WMU experts’ projection of the future global market in flexible hybrid electronics

WMU’s birthplace is again part of daily campus life

A look at the WMU Cooley Innocence Project’s success uncovering wrongful convictions

Studying atmospheric microbes may yield important findings for public health, climate change

Promoting spiritual and cultural understanding between health care providers and patients

WMU key in national flexible hybrid electronics initiative

More than 1,600 alumni and friends of WMU acknowledged their commitment to the renovation of Heritage Hall by purchasing engraved brick pavers for the patio that extends the east portico overlooking the city of Kalamazoo, as well as engraved plaques for an interior donor wall.
Riffing on a theme of the “Mean Girls” film, these students explain that the right game day apparel is critical. To animate the video linked to this photo, download the Layar app to your mobile device. And order your “On Game Day We Wear Gold” shirt at mywmu.com/invisible to benefit the student relief fund.
Dear Friends

We are proud to present to you the beautifully restored Heritage Hall depicted on the cover and on the pages that follow. The recent renewal of this 110-year-old building represents Western Michigan University's commitment to preserving its birthplace.

First known as Western State Normal School, a preparatory school for teachers, the building's core structure was completed in 1905, within two years of our institution's founding. While our earliest students prepared for professional careers as educators only, generations of teachers and learners of all kinds followed them, exchanging ideas, pursuing dreams and achieving goals atop Prospect Hill.

More than two years ago, the University committed to renovate the hall as an Alumni Center and the new home of the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, using a combination of borrowed funds and generous support from individuals and organizations.

We now have an Alumni Center that is not only a stunning and functional part of campus again, but also responsibly updated to comport with the highest levels of sustainability that reflect our University's commitment to the environment.

Revitalizing the University's birthplace also allows us to pay homage to our home community. We are honoring those wise early visionaries who organized and worked purposefully to ensure that a normal school was established in Kalamazoo as opposed to the many other cities that vied for it.

For the more than 100 years since then, the building has been an abiding witness to the entwining histories of our community, our state, the nation and the institution itself. This rich record is chronicled inside Heritage Hall, where you'll find thoughtful displays that tell threads of the story through many eras.

Come be a part of this latest thread in the University's history. The first opportunity to experience the fully refurbished hall and surrounding grounds will be during its grand opening homecoming weekend, Oct. 23-25. But, of course, once it is open, you are welcome to visit anytime. We hope to see you soon.

Best regards,

John M. Dunn
President

Engineering campus to host ‘solar garden’

To harvest clean energy, Michigan's largest utility will build a "solar garden" on the grounds of WMU's College of Engineering and Applied Sciences complex.

The WMU Board of Trustees approved a recommendation allowing the University to enter agreements granting a 9.62-acre parcel to Consumers Energy for the construction of a photovoltaic array immediately west of the engineering building.

The on-campus solar garden, expected to be in operation in 2016, will be among the first large-scale solar projects Consumers Energy is slated to build in the state.

Consumers customers who take part in the program will receive solar energy credits. WMU plans to participate as part of its agreements with the utility.

If the garden project is fully implemented, Consumers also has committed to provide the University with $120,000 in funding over six years for a Solar Learning Module that will educate WMU students, provide exposure to K-12 students and train emergency first responders in how to deal with solar arrays. Consumers also will provide $55,000 for WMU to construct up to three additional solar systems for research and educational use by faculty and students.
Grade A gymnasts
Bronco gymnasts boasted the nation's eighth highest grade point average for the 2014-15 academic year, according to the National Association of Collegiate Gymnastics Coaches/Women.

The Broncos carried a 3.6075 GPA, marking the sixth-straight year WMU has finished in the top 15 nationally. The team had the highest GPA among Mid-American Conference institutions and were one of three MAC teams to place in the top 15. Overall, 11 Bronco student-athletes earned spots on the NACGC/W All-Academic team, including nine returners to the 2016 roster.

Kayla Weber of Canton led the team with a perfect 4.0. She is entering her senior season and studying biomedical sciences. Second-year Courtney Bergstrom of Culver City, California, also had a 4.0, followed by fellow sophomore Anna Corbett of Geneva, Illinois, with a 3.91.

Engineering complex named to honor late president
The building that houses WMU's engineering college has been named to honor the University's sixth president, Dr. Elson S. Floyd, who died in June.

Elson S. Floyd Hall is the new name for the massive College of Engineering and Applied Sciences facility that was begun during Floyd's presidency and serves as the anchor for the successful Business Technology and Research Park he envisioned.

Floyd was president of WMU from 1998 to early 2003. He went on to serve as president of the University of Missouri and then Washington State University. He died June 20, just two weeks after announcing he would take a medical leave from WSU to focus on his battle with cancer. He was 59.

HONORING OUR HERITAGE
HOMEcoming 2015

WMU's 92nd homecoming celebrates our heritage
"Honoring our Heritage" is the rallying theme as WMU marks its 92nd homecoming, Oct. 23-25. Visit mywmu.com/homecoming for a full list of events.

Kicking off the weekend is the grand opening of the newly renovated Heritage Hall on Friday, Oct. 23. The East Campus building formerly known as East Hall has been transformed into the WMU Alumni Center. For more information about its opening celebration and daily tour schedule through homecoming weekend, see the story on page 6 or visit mywmu.com/grandopening.

The homecoming celebration also features perennial favorites—Bronco football, the Campus Classic race and recognition of Distinguished Alumni Award winners.

At 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24, the Bronco football team faces Miami University's RedHawks at Waldo Stadium. To order tickets, call 1-888-4-WMU-TIX or visit wmubroncos.com.

Earlier in the day, thousands of runners and walkers will traverse campus in the annual Campus Classic. The 1K Fun Run and Walk starts at 8:45 a.m., while the 5K Run and Walk is set for 9:15 a.m. Participants may register and pay online at wmich.edu/campusclassic up until 11 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22. Race-day registration also is available from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Student Recreation Center.

Homecoming also is a time to highlight alumni achievement. James S. Brady and Thomas P. Englert are this year's Distinguished Alumni Award recipients.

Brady, a 1966 graduate, is office managing member of the national law firm Dykema Grand Rapids. Among his many achievements, Brady was recognized by Michigan Super Lawyers in the areas of criminal defense and civil litigation defense from 2006 through 2014. He also has been recognized in "The Best Lawyers in America" editions in multiple practice areas from 2003 to 2015. Brady serves on the WMU Foundation Board of Directors, and is a former member of the WMU Board of Trustees.

Englert, a 1976 graduate, is the past CEO of Discount Tire Co. Inc., the world's largest tire and wheel retailer. During four decades with the company, he helped expand it from 23 to 900 stores, and as chief executive grew annual sales from $1.8 to $4.3 billion while quadrupling profits.

Learn more about these distinguished alumni at mywmu.com/da.
Lecture series returns with Gloria Steinem, other luminaries

Launched last academic year, the Raise Your Voice lecture series continues this fall with another slate of artists, activists, writers and scholars.

First up in September was Wagatwe Wanjuki, a survivor, activist and writer who uses social media to campaign for reform of college sexual assault policies.

Through Dec. 9, a weekly Lyceum lecture series is being held in the Lee Honors College lounge on Wednesdays at noon. “Imagine a World Without Gender-Based Violence!” features faculty and community experts addressing topics related to gender-based violence. All events are free and seating is first come, first served.

On Oct. 22, Jackson Katz co-founder of the gender violence prevention and education program Mentors In Violence Prevention, will present “Violence and Silence: Why some men hurt women and how all men can help” in 2452 Knauss Hall at 7 p.m.

The series concludes on Nov. 6 with “An Evening with Gloria Steinem” at 7:30 p.m. in Miller Auditorium. Steinem is a seminal figure in the women’s liberation movement. She co-founded New York Magazine and Ms. magazine, where she continues to serve as a consulting editor.

Steinem will be signing copies of her newest book, “My Life on the Road,” detailing three decades as a feminist organizer.

For a full listing of speakers and other information on the series, visit wmich.edu/honors/events/raise-your-voice.

Coaching legend a hall of famer

Legendary cross country and track and field Head Coach George Dales was among the Mid-American Conference icons formally inducted into the MAC Hall of Fame this year.

An accomplished coach, Dales led WMU to the Mid-American Conference’s first and second team Division I National Championships and is responsible for two of three national championships earned by MAC teams.

During his tenure, the Broncos won back-to-back NCAA Cross Country Championships in 1964 and 1965, and accumulated 12 MAC titles in track and field and eight in cross country. His cross country teams finished in the top 10 nationally on 13 occasions, and he was the 1970 NCAA Track Coach of the Year.

