Where design meets innovation

Also inside MLK Academy at 50
Galloping toward winter
10. Broncos’ Billion-dollar Impact
A new study has found that WMU has a $1.6 billion annual economic impact on its local region.

12. MLK Academy: 50 Years of Achievement
In 2018, WMU celebrates one of its longest-running academic programs, the Martin Luther King Jr. Student Scholars Academy, and thousands of accomplished alumni.

16. All in for Student Success
Some 4,700 incoming freshmen and transfer students are part of a unpacking new program that immediately connects them to campus and orients them to college life.

20. Esports: State of Play
Students who compete in esports at the intercollegiate level now have a new high-tech arena on campus to clash with opponents.

26. Medicine + Engineering
A new master’s degree program in medical engineering at WMed equips students to advance health care through technology.

31. Orchestral Fellow
An alumnus is one of two musicians nationwide selected for a prestigious symphony fellowship.

8. Harnessing the Future of Product Design
This fall, WMU unveiled a state-of-the-art facility for the university’s year-old product design degree program. The institute features studios, presentation spaces and laboratories dedicated to innovation, fabrication, rapid prototyping, 3D printing, woodworking and metalworking.
Dear Friends,

It is remarkable how the opportunities offered by higher education can change the course of an individual’s life. Degree earned, graduates can go on to enrich their communities, advance their professions and make their unique contributions to the world. With that kind of impact at stake, it is critical that we ensure the full promise of a Western Michigan University education is attainable for all our students.

To that end, WMU administrators, faculty and staff constantly work to strengthen services, programs and practices that help students conceive and achieve their academic goals and persist to graduation. And as we fine-tune and create new programs, we model what we expect of students in their coursework—continuous improvement and innovation.

One of the major initiatives launched this fall represents a sweeping expansion of our past successes with peer mentoring, taking it to scale so that all incoming freshmen and transfer students benefit.

On pages that follow, you will read about more than 4,000 students who are the first to experience this program, appropriately named Success at WMU. Under development since January, it includes everything from educational support to social activities. Not only is the program designed to help new students feel embraced and supported right away, it also helps them develop essential academic skills. We want students to have the strongest possible start to their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their WMU experience.

From Success at WMU to marking 50 years of the Martin Luther King Jr. Student College Career and to staying on that successful path throughout their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their academic career. To ensure the full promise of a Western Michigan education is attainable for all our students, it also helps them develop essential academic skills. We want students to have the strongest possible start to their WMU experience.

From Success at WMU to marking 50 years of the Martin Luther King Jr. Student College Career and to staying on that successful path throughout their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their academic career and to stay on that successful path throughout their academic career. To ensure the full promise of a Western Michigan education is attainable for all our students, it also helps them develop essential academic skills. We want students to have the strongest possible start to their WMU experience.

WMU’s “invulnerable health service” garners $1.5M in state support

The University’s Unified Clinics, a multi-specialty group practice that annually serves more than 5,000 patients in southwest Michigan and beyond, has received a $1.5 million state appropriation.

The collective of 10 teaching clinics provides an array of services, including autism evaluation, behavioral health services, child-trauma assessment, hearing treatment, low-vision services, occupational therapy, speech therapy and women’s health services. WMU student practitioners and supervising professionals provide the care and treatment.

"WMU’s Unified Clinics provides invaluable health care services to some of southwest Michigan’s most underserved," states San Margaret O’Brian, who advocated for needed funding to ensure the University can provide the best possible care for patients.

The appropriation, which is the clinics’ first from the state, covers equipment purchases and uncompensated care, as affordability is a major need for the clinics’ patients.

Through this practice, thousands of Michigan residents receive treatment that may not be covered by insurance, is unaffordable through other providers and, in some cases, is unavailable altogether.

"We have been recognized by our patients in the community as a safety net," says Dr. Carol Sundborg, Unified Clinics director.

Multicultural affairs director recognized for leadership

Hernandez, director of the Division of Multicultural Affairs, received El Concilio’s 2018 Quetzalcóatl Award in recognition of her status as a leader who has been working, contributing, supporting and advocating for the well-being of the Latino community in Kalamazoo. El Concilio, formerly the Hispanic American Council, is a community-focused organization that seeks to help Latino residents support their families, contribute to society and so appreciate its cultural significance in the local region.

Hernandez received her accolade during an award ceremony as part of the Nuestra Raíces Gala in September. “Nuestra Raíces” is translated “our roots” in English.

In announcing the award, El Concilio cited Hernandez for her passionate support of the area’s Latino community as well as advocating for WMU’s Latino students so they can succeed in college. Under her leadership, WMU has secured two federal College Assistance Migrant Program grants totaling $4 million. This grant program supports first-generation undergraduate students who are migrant or seasonal farmworkers.

In addition, Hernandez has been selected as one of the Top 50 Latinos in Michigan by the governor-appointed Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan. The honor recognizes women who have had a commitment to lifelong learning and expansions of their own personal and professional resources. Nominations came from across the state, and honorees were recognized Oct. 12 during the Statewide Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations.

Advanced manufacturing lab launched in Grand Rapids

WMU, in partnership with Michigan’s Grand Rapids Community College and West Michigan manufacturers, has opened a 15,000-square-foot instructional and incubation facility in Grand Rapids.

The Advanced Manufacturing Partnership Laboratory occupies the first two floors of WMU’s downtown Grand Rapids location and serves as a program to cultivate the next generation of engineers, designers and other skilled individuals to serve the manufacturing industry. The $2.7 million AMP Lab development and the equipment housed were partially funded through private investments and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

“"The cutting-edge instructional laboratory has been designed to identify by manufacturing leaders—not only locally, but around the globe—to educate the 21st-century advanced manufacturing workforce,” WMU President Edward Montgomery says.

The AMP Lab combines prototyping, training and small-scale manufacturing with the opportunity for individuals to earn college credits to be used toward a degree or certification. The facility includes 3D printers and scanners, a CAD/CAM lab, a plasma cutter, a laser cutter, a welding station, metrology equipment and prototyping tools.

"The AMP Lab is an excellent example of how communities grow stronger when people come together," GRCC President Bill Pink says. "We’re partnering with Western Michigan University and our region’s employers to give residents skills they need for great jobs as well as their first steps in higher education and pursuit of lifelong learning." Purple Promise began using the space before its initial grant program cohorts this fall. In January, WMU will offer courses for a certificate program in integrated design and manufacturing. In addition, manufacturing engineering technology, engineering design technology and engineering management technology courses will be offered at the facility for students enrolled in WMU’s ABET-accredited four-year engineering technology degree program.

"At full strength, the space will be used for six to eight WMU undergraduate courses a semester with class sizes of 15 to 24," says Dr. Steven Butt, WMU professor and chair of the industrial engineering program. "The AMP Lab will also offer associate degrees and manufacturing courses. In addition to college courses, workshops, specialized trainings, product design and manufacturing consulting will occur in the space."
Battery research project at WMU supports utility’s clean-energy plan

This fall, Michigan utility company Consumers Energy opened a large-scale battery facility on WMU’s Parkview Campus. The facility, which is unique to Michigan, stores enough energy from wind and solar sources to power 1,000 homes, and the clean-energy project will offer research opportunities for WMU students.

