STUDENT EARN NATIONAL AND STATE AWARDS

Justine Morneau, a master's degree candidate in the College of Education and Human Development at Western Michigan University, is one of only 12 graduate students from across the country to receive a 2018 NIRSA-William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Award.

Morneau, a graduate assistant for facilities in WMU’s University Recreation department from Bad Axe, was presented the award by the NIRSA: School of Collegiate Recreation organization during its annual conference in Denver.

Morneau is enrolled in WMU’s master's program in educational leadership, with a concentration in higher education and student affairs leadership, and expects to graduate in April. She also received the 2017 Robert W. England-MIRSA Outstanding Student Award in November from the Michigan Intramural Recreational Sports Association.

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Editors: Nicole Leffler, Tyler Sonnenberg-Ward
wmich.edu/education
Student earns awards from national, state recreational sports groups

contact: Jeanne Baron
March 1, 2018 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A master's degree candidate at Western Michigan University is one of only 12 graduate students from across the country to receive a 2018 NIRSA-William N. Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Award.

Justine Morneau, a graduate assistant for facilities in WMU’s University Recreation department from Bad Axe, will be presented with the honor Sunday, March 4, by the NIRSA: School of Collegiate Recreation organization during its annual conference in Denver.

Morneau is enrolled in WMU’s master's program in educational leadership, with a concentration in higher education and student affairs leadership, and expects to graduate in April. She also received the 2017 Robert W. England-MIRSA Outstanding Student Award in November from the Michigan Intramural Recreational Sports Association.

"Although I view these awards as me just following my passion and doing what I love, I am honored and humbled by the recognition," she says. "It warms my heart to know others appreciate my hard work and dedication to making a positive impact on the places I work and the people I interact with."

About the awards

The Wasson Student Leadership & Academic Awards recognize outstanding students who are actively involved with the recreational sports unit on their university or college campus. The award goes to exceptional undergraduate and graduate students who set the standard on campuses through their participation or employment in recreational sports. This year, 22 undergraduate and graduate students from NIRSA's seven regions earned the award. Along with Morneau, just four were selected from Region III, which encompasses Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.

The Robert W. England-MIRSA Outstanding Student Award is presented annually to the student who demonstrates outstanding leadership and service in MIRSA and to recreational sports in Michigan. The award goes to a student who has shown dedication to pursuing a career in campus recreation as well as making a commitment to MIRSA.

Morneau

Morneau intends to pursue a career in collegiate recreation, and she earned her educational leadership program concentration's 2017 Outstanding 1st-Year Student Award in the area of diversity and inclusion.

As WMU's graduate assistant for facilities, she assists in overseeing the Student Recreation Center and its facilities-related student employees. Morneau says interacting with those workers and helping them to develop their professional skills are some of her favorite aspects of the job.

She, too, takes opportunities to get out of her comfort zone and advance her skill set. As an example, she became an instructor for F45, a new fitness program the Student Recreation Center introduced last fall.
In addition, Morneau served as a student coordinator in 2017 for the annual NIRSA Region III Student Lead On, a student-led, student-run conference for students and professionals in collegiate recreation that is aimed at fostering opportunities for leadership, teamwork, networking and professional development. In that role, she planned, organized and executed the event, which is NIRSA’s second largest conference.

Moreau reports that she made the decision to pursue collegiate recreation as a career after attending her first Lead On five years ago.

"I enjoy being able to give back to the association that helped me find my path in life. I want to thank those people who have mentored me thus far and shared their insights," she says. "I also want to thank my academic cohort, and the advisors and faculty members in the Department of Educational Leadership, Research and Technology for their unconditional support, both educationally and on a personal level."

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Veteran educator, prolific researcher named ACE Fellow

contact: Jeanne Baron
April 4, 2018 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Dr. Andrea Beach, Western Michigan University professor of educational leadership, research and technology, has been named a fellow of the American Council on Education for the 2018-19 academic year.

The prestigious ACE Fellows Program strengthens institutions and leadership in American higher education by identifying and preparing faculty and staff for senior positions in college and university administration. In that way, it serves as a powerful engine fueling the expansion of a talented and diverse higher education leadership pipeline.

Although details about her fellowship assignment have yet to be announced out, Beach will join just 44 other fellows who were selected following nomination by the senior administration of their institutions and a rigorous application process to spend 2018-19 working at another college or university.

"I follow in the footsteps of WMU colleagues I deeply respect," Beach says of the University's previous fellows, "and I look forward to this opportunity to help WMU grow as much as I do personally."

ACE Fellows program

The ACE Fellows Program combines retreats, interactive learning opportunities, visits to campuses and other higher education-related organizations, and placement at another higher education institution to condense years of on-the-job experience and skills development into a single year.

During the placement, fellows observe and work with the president and other senior officers at their host institution, attend decision-making meetings, and focus on issues of interest. They also conduct projects of pressing concern for their home institution and seek to implement their findings upon completion of the fellowship placement.