Dales coached many athletes, including Olympic Gold Medalist Ira Murchison, the world record holder in the 100m and 1956 Olympic winner in the 4x100m. Under Dales, the Broncos earned 25 All-American honors, producing 11 in track and field and another 14 in cross country. His 1964 and 1965 NCAA championship teams were inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009, becoming the first entire teams—rather than individuals—to be inducted.

Dales, 94, joined the University’s staff as an athletics and physical education specialist in January 1953 and retired as head track and cross-country coach in 1970. He continued working at WMU on the physical education staff until retiring as a professor in 1987. He ended his coaching career with the winningest record in MAC history from the standpoint of team victories. His teams, both cross country and track, never finished lower than third in the conference.

Medical school gets new clinical research center

The Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine has formed a Center for Clinical Research, bringing together the leadership, expertise, resources and staff of the medical school, Borgess Research Institute and Bronson Research Services in this new collaboration.

The center will strengthen the support for clinical research conducted at Borgess and Bronson hospitals in Kalamazoo, and offer new research opportunities for medical school faculty, residents and students.

Dr. Amy Shipley, chief research officer at Borgess Research Institute, is the medical school’s assistant dean for research compliance. Dr. Thomas Blok, director of research services at Bronson, serves as the medical school’s assistant dean for clinical research. Both provide leadership for the center, officially established in July.

The Stryker School of Medicine is now in its second year, and research is a key component of the school’s development and planning for accreditation. Through the new center, Borgess and Bronson make an important contribution to the medical school’s research strategy.

Major funders, including the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, place a high premium on interdisciplinary research and the new center meets the definition of interdisciplinary.
Celebrate your Connection

Celebrate WMU’s history and connection with the community by adding your name to an inscribed brick on the portico plaza of Heritage Hall.

**12 in. x 12 in. Brick Paver**
$500 - 189 total characters
(21 each on nine lines)

**4 in. x 8 in. Brick Paver**
$100 - 42 total characters
(14 each on three lines)

Join us for the Grand Opening
- October 23—2 to 4 p.m.
- October 24—9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- October 25—1 to 3 p.m.

For more details or to make a gift visit MyWMU.com/AlumniCenter or call (269) 387-8700
WMU’s ‘birthplace’ revitalized

With its $24 million renovation completed in October, the University’s historic birthplace is again part of daily campus life. Aptly renamed Heritage Hall, it houses the WMU Alumni Center and Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

The University invested borrowed funds to redevelop the hall and surrounding grounds. The WMU Alumni Association Board of Directors also stepped up early on with a $1 million contribution to support the project. And additional alumni and friends of the University have given more than $5 million in financial and in-kind gifts.

All are invited to homecoming weekend, Oct. 23-25, which will feature the building’s grand opening, with self-guided tours each day. The ribbon-cutting ceremony is set for 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23.

“Heritage Hall on Prospect Hill is more than just a building. It is a symbol of our rich history of student and faculty successes, and a testament to the deep ties to
the Kalamazoo community," says Jim Thomas, WMU vice president for alumni relations and development.

"Ours is a history that demands to be remembered, shared and celebrated."

Erected in 1905, it was the first facility built especially for the Western State Normal School—the University's original name when it was established as a preparatory school for teachers.

Thousands studied and learned inside its walls during its 110-year lifetime. But as the institution expanded farther and farther west, eventually becoming the sprawling campus it is today, the original building and other facilities on Prospect Hill were less and less utilized.

For years, the University's birthplace awaited its rebirth. This fall, that wait came to an end.

With the exception of the façade of North Hall, the other buildings that immediately surrounded Heritage Hall—West Hall and the Speech and Hearing building—were razed.

"This space is a fitting tribute to our shared values of educational excellence and collaboration. What a tremendous gift Heritage Hall is and will continue to be for the community that Western Michigan University calls home."

Thomas
Like the institution itself, Heritage Hall has evolved, but its core remains intact. In 1905, the hall was constructed as a single building with a footprint similar to the one it has today.

New interior features include a ballroom with a seating capacity of 180 overlooking the city of Kalamazoo, historically correct light fixtures, and a lobby and public area that reinforce the building's original axes.

Shannon Sauer-Becker, project manager for its redevelopment, says the renovation resulted in a "blend of a very high tech elements in a very 1905 building."

The facility was refurbished to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—LEED—platinum certification standards, the highest possible LEED certification. Among its environmentally conscious attributes are a cutting-edge geothermal heating and cooling system, all-LED lighting that uses 60 percent less energy than traditional lighting and water-efficiency features that result in the building using 40 percent less water than a typical facility of the same size.

In addition to the facility's new green attributes, salvaged materials, such as marble from North Hall, were integrated into the building to bolster its platinum certification bid and pay homage to other structures that were on Prospect Hill.

Heritage Hall's interior is heavily devoted to reflecting the University's history, including tributes to distinguished alumni and exhibits that tell the story of the WMU campus and community connection.

In 1903, the proposed building and the 20-acre site overlooking the city were offered by the Kalamazoo community to convince the Michigan Legislature that Kalamazoo should be the location for the new Western State Normal School. At the time, 28 west Michigan communities competed to be chosen as the school's home.

Thomas notes that the building's revitalization celebrates the community's role in the advent of the institution.

"This space is a fitting tribute to our shared values of educational excellence and collaboration. What a tremendous gift Heritage Hall is and will continue to be for the community that Western Michigan University calls home."
A grand place—golden memories

In the 1970s, then-college student Phil Chludzinski learned the foundational lessons for his career in public accounting in the building's classrooms.

Susan Beukema Trudeau was one of many students over the years to sneak a forbidden peek inside its iconic cupola.

And Bob Warnke remembers walking to class on an upper floor when the world learned on Nov. 22, 1963, that John F. Kennedy had been assassinated.

Legion classroom and life lessons, personal stories of discovery, and engaging with momentous periods in history—they've all played out in WMU's first building over the decades.

Western State Normal School had fewer than 200 students when the building was completed in 1905 on Prospect Hill. Thousands followed those pioneers. Thus memories tied to WMU's birthplace—later called East Hall, today monikered Heritage Hall—are innumerable. And the East Campus edifice holds special meaning for many for many different reasons.

"Where I am today and what I've accomplished, I owe to Western Michigan University and what I learned in those buildings" on Prospect Hill, says Chludzinski, a partner in an accounting firm and a past president of the alumni association.

And Trudeau remembers that Heritage Hall was a grand place to learn.

"I was always impressed with the main lobby because it was expansive, with the grand staircase, the windows up above and the portico looking over the whole city," she says, recalling elements of the facility that still impress today.

Alumni of the primary and secondary school programs—Campus School, State High and University High—sponsored a conference room in Heritage Hall honoring this aspect of the building's past.

Bobbie Britigan also is an alumna of the K-12 program, spending early elementary and all of high school at the school. She went on to earn a teaching degree from the University in 1960, and did her student teaching in Heritage Hall, too.

"High school was probably the best four years of my life," says Britigan, who is the granddaughter of Dwight Waldo, the institution's first leader.

"We had great teachers and winning sports teams. I knew everybody in my class and a lot of other students, too. I think my high school class, the class of '56, was the most closely knit of any of them. Most of us have stayed in connection."

"A lot of us started in kindergarten there and went all the way through college, and that's why we have such passion for the building," says Trudeau, who is a graduate of the University High class of 1964 and also studied speech pathology at WMU.

"We spent our whole lives there," she says.

"I've just always loved the East Campus. When Dr. Dunn came up with the proposal to do what he is doing, I was 100 percent in favor of it," she says.

"It looks absolutely gorgeous."

With the exception of the façade of North Hall, the other buildings that immediately surrounded Heritage Hall—West Hall and the Speech and Hearing building—were razed.
an ALL-NATURAL Living, Learning LABORATORY
A seven-layer perennial “food forest” on the west side of WMU's Gibbs House property is a complex ecosystem, though still in its infancy. Much of the fledgling forest was last year the unpaved driveway to a soccer field, and thus largely hardpan, stony, not very fertile. But the land and the students working it are resilient, demonstrating that careful planning and planting will over time return vitality to what was once barren.

“It’s all nut- and fruit-producing plants that mimic the interactions between species that you see in a normal forest. We have all seven different trophic levels,” says Josh Shultz, who is the permaculture program coordinator at the property.

“Permaculture”—permanent agriculture, or alternatively, permanent culture—refers to an agricultural ecosystem created to be sustainable and self-perpetuating.