The Parkview Campus was selected as the site for the new battery facility through a statewide search conducted by Consumers Energy in consultation with Michigan State University. In the coming year, the company and WMU consultants will study data generated at the facility to better the potential for battery storage use around the state. WMU engineering students also will have opportunities to participate in partnerships with Consumers Energy on electric battery research and operations.

Gymnastics posts second-highest GPA in the nation

WMU’s gymnastics team achieved the second-highest grade point average in the nation for the 2017-18 academic year, according to the Women’s Collegiate Gymnastics Association. As a team, the Broncos carried a 3.783 GPA, marking the seventh straight year WMU has finished in the top 10 nationally. Individually, 14 Bronco gymnasts earned Scholar All-America Awards.

Every year we set the bar high for the classroom, in the gym and in the community,” says Penny Jermon, the team’s head coach.

Additionally, WMU once again had the highest GPA among Mid-American Conference institutions, marking the seventh straight year to lead the league. The second-place finish ties the 2013 season for the highest mark in program history. That season, the Broncos posted a 3.808 GPA.

A golden day of giving

On WMU’s second annual Giving Day, held Oct. 3, participants across campus, the state, the country and the world gave generously to support the Broncos and WMU initiatives of their choice.

A student awarded a prestigious federal scholarship is spending the academic year studying abroad in Brazil. Caitlin Wiley received a $20,000 David L. Boren Scholarship to spend the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, where she is studying Portuguese.

And, just before fall semester began at WMU, engineering graduate student Joshua White wrapped up an eight-week summer course at the University of Shiga Prefecture in Hikone, Japan.

Joshua White

White was awarded a full scholarship to study in Japan under the U.S. Department of State’s Critical Language Scholarship program. The program is part of a government effort to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages. Critical languages are those that are less commonly taught in U.S. schools, but are essential for America’s engagement with the world, according to the state department.

Prestigious language scholarships send students abroad

Those who receive these scholarships gain critical language and cultural skills that enable them to contribute to U.S. economic competitiveness and national security. White was one of about 550 competitively selected American students at U.S. colleges and universities who received a CLS award in 2018.

He graduated in April with a Bachelor of Arts in Japanese, Bachelor of Science in applied mathematics in Electrical and Computer Engineering, focusing in computer engineering and a Master of Science in electrical engineering and a Master of Science in applied and computational mathematics in April 2018.

During his undergraduate career, White was named WMU’s 2018 Presidential Scholar in Electrical and Computer Engineering as well as its 2018 Presidential Scholar in World Languages and Literature. Being named a Presidential Scholar is the highest honor a senior can receive from the University.

While plans to one day pursue a doctoral degree in electrical and computer engineering, focusing on research in electro-neurophysiological interfacing. Eventually, he wants to move to Japan and work on developing advanced prosthetics that interface directly into the human nervous system to help improve the quality of life for amputees.

Caitlin Wiley

Wiley was selected as one of 221 Boren Scholarship recipients out of 794 applicants from around the country to receive a 2018-19 academic year award. She and her fellow Boren Scholars are studying some 30 critical languages while living in countries throughout Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Wiley is an honors student double-majoring in Spanish and global and international studies and minorin in Latin American studies. In 2018, she studied abroad in Argentina and felt the impacts of economic and political crisis in that country. She chose to pursue a study abroad experience in Brazil to expand the depth and breadth of her Latin America expertise by studying Portuguese.

She has an intrinsic motivation for applying for the Boren Scholarships—her long-held public service ethos, which she developed after being introduced to federal public service in high school.

“I realized immediately it was the career path I wanted to pursue,” she says. “Since then, I have learned a lot about what it means to be a public servant through interning for a state representative and a U.S. senator.”

Wiley’s dream job is to become a foreign service officer. That dream just might come true, as Boren Scholarship alumni are fast tracked into federal careers after graduation.

Boren scholarships and fellowships, collectively known as the Boren Awards, are sponsored by the National Security Education Program. They are part of a major federal initiative aimed at increasing the number of U.S. citizens who possess foreign language and international skills. Scholars receive up to $20,000 while fellows receive up to $30,000, but all Boren Award winners agree to work in the federal government for at least one year.

“Refining my career aspirations, I have leaned a lot about what it means to be a public servant,” says Wiley, a senior whose dream career is in the foreign service.
This fall, WMU unveiled a state-of-the-art facility for the University’s year-old product design degree program.

The Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation on the first and third floors of Central Kohrman Hall features studios, presentation spaces and laboratories dedicated to innovation, fabrication, rapid prototyping, 3D printing, woodworking and metalworking.

Harnessing the future of product design

The nearly $7 million project to renovate Central Kohrman Hall to support the needs of an innovative product design program was made possible by many generous corporate and individual donors, including Jim and Lois Richmond.

The Kalamazoo-area couple, longtime WMU friends and benefactors who have a passion for the arts, contributed $3 million to the project.

The institute “is truly far beyond anything we ever imagined it would become,” Jim Richmond said in September.

“Just a few weeks ago, Lois and I had the honor of touring the building, which included getting a detailed description of each area and how students will use this creative layout working independently and in groups on design projects.”

A home for WMU’s product design program

The institute named for them is home to WMU’s new product design program, a degree that draws its curriculum from fine arts, engineering and business to develop professionals who will specialize in designing products that combine form, function and manufacturing.

Launched in fall 2017 with its first cohort of students, the program was created to meet current and future design and manufacturing needs in southwest Michigan and beyond.

“The product design curriculum mirrors contemporary design practice,” says Michael Elwell, director of the institute and associate professor of art.

“The students take courses in design, engineering and business, teaching them to create products that are desirable, feasible and viable. Upon graduation, they will be able to speak the language of the designer, engineer and marketer, positioning them for future leadership roles related to project management.”

Southwest Michigan companies involved include FabriKal, Eaton, Landscape Forms, Stylus, Newell Brands, Whirlpool and Tekna. Bob Brown and the Monroe-Brown Foundation provided key initial funding, and area economic development agency Southwest Michigan First has been an important resource as well.

Elwell says the institute has a wide range of corporate partners eager to work with WMU students. And the Richmond Institute will soon offer interdisciplinary courses that bring together students from across the University to work on problems through the lens of design.

“Interdisciplinary collaboration is essential to creating innovative design solutions,” Elwell says.

“Students who take these courses will learn to appreciate the diverse ways their classmates approach problems, while gaining a new appreciation for their own disciplines.”

-
A new study from an economic development organization and WMU has found that the University annually has a $1.6 billion economic impact on the local region.

“WMU’s local economic impact is an excellent return on investment for Michiganders,” says WMU President Edward Montgomery.

“The University’s return of $1.6 billion to its local community is 15 times greater than the state’s investment in WMU. In fact, our total impact is greater than Michigan’s entire budget line for all state universities.”

In fiscal year 2016-17, the year of the study, the state invested $1.4 billion in all state universities, including $104 million for WMU. For every dollar the state invests in WMU, it returns $15.40 in economic vitality for the local region.

The study also determined that WMU supports 16,690 direct, indirect and induced jobs in the local area.

