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Connections 02/2019

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Connections

A monthly newsletter from the College of Health and Human Services



2019 Diversity and Inclusion Conference

On Friday, February 22, the CHHS Committee for Diversity and Inclusion hosted its biannual Diversity and Inclusion Conference. The event drew more than 120 students, faculty and community members to the college for a full day of information sessions, presentations and fellowship.



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“My humanity is bound up in yours, for
we can only be human together.”

Desmond Tutu

Public health organization awarded for service, research

WMU's Gamma Mu Chapter of Eta Sigma Gamma was awarded the Chapter Excellence Award, the highest award a local chapter can receive. It recognizes a year of chapter achievement in service and education. Gamma Mu is one of six chapters nationwide to earn this distinctive award.



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Volunteer for the 2019 Day of Caring

The **2019 Day of Caring** volunteer event is right around the corner. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in a college-wide volunteer opportunity at Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center from 1 to 4:30 p.m. on **Friday, March 29**. Join us for a rewarding afternoon of outreach, service, community and engagement.



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Dr. Mark Nepo at the 2019 Burian Lecture

On Thursday, March 21, poet, author and storyteller, **Dr. Mark Nepo** delivered the 2019 Burian lecture. Part of the **Truth** series of lectures from WMU's Center for the Humanities, Nepo's lecture focused on his most recent book, *More Together Than Alone*, and incorporated readings and stories from several of his previous publications.



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In other news:

- [Renowned Evaluation Center at WMU receives \\$4.9 million NSF grant](#)
- [Dunbar Hall to be transformed in \\$40 million renovation project](#)
- [University welcomes two explosive-detection K-9s to police force](#)

CHHS in social media:

Interested in leading an amazing team of faculty, staff and students in their quest to make the world a better place? Check out our [director job posting](#)!



From the [School of Social Work](#) via [Facebook](#)

(269) 387-7367
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2019 Diversity and Inclusion Conference



Dr. Betty Dennis and Dr. Mark Nepo in the opening session of the conference

On Friday, February 22, the [CHHS Committee for Diversity and Inclusion](#) hosted its biannual [Diversity and Inclusion Conference](#). The theme for this year's conference was **Health Care: The Power of a Community Who Cares**. The event drew more than 120 students, faculty and community members to the college for a full day of information sessions, presentations and fellowship.

The keynote session was a conversation between **Dr. Betty Dennis**, chair of the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion, and **Dr. Mark Nepo**, a poet and author who delivered the 2019 Burian Lecture the evening before.



Students presenting posters at lunch

"I saw Dr. Nepo's talk last night. Much of what he spoke about was so relevant to what we do in our work and in our communities," said Dr. Dennis. "I was very pleased to have him extend his time on campus with us here today, and I think he was very well-received by this group."

Morning sessions included the topics of suicide prevention, integrating OT into community health, and becoming more trauma informed.

Before lunch was served, students and faculty briefly presented posters, which were on display throughout the room. Attendees were encouraged to visit the posters and engage with presenters throughout the time allotted for lunch.



Attendees during the opening session

Afternoon session topics included health care for refugees, a documentary about Pingalwara, advance care planning for marginalized populations, and size-inclusive health practice.

Dr. Cheryl Dickson, associate dean at the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, gave the closing session, which was focused on racial disparities in sleep-related infant deaths.

The Committee for Diversity and Inclusion offers its gratitude to the [Redman Agency](#) in Kalamazoo, which graciously sponsored the event once again this year. They provided breakfast for attendees and also raffled off a tablet during the lunch break.

Public health organization awarded for service, research

The Gamma Mu Chapter of Eta Sigma Gamma, the national public health education honorary, was awarded the Chapter Excellence Award by the national Eta Sigma Gamma office. The award is the highest award a local chapter can receive, and it recognizes a year of chapter achievement in service and education. Gamma Mu is one of six chapters nationwide to earn this distinctive award.

The organization spends significant time hosting and planning service-related events in the community and on campus. These events offer members, WMU students and community members access to new ways to get involved.



Kaleigh Storey

Eta Sigma Gamma president, **Kaleigh Storey**, reflected on the advancements of the organization in education and service activities.

