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WMU ScholarWorks Citation

College of Arts and Sciences, "College of Arts and Sciences: Summer 2017" (2017). *College of Arts and Sciences news*. 56.

https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cas_news/56

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 Summer 2017



ARTS AND SCIENCES

The College of Arts and Sciences has reinstated an updated major and minor in African American and African Studies for fall 2017.

[STORY](#)



FACULTY

Dr. Joseph Stoltman, professor of geography, has won two prestigious national awards, recognizing him as being among the best and brightest in geography education.

[STORY](#)



ALUMNI

Carrie Collins-Fadell (M.P.A., '04) was recently tapped to serve on the United States Brain Injury Alliance Board.

[STORY](#)



STUDENTS

A team of WMU journalism students led by Professor Sue Ellen Christian penned a recent issue of West Michigan's Encore Magazine.

[STORY](#)



WMU reinstates African American and African Studies major and minor

Western Michigan University has announced plans to **reinstate an updated major and minor this fall** that emphasize the historical and contemporary cultures and experiences of African Americans, Africans and people from the African diaspora.

Housed in the College of Arts and Sciences, the reestablished undergraduate programs stem from WMU's Africana Studies program. The highly anticipated major and minor will allow students to choose a concentration in either [African American Studies or African Studies](#), or a combination of the two.

"We are delighted to open enrollment for these two deeply relevant and very important programs," says Dr. Carla Koretsky, College of Arts and Sciences dean. "The AAAS major and minor will provide our students with a greater understanding of the history, cultures and current issues pertaining to peoples of African ancestry. Students will gain essential preparation for civic leadership, professional roles in the public and private sectors, graduate school and other opportunities for employment and service."

AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AFRICAN STUDIES



As part of an intentional community of scholars, students will have the opportunity to engage in critical study of the black diasporic cultural traditions, conditions, race and ethnic relations in Africa, the Caribbean basin, and especially North America. Studies will focus on the essential, organic role black people and their cultures have played in shaping the societies in which they live.

The updated curricula will offer students opportunities for internships, study abroad and independent study of special topics. Students will gain competency in critical thinking and analysis, as well as oral and written communication linked to rigorous historical and contemporary content knowledge regarding the social, economic and political processes that peoples of African descent have faced and continue to face.

Collaboration with the community remains a key element of the programs, which will also support local events and activities to deepen and enliven knowledge of the experiences and cultures of peoples of African descent.

Geography professor wins two prestigious national awards

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A Western Michigan University professor of geography has won two prestigious awards, recognizing him as being among the best and brightest in geography education.

The National Council for Geographic Education has awarded **Dr. Joseph Stoltman** both the Distinguished Mentor Award and the Higher Education Distinguished Teaching Award.

The awards

The Distinguished Mentor Award is presented to college and university professors whose guidance and influence is significant for students becoming geographers or classroom teachers. Only two professors were presented the award this year, the other coming from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The Higher Education Distinguished Teaching Award recognizes and celebrates excellence in higher education geography teaching and leadership. A total of five educators were singled out for that award, with the others coming from Wayne State College in Nebraska, the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, the University of South Florida in Tampa, and the University of Colorado, Denver.



Stoltman

Awards will be presented at a special ceremony during the 2017 National Conference on Geography Education **July 27-30** in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For over 100 years, the National Council for Geographic education has worked to enhance the status and quality of geography teaching and learning at all levels of instruction. Through its awards program, the council recognizes excellence in geography teaching, mentoring, research instructional design and service.

'Custom designed'

"It is an honor to present professor Joseph Stoltman these very special awards," says **Zachary R. Dulli**, the council's CEO. "The Distinguished Mentor Award is given for mentoring future geographers and geography educators, and the Distinguished Teacher—Higher Education Award is given for demonstrating excellence in teaching and leadership at the post-secondary level. I think anyone who knows Joe would agree that these awards sound custom designed for Dr. Stoltman. It is hard to imagine anyone who has been more welcoming and encouraging to future geographers and geography educators than Joe, and his excellence in teaching and leadership are exemplary and beyond reproach."

The National Council for Geographic Education is a nonprofit membership organization with a mission stretching back to its founding in 1915 to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of geography teaching and learning. The council provides a global forum for educators at all levels to exchange ideas and engage in professional learning opportunities to improve geography teaching practice.

"In our increasingly interconnected world, it is more important than ever to help our students understand their place in it," Dulli says. "Joe has added immeasurably to that mission."

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Start Small, Give Back, Be Curious

Posted on Monday, May 8, 2017

Carrie Collins-Fadell (MPA '04) was recently tapped to serve on the United States Brain Injury Alliance Board, an organization that oversees 14 state chapters and is committed to improving lives through awareness, prevention, advocacy, support, research, and community engagement.

Currently the Executive Director of the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona, Collins-Fadell oversees staff that provide information, services, and resources for living with brain injury to thousands of Arizona residents.

After completing her undergraduate degree at Central Michigan University and several internships in Lansing, Collins-Fadell moved there permanently to work. It was while she was working as Chief of Staff running Rep. Dave Woodward's Lansing office when she decided to go back to school for an MPA.



“It was there I learned to reach out and maximize my network by talking to my WMU instructors and classmates, and alumni,” Collins-Fadell said. “I was 22, hiring and managing people and I had not taken a class in that. I learned the value of the WMU family.”