What students and the staff guiding them are cultivating “looks and feels and behaves like a natural forest that doesn’t need to be maintained and sprayed,” says Shultz, a 2009 graduate of WMU’s business management and environmental studies programs.

“All the insects go into balance because we’re filling all the different niches. And everything produces food for us.”

This area of knee- and shoulder-high trees along with other plantings is part of the nearly two-acre property anchored by
the 160-year-old Gibbs farmhouse on the edge of WMU’s Parkview Campus.

Dr. Harold Glasser, executive director for campus sustainability and professor of environmental and sustainability studies, describes the operation as a “living, learning laboratory for modeling sustainability in everyday life.”

East of the food forest are the annual vegetable gardens that produced 63 different crops this summer. Nearby the gardens are plots crowded with beds of native wild flowers adjacent to compost mounds. Two large student-built hoop houses hosted tomato plants, Swiss chard, loofa squash, leeks and other crops this summer. And the hoop houses will help extend the growing season to Thanksgiving and beyond.

Harvested carrots, eggplant, garlic, green beans, squash, peppers and other vegetables were sold on site at the student-run Friday Farm Stand and some local food truck vendors.

“We’re teaching students how to grow food and show them that they can grow it in ways that are more sustainable than conventional methods that use chemicals, herbicides and pesticides. We don’t use any of that here,” Shultz says.

“This is all natural.”

In addition to working the land to grow food using methods that harmonize with the natural environment, students also conduct related research. Some of these student researchers—Gibbs House Fellows—live in the farmhouse.

**‘Natural’ research**

In one experiment, mechanical engineering student Kelsey Pitschel created a subterranean radiant heating system, drawing heat from a large woodchip compost pile, to keep the root zones of greenhouse plants warm through Michigan’s bitterly cold winters.

Students and staff also are testing different types of insulation below ground. They’ve buried empty glass wine bottles encased in cob (clay and straw) in one hoop house bed. Straw wrapped in a vapor barrier is below another, and one bed sits atop extruded polystyrene sheets. Their control bed has no insulation at all.

“The standard is to use polystyrene. But that stuff has some pretty negative environmental impacts both in production and disposal. We’re trying to not support things like that,” Shultz explains.

“So we’re tracking the soil temperature, the water temperature, the soil moisture content of all of these beds, and we’ll use the data we get to compare these types of insulation to see which ones work and which ones don’t,” he says.

“Maybe polystyrene will be the only one that works. That’s a possibility. But I believe some of the other ones have some merit to them.”

Gibbs House Fellow Eli Lowry, a senior in the geography program, oversees a composting unit that uses red wiggler worms to break down food waste, a fertilizer-production method known as vermicomposting. Bacteria break down the food, and the worms eat the bacteria and leave behind nutrient-rich castings as the byproduct.

“Probably one of the best fertilizers you can get,” Lowry says. “It’s really high in organic matter and microbial activity.”

Part of the appeal of vermicomposting is the speed at which the worms create the compost—in weeks versus several months.

“Right now, we’re feeding them about 50 pounds of food waste a week. It’s a good way to handle the food waste that we produce on site and other places on campus,” he says.

One of Lowry’s composting experiments happened by accident when he found that black soldier fly larvae from another student’s project had invaded his composting unit. The fly larvae are also used to create fertilizer, but Lowry read that the two don’t coexist well when mixed.

“Before I freaked out too much, I wanted to see how they would do together,” he says.

“Black soldier fly larvae can handle post-consumer waste such as meat, bread, and fatty or oily material. While the (red wigglers’) place in nature is to eat the litter off the forest floor, so your leaves and stuff. I thought if they can work together, they’d be a really good combination.

“They’ve done fine, but I think the experiment needs more testing before we draw any conclusions.”
All-natural outreach

The Gibbs House is named for John Gibbs, a New York man who bought the property and built the house on it in the 1850s. The site is part of a much larger parcel the University acquired in 1959 that is today the Parkview Campus, home of the engineering college, the WMU Business Technology Research Park and a soccer field.

Since in WMU’s possession, use of the farmhouse and land has evolved over the years. Most recently, its physical footprint changed to make way for a company in the BTR Park, but the amount of acreage dedicated to the Gibbs program remained virtually the same.

For the last year, students and staff have been focused on redeveloping the area, including erecting the hoop houses, planting the food forest, creating a cob oven and building hugelkulturs—raised beds that maximize surface area and hold moisture. Future plans include building a living fence out of hazelnut shrubs and creating an outdoor education space.

With much of the landscape transformation in process—though there’s much more to be done—students and staff have been giving more attention to community outreach and education.

“We typically have a public volunteer work day on Friday afternoons and have periodic workshops and presentations throughout the academic year,” says Derek Kanswicher, coordinator of sustainability projects for the Office of Sustainability.

Some of the program’s past workshops have covered cob oven building, home-scale rainwater collection, honey extraction, woodchip mushroom beds, native bee hotels and tree pruning.

“This summer, we have had several master gardeners volunteer for part of their certification process, sharing their knowledge with our students and contributing to the site development,” Kanswicher says.

The site evolution alone over the past year has attracted a fair amount of attention, as curious passersby stop in to inquire about what’s going on.

“One day I was working here and a guy started asking about woodchips and why we have them in the garden, what do we use them for and how do they benefit the garden,” says Peter Robertson, the property’s annual food production manager.

Though the Gibbs property brims with plant life, visitors will notice it doesn’t have the manicured appearance of home or commercial vegetable and flower gardens. But that’s intentional.

“You’ll never see bare dirt in nature,” Robertson says. “It will be filled by pioneering plants to cover that space.

“We want to find ways to continue to improve the fertility of the soil, but we want to work with nature instead of fighting against it. So if we want a bed to be clear so we can plant something, we may put mulch on it. In the process of making sure that nature doesn’t fill the void with unnecessary items, we’ll fill that space with something that will benefit the soil,” he says.

“We’re happy to tell people about some of these alternatives and what they really mean, that we can generate food from any type of landscape, that we can produce food without having to resort to chemicals and pesticides to generate high-quality nutrient-dense foods.”
SCENE ON CAMPUS

Nearly 31,000 fans packed Waldo Stadium when the Bronco football team faced the Michigan State Spartans in the season’s home opener in September.
This fall, WMU and the WMU Cooley Innocence Project won a $418,000 Justice Department grant to support the project's mission to exonerate people wrongly convicted of serious crimes.

The words "faith" and "hope" are tattooed in large lettering on Donya Davis' arms. While incarcerated for another man's crimes, the 37-year-old Detroiter says he got the imas daily reminders to hold fast to both sentiments.

"It wasn't the law that gave me hope," Davis says. "It was Marla. Marla, the innocence project and those kids. Once I really got to know them and saw how—guns blazing—they were there by my side, I was like, 'I finally got some help.'"

"Marla" is Marla Mitchell-Cichon, law professor and director of the innocence program at Cooley Law School, and "those kids" are a team of law students who investigated Davis' case and worked to free him.

In September, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded WMU and the WMU Cooley Innocence Project with a $418,000 grant to continue helping people like Davis. The DOJ allocation will pay for investigators, experts, a full-time staff attorney and also help defray costs associated with review, evidence location and DNA testing.

In 2006, a victim of sexual assault and robbery identified Davis in a lineup; he was arrested and faced decades in prison. He had had past scrapes with the law, resulting in a felony record and by his own profession was far from an angel. But Davis maintained he didn't commit the crimes.

His alibi defense placed him somewhere else at the time of the assault; it wasn't believed. Skin cells found on the victim excluded him while other key DNA evidence from the crime—untested at the Detroit Crime Lab. And Davis says attorneys who initially represented him were lukewarm advocates.

In the end, he was found guilty.

Being identified by the victim "is still damning evidence even in the face of DNA exclusion," says Mitchell-Cichon.

Behind bars, Davis asked the innocence program to investigate his case.

Through its advocacy, DNA from male biological fluid recovered from the victim that wasn't previously tested was finally analyzed and the results again excluded Davis, Mitchell-Cichon says.

Based on this new evidence, after serving almost seven years in prison, the court freed him in the summer of 2014, pending a new trial. On Nov. 6, 2015, he celebrates a momentous one-year anniversary—the day the prosecutor dismissed all charges against him.