“I believe that if our region is to thrive in the future, we must grow the portion of our workforce that has earned a bachelor’s degree. We are currently 20 percent below the national average. WMU is an enormous help. It can enable us to attract young professionals here, and we can entice them to stay. Students have an impact during their time in Kalamazoo. Each WMU student adds $11,500 to the local economy. It’s wonderful to see students in local businesses,” Kitchens says. “They bring vitality to our community. But they also bring resources. When you see four students having brunch, that’s not just a $46 tab; it’s $46,000 each year in rent, groceries, checking accounts and entertainment. They contribute handsomely to our community as individuals and as citizens.”

The study, conducted by Impact DataSource LLC, located in Austin, Texas, covered Kalamazoo County as well as two surrounding counties—Calhoun and Van Buren.
We had moved away from everything I knew. "I was sad, angry and depressed," Carr says. When she was in fifth grade, and her mother had applied to three universities. All three had rejected her application. The future was bleak.

"I was bad," Carr says. "I had not applied to the program and was accepted. Carr dried her tears and did just that. She applied to the program and was accepted. She was over that 3.0 GPA by my second year. Rashid went on to earn his bachelor’s degree in business administration at WMU in 2001, and his master’s in organizational leadership the following year. In 2001, he was the winner of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Program Award for maintaining high academic standards while supporting his fellow students is 3.29.

"I was initially accepted for one semester at WMU with the agreement that I would get above a 3.0 GPA. I was enrolled in an educational boot camp as part of the MLK program, and I took three classes and did great. I was over that 3.0 GPA by my second year." Rashid went on to earn his bachelor’s degree in business administration at WMU in 2001, and his master’s in organizational leadership the following year. In 2001, he was the winner of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Program Award for maintaining high academic standards while supporting his fellow students is 3.29.

"I was initially accepted for one semester at WMU with the agreement that I would get above a 3.0 GPA. I was enrolled in an educational boot camp as part of the MLK program, and I took three classes and did great. I was over that 3.0 GPA by my second year." Rashid went on to earn his bachelor’s degree in business administration at WMU in 2001, and his master’s in organizational leadership the following year. In 2001, he was the winner of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Program Award for maintaining high academic standards while supporting his fellow students is 3.29.

"Without the MLK program and the support I received at WMU, I don't know what I would have become," Pulliam muses. "Programs like this are the greatest investment a university can make for kids with potential. We have to invest in all kids, not just those going to Harvard. Encourage them, create internships for them—there are many rich ways to expand our workforce."

Results of the MLK program translate into success: 90 percent of student scholars complete and are retained each academic year. The cumulative GPA of participating students is 3.29.

Higher expectations, higher achievement As a high school baseball player in Pontiac, Michigan, John Rashid wasn’t held to high academic standards. He explains that what was then called Project 73 began as a six-week program providing academic support and scholarships to 60 incoming students from southwest Michigan. "Starting Simply" in 1968, Dr. Roger Pulliam, assistant vice chancellor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, was the first director of the program, and encouraged me to apply. He told me about the Martin Luther King Jr. Program at Western Michigan University and the Dow Chemical Marketing Scholarship. She was the lead dog when it came to education in my family, although some of my younger brothers did follow my lead to attend WMU. I came here on a football scholarship. I saw how important it was to be connected, to have those advantages of someone to support you and mentor you."

"The Martin Luther King (program) was amazing." Carr says. "It was a minister, and when I told him why I was crying, he had advice for me," she says. "He told me about the Martin Luther King Jr. program at Western Michigan University and encouraged me to apply."

"The MLK program changed my life," Carr says. "Getting this second chance gave me an incredible drive to succeed. The structure and support program provided students was amazing." Carr later returned to WMU as a peer counselor at the MLK program. Now a successful real estate broker and investor in Atlanta, Georgia, she recently traveled to campus for a 50-year reunion of MLK program alumni to share her story. Her story is just one among many thousands.

Since its inception five decades ago, in 1968, the MLK program has served some 7,000 students, all of whom had journeys similar to that of Carr—struggling in school, from a low-income family, and/or the first generation to attend college. A more important commonality, however, is they all had potential.

Starting Simply" in 1968, Dr. Roger Pulliam, assistant vice chancellor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, was the first director of the program, and I took three classes and did great. I was over that 3.0 GPA by my second year." Rashid went on to earn his bachelor’s degree in business administration at WMU in 2001, and his master’s in organizational leadership the following year. In 2001, he was the winner of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Program Award for maintaining high academic standards while supporting his fellow students is 3.29.

"Starting Simply" in 1968, Dr. Roger Pulliam, assistant vice chancellor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, was the first director of the program, and encouraged me to apply. He told me about the Martin Luther King Jr. Program at Western Michigan University and the Dow Chemical Marketing Scholarship. She was the lead dog when it came to education in my family, although some of my younger brothers did follow my lead to attend WMU. I came here on a football scholarship. I saw how important it was to be connected, to have those advantages of someone to support you and mentor you."

"The MLK program changed my life," Carr says. "Getting this second chance gave me an incredible drive to succeed. The structure and support program provided students was amazing." Carr later returned to WMU as a peer counselor at the MLK program. Now a successful real estate broker and investor in Atlanta, Georgia, she recently traveled to campus for a 50-year reunion of MLK program alumni to share her story. Her story is just one among many thousands.

Since its inception five decades ago, in 1968, the MLK program has served some 7,000 students, all of whom had journeys similar to that of Carr—struggling in school, from a low-income family, and/or the first generation to attend college. A more important commonality, however, is they all had potential.

Starting Simply" in 1968, Dr. Roger Pulliam, assistant vice chancellor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, was the first director of the program, and encouraged me to apply. He told me about the Martin Luther King Jr. Program at Western Michigan University and the Dow Chemical Marketing Scholarship. She was the lead dog when it came to education in my family, although some of my younger brothers did follow my lead to attend WMU. I came here on a football scholarship. I saw how important it was to be connected, to have those advantages of someone to support you and mentor you."

"The MLK program changed my life," Carr says. "Getting this second chance gave me an incredible drive to succeed. The structure and support program provided students was amazing." Carr later returned to WMU as a peer counselor at the MLK program. Now a successful real estate broker and investor in Atlanta, Georgia, she recently traveled to campus for a 50-year reunion of MLK program alumni to share her story. Her story is just one among many thousands.

Since its inception five decades ago, in 1968, the MLK program has served some 7,000 students, all of whom had journeys similar to that of Carr—struggling in school, from a low-income family, and/or the first generation to attend college. A more important commonality, however, is they all had potential.

Starting Simply" in 1968, Dr. Roger Pulliam, assistant vice chancellor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, was the first director of the program, and encouraged me to apply. He told me about the Martin Luther King Jr. Program at Western Michigan University and the Dow Chemical Marketing Scholarship. She was the lead dog when it came to education in my family, although some of my younger brothers did follow my lead to attend WMU. I came here on a football scholarship. I saw how important it was to be connected, to have those advantages of someone to support you and mentor you."

"The MLK program changed my life," Carr says. "Getting this second chance gave me an incredible drive to succeed. The structure and support program provided students was amazing." Carr later returned to WMU as a peer counselor at the MLK program. Now a successful real estate broker and investor in Atlanta, Georgia, she recently traveled to campus for a 50-year reunion of MLK program alumni to share her story. Her story is just one among many thousands.

