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May 2018 archived news items

WMU geology efforts lead to national recognition, two publications

CONTACT: CHERYL ROLAND
MAY 15, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Kehew

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—The Geological Society of America has recognized two strands of Western Michigan University geologic research with the publication of two rare special papers—each focused on an area of WMU faculty expertise.

The unusual publications are among just over 500 such publications in the GSA's 130-year history. Both WMU-related volumes were published in April, making the recognition even more unusual. The two publications each contain multiple papers or "chapters" focused on a single topic. They are:

- "Quaternary Glaciation of the Great Lakes Region," co-edited by **Dr. Alan Kehew**, WMU professor of geological and environmental sciences, and **B. Brandon Curry** of the Illinois State Geological Survey at the University of Illinois. The work focuses on new developments

in glacial geology over the past century, with three of the 12 papers written by WMU authors. The volume was published **April 3**.

- "Paleozoic Stratigraphy and Resources of the Michigan Basin," co-edited by **Drs. G. Michael Grammer, William B. Harrison III** and **David A. Barnes**. Harrison and Barnes are WMU professors emeritus, and Grammer is a former WMU faculty member who is now at Oklahoma State University. The volume explores the significant role the Michigan Basin has played in understanding the geologic process as well as outlines the distribution of natural resources in the basin. The volume was published by GSA **April 25**.



Barnes

Kehew says the publication of a single special paper by GSA is considered a major accolade for both a researcher and his or her department. The fact that two from the same department have been published at the same time is extraordinary. Such GSA publication begins with an invitation from an associate editor at the society to submit a proposal on a topic.

For the Great Lakes volume, Kehew says, that invitation followed a 2015 symposium in Wisconsin that was held to mark the 100th anniversary of a famous U.S. Geological Survey monograph on the glacial geology of the Great Lakes. Following the 2015 symposium, Kehew and his co-editor were asked to compile a volume on the discovery that has taken place since that original publication.

The result is a publication with three of the 12 chapters focusing on work done at WMU. The remaining nine chapters came from colleagues elsewhere in Michigan and from Wisconsin, Illinois, New York and Ohio. The triggering symposium, Kehew notes, was sponsored by the Great Lakes Geologic Mapping Coalition, which is made up of the geological surveys in each of the states. Since 2011, WMU has been home to the Michigan Geological Survey.

Harrison, one of the editors on the Michigan Basin volume, says for his group, the request was to compile a volume that focused on discovery that grew out of WMU's research done through the Michigan Basin Core Research Laboratory on campus that catalogs the state's geology through its extensive collection of cores from the drilling of water, oil and gas wells. Harrison directs that facility.



Harrison

The invitation led them to propose a work based primarily on research by WMU graduate students over the past decade for which the three editors were also co-authors. Of the volume's 15 topics, or chapters, all but two grew out of work at WMU.

For the editors of both volumes, the task required them to arrange for peer reviewers to review each chapter before submitting them to the GSA for additional review and suggestions. The entire process was three years long for the Great Lakes volume and two for the Michigan Basin publication.

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The Geological Society of America is a global professional society with a growing membership of more than 26,000 individuals in 115 countries. GSA provides access to elements that are essential to the professional growth of earth scientists at all levels of expertise and from all sectors: academic, government, business and industry. The society unites thousands of earth scientists from every corner of the globe in a common purpose to study the mysteries of the planet and beyond and to share scientific findings.

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Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa awarded National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology

Contact: [Diana Hearit](#)

May 21, 2018

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa, instructor of the biological sciences department, was recently awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology for her project “The role of neurogenesis in the functional recovery and morphological remodeling of the zebrafish olfactory bulb following lesion”. Calvo-Ochoa will work under the mentorship of [Dr. Christine Byrd-Jacobs](#), professor of the biological sciences department.

Calvo-Ochoa’s research will focus on studying mechanisms of adult brain regeneration, repair and recovery of function following injury in zebrafish, an animal with an extraordinary regenerative potential. This research has implications for improving human health since it could lead to transformative strategies to stimulate neuronal regeneration and integration into damaged brain areas. These strategies could aid to achieve complete repair and recovery in injured human brains after stroke and traumatic brain injury.

The two-year fellowship will support Calvo-Ochoa’s proposed research plan as well as outreach and mentoring activities aimed to actively recruit and engage young Latino students in biology. These activities will assist in the recognition, fostering and advancement of promising Latino scientists that might otherwise be overlooked due to cultural and language barriers, thus broadening their participation in biology and enhancing diversity in STEM.

New proposal submissions policy expected to benefit campus researchers

CONTACT: JEANNE BARON
MAY 31, 2018 | WMU NEWS



KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A new policy has been established to help ensure that principal investigators at Western Michigan University have sufficient time to obtain the support needed to guarantee that all required documents are compliant with sponsor requirements.

The Proposal Submission Policy for External Funding and its procedures lay out a specific timeline for when major elements of a proposal must be completed and provided to the Office of the Vice President for Research. The process aims to limit the number of potential problems that could be encountered if principal investigators leave too little time for themselves or the research office to complete their respective responsibilities.

The proposal submission policy will go into effect July 1, but implementation will be enforced in two stages. During the initial phase—the **July 1 to Aug. 31 transition period**—the research office will be expecting principal investigators to learn about the new standards and follow them as closely as possible. **Full enforcement will begin Sept. 1.**

NEED FOR POLICY

"We want to make sure researchers across campus have time to adjust to the new timeline required by OVPR. Therefore, there will be a transition period before the policy goes into full effect starting Sept. 1," says **Sherine Obare**, associate vice president for research.

"We expect that this process will minimize delays often encountered during the submission process and allow researchers time to prepare the best proposals for the sponsor, while giving OVPR sufficient time to assist researchers with the necessary documents, including budgets, access to agency electronic systems, letters of support and approval for required cost share."

Obare reports that many other universities have well-established proposal submission policies and says her office worked with the WMU Faculty Senate Research Policies Council to develop WMU's. The council approved the new policy's process at its Feb. 8 meeting.

Proposal preparation and submissions can be delayed for a variety of reasons, so it is important that faculty and staff have sufficient time for themselves as well as the research office. When sufficient time is available for proposal preparation, the process allows the researchers to have all the required documents submitted accurately.

"These new deadlines are not only best practice," says **Terri Goss Kinzy**, vice president for research. "They'll allow faculty to focus on conveying their ideas, while our team focuses on making sure proposals get the chance to be awarded."

Read more about the [proposal submission policy](#). Direct questions to the appropriate [program research officer](#).

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