“Our chapter compared to other chapters of Eta Sigma Gamma is relatively small, but we have made it our mission not to let our size affect how much we do as an organization,” Storey said. “It is nice to see that our hard work is not going unrecognized and we are having our chapter’s work noticed by the national organization of Eta Sigma Gamma.”

The Gamma Mu Chapter also received the Research Activity Award for research WMUs chapter conducted in regard to food deserts surrounding universities.

“The goal of this research was to investigate the extent of food deserts surrounding universities and what factors might correlate with students living in a food desert and demographic student data,” Storey said. “We analyzed 18 universities across the nation and found census tracts surrounding universities with high student populations have high likelihood of being food deserts.”

The Gamma Mu Chapter was also notified of a \$132, 557 Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Grant awarded to WMU from the State of Michigan. The grant will focus on developing and implementing new sexual assault prevention strategies. #UHaveAVoice, a social media-based approach to providing sexual assault prevention messages was developed under the guidance of **Dr. Robert Bensley**, professor and co-coordinator of WMU’s public health programs.

WMU's public health program, the public health education honorary, and the WMU Office of Health Education and Promotion will work alongside Eta Sigma Gamma to introduce the new campaign.

"Eta Sigma Gamma will assist in conducting focus group assessment, developing and pilot testing social media messages, and gathering evaluation data," Storey said. "It is a great example of combining an academic program, student organization and student affairs in addressing a public health problem on WMU's campus."

Volunteer for the 2019 Day of Caring at Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center



Horses running on the property at Cheff Center

The **2019 Day of Caring Volunteer Event** is right around the corner.

Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in a college-wide volunteer opportunity at **Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center** from 1 to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, March 29. Join us for a rewarding afternoon of outreach, service, community and engagement.

Volunteer by March 15! Sign up below.

Opened in 1969 as the first therapeutic riding center built especially for the purpose of serving those with special needs in North America, the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center strives to focus on what individuals can accomplish, not on what they cannot. Today, the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center serves riders of all ages who have physical, emotional or cognitive disabilities. Learn more at cheffcenter.org.

Volunteer information:

First Name *

Last name *

Email *

Phone

Submit

Volunteers should dress in jeans, WMU shirts, and comfy close toed shoes, tennis shoes or boots. Feel free to bring sweatshirts, coats, gloves and hats as needed. We will be working on some painting projects, as well as some light outdoor clean-up to prepare for the coming season.



With regards to transportation, please consider carpooling.
(The Cheff Center is located at [8450 N 43rd St, Augusta, Michigan](#).) The college will provide snacks and bottled water for volunteers.

For more information, contact **Kate Reeber** in the [CHHS Office of Student Engagement and Success](#) at katherine.a.reeber@wmich.edu or by phone at (269) 387-8468.

Dr. Mark Nepo at the 2019 Burian Lecture



2019 Burian Lecturer Dr. Mark Nepo

On Thursday, March 21, poet, author and storyteller, **Dr. Mark Nepo** delivered the [2019 Burian Lecture](#), part of a series of lectures, given annually, that focus on community and educational issues in the health and human services from a problem-solving perspective.

The lecture was part of the Truth series from the Western Michigan University [Center for the Humanities](#). This was the second year that the college has worked with the Center for Humanities to host the lecture. The arrangement is mutually beneficial, allowing the college to support the ongoing series on campus, while encouraging our own faculty, staff and students to attend the event on main campus.

Dr. Nepo was introduced by **Dr. Katherine Joslin**, founding director of the University Center for the Humanities, and **Dr. Ron Cisler**, dean of the College of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Nepo's talk focused on personal, community and global connections and drew from passages in his most recent book, *More Together Than Alone*. He incorporated a number stories and readings from several of his previous books. Comments and questions from attendees also contributed to the conversation.



Mark Nepo reads from his latest book

About Mark Nepo

Mark Nepo moved and inspired readers and seekers all over the world with his #1 New York Times bestseller *The Book of Awakening*. Beloved as a poet, teacher, and storyteller, Mark has been called “one of the finest spiritual guides of our time,” “a consummate storyteller,” and “an eloquent spiritual teacher.” His work is widely accessible and used by many and his books have been translated into more than 20 languages. A bestselling author, he has published 20 books and recorded 14 audio projects. Visit Mark at MarkNepo.com.

