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## College of Arts and Sciences E-News Issue 32: December 2015

College of Arts and Sciences

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

# College of *Arts and Sciences*



e-News Issue 32: December 2015

## Upcoming CAS events



## Stay in touch!



## Update your information



20th Annual  
Russian Festival  
a big hit for over  
1,000 participants



## ARTS AND SCIENCES News

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- ▶ Geosciences rock hounds chip off 50 years in fall anniversary fete

## FACULTY Features

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- ▶ Dr. Thomas Gorczyca named a fellow in the American Physical Society

## ALUMNI Profiles

- ▶ English and communication alum Michael Villaire '83 named to 2015 Cecilia and Leonard Doak Health Literacy Champion Award
- ▶ Fulbright student awards go to WMU alumni and doctoral candidate

## STUDENT Stories

- ▶ Global studies senior Andy Bodinger becomes editor-in-chief of Lee Honors College creative writing journal
- ▶ Students kick off model UN program in preparation for competition
- ▶ Anthropology grad students receive archeology scholarships



Photo courtesy of Judith Rypma, Department of English

# Making a Difference for Students Pursuing Careers

Elena Hines  
College of Arts and Sciences staff writer



Karen Steeno advising a student

“I believe the person in front of me has purpose and value,” Karen Steeno said of how she treats the students who come to her for advice about the world of work in her role as career development specialist/liaison to the College of Arts and Sciences.

Her peers also see her value, and they selected her as one of the Make a Difference Award recipients in the fall round of the semi-annual award that recognizes Western Michigan University staff members for their outstanding accomplishments and daily investment of energy and creativity.

The employee of 19 months also describes herself as super-enthusiastic, one who enjoys doing research, seeing trends, trying new things and figuring out where her niche is.

The Big Rapids native’s career path involved sales, non-profit work and getting a master’s degree in counseling psychology.

She learned that “I like to talk to people about what they do well,” and from then, followed an intentional track that led her to Western.

Her role includes doing career fairs, workshops, classroom presentations and more, as well as drop-in advising to help students figure out who they are and articulate their best skills.

She appreciates the variety in her job, which one day can involve advising six or seven young people, and another can involve committee meetings or workshops.

Her favorite moment is when one of her students finds an opportunity and uses what the pair discussed to land the job or internship.

She herself is grateful for the position she landed, and colleagues who are open to collaboration and sending students to her.

“It’s such a beautiful thing to have joy in your workplace,” she said. “It’s an amazing privilege to love my work, and hopefully help others to love theirs.”

Her nominators were effusive in their praise, with this just a sampling of the comments:

“Over the past year Karen has developed relationships with the College of Arts and Sciences with the intention of building up our liberal arts students but, recognizing a need she went one step further and developed special relationships with many departments within the college as well. Upon meeting with me she volunteered her time to help me understand the value of my students in particular. She also helped me to develop my own skills passing that message along to students. Her kind, positive and cheerful demeanor has helped so many of my students and even myself to have a renewed sense of hope if ever we lose it. Students who meet with Karen always leave their meeting a smile and always have nothing but positive things to say about her. Through conversations with her about the career readiness of our students she suggested solutions to reducing the anxiety our seniors felt just before graduation. [She] provides excellent customer service to her students and her colleagues, she promotes a positive image of Western Michigan University both here and off campus, and she doesn’t just bleed brown and gold but also positivity, encouragement and hope as well!”

# Geosciences Rock Hounds Chip Off 50 Years in Fall Anniversary Fete

Olga Bonfiglio  
College of Arts and Sciences staff writer

Fifty years is a milestone for any program, and it did not go unnoticed at the Department of Geosciences this fall semester at Western Michigan University.

The department held a three-day fall event for alumni, students, faculty and staff that included field trips to a gypsum mine, the Lake Michigan shoreline and the Michigan Geological Repository for Research and Education. Participants were also treated to a documentary [video](#) on the department, a Bronco football game, pub crawl and golf outing. The department's founders, previous chairs and elders were on hand to share their stories about the past while faculty noted the department's responses to national and global needs and crises.

Two new faculty were introduced. Dr. Essam Heggy is a planetary geophysicist whose research covers Mars, the moon, icy satellites and near-earth objects. He comes from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the California Institute of Technology.

Dr. Stephen Kaczmarek is a carbonate petrologist who researches crystal growth in carbonate minerals using X-ray diffraction, scanning and transmission electron microscopy and atomic force microscopy. He previously worked as a senior research scientist for ExxonMobil and Bridgewater State University.

The department published an [online anniversary magazine](#) that pays tribute to its past and present achievements as it continues to build its legacy.

