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Winter 2019

## College of Arts and Sciences: Winter 2019

College of Arts and Sciences

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Winter 2019



### ARTS AND SCIENCES

WMU, in partnership with Michigan State University, is now in its fourth year as part of a \$2.3 million program designed to increase diversity in economics doctoral degrees and professions. The 2019 American Economic Association Summer Training Program and Scholarship Program will take place May 30 through July 28.

STORY



### FACULTY

Western Michigan historian, Dr. Sally Hadden, is the first woman to receive a prestigious service award from the American Society for Legal History. Hadden, associate professor of history, has received the Craig Joyce Medal for her long and outstanding service to the organization.

STORY



## RESEARCH

Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa is one of 40 researchers in the nation—and the first at WMU—to be awarded a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in biology. Calvo-Ochoa is studying the zebrafish olfactory bulb to understand how the brain functions and recovers from damage.

[STORY](#)



## STUDENTS

Three undergraduate students have won scholarships in support of their studies overseas through the college's inaugural Study Abroad Photo Contest. The competition invites students to showcase their experiences engaged in learning activities or embracing local culture abroad.

[STORY](#)



## ALUMNI

WMU is proud to introduce a new interactive tour to showcase local flagship Sustainable Brewing program partner breweries and key alumni shaping the industry. Reserve your spot now for the all-inclusive Bronco Brewery Bus Tour Saturday, Feb. 16.

[STORY](#)



WMU has appointed a proven leader as its new vice president for development and alumni relations. Kristen DeVries will provide strategic leadership and oversight of the University's development efforts, alumni engagement and foundation expertise.

STORY

## WMU part of \$2.3 million program that boosts diversity in economics

CONTACT: [Molly Goaley](#)



Students from the first American Economic Association summer program hosted by WMU and MSU.

Economists base much of their work on the belief that equal opportunity is vital to how society functions. Yet, the economics profession has faced a persistent lack of women and members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

Addressing this gap is a priority for the Western Michigan University Department of Economics. Since 2016, WMU has partnered with Michigan State University to offer an innovative program designed to increase diversity in economics doctoral degrees and professions.

The American Economic Association's Summer Training Program and Scholarship Program offers talented undergraduates from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to develop their math, technical and research skills to meet the high demands of academically challenging doctoral programs.

Funded by more than \$2.3 million in grants from the National Science Foundation and other organizations, the summer program has been offered at various universities since 1974, including

Yale, Duke and the University of California, Berkeley. The two-month residential program takes place at MSU's campus in East Lansing and is slated to be hosted by Western and MSU until at least 2020.

“Preparing a diverse pool of students for the rigors of graduate school in economics is an initiative we are proud to support,” says Dr. Christine Moser, WMU professor of economics, who serves as associate director of the summer program. Dr. Don Meyer, WMU Department of Economics chair and professor, also serves as an instructor in the program, with a number of WMU graduate students serving as teaching fellows.

According to Moser, the program accepts about 35 college students, typically juniors or seniors, from around the country. “Most are thinking about graduate school, but some are interested in public policy or other economic professions,” she says. “Some are first-generation college students or come from schools that don't typically send students on to Ph.D. programs. To mentor and advise these students gives them a great opportunity to move to the next level in their education or careers.”

## INTENSIVE PREPARATION

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According to the most recent data from the NSF, just 34 percent of doctoral degrees in economics were awarded to women in 2014. Minority academic economists are even rarer, earning only 8.5 percent of doctoral degrees that year. Beyond academic careers, the gender and racial/ethnic gap has persisted across all economic professions.

The summer program aims to boost diversity in the field by offering students substantial preparation for high-level graduate work in economics and related fields. According to the AEA, some 20 percent of all doctorates awarded to minority scholars in economics can be attributed to the summer program.

“The AEA summer program brings together students and teaching fellows from around the country, and gives them the opportunity to network with one another,” says Chikezie Okoli, a WMU doctoral student and teaching fellow for the program in 2017. “The confluence of different viewpoints, backgrounds, experiences and ideas allows students to learn from their peers about issues they may not have been aware of previously. Additionally, students become better researchers because the program gives them the techniques to conduct proper research and the awareness to ask the right questions.”