About the Burian Lectures

Dr. Bill Burian, founding dean of WMU's College of Health and Human Services, believed in a global health and human services community. To honor his legacy, WMU and CHHS established the **Burian University-Community Lecture Series** in 1989. The lectures are focused on community and educational issues in the health and human services from a problem-solving perspective. They bring together students, faculty, community professionals and service providers, and the citizens of southwest Michigan to interact with leaders of national stature. More information at wmich.edu/hhs/about/lectures.

Renowned Evaluation Center at WMU receives \$4.9 million NSF grant

CONTACT: DIANA BERKSHIRE HEARIT
FEBRUARY 13, 2019 | WMU NEWS



Dr. Lori Wingate

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University's Evaluation Center has received a five-year, \$4.9 million grant from the National Science Foundation to extend and expand its work to support evaluation within the NSF's Advanced Technological Education program.

The University's renowned Evaluation Center is tapped by nonprofit organizations, state and federal agencies, and colleges and universities around the country to conduct program evaluation as well as training.

The center's latest major grant extends its years-long relationship with ATE, a program designed to improve technician education—primarily at colleges that grant associate degrees—in such high-tech areas as advanced manufacturing, nanotechnology and biotechnology.

DEVELOPING EVALUATION CAPACITY

Since 2008, WMU's evaluation experts have been providing evaluation education and technical support through EvaluATE, a project dedicated to developing evaluation capacity within the ATE program.

EvaluATE is currently led by three WMU researchers: principal investigator **Dr. Lori Wingate**, director of research at the Evaluation Center; co-principal investigator **Dr. Arlen Gullickson**, professor emeritus of counselor education and counseling psychology; and co-principal investigator **Emma Perk**, project manager.

With the new grant, two new co-principal investigators are coming on board—**Dr. Michael Harnar**, assistant professor of interdisciplinary evaluation at WMU, and **Dr. Ayesha Boyce**, assistant professor of educational research methodology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

"A really important part of what we do at EvaluATE is to educate the project leaders about evaluation—why evaluation is needed, how to find and work with an external evaluator, and what to do with the results," says Wingate. "To our knowledge, this is the largest single grant NSF has made to support evaluation capacity development."

The expanded initiative will make EvaluATE the "evaluation learning and research hub" for the NSF's ATE program.

It will include evaluation education through webinars, workshops, resource materials and technical assistance; the development and facilitation of a network of ATE evaluators and evaluation users; and a program of research on evaluation within the ATE program.

Learn more about EvaluATE [online](#) by visiting the Evaluation Center website and clicking Projects.

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

Dunbar Hall to be transformed in \$40 million renovation project

CONTACT: PAULA M. DAVIS

FEBRUARY 13, 2019 | WMU NEWS



Dunbar Hall

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Dunbar Hall, one of Western Michigan University's most heavily used classroom buildings and home to more than a dozen academic programs, will undergo \$40 million in renovations, funded in large part through state capital outlay dollars.

Some \$30 million from the state of Michigan and \$10 million in funding raised by the University, including through philanthropic support, will pay for the renovation.

Former state **Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker**, before her term ended in 2018, led the effort to secure this outlay funding to extensively modernize Dunbar Hall.

"We celebrate this major project funding finally coming to fruition and thank Tonya Schuitmaker and all the members of our local legislative delegation who helped make the case for the need," says WMU **President Edward Montgomery**.

The project is set to begin in spring 2020, and University officials expect it to be completed in time for fall classes in 2022.

INTERNAL RENOVATIONS SLATED

The overhaul of the nearly 50-year-old, 78,000-square-foot building in the academic core of campus includes completely reconfigured classroom layouts, additional student workspaces and major technology upgrades to bring teaching and learning spaces up to the latest standards.

"The building's interior and systems are well beyond their normal lifespan," says **David Dakin**, WMU's director of campus planning, space management and capital projects.



The renovation also includes all new electrical, mechanical, heating and cooling, fire suppression, and alarm systems.

Dunbar Hall is home base for the College of Arts and Sciences and is used by many other WMU units. The second most-utilized teaching facility on campus, in the 2018-19 academic year alone, the building will have hosted a total of 605 course sections and more than 17,000 students.