After Rep. Woodward term limited out of office, Collins-Fadell moved to the non-profit sector.

“During my time working for the House of Representatives in Michigan, my boss was a huge supporter and champion of the nonprofit sector and the work they did,” Collins-Fadell explained. “It really stuck with me. One of the most impactful things we did was work to get more funding for SANE (sexual assault nurse examiners) at the Oakland County nonprofit HAVEN.”

Clinics with SANE allow survivors of sexual assault a safe, comforting place with nurses who are specially trained to collect evidence and treat patients with dignity. Collins-Fadell explained that survivors sometimes wait in emergency rooms for hours, unable to shower, brush their hair, change their clothes, or use the bathroom because they could shed or destroy evidence.

“People were being re-victimized and it was amazing to be able to do something about it,” she said.

From there, Collins-Fadell worked for six years with the Michigan Alzheimer's Association, building the first marketing and public policy programs for its chapters. From there, she moved to Phoenix to begin her work with the Brain Injury Alliance.

For students or recent graduates interested in working on the non-profit sector, Collins-Fadell has some sound advice. Start small, give back, and be curious.

*“I would say follow former NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg's advice, **start small**. If you want to run a homeless shelter someday, start by volunteering so that you really understand the programs from the inside out. You can have big dreams and work every day on little pieces and parts of them.*

*Also, always **give back**. One of the funnest things that I do is give back to the nonprofit sector by serving as a writer for [Nonprofit Quarterly](#). I have learned so much and met so many fascinating people by giving my time.*

*Finally, **be curious**. I have been involved in some pretty huge and expensive trainings at Center for Creative Leadership and Deloitte, but **NOTHING** in my experience matches what you learn from being engaged and curious about the world around you. Talk to your instructors, interact with the nonprofits in your community, ask to shadow someone in a nonprofit who is doing the job you might want to do some day. There's no replacement for experience. I just met a volunteer who spent years dreaming of the day she could retire and work with kids. She lasted one day in the classroom and knew it was not for her. Get out and get some hands on experience. There are 100 ways WMU can help you facilitate that.*

Reach out to Alumni and get a few mentors. It's a fantastic world filled with people doing great things and you have a place in it, never let the hard days make you forget that.”

WMU journalism students pen issue of West Michigan magazine

contact: Cheryl Roland

May 4, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—What would college journalists choose to write about if they were given an entire magazine to fill with their best work?

That question is answered in May's issue of Encore Magazine, a regional lifestyle magazine based in Kalamazoo and serving Southwest Michigan. The May 2017 issue was written almost entirely by a team of junior- and senior-level Western Michigan University journalism students taught by **Professor Sue Ellen Christian** in the WMU School of Communication.

For their senior capstone experience, five aspiring journalists—**Carolyn Diana, Samantha Marzke, Samantha May, Jay Penny** and **Greyson Steele**—conceptualized, reported, researched and wrote the feature articles in the magazine and also, in many cases, took photographs to accompany the articles.

The students' articles are in keeping with Encore's mission of showcasing the greater Kalamazoo community, but, the articles have a decidedly WMU bent. Among the stories are an in-depth feature on how technology has revolutionized the academic and social lives of college students, an article about a program that addresses student hunger and economic need, a profile of an

inventive cellist, and another about an enterprising student who has turned custom-dyed socks into a viable business. There's also a montage on how dorm décor has evolved over the decades.



From left: May, Penny, Steele, Marzke and Diana (Photo credit: Encore/Brian Powers)

'A mountain-top experience'

Encore editor **Marie Lee** says that the project was conceived in collaboration with Professor Christian to encourage and showcase future journalists.

"In a time when journalism is under fire and people wonder about its future, we want to showcase just how important journalism education is," Lee says. "Not only do these young writers give us great stories about people and initiatives at their own university, but this issue spotlights their talents and the outstanding journalism training they are receiving through WMU's School of Communication."

The project was a semester-long endeavor for the five students who began in January working on content for the May issue. Christian, their journalism professor, says it was an important and exciting collaboration in keeping with the intent of the journalism program's capstone reporting course, which focuses in depth on a single topic or project throughout the semester.

"The Encore collaboration was a mountain-top experience for the students because they were treated as professionals, received excellent editing and were highly motivated to get the facts and stories right. They were able to put into practice all the lessons they'd learned throughout their program at WMU, and had a great time doing it," says Christian.



Professor Sue Ellen Christian meets with her students and magazine contributors. (Photo credit: Encore/Brian Powers)

The issue was made public **May 1** and will be available at public distribution points around the greater Kalamazoo area and online at encorekalamazoo.com. To view the digital edition of Encore's May 2017 issue, visit bit.ly/2pLBIUn.

About the students

The students, their hometowns and academic class status at WMU are:

- **Carolyn Diana**, 22, from Beverly, Illinois, who graduated in April with bachelor's degrees in journalism and Spanish.
- **Samantha Marzke**, 22, from St. Joseph, who graduated in April with a bachelor's degree in journalism.
- **Samantha May**, 21, from Washington, who graduated in April with a bachelor's degree in film, video and media studies.
- **Jay Penny**, 39, from Edwardsburg, who graduated in April with a bachelor's degree in journalism and will pursue a graduate degree in communication at WMU this fall.
- **Greyson Steele**, 20, from Plainwell, a third-year journalism major who will graduate in 2018.

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