Since its inception five decades ago, in 1968, the MLK program has served some 7,000 students, all of whom had journeys similar to that of Carr—struggling in school, from a low-income family, and/or the first generation to attend college. A more important commonality, however, is they all had potential.
The MLK program has changed in some ways over the years while retaining the discipline, the encouragement, the mentoring and the support of its first years.

Joe Murray, assistant director of the program and the Division of Multicultural Affairs, notes that it is now known as the Martin Luther King Jr. Academy. In addition, what began as a summer bridge program for incoming students is now a four-tier program that guides students through every year of their education to graduation. Once in the program, students meet regularly with staff and academy peer leaders. The first year includes an introduction to campus life, academic course review and coaching, diversity and cultural programs, and academic process review.

“Our most common challenge in the first year is handling homesickness,” Murray says. “One of our students recently brought his mother in to meet us after graduation. He wanted her to know where we were.” Murray says. “One of our students recently brought his mother in to meet us after graduation. He wanted her to know where we were.”

During the second tier, students move beyond the classroom experience and begin to explore opportunities in study abroad, careers and internships, and global learning. Leadership development and global learning experiences, but also begins the students on their path to graduation and entrance into a profession.

The third tier brings study abroad and internship experiences, but also begins the students on their path to graduation and possible graduate school. Career choices begin to take shape. Fourth, or upper, tier centers on global learning and peer leader coaching.

The MLK program has gone through some changes over the years. It began in 1968 as the Student Scholars Academy through the University’s Multicultural Leadership Scholars competition. Collectively, the four-tiered WMU-MLK Student Scholars Academy annually serves approximately 100-150 students who represent a wide variety of diverse backgrounds.

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Our most common challenge in the first year is handling homesickness,” Murray says. “One of our students recently brought his mother in to meet us after graduation. He wanted her to know where we were.”

During the second tier, students move beyond the classroom experience and begin to explore opportunities in study abroad, careers and internships, and global learning. Leadership development and global learning experiences, but also begins the students on their path to graduation and entrance into a profession.

The third tier brings study abroad and internship experiences, but also begins the students on their path to graduation and possible graduate school. Career choices begin to take shape. Fourth, or upper, tier centers on global learning and peer leader coaching.

The MLK program has gone through some changes over the years. It began in 1968 as the Student Scholars Academy through the University’s Multicultural Leadership Scholars competition. Collectively, the four-tiered WMU-MLK Student Scholars Academy annually serves approximately 100-150 students who represent a wide variety of diverse backgrounds.

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page

MLK Academy: 50 Years

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page

MLK Academy: 50 Years

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page

MLK Academy: 50 Years

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page

MLK Academy: 50 Years

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page

MLK Academy: 50 Years

Murray says. “First year, we are already looking at their second year and how to prepare them for the next step.”

“Second year is when they may lose that spark,” Murray says. “We have to keep them motivated. We do that by building relationships with our students, and let them know they always have someone to go to—we can act on their behalf, if needed. If at first they thought we were mean, by now they get it. We are here for them.”

Story continues on next page
Going ALL in to promote student success

This academic year’s 4,700 incoming freshmen and transfer students have unprecedented opportunities to succeed in college at WMU. The reason—Success at WMU, a sweeping new peer mentoring program that immediately connects these students to campus and orients them to college life and the University.

Launched at the start of the 2018-19 academic year, it is one of two new programs largely being paid for by awards from the Presidential Transformational Initiative Fund that WMU President Edward Montgomery inaugurated in 2017. Montgomery challenged faculty and staff to come up with ideas for building a stronger sense of belonging and community among all students. More than 60 proposals were submitted, with Success at WMU and Exports at WMU selected as the first initiatives to be funded.

“Student success is President Montgomery’s top priority, and by supporting students in their transition to Western, we’ll make WMU a campus of choice,” says Monica Liggins-Abrams, who leads Success at WMU along with Dr. Keith M. Hearit, the program’s executive director and a professor of communication.

“We didn’t want to disrupt existing programs. We wanted to leverage the existing peer mentoring expertise on campus, so we relied heavily on the work people all over campus have been doing for years,” Liggins-Abrams explains.

“Student Success is President Montgomery’s top priority, and by supporting students in their transition to Western, we’ll make WMU a campus of choice.” —Monica Liggins-Abrams

“As a result, we expect new students will have fewer adjustment problems, feel more comfortable seeking help when they need it and be motivated to stay in school. Ultimately, we should see a significant improvement in the number of students who are satisfied with their educational experience at WMU, helping us to make this the campus of choice.’’

Building on past successes

More than 100 student employees are serving as peer mentors this year after receiving special training. They, in turn, are being mentored by some 60 faculty and staff who have volunteered to be their champions.

Liggins-Abrams says individual cohorts will remain in place for the 2018-19 academic year, although students are not required to participate. She notes that communities look and behave differently, in part because some cohorts comprised of transfer, regional location or other sets of students may only need to communicate intermittently or through emails and video conferences.

Differences also crop up because of the way students are assigned to communities, with international, transfer and other categories of students clustered together when possible.

“We didn’t want to disrupt existing programs. We wanted to leverage the existing peer mentoring expertise on campus, so we relied heavily on the work people all over campus have been doing for years,” Liggins-Abrams explains.

“What makes Success at WMU unique is its scale. We’re being very intentional. Going forward, we want to touch every new student.”

Evaluating its effectiveness

In addition to an $818,500 award from the Presidential Transformational Initiative Fund, Success at WMU is being paid for by a matching award from the Division of Academic Affairs and support from the Division of Student Affairs as well as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

In two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The program is partnering with the director of assessment and effectiveness in WMU’s student affairs division, and external evaluators to build a comprehensive evaluation plan that will be administered to provide ongoing program improvement and determine whether the program has been effective enough to continue.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The initiative is a large-scale commitment that takes advantage of WMU’s past success with student support programs for targeted populations of students and learning communities.

Creating a campus of choice

“Student Success is President Montgomery’s top priority, and by supporting students in their transition to Western, we’ll make WMU a campus of choice.” —Monica Liggins-Abrams

“Student Success is President Montgomery’s top priority, and by supporting students in their transition to Western, we’ll make WMU a campus of choice.” —Monica Liggins-Abrams

“Student Success is President Montgomery’s top priority, and by supporting students in their transition to Western, we’ll make WMU a campus of choice.” —Monica Liggins-Abrams

“As a result, we expect new students will have fewer adjustment problems, feel more comfortable seeking help when they need it and be motivated to stay in school. Ultimately, we should see a significant improvement in the number of students who are satisfied with their educational experience at WMU, helping us to make this the campus of choice.’’

Building on past successes

More than 100 student employees are serving as peer mentors this year after receiving special training. They, in turn, are being mentored by some 60 faculty and staff who have volunteered to be their champions.

Liggins-Abrams says individual cohorts will remain in place for the 2018-19 academic year, although students are not required to participate. She notes that communities look and behave differently, in part because some cohorts comprised of transfer, regional location or other sets of students may only need to communicate intermittently or through emails and video conferences.

Differences also crop up because of the way students are assigned to communities, with international, transfer and other categories of students clustered together when possible.