Enrollment has been growing from 72 undergraduate students in fall 2007 to 121 undergraduate students in fall 2015, and from 37 graduate students to 64 graduate students for the same period reported Dr. Mohamed Sultan, geosciences chair. Revenues from the department's endowment base have sent students to professional conferences and provided scholarships, outreach activities and staff support. This includes long-term funding for the CoreKids, a K-12 Earth Science Outreach Program designed to increase awareness and understanding of the Earth, its processes and its natural resources among Michigan's students, teachers and the public. The program served over 16,000 middle and high school students in southwest Michigan last year.

Sultan added that over the past eight years, the department has averaged \$800,000 per year with incoming research dollars. It has also established the Alumni and Friends Outreach Endowment Fund to support its outreach activities.

New educational programs include an integrated science program for undergraduates, an accelerated BS/MA program in Michigan and an expanded summer hydrology field course, said

Sultan. The labs in Rood Hall are being updated and renovated and the new rock garden south of the building serves as a recruitment tool for undecided and prospective students.

“I feel fortunate to have a strong foundation to build on and to be challenged by the achievements of my predecessors,” said Sultan. “I feel honored to be lumped with this group of dedicated, resourceful and distinguished chairs and faculty.”

## **Macfarlane Receives 2015 Floyd S. Chalmers Award**

DJ DeLong

Creative writing and history major

College of Arts and Sciences, Marketing and Communications student employee

On November 7, Dr. Daniel Macfarlane, an assistant professor in the Department of Environmental and Sustainability Studies at Western Michigan University, received the 2015 Floyd S. Chalmers Award for his book, *Negotiating a River: Canada, the U.S., and the Creation of the St. Lawrence Seaway*. University of British Columbia Press nominated the book for the award.

His research on the St. Lawrence megaproject began in fall 2008 and became his doctoral dissertation at the University of Ottawa, which he defended in December 2010. Macfarlane turned his dissertation into a book over the next several years as a postdoctoral fellow and a Fulbright Visiting Research Chair. Finally, he published the book in February 2014.

*Negotiating a River* looks at the profound impacts of the planning and building of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project from the complex diplomatic negotiations, political maneuvering, and the environmental diplomacy to the implications on national identities and transnational relations. This project is one of the largest trans-border projects ever undertaken.



The Floyd S. Chalmers Award is given annually to the best book written on any aspect of Ontario history in the preceding calendar year. The award is judged on the basis of the strength of the arguments presented in the book, the range and significance of the subject, the quality of

the research and the excellence of the literary style. Macfarlane achieved all of these areas and has won the prize, which includes a \$1000 cash award as well as an Inuit carving.

The award jury concluded that Macfarlane's *Negotiating a River* was the top submission and said, "This superior piece of scholarship communicates the geopolitical, bureaucratic, technological, and social implications of one of North America's megaprojects." They added that the book is "well written and well researched" and that "it concludes with the assessment that the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway fulfilled a long-standing dream in Canadian and Ontario history."

WMU and the College of Arts and Sciences has provided Macfarlane with the teaching and research opportunities to continue his focus on water in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin. Macfarlane is in the process of writing another book on the trans-border engineering of Niagara Falls, which is directly linked to *Negotiating a River*. He is also co-editing a book with WMU professor Dr. Lynne Heasley on US-Canadian border waters.

When asked about how it felt to find out he had won the award, Macfarlane says, "It makes one feel that all the hard work was worthwhile and that the end result is valued by your academic peers."

## Physics Professor Named APS Fellow

Olga Bonfiglio  
College of Arts and Sciences staff writer

Dr. Thomas Gorczyca, professor of atomic and molecular physics at Western Michigan University, was named a fellow in the American Physical Society for "advancing our fundamental understanding in the photoionization, spectra and opacities of atomic ions in astrophysical plasmas."

The criterion for election is exceptional contributions to the physics enterprise like outstanding physics research, important applications of physics, leadership in or service to physics, or significant contributions to physics education. Each fellowship is a distinct honor signifying recognition by one's professional peers.

Gorczyca is one of five WMU faculty members to be named an APS fellow including:

Eugene M. Bernstein – 1976



John Allen Tanis – 1989

Nora Berrah – 1999

Arthur Robert McGurn – 2005

McGurn and Tanis remain active in the department.

The American Physical Society is a non-profit membership organization working to advance and diffuse the knowledge of physics through its outstanding research journals, scientific meetings, and education, outreach, advocacy, and international activities. APS represents over 51,000 members, including physicists in academia, national laboratories, and industry in the United States and throughout the world. Society offices are located in College Park, Md. (Headquarters), Ridge, N.Y., and Washington, D.C.