The application deadline for the 2019 summer program is Jan. 31. Interested students can learn more at the [AEA Summer Program website](#).

## THE AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

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The American Economic Association encourages economic research, issues publications on economic subjects and encourages perfect freedom of economic discussion. With more than 20,000 members, the association publishes the American Economic Review, Journal of

Economic Literature, Journal of Economic Perspectives and AEA Papers and Proceedings, as well as American Economic Journals including Applied Economics, Economic Policy, Macroeconomics and Microeconomics. More information can be found at [the AEA website](#).

## National association honors historian for service

CONTACT: JEANNE BARON  
NOVEMBER 21, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Dr. Sally Hadden

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A Western Michigan historian is the first woman to receive a prestigious service award from the American Society for Legal History.

**Dr. Sally Hadden**, associate professor of history, received the Craig Joyce Medal at the society's annual meeting in November for her long and outstanding service to the organization. Awarded only four times until now, the medal is presented on an occasional basis to "acknowledge and honor extraordinary and sustained volunteer service to the society."

Hadden has been a member of the society since 1989. She has served on five committees, chairing two; been elected to the board of directors; and after nine years, just completed her third term as national secretary.

At WMU, she teaches, serves as director of graduate studies for her department, and writes about as well as researches law and history in early America. Hadden also is working on two new writing projects: a monograph on 18-century lawyers in colonial American cities and a study of the earliest U.S. Supreme Court.

She previously completed a monograph titled "Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas" and co-edited or co-authored "Signposts: New Directions in Southern Legal History," "A Companion to American Legal History" and "Traveling the Beaten Path: Charles Tait's Charges to Federal Grand Juries, 1822-1825."



## ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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The American Society for Legal History is an international academic organization dedicated to fostering scholarship and teaching in the many fields of legal history around the world. It was founded in 1956 to foster interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching in the broad field of legal history.

The society sponsors a quarterly journal, the Law and History Review, and a book series, Studies in Legal History, both of which are published for the Society by Cambridge University Press. The organization's international members include historians, law professors, graduate students, lawyers and judges.

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

## Researcher earns prestigious fellowship for brain cell regeneration study

CONTACT: DIANA BERKSHIRE HEARIT

DECEMBER 10, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa is one of 40 researchers in the nation to be awarded a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in biology.

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A Western Michigan University researcher is one of a select group in the nation to receive a distinguished award for her work that may lead to a better understanding of how to repair traumatic brain injuries or progressive memory loss.

**Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa** is one of 40 researchers in the nation—and the first at WMU—to be awarded a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in biology.

With her \$138,000 award, Calvo-Ochoa is studying the zebrafish olfactory bulb to understand how the brain functions and recovers from damage. Unlike humans, zebrafish can repair brain lesions through cell regeneration.

"By learning how this process works," Calvo-Ochoa says, "we may be able to learn how this might work in the human brain when there is some form of traumatic brain injury" or a condition such as Alzheimer's disease.

"The NSF fellowship is a tremendous opportunity for Erika," says **Dr. Christine Byrd-Jacobs**, professor of biological sciences and Calvo-Ochoa's faculty mentor.

"Erika's project will help us gain new knowledge about how the adult brain can regain function after injury. She is exploring the process of regeneration and recovery using a fish model."

### Longtime passion drives discovery

Calvo-Ochoa has been interested in science and how the body works since she was a child.

"As a first grader, I remember going to my school library and finding books on the human body and cells. I would read and study those every day. I did not come from a scientific family, but I knew this was what I wanted to do."

Indeed, she's the first one on this path in many ways. She is the first person at WMU to receive the NSF research postdoc fellowship. She also is the first woman, Latina and immigrant to be so honored at the University.

Calvo-Ochoa only recently became a resident of the United States. Before that, she'd held a couple different visas that enabled her to work as a research assistant while her residency application was in process. Once she became a resident, she applied for and won the NSF fellowship.

"I am so humbled and grateful to the National Science Foundation and to Dr. Byrd-Jacobs for giving me this incredible opportunity," Calvo-Ochoa says. "For me, personally, it means everything. It's the chance to get back into the research lab, and it's the chance to show students from diverse backgrounds that they can be scientists, too."

