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Newsletter

College of Health and Human Services

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5-2018

## Connections, 05/2018

College of Health and Human Services

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College of Health  
and Human Services



# Connections

A newsletter from the College of Health and Human Services

MAY 2018

## Wisconsin educator will lead CHHS

**Dr. Ron A. Cisler** of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has been named the new dean of the College of Health and Human Services, effective Aug. 1. Dr. Cisler will succeed **Dr. Earlie Washington**, who has served as dean of the College of Health and Human Services since 2006.



## Dean Washington recognized by nursing association

**Dean Earlie Washington** was honored at a recent gala held by the Kent County, Kalamazoo-Muskegon Michigan National Black Nurses Association, a nursing organization which works to reduce health disparities among African Americans and other minority communities in West Michigan.



## Empower Success program completes successful first year

Empower Success is meant to help recruit, admit, retain and graduate nursing students from underrepresented groups and educationally and financially disadvantaged populations. In its



first year, 10 students received scholarships and 24 students were awarded stipends, totalling \$225,000 in financial support.

### **Faculty member named AGHE Fellow**

**Dr. Janet Hahn**, coordinator of the WMU Center for Gerontology, has been named Fellow in the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, an honor to recognize outstanding leadership in gerontology by established scholars and educators.



### **PA student attends leadership summit**

WMU physician assistant student **Colin Knue** was selected by the Michigan Academy of Physician Assistants to attend the annual Leadership and Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C. He was one of four students from Michigan to attend the event.



### **HHS on Social Media**



### **OT Faculty member honored at recent Autism Family Network event!!**

In honor of Autism Awareness Month, the Autism Family Network hosted a dinner to "Celebrate Autism." Our very own OT faculty member, **Tracy Young**, was nominated for the Essential Piece Award by the Wilkenson family. OT students have worked with the Wilkenson's son, Parker, at our level I and level II pediatric clinics. Parker was also the recipient of an Amtryke last year, given to him by the Grand Rapids Student Occupational Therapy Association.

From the [Department of Occupational Therapy](#) via [Facebook](#)

## In other news

Here are some other WMU news articles you might be interested in:

- [Ball State business dean named WMU's next provost](#)
- [WMU's Seita foster youth effort garners national acclaim](#)
- [WMU welcomes new VP for marketing and strategic communication](#)

## CHHS on Facebook and Instagram

The College of Health and Human Services is on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)! Please take a moment to "like" and "follow" us to stay informed on what's going on throughout the college.



# Wisconsin educator will lead WMU College of Health and Human Services

**CONTACT: CHERYL ROLAND**  
**MAY 15, 2018 | WMU NEWS**

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—**Dr. Ron A. Cisler** of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has been named the new dean of Western Michigan University's College of Health and Human Services, effective **Aug. 1**.

Cisler currently serves as interim dean of UWM's College of Health Sciences, and he is a professor of health informatics and administration in that college. He also is an affiliate professor of population health sciences at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

"We are delighted to have Dr. Cisler join us in this leadership capacity," says WMU Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs **Susan Stapleton**. "He brings with him extensive experience in the areas that reflect this university's strongest commitments—teaching and mentoring, research, service and community engagement. He is a wonderful match for this position."



*Cisler*

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## CISLER



Cisler's primary research interests are in population health disparities, behavioral health risk factors, and alcoholism and alcohol-related illnesses. He is internationally known for his expertise in assessing recovery outcomes for alcohol treatment clinical trials. In recent years, he has also served at the local, state and national levels as a researcher and widely quoted expert on the topic of improving urban infant mortality rates and reducing health care disparities.

His research has attracted strong federal and foundation support from such entities as the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the National Institute of Mental Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Economic Development, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wisconsin Partnership Program and pharmaceutical companies Pfizer, Liplha and Oy-Contral. In addition, he has served on review panels for a number of federal grant programs, primarily in the National Institutes of Health.

Cisler says he was drawn to the WMU position by the caliber of the college, the research and innovation role it plays as an engine of economic prosperity for the region, and its capacity to impact individuals and the broader community it serves.

"The College of Health and Human Services includes such a broad base of disciplines that it is uniquely situated to provide education and innovation opportunities from several perspectives," Cisler says. "My background has been in interdisciplinary education, research and discovery, bringing together diverse fields such as the health sciences, social services, public health, engineering and medicine. WMU and Kalamazoo are wonderfully positioned as a community to continue those efforts."