## Fulbright student awards go to WMU alumni, doctoral candidate

by Margaret von Steinen

October 6, 2015 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Two recent Western Michigan University alumni and a current doctoral candidate have won highly competitive Fulbright awards to conduct research or teach English overseas for the 2015-16 academic year.

The trio is comprised of **Keith Carver**, a spring 2015 graduate from Marshall; **Peter Dobek**, a doctoral candidate from McHenry, Illinois; and **Ian Magnuson**, a spring 2014 graduate from Battle Creek.

They are part of the cohort of more than 1,900 U.S. citizens who will travel abroad for the 2015-16 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. All of the award recipients were selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential.

### Fulbright award recipients

#### Keith Carver

Carver is an alumnus of WMU's Master of Fine Arts in creative writing program who graduated from Marshall High School. He was placed by the Turkish Fulbright commission in Yalova, Turkey, located on the Sea of Marmara near Istanbul.

Carver will teach English for one year, with the possibility of a one-year



renewal. He plans to teach English in the United States or overseas after completing his Fulbright program.

### **Peter Dobek**

Dobek graduated from McHenry East High School and is pursuing a doctoral degree in history. He plans to conduct dissertation research in Cracow, Poland, in affiliation with the Faculty of History at Jagiellonian University—the oldest university in Poland and the second oldest university in Central Europe.



In his dissertation, Dobek examines public houses—inns, taverns, alehouses—during the Jagiellonian Dynasty (1385-1572) in the city of Cracow and its immediate surroundings as important nodes of society, politics, economics, gender relations and culture. The project draws on manuscript sources in Cracow's archives and libraries, including the National Archives.

Dobek is proficient in Polish, Spanish and Latin, and has studied abroad in Spain. He expects to graduate from WMU in 2017, then to seek a tenure-track position as a professor teaching European, medieval or Polish history.

### **Ian Magnuson**

Magnuson earned a bachelor's degree from WMU, double majoring in German as well as global and international studies, and graduated from Lakeview High School in Battle Creek. He was awarded an English teaching assistantship at two German university-preparatory high schools.



Magnuson, who studied abroad in Bonn, Germany, in 2012, is preparing for a career working with international nonprofit organizations or in international higher education.

## **WMU and application help**

The WMU Fulbright alumni community extends back to 1952, when Professor Chester L. Hunt of the Department of Sociology traveled to the Philippines as a Fulbright Scholar. The University sent out its first student on a Fulbright award in 1993, and welcomed its first incoming Fulbright Scholar in 1981 and the first incoming Fulbright Fellow in 2004.

WMU's Haenicke Institute for Global Education assists faculty members and students in applying for Fulbright grants. Questions may be directed to Dr. Michelle Metro-Roland, the University's Fulbright advisor, at [michelle.metro-roland@wmich.edu](mailto:michelle.metro-roland@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-5890.

## Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. It operates in over 160 countries worldwide and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

The program was established in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright. Since then it has given about 360,000 students, scholars, teachers, artists and scientists the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research; exchange ideas; and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

Fulbright recipients are among some 50,000 people who annually participate in U.S. Department of State exchange programs.

**For more information** about Fulbright programs for faculty and students, visit the Haenicke Institute website at [wmich.edu/international](http://wmich.edu/international) or the Fulbright website at [ie.org/fulbright](http://ie.org/fulbright).

**For more news, arts and events**, visit [wmich.edu/news](http://wmich.edu/news).

## New Editor-in-Chief for The Laureate

DJ DeLong

Creative writing and history major

College of Arts and Sciences, Marketing and Communications student employee

Each year, the Lee Honors College creative journal, The Laureate, welcomes a new editor-in-chief. This year's editor is Andy Bodinger, a senior majoring in global and international studies and English with a focus on creative writing, and a minor in Chinese. He comes to the position with an extensive writing background that includes being published in last year's edition of The Laureate and as the undergraduate runner-up in the fiction category of the Gwen Frostic Writing Award.

The Laureate gives undergraduates the opportunity to get their pieces published or be involved in the editing process. In the past couple years the journal has transferred over to being a completely digital publication. And, with the help from Becky Cooper, the faculty editor, Bodinger has added some new categories this year, including music and short films.

"The addition of audio as a feature to the journal really made me think about the potential of the medium of an online journal to include forms of art not traditionally associated with journals," he says. Audio was first added last year with recordings of the authors reading their pieces.