Davis, the third WMU Cooley Innocence Project exoneree, is one of its latest breakthroughs. Another incremental breakthrough came this past summer on a case that project attorneys were litigating for three years. The Michigan Court of Appeals ordered DNA testing in a case that project director Maria Mitchell-Cichon has been trying for years before the project uncovered DNA evidence that led to their release.
This fall, WMU and the WMU Cooley Innocence Project won a $418,000 Justice Department grant to support the project’s mission to exonerate people wrongfully convicted of serious crimes.

The words "faith" and "hope" are tattooed in large lettering on Donya Davis’ arms. While incarcerated for another man’s crimes, the 37-year-old Detroiter says he got the inscriptions as daily reminders to hold fast to both sentiments. Years into his sentence, always asserting innocence and filing legal motions as his own attorney from prison to no avail, he just about lost hope anyone would believe he was wrongfully accused.

Just about.

"It wasn’t the law that gave me hope," Davis says. "It was Marla. Marla, the innocence project and those kids. Once I really got to know them and saw how—guns blazing—they were on my case, I was like, ‘I finally got some help.’"

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Several months ago, WMU junior Ashley Chlebek was still deciding whether she wanted to pursue a law degree. Spending an eye-opening summer reviewing the cases of potentially innocent people locked behind bars decided it.

It's been enlightening for her to see how the justice system sometimes misses the mark, and the criminal justice major wants to be part of improving the system.

"We're called the innocence project, but we're looking for truth more then innocence," says Chlebek who plans a second internship with the project.

"Even if somebody writes to us saying they are innocent, we look at it objectively. It's more about finding out what actually happened rather than just saying that they're innocent and trying to prove their innocence. The DNA tells us what's what.''

**Roots of wrongful conviction**

Innocence programs across the nation have won with the release of 330 wrongfully accused individuals based on what DNA testing revealed. Those exonerees served an average of 14 years in prison before release.

In addition to freeing the innocent, Mitchell-Cichon says post-conviction DNA testing has revealed how some time-honored, though flawed techniques used to incriminate people, such as eyewitness identification and hair-strand analysis, have led to wrongful convictions.

"In Michigan, and in other states, when we exonerate someone through DNA, if we take a close look, we see one or more of the leading causes of wrongful conviction was present," she says.

False accusation, misconduct by officials and misidentification by witnesses are among the top causes of wrongful conviction, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

The things that can lead to wrongful conviction are nothing new, says Mitchell-Cichon, noting that "we've known since the late 1970s, through social science research, that eyewitness identification is inherently unreliable."

But she says the hard science of DNA testing has "gotten our attention. It has given us a window into the causes of wrongful convictions like nothing else has."

And DNA analysis has been consistently improving, becoming more discriminating. Such advances periodically lead the project to reconsider cases it previously closed or wouldn't consider.

Mitchell-Cichon initially turned away Donya Davis' request to review his case because the original state law allowing for post-conviction DNA analysis only pertained to convictions prior to 2001. He was convicted in 2007.
But the law was amended in 2009 to allow for testing in more recent convictions that meet certain criteria, including establishing that DNA analysis has advanced since the conviction.

“It’s very easy to prove that there’s better testing because there is. The (now-defunct) Detroit Crime Lab had very antiquated DNA testing,” Mitchell-Cichon says.

“They didn’t have the capability to do what’s called Y-STR testing, which isolates the male DNA in a sample, which can be critically important in a rape case.”

The project is now looking at re-evaluating cases that involve hair-strand comparison analysis, in view of a startling FBI report.

In April, the Federal Bureau of Investigation admitted that over a several-decade period prior to 2000, most of its agent-analysts gave false testimony about the strength of hair-strand comparison analysis or submitted lab reports with erroneous statements.

The FBI and the Justice Department began reviewing criminal cases involving microscopic hair analysis after the exoneration of three men convicted at least in part because testimony given by three different bureau examiners was scientifically flawed, according to the bureau.

“There’s been a lot of attention to the ‘science’ we use to incriminate people in our criminal justice system,” the law professor says.

**Textbook example**

Because so many things went wrong for him, Cooley’s first exoneree Ken Wyniemko may be one of the best illustrations of how deficiencies in the legal system can lead to wrongful conviction.

Eyewitness misidentification, false assertions by a jailhouse “snitch” and some of the actions of law enforcement played a role in Wyniemko’s conviction for sexual assault, breaking and entering, and armed robbery in a southeast Michigan community.

Wyniemko did not fit the victim’s description of the person responsible for the crimes and there was no physical evidence that linked him, but he spent almost nine years of a 40- to 60-year prison term paying for the crimes.

Law enforcement contributed to the wrongful conviction by securing a false statement from a jail inmate. And some of the biological evidence from the crime was not tested until the WMU Cooley Innocence Project got involved, leading to Wyniemko’s 2003 release.

Five years later, the person responsible for the crimes was identified through a DNA evidence database. The statute of limitations prohibited the man from being charged, but he was later imprisoned for an unrelated sex crime.

Wyniemko, after being exonerated, filed a federal lawsuit against Clinton Township. In denying the township’s motion to dismiss the suit, a federal judge wrote that officials’ misconduct in the crime investigation “was instrumental to the continued confinement, prosecution and conviction” of Wyniemko, which “tainted the legal process” and denied him a fair trial.

The township settled the case with Wyniemko for more than $3 million. In Michigan, pursuing a civil suit is the only avenue for the wrongfully convicted to be compensated for time spent behind bars. And most exonerees will not be able to meet the high standard of proof required to recover civil damages, and some state actors, such as prosecutors, are immune from suit, Mitchell-Cichon adds.

The WMU Cooley Innocence Project is among those supporting the passage of pending legislation that may result in the state paying victims of wrongful conviction $60,000 for every year spent behind bars.

If the compensation legislation becomes law and it’s retroactive, Davis says every dime will go to his mother, Denise Larry. Larry, a nurse administrator in Detroit, hit financial rock bottom helping to pay for her son’s legal defense.

“I lost a lot in this, but my mom, she suffered daily. She took care of my children, mortgaged her house. Whatever they give me will never be enough to cover my debt to her,” he says.

“I went to prison, but I believe she did more hard time than I did. It shattered her life. Not only am I her only child, but she was telling the judge, ‘I know it wasn’t him; he was with me.’”

At the time of the crime, Davis says he was home with his mother, fiancée and children.

“That’s what struck my fiancée and my mom. And a few days later, police came looking for me. ... I really don’t have a good fix on how I was accused. But like I told the judge, ‘There’s nothing I can do about something I don’t know about.’”

On the day of his release, Davis plans were simple: take a long bath and relax into newfound freedom. His children, however, had other plans.

“The whole house was filled with kids, and I just had a great time. However, the next morning, I ran five miles. It may sound funny, but the last five years I had been running in circles in prison. I wanted to see what it felt like to keep going straight.”

Davis ran straight and free that day for the first time in almost seven years, but he says his life has remained tripped up by the wrongful conviction.

Though he and Mitchell-Cichon are trying to correct his record, the felonies remain on the criminal history database that employers check. Despite his prior felony record, he believes the rape and robbery convictions are what keep potential jobs at bay.

He explains the unusual circumstances to would-be employers, but his background, he says, “makes them doubt me.”
She’s a badass who raises donkeys, and she has disciplined herself to write every single day since she was 20 years old. Bonnie Jo Campbell is the author of the national bestseller, "Once Upon a River"; the novel "Q Road"; story collections, American Salvage, and Women and Other Animals; and the poetry chapbook, "Love Letters to Sons of Bitches."

In October 2015, the two-time WMU alumna’s new story collection, "Mothers, Tell Your Daughters," will reach the hands of many eager fans.

“I don’t admit this very often, but I’m something of a scaredy-cat,” Campbell laughs. "I worry a lot, so even as a youth, I was scared of doing things, but that somehow worked to the opposite. I felt like I had to address those fears."

And address them she did. To read Campbell’s biographical statement is to read something stranger than fiction: grew up on a farm just outside Kalamazoo, castrating pigs and milking cows; joined the circus and traveled the country selling snow cones; hitchhiked across the United States and Canada; rode her bicycle across the Swiss Alps; started her own bicycle touring company and led tours across Russia and the Baltics, Romania and Bulgaria.

“I wanted to be exposed to as many different kinds of people as possible,” Campbell says. "It helped me see my own people better."

Campbell brought her adventure and misadventure stories, her love of people and animals, back home with her to Michigan. Her books, threaded through with humor, nonetheless address painful themes and embattled relationships. Her female characters are often victimized, but never victims.


“The most potent of the stories address issues and difficulties between mothers and daughters,” Campbell says. "I get asked why I write stories about such rough situations, but I have to tell you, it’s the trouble that gets our attention.”