The breadth of this set of health and human service disciplines, Cisler says, allows the college the ability to impact health and societal issues across several continua, including:

- Prevention to intervention to rehabilitation.
- Human disability, to human ability, to high levels of human performance.
- Individual, family and community poverty and prosperity.
- Health and wellness across the lifespan—from birth to end of life.

Cisler earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and master's and doctoral degrees from UWM—all in psychology. In addition, he did post-doctoral work in addiction and behavioral health, also at UWM. He has served in teaching and research positions at UWM since 1984. In addition to his two appointments as a full professor, he also serves as an affiliate professor or senior scientist for a number of other UWM academic and research units.

Cisler has served as an advisor or degree committee member to some four dozen master's, doctoral and post-doctoral students as well as a mentor to young faculty members engaged in research in such areas as psychology, substance abuse, health informatics, health literacy, maternal and infant health, urban studies and public health.

Widely published in his discipline, Cisler has served as associate editor for the *Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research* and field reviewer for numerous other professional journals targeting both broad health issues and clinical and public health alcohol research. He has

co-authored a handbook series on brief assessment measures in health research and practice targeting behavioral disorders including substance use and eating disorders.

Cisler will replace **Dr. Earlie Washington**, who has announced she will return to the School of Social Work faculty after a year-long administrative leave that will begin Aug. 1. Washington has served as dean of the College of Health and Human Services since 2006.

For more WMU news, arts and events, visit [WMU News online](#).

## Dean Washington recognized by nursing association

**Dean Earlie Washington** was honored at a recent gala held by the Kent County, Kalamazoo-Muskegon Michigan National Black Nurses Association, a professional membership nursing organization which works to reduce health disparities among African Americans and other minority communities in the West Michigan.

At the fourteenth annual scholarship awards and gala on May 18, Dr. Washington received the “Volunteer Community Service Award” for her work in the community and dedication to educating the next generation of health care professionals.

Upon receiving the award, Dean Washington expressed gratitude to KMMBNA for the recognition, and went on to applaud the organization’s work in the community.

“Thank you for encouraging and supporting young black women and men to pursue careers in health care. Increasing health care workforce diversity is something that is near and dear to my heart, and I greatly appreciate all the vital work KMMBNA is doing,” Dr. Washington said.

Angela Hanks, vice president of Chemical Bank in Walker, also received the volunteer award. The gala and dinner included a silent auction, which helped to raise funds for scholarships for students entering the nursing field. Last year, two Bronson School of Nursing students at WMU received scholarships following the gala.

In her acceptance speech, Dean Washington recognized students, colleagues and her leadership team for their dedication to community service. “For those on the front lines of health care, as well as those who teach it, service is ingrained in the fabric of our lives. Community service brings out the best in us all, and makes our communities better places for all to live.”



*Dean Earlie Washington*

To date, the KMMBNA has awarded more than \$55,000 in nursing tuition scholarships. Out of those recipients, more than 50 have graduated nursing school and are working RNs or LPNs.

## Empower Success program completes successful first year

In July 2017, **Dr. Mary Ann Stark**, professor of nursing, was awarded a \$2 million grant (over four years) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration for funding to support nursing workforce diversity. With this grant, the Empowering Nursing Students for Success (Empower Success) program launched in September 2017.

The purpose of Empower Success is to help the Bronson School of Nursing to recruit, admit, retain and graduate students from underrepresented groups and educationally and financially disadvantaged populations into the nursing workforce.

According to Dr. Stark, the program completed its first academic year with great success. Ten students received scholarships and 24 students were awarded stipends. In total, \$225,000 was distributed for student financial support. Notably, all 15 Empower Success scholars who graduated this year received offers of employment as professional nurses following graduation.



*Empower Success December 2017 grads*

In addition to financial support, student scholars in the program are offered support from a faculty mentor, **Ms. Mary Stahl**, and a peer student navigator. The faculty mentor and navigator meet individually with each student and establish a plan to help the student meet academic goals. This academic and peer support is administered by **Ms. Kimberly Searing**, the Empower Success program coordinator.

This year, 19 students received peer support from a paid navigator and 15 met regularly throughout the semester with Ms. Stahl or Ms. Searing to accomplish academic goals. We were able to employ 23 navigators to work



*Alex Mekuria and Yessica Garcia*

about three hours a week with a student scholar.

**Alex Mekuria** graduated in April. When asked how the Empower Success program was beneficial to him he replied, "it helped me utilize my potential which was obscured by lack of resources." He was able to work less and study more. With the help of his navigator, Alex learned how to prioritize and organize himself, too. He is now working at Borgess PIPP hospital and studying for the NCLEX exam, which indicates whether it is safe for one to begin practicing as an entry-level nurse.

