.htm> for more information regarding these and other ACLS funding opportunities. **I**

Lending Editorial and Research Support: Jennifer Wendling

Since she came to Walwood Hall in October 1999, Jennifer Wendling's excellent writing and editing skills—she has her bachelor's degree in English from WMU—have been put to good use for the OVPR. Jennifer produces the vice president's correspondence and memoranda, and she researches and compiles data on various topics via the Internet. She is frequently called upon to edit other materials written within the office, and she provides editorial and proofreading support for OVPR publications such as *Research Magazine*, *Inquiry* newsletter, and the Annual Report. Beginning this month, Jennifer will also help edit and maintain the OVPR's Web pages.



"Because I love English, the editing and writing I do are the most enjoyable," Jennifer says.

Jennifer also maintains data for the Life Sciences Corridor Initiative, a state-funded program that supports research in the life sciences. In June, she created a database to organize the letters of intent and pre-proposals submitted to the Michigan Life Sciences Fund by interested researchers.

Working to Promote Faculty Research: Gina Betcher

From the OVPR's Sangren Hall office of Research Administration, Gina Betcher works one-on-one with constituent faculty members, guiding them through the many stages of the research proposal process. Gina pores through journals such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to find the newest research opportunities, and she keeps herself updated on funding and research programs offered through the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Michigan Department of Education.



"I'm familiar with the programs that are out there, and we're here to promote these research opportunities," Gina says. Faculty are "under a lot of pressure" as they try to fund their research, she adds, and she is here to "try to alleviate that pressure."

Gina, a master's student in Western's creative writing program, also serves as assistant to the editor for the OVPR's *Research Magazine*.

Changing the Way the Office Runs: Sarah Ylkanen

Sarah Ylkanen began her job in the Friedmann Hall office of Research Administration at the beginning of June. In only two months, she has made an impressive difference in the office, which deals with proposals and contracts that require signatures from all over campus. "Before Sarah came [and developed an Excel spreadsheet to track them], knowing where these documents were at any given time was a huge problem," says Dr. Rebecca Josvai. "The system she developed has been an enormous help."

Sarah also delivers materials to department heads, reviews the proposal approval forms submitted by faculty members, and assists with the financial aspects of research administration, helping to review and proof budget numbers.

For Sarah, who will graduate in December with her bachelor's degree in organizational communication, the most challenging aspect of her job is keeping up with the needs of all three of her supervisors: "I have notes posted everywhere," she laughs. But as far as her co-workers in Friedmann are concerned, Sarah is doing just fine: "Sarah has dramatically changed the way the office runs," says Dr. Josvai.



Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Monday–Friday, August 14–18	International Teaching Assistant Training, 9 A.M.–5:50 P.M., Schneider Hall, Room 2000
Wednesday, August 16	Graduate College thesis/dissertation formatting workshop, 10–11:30 A.M. (Call 387-3569 to register)
Monday–Tuesday, August 21–22	Departmental Teaching Assistant Training
Wednesday–Friday, August 23–25	University-wide Graduate Assistant Training, 8 A.M.–5 P.M., Schneider Hall, Room 2000
Wednesday, August 23	Graduate and Nontraditional Student Services Fair, 3–6 P.M., John Bernhard Ctr., North Ballroom
Thursday, September 14	"Gifts, Grants or Whatever? Determining How Contributions Should Really Be Counted," Live satellite broadcast, noon–3:30 P.M., Fetzer Center, Room 1010 (Call Jennifer Wendling at 387-8271 to register)
Friday, September 15	Applications due in The Graduate College for Graduate Student Research and Travel Fund awards
Friday, September 15	Doctoral student workshop: "Practical Strategies for Writing a Dissertation," 10 A.M.–3 P.M., Western Michigan University in Lansing, Room 202H, 6105 West Saint Joseph Highway, Lansing, Michigan (RSVP The Graduate College at 387-3570 by Friday, September 1)
Wednesday–Thursday, September 27–28	Human subjects protection training sessions, 204 Bernhard Center Select one: September 27, 9 A.M.–noon September 28, 9 A.M.–noon September 27, 1–4 P.M. September 28, 1–4 P.M. (Call 387-8293 to reserve a seat)



**Office of the Vice President for Research
The Graduate College**

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