Campbell’s work has garnered a great deal of attention. Her collection, American Salvage, was a finalist for the National Book Award and a Michigan Notable Book. "Once Upon a River" was a Michigan Notable Book and was named a Top Ten Summer Book by CNN, NPR, Parade Magazine, and others. "Q Road" was a Barnes & Noble Great New Writer book.

Yet with all of Campbell’s success, she remains modest about her talent, crediting the push into excellence to her professor at WMU, writer Jaimy Gordon. Campbell earned her bachelor’s degree in philosophy at the University of Chicago, but her second bachelor's degree in mathematics, followed by a master's, at WMU.
"I kind of knew I wasn’t a very good writer,” Campbell says. “But I loved writing. And I’m a very good re-writer. I didn’t even know what an MFA was until I took a class with Jaimy Gordon when I was 35. She advised me to drop the math and apply for the MFA program.”

Campbell knew good advice when she heard it. She added an MFA to her resume.

“Jaimy is a powerful force, and I did what she said,” she says. “I thought that problems with a given piece of work had to be solved with plot, but she showed me that problems can be solved with language. She taught me there is no excuse for and no place for inelegant writing. Having a genius like Jaimy Gordon apply herself to my stories, sentence by sentence, made me see how a story worked and how language works.”

Campbell now teaches the next generation of writers as a professor of creative writing at Pacific University Low Residence Program in Oregon and, on occasion, as visiting professor of creative writing at WMU. And she continues to cultivate what she calls her “badass-ness.”

“As a youth, I didn’t have to go out of my way to be tough, because I was a big, strong farm girl with impressive muscles and a natural kind of badass-ness. As life went on, I found that I had to make an effort to stay in touch with my tough side, because I was working jobs where I was sitting around on my butt, a hazard of being a writer.”

**Lauded lit**

**First-of-its-kind book on LGBT history praised**

A WMU department chair’s book has been awarded a prestigious Lambda Literary Award. Dr. Susan Freeman, chair of the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, co-authored “Understanding and Teaching U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History” with Dr. Leila J. Rupp. Rupp is professor of feminist studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Celebrating the best gay, lesbian and transgender books of the year, the 27th Lambda Literary Awards were presented in New York in June. Their book, published by the University of Wisconsin Press, was recognized in the LGBT Anthology category. The text is believed to be the first designed for university and high school teachers who want to integrate LGBT history into curriculum.

**Honored by an ‘IPPY’**

A comparative religion professor’s biography about a southwest Michigan community’s health and wellness past and its central figure, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, has won an Independent Publisher Book Award, known as the IPPY. “Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living” by Dr. Brian C. Wilson won an IPPY Silver Medal in the biography category. Conducted annually, the Independent Publisher Book Awards honor the year’s best independently published titles from around the world. Wilson’s book was published by Indiana University Press in 2014. The professor didn’t start off writing a book about Kellogg, the older brother of cereal magnate W.K. Kellogg. He was interested in writing about the religious history of Battle Creek, which was founded as a Quaker town and became a hotbed for spiritualism, attracting other, radical religious groups. He started reading about the Seventh-day Adventists, who showed up in 1855, and from there became intrigued by John Harvey Kellogg.
Exploring earth's atmosphere

Go outside. Step on grass. The basics of biology have taught you that the earth beneath you teems with billions of diverse microorganisms.

You know this because scientists of various stripes have long studied the earth's terrestrial ecosystem.

Now, look up. The air about you and atmosphere for miles above also swarm with biota invisible to the naked eye.

But, unlike that patch of earth you're claiming for the moment, the atmosphere is an ecological realm that has been little explored for its microbial makeup.

Microbial ecologist Dr. Kathryn Docherty of WMU's biological sciences department thinks we should know more, much more, about the airborne microbiome. And to add to current knowledge, she has launched research in partnership with an aerospace engineering professor.

"I'm interested in the basic question of how microbial diversity ends up where it does. And is there microbial activity in the air?" says Docherty, the lead investigator on this project with Dr. Kristina Lemmer, assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

What they ultimately learn about microbes in the atmosphere may yield important findings on several fronts, including public health and climate change.

Microbes on the move

The earth is laden with bacteria, viruses, fungi, eukaryotes and other types of microorganisms. They're key elements of the global ecosystem, managing the earth's major nutrient cycles, including oxygen production, decomposition and carbon cycling, functions that make life possible for larger species—humanity, for example.

But how the tiny organisms are distributed across the earth has long been a question in microbial ecology. The WMU research team is also interested in the possible interaction and reciprocal relationship between microbes on the ground and in the air, and how land use may affect that interplay.

"Though the atmosphere is thought to serve as a mechanism for dispersing microbial life among all surface habitats on earth, our current understanding of this important connection is limited," Docherty says.

There's a high degree of similarity in communities of microbes across land and aquatic habitats. So for the microbes found in, say, the very different landscapes of the Alaskan tundra and the rainforests of Hawaii, how did they get to these locales and what accounts for the similarities in their respective bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms?

"Nobody expects to see the same types of plants and animals in those places because they just can't travel that distance, but microbes can. That's where understanding more about the air microbiome comes in," she says.

One thought is that for some species of microbes, the upper atmosphere serves as their habitat. That's where the organisms dwell and they are never deposited on the earth's surface.

"But another idea is that those microbes actually serve as a reservoir for the diversity of organisms that end up on the soil habitats or on the aquatic habitats of the earth," Docherty says.

Testing techniques

While the diversity and behavior of plant and animal life are fairly easy to observe by sight, that's not the case for microbes. And the earth's microbes are infinitely more numerous than either plants or animals. Yet just a tiny sliver of them, perhaps 1 percent, can be grown in the lab for scientists to study, which has severely limited the exploration of total microbial biodiversity.

Only in the past decade have scientists been able to more deeply examine these microscopic communities thanks to breakthroughs in DNA-based sequencing.
"These techniques have allowed us to understand how many microorganisms are in, let’s say, a gram of soil, and who they are. And it turns out that there are millions, usually, in a gram of soil," Docherty says.

Her research team is turning sequencing techniques skyward, using genomics to examine the types of microorganisms that are found over urban, rural and aquatic habitats at near-to-earth and higher altitudes.

Using balloons carrying air samplers, the researchers have collected microbes at about 6½ feet and also nearly 330 feet above the earth’s surface. This pilot study was supported by a $10,000 matching grant from the Michigan Space Consortium program and a $5,000 award from WMU’s College of Arts and Sciences.

They’ve since won a nearly $300,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to, next year, collect samples from sites around the United States at various altitudes, up to 25,000 meters, or nearly 16 miles.

Is man messing up the airborne microbiome?

One of their pilot study findings suggests that microorganisms are more plentiful above forested versus non-forested areas. This relates to another big question the WMU researchers are pursuing: What function might microorganisms perform while they are aloft?

“They’re active catalysts in soil and water for (the earth’s) nutrient cycles. Does that also happen in the air? Or, are microbes breaking down pollutants in the atmosphere, but we haven’t quantified that process?”

“I think both of those things are possible and just not examined yet,” Docherty says.

Too much carbon in the atmosphere in the form of greenhouse gases is what scientists say is driving climate change.

Microorganisms, which already play a key role in carbon cycling, may also be involved in breaking down atmospheric carbon pollutants.

But, Docherty notes, “we make changes to the surface landscape with little consideration of the air as a biological component of the ecosystem.”

“As we’re potentially screwing up these (airborne microbial) communities, we’re potentially impacting earth’s ability to store carbon and also to cycle other nutrients appropriately,” Docherty says.

“Though the atmosphere is thought to serve as a mechanism for dispersing microbial life among all surface habitats on earth, our current understanding of this important connection is limited.”

—Docherty

For example, how would paving over a forested area impact the airborne microbiome?

It’s possible that resurfacing a landscape reduces its microbial contribution to the air. But Docherty says the relationship between land and air in this sense is probably more of a two-way exchange, with the terrestrial habitat contributing to the air microbiome, and whatever is in the air contributing to terrestrial habitat.

“So the real question I want to get at with the balloon sampling is what’s the amount of each of those contributions, and does it change as you pave over and reduce the amount of contribution from natural soil when now you just have asphalt?” she says.

From a public health perspective, Docherty adds, “it’s also important to understand how land use may influence the spread of airborne microorganisms that can act as triggers for asthma as well as potential airborne pathogens.”