**Yessica Garcia** also graduated in April and is now working in surgery at Holland Hospital. When asked about the program, she replied, "Empower Success not only provided me with financial support but also with emotional support. It paired me up with a navigator who guided me through the tough parts of nursing school that I didn't quite understand how to deal with myself. Having a strong support network greatly motivated me and allowed me to become successful within our program."

## Faculty member named AGHE Fellow

**Dr. Janet Hahn**, coordinator of the [WMU Center for Gerontology](#) and assistant professor in the [School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs](#), has been named Fellow in the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE).

Fellow status is an honor conferred by AGHE to recognize outstanding leadership in gerontology and/or geriatrics education by established scholars and educators. The group announced its 2018 fellows in March at AGHE's 44th Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.



*Dr. Jennifer Mendez, Wayne State University, and Dr. Harvey Sterns, University of Akron, with Dr. Hahn*

"Dr. Hahn has been an active gerontological contributor to her university, her community, state and the nation," says one of her nominators, **Dr. Harvey Sterns**, from the University of Akron. "Of note are her community and state level reports, evaluation reports [and] a number of scholarly contributions that add to our field. She has been a major supporter of gerontology and geriatric education for many years."



Dr. Hahn is active on various committees in the academy. She also presented two papers and offered a workshop at the conference, which provides a forum for professionals in the field of aging to present their work and share ideas about gerontological and geriatric education and training.

“It is wonderful to see Dr. Hahn receive this honor from her professional organization and to know that she has the respect of her fellow gerontologists,” says **Dr. Mark Kelley**, director of WMU's School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs.

Dr. Hahn earned her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Minnesota in 1992 and her bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology from Kalamazoo College in 1982.

About the AGHE

The [Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education](#) (AGHE) is the educational unit of [The Gerontological Society of America](#), the nation's oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to research, education, and practice in the field of aging. AGHE seeks to advance gerontology as a field of study at institutions of higher education through conferences, publications, technical assistance, research studies, and consultation with policy makers. It is currently the only institutional member organization dedicated to gerontology and geriatrics education worldwide.

## PA student attends leadership summit

WMU physician assistant student **Colin Knue** was selected by the [Michigan Academy of Physician Assistants](#) to attend the annual [Leadership and Advocacy Summit](#) in Washington, D.C. He was one of four students from Michigan to attend the event in March.

The summit was sponsored by the [American Academy of Physician Assistants](#), which serves as the national organization for physician assistants. It was attended by 225 PAs and PA students from 50 constituent organizations.

"Attending the leadership summit was an extremely valuable and inspiring experience," says Knue. "Meeting PAs and students from different states provided an insight and understanding of the difference of PA laws from state to state and how we all are working together in moving the PA profession forward."



*WMU PA student Colin Knue (second from right) in Washington, D.C.*

Sessions at the summit covered specifics about the inner workings of the legislative process and attendees had opportunities to meet with various Michigan legislative staffers. Throughout the summit, special emphasis was placed on advocating for the Promoting Access to Diabetic Shoes Act and the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to attend," added Knue. "I feel honored to have been chosen by MAPA for this."

## Ball State business dean named WMU's next provost

CONTACT: CHERYL ROLAND  
MAY 17, 2018 | WMU NEWS

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—After conducting a nationwide search, Western Michigan University has named **Dr. Jennifer P. Bott**, business dean at Ball State University, as its new provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Bott is the Bryan Dean of the Miller College of Business and professor of management at Ball State, a position she has held for three years. Her appointment to become WMU's chief academic officer, effective July 1, was announced by WMU President Edward Montgomery.

"Dr. Bott brings to the position a strong background in teaching, research and community engagement," says Montgomery. "She has held senior leadership positions in which she demonstrated her acumen in strategic planning, program development, budgeting and shared governance. She also brings to her new role a track record of success in fundraising, building enrollment and working across institutional silos."



*Bott*

### BOTT

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Part of the Ball State community since 2004, Bott began her career there as assistant professor of management. Prior to becoming business dean, she spent five years as assistant and then associate provost for learning initiatives. Her responsibilities included student success efforts as well as administrative, student, faculty and research services for Ball State's online and blended education enterprise.

She was selected as an American Council on Education Fellow in 2013-14, spending time at host institution West Virginia University, where she was mentored by WVU President Gordon Gee and Dr. Jim Clements, who is now president of Clemson University.