Bodinger admits that he never planned on becoming the editor-in-chief. "I had no experience and I didn't think I would be prepared," he comments. After seeing a post on the Lee Honors College's Facebook page expressing the need for a new editor, he applied. He said, "I figured it

was worth a shot; I could contribute to the Honor's College in some way and I could learn more about the (publishing) process."

The operation of creating an entire journal involves many different steps, such as reading and selecting submissions, editing, organizing the layout, and working with a design team to develop the final product. Bodinger plans to centralize the process on Google Docs, to allow his assistant editors to help. "I plan for everyone piece to be read/seen by multiple people, and based on everyone's reactions we decide which pieces are to be added and which on to omit," he says.

Submissions are currently being accepted for The Laureate until December 16. Those interested can find out more information through their [Facebook](#) and [tumblr](#) accounts. You can also check out the journals from the past on [ScholarWorks](#).

## **Students Kick Off Model UN in Preparation for National Spring Event**

Olga Bonfiglio  
College of Arts and Sciences staff writer

The Model UN Club at WMU began the Fall 2015 semester with a series of diplomatic activities. This new RSO was formed in April and began official meetings in September. This program is a student-run organization sponsored by Global and International Studies.

The first simulation was held on October 23 when 20 undergraduates represented members of the U.S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and had to negotiate the foreign aid budget for that country for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Working in three separate groups, the students had to address the strengths and weaknesses of six different aid projects that included a public health program designed to prevent another Ebola epidemic; development of a National Guard force to provide security while promoting democracy; a telecommunications project that would expand cell phone access across the republic; the expansion of educational opportunities for second education teachers; a port development project to expand exports; and an agriculture program that would encourage the production of cash crops for export. Each project had a stated cost and was championed by a member of the embassy staff during the deliberations. The group then had to formulate a budget proposal that came under a non-negotiable ceiling cap and select a speaker who presented their proposals to the ambassador.

The club conducted its second simulation on November 9 and addressed the issue of Syrian refugees and their impact on Europe. Thirty-two students attended this activity which featured debates between different groups representing pro-refugee and anti-refugee perspectives as well as groups that addressed the German, French, and Turkish government positions. Members of each group met and formed a policy recommendation, and a spokesperson then presented their reports to the others. This led to a moderated debate and a final wrap-up. Students practiced their policy-making and speaking skills to convince members of other groups to adopt their positions.

The Model UN held its third training simulation on November 30 in which 18 students, each representing a different country, formulated a resolution to deal with issues associated with the contested Spratly Islands. The delegates had to select one of two topics to address, either the security of maritime shipping through the region or the prevention of overfishing in the southern South China Sea. The participants decided to focus on overfishing and developed a four point resolution decided to protect the commercial fish population to ensure sustainable fish yields in the region for future generations.

These simulation exercises will help WMU students prepare to participate in the North American Model UN Conference, which will be held in Toronto in February 2016.

The Model UN Club became a registered WMU student organization last spring. Students from all majors and minors are welcome to join. The group is also working with Global and International Studies to develop an annual Model UN conference for high school students in April 2016 on the Western campus.

For more information about the [club](#), contact Sarah Hughey.

## **Anthropology Receives Field School Scholarships**

Olga Bonfiglio  
College of Arts and Sciences staff writer

Western Michigan University's field school received a \$1000 field school scholarship on behalf of the [Society for American Archaeology](#) because they best met the Society's criteria, particularly with regard to their "community service learning" philosophy and curriculum. WMU split the award between the following two students:

Amelia Harp is a non-degree graduate student studying anthropology at Western Michigan University. She is also pursuing her M.A. in Anthropology at Georgia State University. She received her Bachelor's in Anthropology from Kennesaw State University, and completed an internship with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Department of Language and Culture. Her research interests include historical archaeology, public archaeology, and Native American studies with particular focus on the Great Lakes region. She is currently studying architecture and critically analyzing the relationship between academia and other various stakeholders, including Native American tribes, in the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project as part of her thesis work. She has participated in previous archaeological studies at Fort St. Joseph, the Dabbs Site in Georgia's Bartow County, and Fort Daniel in Gwinnett County. She has also aided in analyzing historical artifacts that were uncovered during the 1970s in archaeological excavations associated with the MARTA subway system in Atlanta.

Erika Loveland is a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at Western Michigan University. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Michigan and

completed her archaeological field school at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. Her research interests include historical archaeology, public archaeology, colonialism, trade, and regional analysis. She is currently examining the architectural components of Fort St. Joseph, a French mission-garrison-trading post complex. She has participated in research projects for the pre-historic Garden Creek Site in North Carolina and the Undocumented Migration Project.