She hopes the team’s pioneering investigations will provide new insights.
The growing conflation of work and leisure

A new study published in the *Journal of Occupational Health and Psychology* found that workers on call have higher levels of cortisol, a hormone released during stressful situations. Other studies have shown that emailing after business hours can be psychologically damaging.

The infringement of work on free time is increasing and it's also getting more attention, says Dr. Elizabeth Hoger, a WMU associate professor of business information systems.

"I think it's a problem that's been around for awhile that people are finally starting to acknowledge," she says. "It's a problem in terms of work-life boundaries that haven't been clarified. They're not clarified by the workers and they're not clarified by the workplace."

At least for some commuting workers in Europe, the European Union's Court of Justice recently made the parameters a little clearer about work done in transit.

In a ruling this fall, the court determined that "the journeys made by workers without fixed or habitual place of work between their homes and the first and last customer of the day constitute working time."

Excluding those journeys from working time, the court said, is "contrary to the objective of protecting the safety and health of workers."

Good for them. But for the rest of us not being thusly compensated, Hoger says the line between work and leisure continues to blur with the widespread use of technology, particularly portable technology such as smartphones.

"The professional and personal boundaries are blurring," she says. "Email is just one symptom of that. At what point do you use the machines, and at what point don't you use the machines? At what point is work part of your day? How is work defined? Does answering an email after hours count as work?"

"I think it's about who or what's in charge," Hoger says. "Does the worker have a chance to say, 'I'm in charge of my time and can take two hours.' Or, does the workplace dominate and say, 'You must always be available?'" There's a continuum between those two things that we're all trying to find our spaces on. And it will shift.

Hoger says there are upsides and downsides of constant connectivity, but it hasn't been explored enough given the proliferation of technology.

"The real issue is a lack of reflection and stepping back and saying, 'OK, what are the upsides to constant connectivity and what are the downsides?'"

Hoger says after-hours contact may not be a matter of company policy, "but it's certainly part of a job description. I think stepping back is a key and thinking about controlling our own time is a key."
Promoting spiritual and cultural awareness between providers, patients

An education program developed to help health care professionals gain an advanced understanding of humanity’s diverse cultural and spiritual perspectives on the body, illness and health is meeting a growing need in medicine.

Dr. Cynthia Visscher, a faculty specialist in the Department of Comparative Religion, says WMU’s online graduate certificate in spirituality, culture and health was developed in 2012 in response to broad trends in U.S. Census data. Many first-generation immigrants are moving out of larger cities, creating an increase in ethnic, cultural and religious diversity across small- and medium-sized towns in the United States. And when looking at how the body is viewed, or how health is viewed, across cultures and religions, differences exist.

“We were aware that these broad national trends were going on, and not a lot of understanding existed about how to best serve patients, and how we can change or adapt health care organizations to help people to understand multiple belief systems and how they affect health practices and care needs,” Visscher says.

This type of disconnect between providers and patients was recently underscored by a study published in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine* in August.

Drawn from experiences in 13 intensive care units across the nation, the study found that nearly 78 percent of individuals making medical decisions on behalf of patients considered religion or spirituality to be fairly or very important in their lives. Meanwhile, discussion of religion or spirituality occurred in 16 percent of cases in the study—that is, in 40 of 249 “goals-of-care” meetings between health care professionals and the patient surrogates.

Researchers also found that in only eight of the goals-of-care meetings did “health care providers attempt to further understand surrogates’ beliefs, for example, by asking questions about the patient’s religion,” according to the journal.

WMU’s Visscher cautions that gaps in cultural or religious understanding can cause medical errors if the communication between patient and health care provider is not great, thereby causing risks for health care organizations.

“On the other hand,” she says, “increased understanding could also have huge benefits for health care organizations.”

Dr. Nadia Tremonti, an alumna who is a leading physician in pediatric palliative care, says her undergraduate education in comparative religion at WMU helped her better serve families from a diversity of religious and cultural backgrounds as they were experiencing grief and stress.

A medical director for both the Kaleidoscope Kids team at Henry Ford Hospice and the pediatric care team at Children’s Hospital of Michigan in Detroit, Tremonti was the recipient of the WMU Department of Comparative Religion Alumni Achievement Award in 2011. The physician found that how she discussed treatment and care options while recognizing religious and medical concerns spoke to a real need of the families she served.

In light of the need, Visscher and Dr. Stephen Covell, chair of the comparative religion department, worked to create the online graduate certificate in cooperation with the Integrative Wellness and Holistic Health program in the College of Health and Human Services and Extended University Programs.

Setting it apart from others, developers say the WMU program takes a worldview rather than focusing on Christian-based or Western traditions. A narrow approach doesn’t recognize the breadth of cultural, religious and spiritual practices providers may encounter in their patient populations.

"Based on this complexity," says Visscher, "we have moved from cultural competence as a standard, and instead focus on the concept of cultural humility. Cultural humility fits with the idea of patient-centered care, where the care is individualized.

"Because of this shift, skills like communication and negotiating become very important. The skills have to be interactive and listening-based, and not knowledge-based, which we teach in our certification program.”

Graduates leave with practical skills designed to improve the quality and sensitivity of patient-provider interactions in the health care and human services industry. Covell says their research and practices have been warmly received within the medical community.

For more information about the graduate certificate and other comparative religion programs, visit wmich.edu/religion.
**Lee Honors College**

**Eight students and their Disney pilgrimage**

As part of the Lee Honors College Study in the States program, eight students followed in Walt Disney's footsteps and visited 43 destinations related to Disney's life in three states over eight days this past summer.

Students had the rare opportunity to dine with Walt Disney's son-in-law (and former Walt Disney Company CEO) Ron Miller and take a private tour of Disneyland with original Walt Disney "Imagineer" Bob Gurr.

The course exposed students to the creativity, perseverance, successes, failures and impact of Disney, who set the foundation for the animated feature industry and the theme park/resort business. Students even held one of the American icon's Academy Awards.

During the trip, students met with a variety of WMU alumni and experienced life in some major metropolitan cities. The journey took students from Chicago through several cities in Missouri and ultimately to Anaheim, California.

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**College of Arts and Sciences**

**Studying one of mankind's greatest challenges**

This fall, WMU began offering a minor in climate change studies. It was created by an interdisciplinary group of faculty—the Interdisciplinary Humanities Group for the Study of Climate Change sponsored by the WMU Center for Humanities.

One of the major goals of this group was to infuse climate change into the liberal arts education.

"It was time for us to move beyond the science and let students understand the world they live in," says Dr. Denise Keele, the group's chair and an associate professor of political science and environmental and sustainability studies.

"There are challenges coming, and our real hope is to teach students something that will be useful to their lives and the future."

The climate change studies minor is an interdisciplinary and integrative program of study involving expert faculty and key courses from intersecting disciplines. Students will be provided with the necessary science-based background and a broad understanding of the human relationship to climate change.

For more information about the minor, call (269) 387-3536.

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**College of Engineering and Applied Sciences**

**Foundation gives $50,000 to support student engineers**

The DENSO North America Foundation has invested $50,000 to support student teams involved in solar, Formula SAE and Baja vehicle racing. The grant will provide three well-established engineering teams a leg up in their preparations for the 2015-16 competitive season.

"It’s important for students to work with technology, to make mistakes and collaborate as a team on solutions," says Karen Cooper-Boyer, director of the DENSO North America Foundation Board of Directors and vice president of General Administration at DENSO Manufacturing Michigan Inc. in Battle Creek.

"This type of hands-on experience develops students' skills, and we see that demonstrated in our engineering co-ops who have participated in these vehicle teams. These are the students who will drive innovation and help shape our future," she says.

The three teams and amount each will receive through the grant are:

- The Sunseeker solar race team, which develops a solar-powered vehicle for the American Solar Challenge, a biennial cross-country race that is run on highways across the United States, $30,000;
- The Formula SAE team, which responds to a challenge from the Society of Automotive Engineers—SAE—asking colleges and universities around the world to design and build small-scale, Formula One-style cars, $13,000; and
- The SAE Baja team, which takes part in competitions sponsored by SAE that test engineering and design capabilities as students build and compete in small, off-road vehicles across North America, $7,000.
College of Health and Human Services
Alumna's research featured on CBS News

WMU alumna Dr. Stephanie Combs-Miller's research on the therapeutic effects of boxing for people with Parkinson's disease is expected to be featured on CBS Sunday Morning this fall. Broadcaster Lesley Stahl interviewed Combs-Miller about her work with Rock Steady Boxing in Indianapolis. Since 2007, the specialist in neurological physical therapy has been collaborating with Rock Steady, researching the effects of its boxing training program for people with Parkinson's.