As business dean, she oversees Ball State's Launch Indiana business and community development initiatives and is actively engaged in the community through service on corporate and nonprofit boards. She also is a Certified University Planner and served on two of Ball State's Strategic Planning Leadership Teams.

Bott says Montgomery's focus on transformational initiatives from the start of his WMU presidency and the opportunity to be part of a leadership team that is focused on big ideas and committed to student success led her to pursue the WMU role.

"I was stunned at how much innovation is occurring in every part of the campus," she says of her recent visit to campus and research on WMU. "I was deeply impressed by the creativity I saw among the faculty, staff and students. And the opportunity to be part of a leadership team that embraces big, transformational ideas was very appealing."

She points to the University's Signature Program, which allows students to tailor and document the breadth of their University experience, as an idea that has the potential to differentiate WMU. She also sees the campuswide commitment to student success as one that will be critical to WMU's future.

"Student success will be a key defining feature for colleges moving forward for years to come," she says.

Bott earned a bachelor's degree from DePauw University and master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Akron. She also has earned certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources. Her research interests include methodology and statistics, the intersection of new media and human resources, and organizational and generational diversity.

She has published widely on such topics as instructional advances, research methods and applied business topics. Her publication record includes more than two dozen articles in peer-reviewed journals as well as five book chapters. In addition, she has made 30 peer-reviewed presentations. She also has enjoyed success in securing external funding for her work, receiving \$1.85 million in grants over the past six years. In addition to her external research funding, Bott raised \$15 million in private funds in her three years as dean, supporting student and faculty success.

Bott's teaching experience includes coursework in human resource management and statistics, and she has taught at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She also led several immersive learning projects, one of which involved partnering with NFL quarterback Peyton Manning to develop a curriculum aimed at reducing childhood obesity taught in 400 schools across Indiana.

In her new role at WMU, Bott will replace Dr. Timothy J. Greene, who returned to the engineering faculty last summer after serving for nine years as provost. Graduate College Dean Dr. Susan Stapleton has been serving as interim provost since his departure.

**For more WMU news, arts and events, visit [WMU News](#) online.**

# WMU's Seita foster youth effort garners national acclaim

CONTACT: CHERYL ROLAND  
MAY 17, 2018 | WMU NEWS

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi—the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines—has announced Western Michigan University as the 2018 recipient of its **Excellence in Innovation Award**.

The \$100,000 award, given biennially, recognizes WMU for achievement in finding a powerful solution to expanding higher education opportunities through its **Seita Scholars Program**.



"Phi Kappa Phi is proud to recognize Western Michigan University for its innovative Seita Scholars Program," said Society Executive Director **Dr. Mary Todd**. "By lifting up an under-represented population—young people who have aged out of foster care—the University has transformed lives and offered hope to individuals who may never have dreamed a college degree was within reach."

Established in 2008 as a signature initiative of WMU, the Seita Scholars Program is a comprehensive support system that aims to increase successful outcomes among young adults who have aged out of the foster care system in the state of Michigan. Scholars of the program receive a scholarship, year-round on-campus housing and one-on-one campus coaching for academic and personal support throughout their collegiate career.

Expanding on the success of the Seita Scholars Program, WMU established the Center for Fostering Success in 2012. The center conducts research on foster care and higher education and has trained campus coaches for foster youth in nine states. The center is also the home base for a statewide network—Fostering Success Michigan—that focuses on disseminating best practices and supporting other colleges and universities as they provide opportunities to former foster care youth.

WMU, on behalf of its efforts through the Seita Scholars Program and Center for Fostering Success, was selected as the 2018 recipient of the Excellence in Innovation Award by a jury of emeritus college and university presidents during a two-part screening process. The University was first chosen as one of six semifinalists before advancing as one of three finalists. The pool of entries represented inventive, multifaceted projects at institutions across the United States. Each



institution was assessed on its project's ability to achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes to create systemic large-scale change.

"We are enormously pleased that Phi Kappa Phi has recognized both the innovative nature and the impact of our Seita Scholars Program," said **Dr. Edward Montgomery**, president of WMU. "Our Seita Scholars Program has made a real difference in the lives of an amazingly resilient group of young people here on our campus. Through this program, we've learned to rethink student support systems in a way that can be adapted by college and university communities around the nation. We are indebted to our staff and faculty who work alongside these students to make a real difference."

WMU will accept the Excellence in Innovation Award during Phi Kappa Phi's Biennial Convention in Minneapolis Aug. 3.