“We didn’t want to disrupt existing programs. We wanted to leverage the existing peer mentoring expertise on campus, so we relied heavily on the work people all over campus have been doing for years,” Liggins-Abrams explains.

“What makes Success at WMU unique is its scale. We’re being very intentional. Going forward, we want to touch every new student.”

Evaluating its effectiveness

In addition to an $818,500 award from the Presidential Transformational Initiative Fund, Success at WMU is being paid for by a matching award from the Division of Academic Affairs and support from the Division of Student Affairs as well as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The program is partnering with the director of assessment and effectiveness in WMU’s student affairs division, and external evaluators to build a comprehensive evaluation plan that will be administered to provide ongoing program improvement and determine whether the program has been effective enough to continue.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The program is partnering with the director of assessment and effectiveness in WMU’s student affairs division, and external evaluators to build a comprehensive evaluation plan that will be administered to provide ongoing program improvement and determine whether the program has been effective enough to continue.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The program is partnering with the director of assessment and effectiveness in WMU’s student affairs division, and external evaluators to build a comprehensive evaluation plan that will be administered to provide ongoing program improvement and determine whether the program has been effective enough to continue.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.

The program is partnering with the director of assessment and effectiveness in WMU’s student affairs division, and external evaluators to build a comprehensive evaluation plan that will be administered to provide ongoing program improvement and determine whether the program has been effective enough to continue.

Along with Hearit and Liggins-Abrams, an assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate assistant and interns round out the staff. “A huge component of Success at WMU’s first two years will be evaluation and research. We want to make sure the program is working well, and we’re documenting the impact we’re having on students, peer mentors and champions,” Liggins-Abrams says.
Cailla Rae Moss, a second-year student from Plainwell, Michigan, performs at marching band practice near Lawson Arena on Halloween. The skeleton face was an alternative to wearing a full costume. She painted her face that morning. “I had it on all day during Halloween. Everyone I ran into was really impressed,” she said.

Scene on campus
**SKILL**

**TEAMS**

**TRAINING**

**COMPETITION**

**CAREER**

**ESPORTS**

**STATE OF PLAY**

In the ring and online

In the ring

wmich.edu/magazine

Anything like this, especially because it happened to grabbing people was probably the most another member of the trio said. “Their attention "Coming in here is definitely mind boggling," one of the students said from sophisticated gaming equipment. But the arena is definitely amazing," one of the students said from by its sophisticated gaming computers behind the gaming machine he was test driving at sophisticated gaming computers and selected technology. They included a trio of senior aviation technical operations students who saw a tweet about the event and decided to check by its sophisticated gaming computers and selected technology. They included a trio of senior aviation technical operations students who saw a tweet about the event and decided to check out the new facility. "I didn't expect this, especially because it's a normal, old-style theatre with some of the most sophisticated gaming equipment. But the arena is definitely amazing," one of the students said from behind the gaming machine he was test driving at the arena. "Coming in here is definitely mind boggling," another member of the trio said. "Their attention to grabbing people was probably the most successful thing I've seen so far. Nobody expects anything like this, especially because it happened to us. They announced it just last year." Esports at WMU The WMU Esports Arena is located on the corner of Oakland Drive and Oliver Lane in what was previously known as the Little Theatre. The facility now serves as home base for the Esports Club at WMU. The club grew out of the University’s League of Legends registered student organization and is one of WMU’s formal sports clubs. But instead of putting on uniforms and taking to the court or turf, players don headsets and sit behind gaming machines, playing it out in the virtual world of online competitive video gaming. Membership involves about 70 students, including coaches and first-string players and substitutes for its five competition teams: League of Legends, Dota 2, Overwatch, Fortnite and Counter-Strike Global Offensive. During events, players take to the facility’s stage, which is outfitted with 32 competition-level gaming machines. Webcasts project their faces onto screens attached to the front of each machine and are tied into two large screens suspended above the stage. Spectators can follow game play by watching the screens, or, when a contest is being streamed, watching twitch.tv. Behind the competition machines are 24 practice machines, allowing students to prepare for their contests. Each PC has its own ergonomic gaming chair, high-resolution monitor, headset, and special keyboard and mouse. WMU has yet to open up the arena to spectators or intramural electronic game teams, but plans to do so soon. It also hopes to host invitational and tournaments, most likely as ticketed events, and is exploring renting out the arena to high school teams and community groups. In preparation for those types of activities, there’s a shoreshooting station at the back of the arena so spectators can be treated to a running commentary of all the action. Meanwhile, the background music and enveloping colored light heighten the gaming experience for both players and spectators. A new community on campus Together, the Esports Arena and club constitute the third round of two transformational initiatives. President Edward Montgomery agreed last year to help fund a way of transforming how WMU serves students. Funding to formally sponsor video gaming and develop the arena came from a grant from Montgomery’s Transformational Initiative Fund and additional monies provided by various vice presidential areas. “The purpose of the project is to extend the University’s community-building efforts to encompass students’ recreational hours,” says Scott Puckett, esports director and a senior director of information technology. “This is one more way we can help students with like interests meet and play together.” Getting the esports initiative off the ground has been a team effort in itself, drawing upon staff members from across the university as well as the student League of Legends team. “We’re starting at a good spot. Some schools are in front of us, and others are behind us.” Puckett says. “But we have a mature program when others are developing theirs, and now we have an arena when others are building theirs.” And interest has been strong, with about 200 people showing up early this academic year to learn about WMU’s club and some 606 showing an interest in it during orientation this past summer. “A few select students were fortunate enough to make the club team. When we tell people who didn’t make the team that they can still play here for intramurals, their faces just light up and glow,” says Mike Berdowski, coordinator of intramural sports. “And very few universities in the nation have an arena like this. The majority of arenas you see that people talk about are essentially just glorified computer labs. We have a competition arena. Those are the ones you’ll see on ESPN.” Good return on investment Several students attending the open house said they think the arena and team will have a good return on investment for the University, both in terms of community building on campus and prompting prospective students to take a second look at WMU. “Esports is a different type of sport, but I would consider it a sport.” says Rattray or turf, players provide different objectives, and those objectives provide different strategies. So there’s team building in there, there’s problem solving, team communication. All these things that we’re teaching them in the classroom are things they can be learning here.” Cameron Mcllroy, Esports Club vice president, describes it as advanced thinking. And he believes many people will enjoy watching WMU’s teams put their skills against teams from other schools. “I’d really like people to just show up and give it a try. Come and fully experience the arena,” Mcllroy asks. “We’ve got revolutionary things that mainstream arenas and professionals actually use. It’s incredibly cool. We’ve been managing to build here.” How important of dedication and skill-building things” says Andrea Rattray, WMU coordinator of club sports and esports. “When you see esports, all you think about is someone playing a video game, whether it’s on a computer or console,” says Rattray. “Those games provide different objectives, and those objectives provide different strategies. So there’s team building in there, there’s problem solving, team communication. All these things that we’re teaching them in the classroom are things they can be learning here.”
of the earliest memories I have of my interaction with music occurred when I was 5 years old sitting in church. I remember the notes of the grand piano echoing off the walls and back into my ears. I watched as a woman behind a podium poured her voice into a microphone, and the congregation sang along with her. The voices of about 200 people resonated together as one voice. The sounds gave me goosebumps—a feeling of pure bliss.