Combs-Miller is an associate professor of physical therapy at the University of Indianapolis and research director of its College of Health Sciences. She and her research team's two-year longitudinal study found that people with Parkinson's who participate in Rock Steady Boxing on a regular basis maintained higher levels of function and quality of life than those who took part in other exercise. She hopes the national exposure will encourage people living with the disease to exercise, maybe even box.

Combs-Miller graduated from WMU's interdisciplinary health sciences doctoral program in 2009 and was inducted into the College of Health and Human Services Outstanding Alumni Academy in 2013.

Graduate College
New interdisciplinary studies doctorate launched

WMU is offering a new interdisciplinary studies doctorate that is housed in the Graduate College. This unique degree offers flexibility to students with interests that span existing academic boundaries and established programs. The degree combines coursework and research in two or more disciplines or programs, and may involve more than one academic college.

This new doctoral program, which requires a minimum of 60 credit hours, allows students with broad, cross-disciplinary interests to take a lead in designing a tailored doctoral degree, with oversight by a dissertation committee consisting of faculty members from at least two disciplines.

Admission decisions will be made by a committee consisting of the Graduate College dean, at least one faculty member from each of the areas of proposed study, and the department chairs from the areas of proposed study.

Students must maintain at least a 3.25 grade point average and complete a dissertation that conforms to the standards of their disciplines and involves original research. For more information about the new degree, contact the Graduate College at (269) 387-8212 or visit the Graduate College website at wmich.edu/grad.

College of Aviation
WMU aviators finish fifth in 2,200-mile race

Representing the aviation college, students Sara Karsten and Katherine Vena competed in this year's Air Race Classic cross-country flying event for women aviators, capturing fifth place in the collegiate division and 11th place overall.

The pilots completed the 2,200-mile course from Fredericksburg, Virginia, to Fairhope, Alabama, using two and a half of the four days allotted for the race. They were honored for completing the eighth leg of the race—from Union City, Tennessee, to Gadsden, Alabama—with the fastest time of any of the 54 competitor teams.

The overall winner of the June 22-25 race as well as the winner of the collegiate division was a team from Southern Illinois University. A total of 17 collegiate teams were among this year's competitors.

The 2015 race, which has its roots in an event that began in 1929, followed a zigzag route with flybys at checkpoints in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and Tennessee.

Haworth College of Business
'Outstanding' paper praised

Dr. Kuanchin Chen, professor of business information systems, has been recognized for an academic paper published in the journal Internet Research.

The paper, "The Effects of Hedonic/Utilitarian Expectations and Social Influence on Continuance Intention to Play Online Games," was selected by the journal's editorial team as the Outstanding Paper of 2014.

The paper was co-written by I-Cheng Chang from the National Dong Hwa University in Hualien, Taiwan, and Chuang-Chun Liu from the Institute of Information Management, National Chiao Tung University in Hsinchu, Taiwan.

This is the latest accolade for Chen's research efforts. He received the Haworth College of Business Faculty Research Award for the 2014-15 academic year. His research interests include electronic commerce, online behavioral issues, applied artificial intelligence, data mining techniques, Internet security and digital watermarking.
Professor recognized for scholarship in adapted physical education

Dr. Jiabei Zhang, professor of adapted physical education, was honored with a Scholarly Contribution Award at the 2015 Annual Summer Conference of National Consortium for Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities. The award recognized Zhang’s distinguished and prolific contributions to refereed journals of national and international significance. During his 18-year tenure at WMU, he has authored 46 research articles and 52 research abstracts in professional journals. Zhang also has given 88 presentations at professional conferences around the world. His publications and presentations have helped advance knowledge in physical education for individuals with disabilities, especially his series of research articles focusing on the quantitative estimation of the need for additional special (adapted) physical education teachers, which have been extensively cited in federal grant proposals by special (adapted) physical education professionals. Won over the past 10 years, Zhang is also the recipient of $2.3 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Education. With these grants he’s helped educate adapted physical education teachers, created the world’s first online master’s degree program in adapted physical education and developed the integrated sport activity program for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Dancing with the WMU/Kazoo Stars

The popular scholarship fundraiser Dancing with WMU/Kazoo Stars returns to WMU’s Miller Auditorium on Nov. 13. The event brings together local celebrities, paired with dance students or faculty members, to perform ballroom dances in competition for prizes. The duos will be performing a unique routine choreographed by Jeremy Blair, WMU dance faculty member. WMU’s Partners in Dance organization, the Department of Dance and the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs are hosting the event. They hope to raise $15,000 for scholarships for dance students, veterans, service members and family members of veterans. Three community judges will select the winners and attendees may vote for the People’s Choice winner by buying votes. The evening will also include dance entertainment, hors d’oeuvres, desserts and a cash bar. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., and the event begins at 8:15 p.m. The cost to attend is $85 per person, $50 of which is tax-deductible. To purchase tickets or for more information, contact the Department of Dance at (269) 387-5875.

Get ready... Get set... Register

wmich.edu/campusclassic

» Oct. 24 «
WMU key player in national flexible hybrid electronics initiative

The global market in flexible hybrid electronics, now at nearly $13 billion, is expected to top $77 billion by 2025, WMU experts say.

WMU engineering experts and a new University center will play a critical role in a recently developed $171 million manufacturing innovation initiative that has the backing of U.S. Department of Defense dollars and other financial investment.

The Flexible Hybrid Electronics Manufacturing Innovation Institute is the newest member of the Obama administration's Nationwide Network for Manufacturing Innovation—NNMI—which is intended to scale up advanced flexible hybrid electronic manufacturing technologies and processes. The institute will be centered in California, with Silicon Valley's public-private manufacturing consortium, FlexTech Alliance, leading the initiative.

WMU sensor and flexible printing experts are part of the FlexTech team.

The Department of Defense is providing FlexTech with $75 million, funding that will be matched by $96 million from nonfederal sources, including the City of San Jose, private companies, universities, several U.S. states and not-for-profit organizations.

Flexible hybrid electronics is an emerging technology that uses advanced flexible materials for circuits, communications, sensors and power, and combines them with thinned silicon chips “to ultimately produce the next generation of electronic products,” Defense Secretary Ash Carter said during a presentation in August announcing this new initiative.

He explained that after decades of doing things the other way around, industry will be able to shape electronics to platforms.

“By seamlessly printing lightweight, flexible structural integrity sensors right onto the surfaces of ships and aircraft, or folding them into cracks and crevices where rigid circuit boards and bulky wiring could never fit, we'll be able to have real-time damage reports—making the stuff of science fiction, in that sense, into reality,” Carter said.

In addition to defense, the institute's work is expected to benefit an array of markets, including automotive, communications, consumer electronics, medical devices, health care, transportation and logistics, and agriculture. While the institute will be headquartered in San Jose, existing nodes around the country already have in place the infrastructure ready to solve some of the known manufacturing challenges.

A WMU ‘FEAT’

WMU has been identified as a “thematic node,” one of four centers around the nation named in the NNMI proposal. The WMU entity is the Flexible Electronics Applications and Technology—FEAT—Center. Engineering professors and FEAT directors Drs. Massood Atashbar and Margaret Joyce helped write the winning proposal and serve as core subject matter experts.

“ ‘This is not a center for research, it's a center for manufacturing,” Joyce says. “The focus of the center will be to assist industry in the scale-up of their technologies and to identify new technology needs in the process.”

The national network will work together to extend technologies that meet the expressed needs of the military and can be transitioned to consumer markets.

Obtaining funding to launch an institute has been an extraordinarily competitive and multi-step, two-year process, the WMU team members say. The prospective winners in the process for this technology came down to FlexTech Alliance and Arizona State University.

Joyce says securing the funding meant building a case that the technology was ready, the infrastructure was in place and industry supported the idea of moving quickly into a manufacturing environment.

The WMU role in the initiative has already attracted the support of 10 companies and four other universities. As new projects are launched through the hub organization in Silicon Valley, WMU may also reach out to lead and partner with other members of the national network.
Classnotes

Send submissions to: teresa.ventimiglia@wmich.edu. Include your name (first, middle, last, maiden), degrees, years graduated and a daytime phone number by which we can reach you. We will publish photos as space permits.

1971-1986

Paulette Cushier, BS '71, has been appointed to the board of directors for Sky Foundation Inc. in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The foundation raises awareness and provides funding for the early detection of pancreatic cancer.

Linda Duevel, BA '72, MA '75, was honored with the International Superintendent of the Year Award by the Association for the Advancement of International Education. After 40 years of service to her school, Duevel recently retired as superintendent of the International School of Stavanger in Norway, a private English-language school for students in preschool through grade 12.