At WMU, she's become an inspiring figure because of her zeal for learning, her humility and commitment to promoting diversity in STEM fields—science, technology, engineering and mathematics.





Dr. Erika Calvo-Ochoa is studying the zebrafish olfactory bulb to understand how the brain functions and recovers from damage.

"It is important to me to be able to inspire Latinas both in the USA and in Mexico, my homeland, to work hard, to pursue their dreams and to know it is possible to be a successful Latina in STEM," Calvo-Ochoa says.

"It's not been easy. But I share that openly with my students and those I mentor, so that I can encourage them to not give up."

#### Reaching beyond the laboratory

Her proposal includes an outreach component, and she is excited to work through existing programs at WMU, such as the College Assistance Migrant Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education to mentor and inspire young Latino students, just as she was mentored at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico while earning her bachelor's degree in biomedical research and her doctorate in neuroscience.

"It was very competitive and challenging, but thanks to many great mentors, I got outstanding scientific training. I aspire to be this kind of mentor to young students to show them they can do research, too."

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

# Three students win scholarships through Arts and Sciences Study Abroad Photo Contest

Three undergraduate students have won scholarships in support of their studies overseas through the college's inaugural Study Abroad Photo Contest. The competition invites students to showcase their experiences engaged in learning activities or embracing local culture abroad. The 2018 winners were selected by the College of Arts and Sciences' deans. They include:

## WINNERS

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First Place – \$1,000

*Alex Bicknell*

**Majors:** History, Latin

**Minors:** Communication, Business Analysis

**Study Abroad Program:** Water Resource Management in China

**Photo Info:** Chris Coppock, Krishna Polius, Adriana Echols and Alex Bicknell climb the Great Wall.



Second Place – \$750

*Grace Sylvester*

**Major:** Pre-Psychology

**Minor:** Spanish

**Study Abroad Program:** Study Abroad in Quito, Ecuador

**Photo Info:** Jessica Poling at the top of the Cathedral of Quito (Catedral de Quito) with El Pancillo in the far background.



Third Place – \$250

*Sydney Kester*

**Major:** Public Relations

**Minor:** Global and International Studies

**Study Abroad Program:** Colonialism and Terrorism in Dublin and Belfast, Ireland

**Photo Info:** Sydney Kester representing WMU at one of the greatest natural wonders of the world, Giant's Causeway in Bushmills, Ireland.

## 2019 COMPETITION

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Entries are now being accepted for the 2019 Arts and Sciences Study Abroad Photo Contest. Details and eligibility can be found on the [contest webpage](#).

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [YouTube](#)



Hop on and enjoy the all-inclusive five-hour Kalamazoo winter escape on the Bronco Brewery Bus Tour on Saturday, February 16. Western Michigan University is proud to introduce a new interactive tour to showcase local flagship Sustainable Brewing program partner breweries and key alumni shaping the industry.

The tour includes your own reserved seat on an Indian Trails chartered bus, special expert guides between each stop, a lunch buffet, beer samples and tours at each of the three destinations: Paw Paw Brewing Co., Arcadia Brewing Co, and Bell's Brewery (Comstock Brewery main production facility). This year's tour will focus on fresh water and sustainability efforts in the brewery process. Only three buses and 150 seats available, so reserve your spot today!

### **Date and Time**

Saturday, February 16,  
11:30 a.m. arrival and check-in  
Noon to 5 p.m.

### **Tour Itinerary**

Start at: Heritage Hall  
11:30 a.m. arrive and check-in

Noon departure

Stops include:

- Paw Paw Brewing Co., food buffet, beer samples and tour

- Arcadia Brewing Co., flight of 4 beers
- Bell's Brewery Inc. (Comstock Brewery), samples and tour

End at: Heritage Hall, 5 p.m.

### **Park and Departure Location**

WMU Heritage Hall  
Parking Lot 1  
625 Oakland Drive  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

### **Admission**

\$69/person\*

\*Early bird registration has been extended until the registration closes on Thursday, February 14.

\*\$15 from each admission will benefit the WMU Sustainable Brewing program and each guest will receive a wooden bottle opener

### **Guest Parking**

Parking is free of charge in Parking Lot 1 for the duration of the event. Buses will be parked and ready in the same lot for convenient access.