"Without a doubt, we will benefit from having modern technology in classrooms that will allow our faculty to use innovative, active learning strategies that are difficult to implement in small classrooms designed in the late 1960's," says **Dr. Carla Koretsky**, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

In addition to academic programs, classrooms and computer labs, the building also houses WMU's media services department, production studios for broadcasting and other University programs.

When the newly modernized facility comes online in 2022, it will be energy efficient, designed for sustainability and renovated with the intent to achieve LEED gold certification, Dakin says.

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University welcomes two explosive-detection K-9s to police force

CONTACT: DEANNE PUCA
FEBRUARY 7, 2019 | WMU NEWS

Video of -ITLl7FZG6E

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Two rookies have joined Western Michigan University's Department of Public Safety.

K-9 Brax and K-9 Oso, both less than two-year-old male German shepherds, are Kalamazoo County's first and only explosion-detection canines. The dogs and their handlers, WMU officers **Travis Cable** and **Michael Lininger**, trained for three months at a facility in Taylor, Michigan, and received dual certification for both explosive detection and patrol in mid-January.

"It has been a lot of work for the officers, but I think that they both would agree that it is a labor of love," says WMU Public Safety **Chief Scott Merlo**, adding that bringing a K-9 program to WMU has been his goal since he started at the University four years ago.

The dogs also will be available to other agencies in Kalamazoo County.

"There is always an unfortunate need for explosive-detection K-9s," he says. "Most athletic events, especially football games, utilize a bomb-detection team to sweep stadiums prior to events, and there have been requests the last few years for this service."

Law enforcement agencies in Kalamazoo County and the surrounding areas already work closely together. The explosive-detection K-9 unit is "another tool in our arsenal," says Merlo. "We wouldn't be successful without the assistance of each other."

Besides explosive detection, the dual-purpose dogs will be used on patrol.

"Our goal is that the dogs will be used to enhance our community policing efforts, and the students will come to accept and love the dogs. We want our community to feel comfortable around the dogs, and we encourage them to interact with the officers," Merlo says.



Officer Michael Lininger, left, introduces Brax to WMU President Edward Montgomery.

The dogs live with the officers in their homes, travel with them to work and train several days a week—K-9 Oso with Officer Cable and K-9 Brax with Officer Lininger.

They have one day a week "to relax and be a normal pup a little bit and not so regimented," says Cable. "But, at same time, his training is his play, (he) loves it. And he loves meeting new people and getting out around campus."

The dogs work as a team with the officers.

"We end up relying on each other when we are working. One example of that is bomb-detection work. Obviously, I can't smell what he can smell," Lininger says, adding that when Brax detects the odors of explosive chemicals, "his breathing changes, his whole body language changes. And I'm able to read that."

The canine rookies can be spotted with the officers as they ride in a marked police Chevrolet Tahoe that has "K-9" written on the sides and also will accompany the officers on walks so students can meet them.

The officers request that people ask if they can interact with the dogs before they approach them, though.

"It's always nice to ask first. We're definitely going to be a big part of the community, and we love to meet people... But maybe we are in the middle of working, and it's not a good time," Cable says.

More likely than not, if you ask, the handlers will allow people to approach the dogs.

"Petting is OK, and if there's something I would be concerned as a handler, I'd let you know ahead of time, especially with little children," Cable says. "Most of (the dogs') focus is going to be on the community policing aspect and trying to give a route to feel comfortable talking to police officers."

"Most people are fascinated by dogs," adds Merlo. "We want our WMU community to adopt these dogs, to approach these dogs, and to come to love them and respect them as we do."

The energetic animals were introduced to WMU **President Edward Montgomery** during their official start of duty last month.

"They were fantastic dogs. I really liked the chance to be able to interact with them. They had great dispositions," Montgomery says.

He notes that comfort animals have shown to have amazing psychological effects on people and make them feel relaxed and less tense.

"Having a dog with a police officer makes them more approachable. I think that's one of the benefits," adds Montgomery. "These dogs will certainly do that."

Merlo added that WMU does not plan to add additional K-9s at this time.

For more information, contact Chief Merlo at scott.merlo@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5573.

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