## SEITA SUCCESS

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Since accepting its first class of former foster care youth in fall 2008, WMU's Seita Scholars Program has grown into the nation's largest and most comprehensive outreach program for young people who have aged out of foster care. The program is named after Dr. John Seita a three-degree WMU alumnus who is a national advocate for foster care youth and whose personal story inspired program founders.

Today, about 150 former foster-care youth are at home on the WMU campus and working toward their degrees. By the time the program hits its 10-year anniversary in September, it will have nearly 150 graduates.

## ABOUT PHI KAPPA PHI

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Founded in 1897 at the University of Maine, Phi Kappa Phi annually inducts approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni. The society has chapters at more than 300 select colleges and universities in North America and the Philippines. Membership is by invitation only to the top 10 percent of seniors and graduate students and 7.5 percent of juniors. Faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction also qualify. The society's mission is "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others."

# WMU welcomes new VP for marketing and strategic communication

CONTACT: PAULA M. DAVIS  
MAY 24, 2018 | WMU NEWS

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University President Edward Montgomery announced today that he has appointed **Tony Proudfoot** as the University's new **vice president for marketing and strategic communication**, effective **June 27**.



*Proudfoot*

Proudfoot, interim senior vice president for marketing and communications at the University of Arizona, was one of three final candidates in the nationwide search to fill a newly created position at WMU charged with providing the vision and the leadership to advance institutional marketing and communication, leading the Office of University Relations.

"As we move Western Michigan University forward, 'transformational change' has been our guiding principle and our goal for every major aspect of this institution. I believe Tony Proudfoot has the transformational ideas, experience and thinking to reshape and elevate our efforts in marketing, brand positioning and communication," Montgomery says.

"Our challenge is to make WMU the university of choice for this region and beyond. Tony's results-oriented approaches and deep expertise in higher education marketing will be crucial to this work," he says.

Proudfoot comes to Kalamazoo as a leader with more than two decades of experience in marketing and communications at major universities. At WMU, he will work collaboratively with all units to integrate marketing and communication efforts to further elevate the stature of the University.

"I am honored and humbled to be entrusted with the responsibility of strengthening the University's brand. WMU's strengths were apparent almost immediately when I stepped on campus," Proudfoot says.

"Reimagining how we present those strengths to the world will enable WMU to become an undisputed first choice. I look forward to working collaboratively across the University to focus our greatest assets into a clear, compelling voice that attracts attention, students, research talent and financial support."

Since January 2015, Proudfoot has served at the University of Arizona. He joined the 43,000-student, Tucson-based school as associate vice president for marketing communications and brand management, operating as UA's senior marketing strategist and overseeing \$3 million in resources and a staff of 18. This past January, Proudfoot was tapped to additionally serve as the university's interim senior vice president for marketing and communications, greatly expanding his budgetary, staff oversight and leadership responsibilities.

During his more than three years at UA, Proudfoot created a new brand governance model and established new brand position platforms for most of the institution's colleges. He also has provided counsel and leadership to more than 250 marketers across campus to bring coherence to the university's brand and enhance its competitive advantage.

Prior to leading marketing at UA, Proudfoot spent eight years at his alma mater, Ball State University, where he was associate vice president for marketing and communications, overseeing some \$4 million in resources and a full-time staff of 36. At Ball State, he developed and led the university's brand strategy as well as integrated marketing and communications strategies for admissions, development, legislative affairs, alumni affairs, colleges, departments and university initiatives. The challenge at the Muncie, Indiana, university was to reposition the institution to compete. During Proudfoot's eight years, the university saw record increases in enrollment, student persistence, graduation rates and philanthropic support.

Earlier in his career, Proudfoot moved up the ranks in marketing in the Indiana University system over a 12-year period. He started as a marketing research analyst in 1995 and was ultimately elevated to executive associate director of the system's Office of University Marketing and Communications. During his IU tenure, he led the system's first brand alignment, established partnerships with campuses beyond the flagship campus in Bloomington and led marketing research for all eight campuses.

When Proudfoot starts his new job at WMU, he will lead an office that has been headed by Greg Rosine, vice president for government affairs and university relations. Rosine will continue to serve as vice president for government affairs while assisting Proudfoot in his transition to campus.

"I'm excited to get started and work with every member of the Western Michigan University family," Proudfoot says. "There is an undeniable affinity for the University that is easily felt in just a short time there. My vision is to extend that deep emotional connection to help the University thrive in an increasingly competitive environment. I'm confident we will thrive together."

Proudfoot earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Ball State in 1995. He and his wife, Natalie, have two daughters.

**For more WMU news, arts and events, visit [WMU News](#) online.**