I tried to sing along, my eyes glued to the hymn book, even though I didn’t know how to read yet! In awe, I thought, “I want to sing like that and make people feel how happy I feel right now someday.” Throughout my childhood, the “magical” effect of music became even more meaningful to me.

As an adolescent, I began a battle with anxiety and depression. I marched to the beat of my own drum and often felt like an outsider. I eventually felt myself numb and bored with the mundanity of everyday life. However, I found an escape from reality in music. When listening to music, I traveled to new places, heard new stories and experienced intense feelings I didn’t feel on a daily basis. In melodies and harmony, I found a world that was endless and intricate. The songs I loved resonated with feelings that lived deep in my gut.

Eventually, I realized how powerful it was to create music with my own voice. While I felt it difficult to express myself through words, singing translated my thoughts into something the world could understand. Music, particularly in the form of singing, gave me a sense of clarity and identity in a world that was often confusing. I chose to major in music as an undergraduate at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign because it fascinated me more than any other subject. I was interested in working with the diverse populations such as individuals who are incarcerated, veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, those in psychiatric units or mental health centers, hospice or medical settings, and older adults with dementia. I also found studying psychology and the brain intriguing.

While I had heard positive feedback from friends pursuing music therapy, my current college didn’t offer that major. I adapted and created a music degree that combined my two main interests: music, specifically vocal jazz, and psychology. My education included courses in areas that challenged and inspired me. Before graduating, I began applying to graduate schools where I could pursue a master’s degree in music therapy.

I was drawn to Western Michigan University because of the Brain Research and Interdisciplinary Neurosciences Lab—the BRAIN Lab—founded by Ed Roth, professor of music therapy. I also wanted to attend WMU to learn from Professor Roth’s expertise in working with clinical populations with experiences of trauma and/or mental illnesses. It only made sense to study music therapy in a program that emphasized musical interventions backed by scientific research.

Two years later, as the lab’s graduate research assistant, I have the opportunity to dive into research pertaining to the lab’s current interest in the social and neurological implications of improvisation. In addition, the lab nurtures research related to the physiological outcomes of musical experiences.

During my time in the program, I’ve become increasingly interested in the interpersonal dynamics of musical improvisation and how musical improvisation interventions can be used by music therapists to treat individuals with symptoms of social isolation or loneliness. With more insight into the neurological processes initiated by music, I am also interested in how musical experiences may be used to treat individuals struggling with drug addiction.

Music will always be a constant in my life—a modality I can rely on for relief and joy. I am grateful to merge my interests in the sciences of music and the mind in the music therapy program and at the BRAIN Lab at WMU.

Music therapy is a field that not only nurtures my interests, but allows me to provide services that benefit others who seek help. My experience has given me the opportunity to provide music therapy services to individuals with aphasia, dementia, Parkinson’s disease, intellectual and physical disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder and mood disorders.

Today, as an intern at the Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care in the Chicago area, I am learning how to effectively improve quality of life through music therapy for patients at the end of life. As I move closer to receiving my master’s degree, I am thankful for my professors and peers at WMU. They have helped develop my passion for pursuing the neuroscience of music and contributing to research that will better help music therapists effectively treat populations in need.
Think Big

This can’t wait.
We need your voice.
Join the conversation.

A University Built On Purpose

Think Big is WMU’s call for all students, faculty, staff, donors, alumni and community members to rethink and reimagine Western Michigan University.

The higher education landscape is changing. Students face new pressures and challenges that affect the way they choose a university and engage with their campus communities. While financial resources are often limited, options for how they learn, play and connect with others are virtually infinite.

Meanwhile, existing industries are evolving and new fields of expertise are emerging quickly, fundamentally changing the nature of work.

Those who generously give to universities want to support causes that have a clear impact. And increasingly scarce research funding requires demonstrated value and expertise in order to attract investment.

WMU is a wonderful university today because of the forethought of those who came before us. Now is our opportunity to take advantage of a changing world and create the extraordinary WMU of tomorrow.

wmich.edu/thinkbig

So, what’s your big idea?
Visit us online and get involved.

Join us
WMU is your university.
It is a source of pride for all Broncos. Help us move further into the forefront of education and research.

Share your good thinking online and stay engaged throughout the Think Big process.
wmich.edu/thinkbig
A new master’s degree program in medical engineering at WMed equips students to advance health care through technology.

During a successful career that has spanned some two decades, Dr. Tycho K. Fredericks says his success as an educator and engineer can be traced back to a question he is never afraid to ask: Why do you do it that way?

“That’s the way I was trained,” says Fredericks, a professor in the Department of Industrial and Entrepreneurial Engineering and Engineering Management at the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. “There are always other ways to do things, and sometimes having outside eyes looking at something will help you do that.”

That philosophy is the engine behind the new Master of Science degree in medical engineering at the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. The interdisciplinary, graduate-level program at WMed is for engineers and quantitative scientists with an end goal in mind—creating new medical devices and processes to improve health care.

The inaugural class began the new degree program in September.

For Fredericks, who serves as program chief and professor in medical engineering at WMed, the start of classes and the launch of the new curriculum are the culmination of what has been a seven-year process to implement a program that immerses students into the world of health care with a focus on the interface between medicine and engineering.

“Our mission is to train professionals and create technologies to improve health care,” he says.

During the master’s program, students will complete five courses at the medical school and three courses at WMU. In the first year, students will get the chance to choose a specialty track that fits best with their career goals.

That list includes biomechanics and biomaterials, biological signal processing, sensors, and instrumentation, health care systems engineering. As part of their education, students interact with diverse groups of professionals, from engineers and clinicians to surgeons and residents, as well as nurses, medical technologists and business and regulatory experts.

Fredericks says a key component of the new master’s program is the first 15 weeks of instruction, which immerses students in health care and gives them an up-close look at the inner workings of clinical settings. That step, he says, is vitally important so that students gain a deeper understanding of the discipline of medicine and, in turn, can begin assessing and identifying where they can use their skills to improve processes and instruments.

“I can’t tell you how to do the surgery,” says Luke Swoboda, an alumnus of WMU’s industrial engineering program. “But I can look for areas for improvement as far as timing, efficiency, even instrumentation. I can look at how tools are currently used and how they can possibly be used in ways that are better for the surgeon and the patient.”

At the conclusion of the master’s program at WMed, students will take part in a final capstone, completing either a thesis or a medical engineering design project. The work by students, Fredericks says, will focus on “a real problem that’s scalable” and could focus on such things as improving the design of an existing product, or on processes that could reduce patient wait times, among other things.

Fredericks describes the curriculum for the new master’s program as “quasi-fluid” and says that it will be built around the students’ capstone projects.

“It’s customization for education, in a sense,” Fredericks explains. “For us, it’s about the student. You don’t dictate your agenda on the students; it’s more about helping them become the best version of whatever they’re going to be down the road. We’re going to help them learn the structure of health care.”

In launching the new program, Fredericks is supported by faculty at both WMed and WMU. Each faculty member brings to the table experiences that will serve students well.