### **MyWMU Accommodations Statement**


WMU's Office of Development and Alumni Relations will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities or dietary restrictions. Requests can be served more effectively if notice is provided at least ten (10) days before the event. Direct accommodation requests to [concierge@mywmu.com](mailto:concierge@mywmu.com) or (269) 387-8746.

### **Wear Bronco Gear**

Show your Bronco pride! Wearing Bronco gear to alumni events is always encouraged. If you'd like to order Bronco gear online, visit the WMU Bookstore or the [MyWMU Store](#).

### **About WMU's Sustainable Brewing Program**

Launched in 2015, the joint sustainable brewing program was developed at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Western Michigan University by the two schools working in close coordination with the industry. The program offers students the opportunity to earn a certificate or associate degree at KVCC, then transfer to a Bachelor of Science degree that marries industry art and science with WMU's national reputation in sustainability. The rigorous science curriculum, which addresses some of the industry's most pressing issues, has been developed with input from a panel of Michigan's top craft brewers and suppliers. Learn more at [wmich.edu/brewing](http://wmich.edu/brewing).



**REGISTER**

# WMU appoints proven leader as new VP for development and alumni relations

CONTACT: PAULA M. DAVIS

DECEMBER 19, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Kristen DeVries

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Following a national search, Western Michigan University has named an experienced fundraising executive to provide strategic leadership and oversight of the University's development efforts, alumni engagement and foundation enterprise.

**Kristen R. DeVries**, previously vice president for university advancement at Lawrence Technological University, will join WMU as its next vice president for development and alumni relations, effective **Jan. 2**. She also will serve as executive director of the WMU Foundation.

A proven leader, DeVries fills a critical role at WMU, joining the enterprise-wide effort to advance the strategic direction of the University.

"We are excited to have an experienced and talented leader like Kristen assume this important position," says WMU **President Edward Montgomery**.

"She has a proven track record of building a first-rate development and alumni relations team and successfully executing a major comprehensive fundraising campaign."

## POSITION AT WMU

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In leading WMU's Office of Development and Alumni Relations, DeVries will oversee a comprehensive fundraising campaign; manage corporate, foundation and major gifts; and preside over all other fundraising activities. She also will be responsible for alumni engagement activities, as well as promoting engagement with faculty, staff and students.

As executive director of the WMU Foundation, she will work closely with WMU's president and with the WMU Foundation Board of Directors to set and meet fundraising goals.



"With Western Michigan University's leadership on such an impressive trajectory, it's a tremendous time to join the University and to engage even more constituents in the great future ahead of us," DeVries says.

"I'm very impressed by the quality of WMU's development and alumni relations professionals as well as that of the faculty, deans and other academic leadership. I feel honored that I've been asked to join such an excellent group."

DeVries says she is looking forward to the opportunities her role at WMU will present, including launching a comprehensive campaign in the future.

## PRIOR POSITIONS

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Prior to being tapped by WMU, DeVries led all fundraising and alumni engagement activities at LTU. She first joined the Southfield, Michigan, university in 2016.

During her tenure there, she increased the level of giving every year. In addition, the university experienced a record-setting increase in the number of individual donors, social media engagement increased tenfold, and new technologies such as text to give and crowdfunding were implemented. DeVries also was part of a leadership group that launched a nursing program at LTU in partnership with Ascension, and she was part of a team that achieved AACSB accreditation for the first time in the College of Business and Information Technology.

Previously, DeVries served as senior associate vice president for strategic engagement and advancement operations at Drexel University; associate director of relationship management, operations and performance improvement at the University of North Texas; and an administrator in fundraising-related posts at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, National Jewish Medical & Research Center, and Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

## VP SEARCH

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During WMU's search for a vice president for development and alumni relations, Renee Pearl, director of engagement, guided the operation.

"Renee has done an excellent job leading our alumni engagement and fundraising efforts during this interim period," Montgomery says. "We appreciate all of her hard work and her willingness to serve during this critical period."

**To learn more** about WMU's development, alumni relations and foundation activities, visit the [Office of Development and Alumni Relations website](#).

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