Steve M. Raymond, BS '72, has been appointed as the associate director of the Manresa Jesuit Retreat House in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Daniel M. Little, BS '74, MBA '76, is the author of "On the Edge of a Dream," his first novel. The book recounts a love story based on a real-life event, a family's experience with pancreatic cancer. Little is an attorney in San Diego County, California.

Michael Williams, MBA '78, is a member of the board of directors for the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, an organization serving eight counties in northeast Illinois. A retired IRS agent, Williams continues to serve the community through volunteering and ministering. He also is a WAAU alumni ambassador.

Roger Webster, BS '80, is the director of human resources consulting for Rehmann, a financial services firm with offices in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Florida.

Jeff Hollobaugh, BA '82, MA '84, has published another book, "How to Serve the Community Through Volunteering and Ministering." He also is a WMU alumni ambassador.

Joyce E. Hyde, BS '44, TC '48, MA '54, was honored with the International Freedom's Silver Service award. The nonprofit legal organization defends the right of people to freely live their faith. Hollobaugh, a former WMU alumnus and now a retired IRS agent, continues to serve the community through volunteering and ministering. He also is a WAAU alumni ambassador.

Ralph R. Kauffman, BBA '55, was honored with the International Freedom's Silver Service award. The nonprofit legal organization defends the right of people to freely live their faith. Hollobaugh, a former WMU alumnus and now a retired IRS agent, continues to serve the community through volunteering and ministering. He also is a WAAU alumni ambassador.

Karen Lynne (Eich) Fonkert, BS '91, PhD '12, has been promoted to associate professor of mathematics at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York. She received her PhD from the University of Michigan and has been a visiting scholar at the University of Cambridge, England.

Donald P. DeNault, BS '93, is the president of the Macomb County Bar Association. He has served in several roles, including president, executive director, and president of the Michigan State Bar Foundation. DeNault is a shareholder with O'Reilly Rancilio PC in Sterling, Heights, Michigan, focusing his practice on municipal law, school law and litigation.

Gerard (Gerry) LaFemina, MPA '93, received the Faculty Achievement Award from Frostburg State University in Maryland. LaFemina was honored for his scholarly works, including seven books of poetry, a novel and poetry collections. He is an associate professor of English.

Daniel Bloom, BBA '95, was promoted to accounts supervisor at Highline, a Michigan-based company providing design, engineering, testing and manufacturing of metal and plastic solutions worldwide.

Jeremy Sayles, BBA '96, was recently promoted to commercial operations director of Region America, a division of Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, based in Madison, New Jersey. Sayles is responsible for all commercial operations including marketing, sales, sales training and sales force development and support for the Region America business unit.

Samantha Ann Newell, BS '97, MA '01, was honored with an Outstanding People for Education Award from the School Board Association in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Newell is a math teacher at Philadelphia High School in the county.

Maggie Bullard-Marshall, BA '98, was the vice president of government affairs for Attainia, in Sacramento, California.

Jeffrey P. McGregor, BA '85, is a middle school teacher at Jay Stream Middle School in Carol Stream, Illinois.

Daniel P. Dalton, BS '86, was recognized with the Alliance Defending Freedom's Silver Service award. The nonprofit legal organization defends the right of people to freely live their faith. Dalton, a founder of Detroit-based Freedom's Silver Service, is also a shareholder with O'Reilly Rancilio PC in Sterling Heights, Michigan, focusing his practice on municipal law, school law and litigation.

Gleason

Jeffrey P. McGregor, BA '85, is a middle school teacher at Jay Stream Middle School in Carol Stream, Illinois.

Theodore Wank, BBA '53, Feb. 15, 2015, Lansing, MI
Eugene A. Bodnar, BS '54, Apr. 15, 2015, Muskegon, MI
Lola M. Haller, TC '54, May 16, 2015, Lake Odessa, MI
John J. Barry, BBA '54, May 24, 2015, Grand Rapids, MI
Ronald D. Anderson, BS '53, May 29, 2015, Kalamazoo, MI

Gleason and Fonkhart

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If Lesley Ware could speak with her "tweenage" self, her advice might be something like: Embrace your uniqueness, proudly display your inner fashionista and don’t feel obligated to bend to trend. It’s a message she was hesitant to express as a girl, but fully embodies today, inspiring and teaching the up-and-coming generation of fashion lovers.

Ware is the proprietor and chief educator at Creative Cookie, a boutique sewing studio in Brooklyn, New York, where she teaches sewing and design to young fashion enthusiasts. She also recently authored her first book, “Sew Fab,” a sewing and style guide geared to youth age 8 to 13.

“I just want girls to know it’s OK to wear what you want to wear and be who you want to be,” she says.

Ware’s work is almost as she envisioned it years ago as an elementary education major at WMU; it’s just that her classroom is a little unconventional.

“It brings together every experience I’ve had in a really neat package,” she says, dating back to when she was a 4 year old getting her first sewing lessons from her mother to her college years studying teaching to her early professional life working in youth-related programming at nonprofits.

A Muskegon, Michigan native, Ware has fond memories of moving to WMU in the 1990s, a transition that was scary for the first-generation college student but long anticipated.

“Growing up in a small town in Michigan was kind of hard. I always felt different. .. I just never felt comfortable being myself,” she says.

High school being a realm where a quirky style and uniqueness can be woefully underappreciated, Ware remembers thinking, ‘I can’t wait to get out of high school. In college, you get to be yourself.’ and that’s Just what happened.

“I came to the campus and it was, of course, gorgeous and had really awesome support services for students. I felt instantly comfortable and at home.”

In 2001, she completed the elementary education program on a full academic scholarship and then earned a master’s degree in public administration as a Thurgood Marshall fellow, also at WMU. For the decade that followed, she worked in the nonprofit sector for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Forbes Funds, and most recently the Girl Scouts in New York.

Relocating to the Big Apple in 2006 turned out to be more momentous than she had imagined. The Girl Scouts’ national office happens to be in Manhattan on the edge of the garment district. And at that time, New York Fashion Week was in Bryant Park, a four-minute walk from her job.
More than just geographically, Ware found herself in one of the fashion capitals of the world, an environment that intensified a lifelong love for clothing design.

"I was so inspired and almost overwhelmed on a daily basis," Ware says. She eventually moved from fashion industry fan to moonlighting at something more formal, starting a fashion blog called Creative Cookie. Through connections, one of her big breaks as a blogger came with an invitation to Fashion Week.

"I kind of networked my way in," she says. "I learned the ropes enough to get invited. The next year, I got press credentials."

After almost three years blogging, Ware took the plunge and turned her pastime into a full-time business venture. Today, she teaches sewing and clothing design at Creative Cookie studio and also at a charter school in the Bronx, where she incorporates math, writing and fashion history lessons for her students.

But don't envision that section on sewing you had in "home ec" class in which everyone learned to assemble an animal-shaped pillow.

"I don't like a cookie-cutter approach to fashion," Ware explains. "In my classes, I have the girls do what they want to do once they learn the basics."

While one of her current pupils at Creative Cookie is making dresses for special occasions, another is designing a line of clothes. She's also guiding a girl who is making pillows and a comforter for her bedroom.

"Everyone is doing something different. It speaks more to an individual style, and it's more exciting for the girls to do something that's them," she says.

In 2012, Ware again let her creative inclinations lead to an exciting new venture. After searching for reference materials that would teach sewing to tweens and coming up empty-handed at local bookstores, she decided to write something of her own.

In February, "Sew Fab" was published by Laurence King of London, and released in the United States and the United Kingdom.

In addition to sewing projects with step-by-step instructions, the book offers tips from the practical to the inspirational, such as, "Pins keep your fabric from moving when you sew" and "The most important fashion accessory is being yourself and feeling confident."

Ware's goal now is to write a book a year, and she looks forward to the release of her second Laurence King title, the forthcoming "Style File."

"I hope that by inspiring the next generation, fashion will have a more exciting future. I just want girls to feel good about themselves," she says.

To learn more about "Sew Fab" and Ware, visit her blogs at thecreativecookie.com and lesleyware.com.
WMU has become just the fifth U.S. organization to be accredited for landscape management and operations under a new, sustainability-oriented program of the Professional Grounds Management Society. The program evaluates grounds management principles and practices that guide and produce attractive, healthy, sustainable, and high-quality properties. WMU received a four-star Landscape Management and Operations Accreditation, the highest possible level of accreditation.