More than 2,000 higher education leaders have participated in the ACE Fellows Program over the past five decades, with more than 80 percent of fellows having gone on to serve as senior leaders of colleges and universities.
Beach

Beach, who joined WMU’s faculty in 2003, is co-director of the Center for Research on Instructional Change in Postsecondary Education, which she co-founded in 2014. In addition, she founded the Office of Faculty Development and was its director from 2008 to 2015.

Her research centers on organizational change in higher education, support of innovation in teaching and learning, faculty learning communities, and faculty development as a change lever. She has been the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on several NSF-funded grants.

Beach has been PI and co-PI on several NSF-funded grants focused on instructional change strategies that have produced articles and book chapters, as well as instruments to self-report instruction and academic department climate for instructional improvement.

As co-director of the Center for Research on Instructional Change in Postsecondary Education, she helps lead an organization that has a portfolio of projects totaling $6.7 million. Beach serves as co-principal investigator for development of the Accelerating Systemic Change Network, a national network funded by the NSF and also directs a $3.2 million project funded by the U.S. Department of Education's First in the World program. That program seeks to undertake, document and measure outcomes of institutional transformation aimed at improving the persistence and academic success of students from low-income backgrounds.

Beach earned bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Michigan State University.

American Council on Education

ACE, which is celebrating its centennial this year, is the major coordinating body for all of the nation's higher education institutions and represents nearly 1,800 college and university presidents and related associations. It provides leadership on key higher education issues and influences public policy through advocacy.

Educational Rockstar

Posted on Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Neal Cronkite (B.S. ’06, Elementary Education) will do just about anything to cut through the mental clutter and connect with his fifth-grade math and science students at Michigan's Washington Woods Middle School. Whether it's adopting a scientist persona, employing a high-technology smart board in his class or even strumming tunes on his guitar, Cronkite is willing to do whatever it takes to rock his students' world.

But it was Cronkite who was looking fully engaged this morning at a surprise school assembly as State Chief Deputy Superintendent of Education Sheila Alles and Milken Family Foundation Senior Program Administrator Greg Gallagher named him as the newest recipient of a Milken Educator Award. The national recognition comes with an unrestricted $25,000 cash prize. Cronkite is the only Milken Educator Award winner from Michigan this year, and is among the 44 honorees for 2017-18.
The Milken Educator Awards, hailed by Teacher magazine as the "Oscars of Teaching" has been opening minds and shaping futures for 30 years. Research shows teacher quality is the driving in-school factor behind student growth and achievement. The initiative not only aims to reward great teachers, but to celebrate, elevate and activate those innovators in the classroom who are guiding America’s next generation of leaders. Milken Educators believe, "The future belongs to the educated."

A STEM education aficionado who's a regular at technology conferences, Cronkite not only incorporates what he learns into his lessons but also shares the insights he gleans and classroom tech tips with his colleagues. Cronkite is equally engaged with non-technology aspects of learning, promoting empathy, teamwork, leadership and other life skills both within the classroom and beyond. When he's not soliciting critiques from administrators to improve his own teaching chops, he's leading extracurricular activities like the Stampede Running Club or working with the school district's teacher leadership teams.

Simmons to Lead Service Year Alliance

 Posted on Tuesday, February 6, 2018

On Monday, February 5, 2018, Dr. Robert Simmons III (B.S. ’97, Elementary Education) joined Service Year Alliance as the organization’s new President. Simmons comes to Service Year Alliance from his previous role as Vice President of Strategy & Innovation for the Campaign for Black Male Achievement.

As a nationally recognized scholar on issues of diversity and equity in higher education and K-12, Simmons has served as an award winning STEM teacher in Detroit, a tenured professor of education and African & African American Studies at Loyola University Maryland, and the Director of the Center for Innovation in Urban Education. Additionally, Simmons has spoken across the country and authored over 40 publications.

“My long-standing commitment to service stems from my parents attending Spelman and Morehouse colleges, my mother working in the public library system in Detroit for over 20 years, and the challenges and mental incarceration I faced during my father’s life in and out of prison. This dedication to service, combined with my devotion to increasing opportunity for young people — both in and out of the classroom — has been the focus of my career for decades. I am eager to continue this important work at Service Year Alliance where, together with the service year sector, we can empower the next generation of young Americans to come together in service to our communities and country,” said Robert Simmons III, President of Service Year Alliance.

“With deep cultural differences currently threatening to divide us, the need for a bold solution is urgent. Fortunately, a service year can bind diverse young Americans together in common purpose. I look forward to continuing to explore the transformational impact that service year experiences have on young people and our society in my new role.”

As President, Dr. Simmons will spearhead fundraising, business development, and public relations efforts at Service Year Alliance, while also bringing his passion and expertise in youth empowerment, race, and equity to the service year field.