“I can’t tell you how to do the surgery,” says Luke Swoboda, part of the first class of medical engineering students. “But I can look for areas for improvement as far as timing, efficiency, even instrumentation. I can look at how tools are currently used and how they can possibly be used in ways that are better for the surgeon and the patient.”
To 1967, the year Jim Richmond began his career at Stryker Corp., the company was grossing about $3 million annually. Last year, the company’s revenues topped $12.44 billion.

The reason? Innovation, he says.

Richmond helped steer Stryker on a course to becoming one of the top medical device and technology companies in the world, retiring from the company in 1988 as senior vice president of global marketing and development.

He and his wife, Lois, both alumni and some of the most generous of the University’s benefactors, hope to replicate that theme of inclusivity with their most recent gift to WMU, a $3 million contribution for the Richmond Center for Design and Innovation.

Launched in fall 2017 with its first class of students, the program was created to meet current and future design and manufacturing needs in southwest Michigan and beyond. Now that the program has a new home, it can really take off, Jim says.

Jim, who himself holds 14 patents for medical device products he invented, knows the importance of creating a culture of cooperation in any company. Issues are dealt with efficiently and products that meet end-user needs are created more quickly.

He sees the institute as a laboratory where this theme of inclusivity is fostered and celebrated.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says. “There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says. “There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

They told me, “This program is what I was looking for all along. I wanted to do engineering, but I have a passion for art.” They couldn’t believe there was a program tailored perfectly for them.

The Richmonds—known for their passion for the arts—also gave $3 million to WMU to aid in the construction of the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, home to the Gwen Frostic School of Art, which opened in 2007.

Several southwest Michigan companies have supported the institute, including Whirlpool, Tekna, Newell Brands, Stryker, Fabrikal, Landscape Forms and Eaton. Bob Brown and the Monroe-Brown Foundation provided funding, and local economic development agency Southwest Michigan First assisted with the construction of the Richmond Center for Design and Innovation.

The institute is home to WMU’s new product development program, a degree that draws its curriculum from fine arts, engineering and business to develop professionals who will specialize in designing products that combine form, function and manufacturing.

The institute is going to serve as a model for how that culture of cooperation can drive innovation and efficiency.”

“Historically, there were islands in a cooperation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” says Jim Richmond.

“There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

The institute is going to serve as a model for how that culture of cooperation can drive innovation and efficiency.”

Alumni Profile

Jim and Lois Richmond: ADVOCATES FOR INNOVATION AND THE ARTS

In 1967, the year Jim Richmond began his career at Stryker Corp., the company was grossing about $3 million annually. Last year, the company’s revenues topped $12.44 billion.

The reason? Innovation, he says.

Richmond helped steer Stryker on a course to becoming one of the top medical device and technology companies in the world, retiring from the company in 1988 as senior vice president of global marketing and development.

He and his wife, Lois, both alumni and some of the most generous of the University’s benefactors, hope to replicate that theme of inclusivity with their most recent gift to WMU, a $3 million contribution for the Richmond Center for Design and Innovation.

Launched in fall 2017 with its first class of students, the program was created to meet current and future design and manufacturing needs in southwest Michigan and beyond. Now that the program has a new home, it can really take off, Jim says.

Jim, who himself holds 14 patents for medical device products he invented, knows the importance of creating a culture of cooperation in any company. Issues are dealt with efficiently and products that meet end-user needs are created more quickly.

He sees the institute as a laboratory where this theme of inclusivity is fostered and celebrated.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says. “There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

“Historically, there were islands in a corporation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” he says. “There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

They told me, “This program is what I was looking for all along. I wanted to do engineering, but I have a passion for art.” They couldn’t believe there was a program tailored perfectly for them.

The Richmonds—known for their passion for the arts—also gave $3 million to WMU to aid in the construction of the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, home to the Gwen Frostic School of Art, which opened in 2007.

Several southwest Michigan companies have supported the institute, including Whirlpool, Tekna, Newell Brands, Stryker, Fabrikal, Landscape Forms and Eaton. Bob Brown and the Monroe-Brown Foundation provided funding, and local economic development agency Southwest Michigan First assisted with the construction of the Richmond Center for Design and Innovation.

The institute is home to WMU’s new product development program, a degree that draws its curriculum from fine arts, engineering and business to develop professionals who will specialize in designing products that combine form, function and manufacturing.

The institute is going to serve as a model for how that culture of cooperation can drive innovation and efficiency.”

“Historically, there were islands in a cooperation—engineering over here, marketing over there, manufacturing somewhere else,” says Jim Richmond.

“There is a move now toward greater cooperation across corporate departments.

The institute is going to serve as a model for how that culture of cooperation can drive innovation and efficiency.”
Alumni selected for prestigious Detroit Symphony Orchestra fellowship

Michael Gaud is one of two musicians nationwide picked as African-American Orchestra Fellows for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s 2018-19 season.

As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.

Michael Gaud, 24, has been selected as a fellow for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in its Dearborn, Michigan, home. As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.

Michael Gaud, 24, has been selected as a fellow for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in its Dearborn, Michigan, home. As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.

Michael Gaud, 24, has been selected as a fellow for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in its Dearborn, Michigan, home. As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.

Michael Gaud, 24, has been selected as a fellow for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in its Dearborn, Michigan, home. As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.

Michael Gaud, 24, has been selected as a fellow for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in its Dearborn, Michigan, home. As part of the fellowship, the 2017 WMU graduate and trumpet player performs regularly with the DSO at Orchestra Hall and in the community, is mentored by tenured musicians, and participates in mock auditions to gain experience in the competitive orchestra field. “I’m thoroughly excited to be playing alongside members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The actual experience of performing and rehearsing is probably what I’m looking forward to the most,” Gaud said before his season-long fellowship began.

“But my other duties, like observing some of the inner workings of the orchestra, assisting with community engagement events and being mentored by members of the orchestra, are also very exciting things to look forward to.”

Inaugurated in 1990, the DSO’s African-American Orchestra Fellowship looks to enhance the career development of African-American orchestral musicians and, in the long term, the diversity of professional orchestras. Gaud summed up his fellow musicians at WMU, Scott Thorsburg, professor of music, and Dr. Robert White, associate professor of music, as being significant influences in his success.

“They are among the most influential people in my life thus far, musically and personally. Some specific things were my organization skills when preparing for auditions and the daily maintenance of my playing and coming to always perform with a sense of musicianship,” he said.

“The most memorable moments at Western were the opportunities I was given to play alongside the brass faculty. Hearing them perform was always a humbling experience and remains to be so when I go back for the occasional concert.”

Gaud is a native of San Antonio, Texas, where he received a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music from WMU, and is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Michigan State University. As a soloist, Gaud has performed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and was a semi-finalist at the International Trumpet Guild Scholarship Competition. His most recent performances include the premiere of Michael Gaud’s concerto with the New Mexico Wind Orchestra. Gaud is also a contributor to the WMU Department of Ophthalmology’s Center for Visionary Science and is mentored by tenured musicians.
James R. Glock, BA ’76, MA ’93, PhD ’96, Sept. 10, 2018, Royal Oak, MI
Richard L. Norris, BC ’78, BS ’85, Aug. 15, 2018, Venice, FL
Herbert J. Shave, BA, May 12, 2019, Schoolcraft, MI
Donald D. Campbell, BA ’86, MA ’93, Aug. 4, 2018, New York, NY
John R. Cattin, BA ’88, July 26, 2018, Worldmark, CA
David M. Hay, BA ’78, July 15, 2018, Rochester Hills, MI
Ritch (Zarri) Ershas, BC ’78, Sept. 1, 2018, The Woodlands, TX
Robert P. Charnesky, BA ’79, Aug. 19, 2018, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Eugene B. McCoy, BA ’68, Aug. 14, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Ruth M. Soper, BA ’80, Aug. 1, 2018, CA
Marcos (Johnson) Mena, BC ’74, June 30, 2018, Venice, FL
Carolyne S. (Dalton) Brennan, BA, June 14, 2018, Seoul, Korea
Thomas A. Carey, BA ’90, Aug. 7, 2018, Ironwood, MI
Wayne Kruizer, BS ’84, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
James K. Leonard, BA ’87, July 17, 2018, Marshall, MI
Judith H. (Warthin) Lycke, BA ’82, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Kathryn K. Boudreau, BC ’89, June 25, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Elaine (Torchick) Weber, BA ’84, Aug. 12, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Roger D. Wilkay, BBA ’81, Aug. 10, 2018, Washington, DC
Elizabeth L. Mercotte Steiner, BA ’83, CT
Tom D’Owra, BA ’86, Aug. 12, 2018, Chicago, IL
Hazel Wiltfleiter, BS, Aug. 5, 2018, Battle Creek, MI
Dana Forbes ’77, July 19, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Richard D. Davis, BS, ’72, July 14, 2018, Ludington, MI
Nancy H. (Taylor) Holland, BA, July 28, 2018, Venice, FL
Jeremiah J. Swartz, BA, May 9, 2019, Schoolcraft, MI
Donald D. Campbell, BA ’86, MA ’93, Aug. 4, 2018, New York, NY
Joyce A. (Ohe) Albee, BBA ’75, Aug. 10, 2018, Grand Blanc, MI
Jerome M. Bridgeman, BA ’66, May 9, 2019, Battle Creek, MI
Helen K. Gancarz, MA ’90, Aug. 12, 2018, St. Louis, MO
Frederick L. Lessen, BA ’64, July 28, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Jack R. Longman, BS ’80, July 31, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Gary L. Nagel, BA ’80, July 30, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Suzan J. (Barrett) Playfoot, BS ’77, Sept. 3, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Richard D. Bajnall, BA ’72, May 25, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
Ann (Zimmermann) King, BA ’82, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Donald R. McCormick, BA ’76, May 15, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
Kame L. Heyen, BA ’84, Aug. 11, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Audry (Adams) Macdonald, BC ’11, Aug. 12, 2018, Coldwater, MI
Brian C. Lake, BA ’87, July 30, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Alvinne J. (Howard) Frizzell, BS ’78, Aug. 24, 2018, Fort Scott, KS
Edith L. (Laird) Jarrett, BA ’76, July 31, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Alinee J. (Howard) Frizzell, BS ’78, Aug. 24, 2018, Fort Scott, KS
Steven J. Dorway, BS ’79, July 31, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Jennifer M., MA ’95, June 28, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
Bryan A. Wins, BS, ’85, Aug. 11, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
David R. Edwards, BS, ’85, July 16, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Eugene E. Rowe, BS, ’86, June 26, 2018, Battle Creek, MI
Garfield C. Smith, BS, ’76, July 12, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Omar A., BS, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Jean C. Van Zoonen, BS ’82, Sept. 9, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Douglas B. Anderson, BS ’85, June 19, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Karen L. (Saylor) Cape, BS ’78, July 14, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Robert J. (Frank) Scaletta, BS, ’79, July 19, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
John J. Fleming, BS ’65, May 5, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
Gordon L. Nagel, BS ’66, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Regina A. (Laureau) Vandam, BS ’75, Aug. 11, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
C. Patrick Babcock, BS ’62, Aug. 6, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Douglas A. Bodrozh, BS ’66, Aug. 19, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Kevin M. (Nagel) Christian, BS ’67, May 14, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
Henry L. (Jarman) Daves, BS ’66, July 30, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
James K. Smith, BS ’67, May 25, 2019, Kalamazoo, MI
James J. Fagan, BS, ’70, July 13, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Gerald L. Nagel, BS ’71, July 7, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Gary D. Shook, BS ’71, July 7, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Denis A.money, BS, ’72, July 26, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Kir P. Goldberg, BS ’74, July 11, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Michael D. Klam, BS ’78, July 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Loretta J. Poulson, BS ’72, Aug. 12, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Pamela A. (Lemley) Parmelee, BS ’70, Aug. 8, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Donald A. (Bible) Murphy, BS ’72, Aug. 26, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Steve W. (Hutch) Hackett, BS ’74, Aug. 24, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Robert J. (Frank) Scaletta, BS, ’79, July 19, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Mary E. (Zimmerman) Hager, BS ’71, Aug. 22, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Patricia A. Cooper, BS, ’75, Aug. 20, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
John H. (Kunter) Kuster, BS ’75, July 28, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Emilie E. (Henderson) (Kruschwitz) Schrock, BS ’76, Aug. 7, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Mark H. Thomas, BS ’77, Aug. 17, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Hilary (Johnson) Weidmuller, BS ’78, Aug. 14, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Robin S. VanderBos, BS ’78, Aug. 16, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Karen M. (Dill) Rankin, BS ’78, Aug. 13, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Sherwood Cordier, professor emeritus of education, Aug. 15, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Geoffry A. Smith, dean of the Division of Continuing Education, May 3, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Nicholas J. Zillante Druskovich, associate professor of English, May 9, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Joseph (M.) Bremner, professor of psychology, May 16, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Fred D. (Johnson) Jessen, professor of psychology, May 17, 2018, Kalamazoo, MI
Dr. Chien-Juh Gu explores how international migration reshapes women’s senses of themselves in her latest book, “The Resilient Self.”

The sociologist uses life history interviews and ethnographic observations to illustrate how immigration creates gendered work and family contexts for middle-class Taiwanese American women, who, in turn, negotiate and resist the social and psychological effects of the processes of immigration and settlement.

Most of the women she interviewed migrated as dependents when their U.S.-educated husbands found professional jobs at go-go clubs. Constrained by gender roles and the immigrant visas, those women could not work outside of the home during the initial phase of their settlement. The significant contract of their lives before and after immigration—changing from successful professionals to housewives—generated feelings of boredom, loneliness and depression.

Mourning their lost careers and lacking full-time homemaking, these highly educated immigrant women were forced to redefine the meaning of work and household, which in turn shaped their perceptions of themselves and others in the family work and in the larger community.

As a professor of sociology, is also the author of “Mental Health Among Taiwanese American Women: Gender, Immigration and Transnational Struggles.”
Broncos are Prepared.


Our graduates earn degrees that prepare them to immediately succeed. In just three months—half the standard of most colleges—Broncos are employed in jobs they like that are in their field. We go further, focusing not just on 2022 but 2042, and a lifetime of opportunities that will come from a changing world of work. Our students learn deeply in their major, and also learn to adapt by pairing their passions with critical thinking, reasoning, writing and communication.

It’s a great day to be a Bronco.

wmich.edu