Impactful interns

As an intern, he saved a company $1 million with his innovative engineering. Our Broncos are gaining meaningful, resume-worthy experiences and impacting industries before graduation.
10. Preparing to prosper
Forget fetching coffee—Broncos are gaining valuable industry experience and connections in their summer internships. From designing toys, furthering space explorations, influencing political policy, managing media for professional athletes, rewiring planes, crafting stories, creating new food packaging and equipment and even holding a birthing mother’s hand, students are learning in and out of the classroom.

20. Expanding the horizons
Exploring the world is as easy as the click of a button thanks to the first cohort of the Global Engagement Program. After seeing the sights themselves, they’re recreating those magical moments for the next generation.

22. 100 years of better living
After a century of improving patients’ lives, the occupational therapy program is continuing to find ways to stand out.

24. Betting on an adventure
Jerry Selbee won the lottery—literally and figuratively. A loophole landed him millions and actor Bryan Cranston’s attention.

30. Why I give
Keeping the spirit of his wife alive, Bill Thompson says he wants to give back to the place that “touched and helped mold our lives.”
Western leads the state with new public electric vehicle charger network on campus

Western is amping up sustainability efforts. The institution, in partnership with the utility Consumers Energy, unveiled 10 new dual-port electric vehicle chargers on campus capable of powering up to 20 vehicles simultaneously—the most public chargers of any university in the state.

A $50,000 grant from Consumers Energy's PowerMI Fleet initiative helped to fund the new electric vehicle technology on campus.

As the first research institution in the state to install such technology in 2011, Western continues to have the most robust electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Michigan and ranks among the top five colleges nationally.

Students helped to fuel the electric vehicle charging infrastructure improvements on campus. A team of engineering Broncos completed a senior design project in fall 2021, investigating ways to revitalize the University's charging network, ultimately making technology recommendations and developing a model the University can draw upon in the coming years to maintain a robust, revenue-neutral and publicly accessible charger network.

Chargers are located at various locations across Western's Kalamazoo campuses and are available for public use. The fees for use are based on research conducted by the engineering students and students in the Haworth College of Business as well as peer-institution review and stakeholder input.

Jeff Spoelstra, director of the Office for Sustainability and co-chair of the Carbon Neutrality Committee, will lead student researchers in a yearlong usage study to reassess charging fees in summer 2023 in order to ensure equity, user satisfaction and network sustainability.

"We want to learn together. Western has a great track record of pulling groups together and giving students a chance to engage in meaningful research—in this case, learning how to manage an electric vehicle network."

2022 class of Presidential Innovation Professors announced

The Office of Research and Innovation is recognizing three faculty members for their advanced and creative study with Presidential Innovation Professorships. It recognizes and provides funding to outstanding faculty members for creativity in research and entrepreneurial approaches to their disciplines.

**Dr. Martha Council-Vargas**
Professor of flute
**Research:** Integrative Performance of Flute Music by Historically Underrepresented Composers and the Power of Art as a Catalyst for Change

**Dr. Tianshu Liu**
Professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering
**Research:** Unified Image-based Measurements of Complex Flows

**Dr. Alisa Perkins**
Associate professor of comparative religion
**Research:** Race, Religion and Revitalization: Black Muslim Community Leadership in Detroit
Western curbs paper scrap and bioplastic waste with one of the only compostability testing labs of its kind

An innovative new lab at Western will help companies evolve to a greener future. Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certification is expected later this summer on the new compostability testing facility—one of just four of its kind in North America.

The new lab will certify products as compostable if they pass the three primary steps of the compostability test:

- **Disintegration:** Confirming the test product breaks down in size.
- **Biodegradation:** Making sure it converts to carbon dioxide in a timely manner.
- **Toxicity:** Testing seed germination and plant growth to ensure the soil is viable.

"Our CO2 conversion equipment is unique, possibly making us the only fully automated testing lab in the world," says Lon Pschigoda, general manager of the WMU Pilot Plants. "We've gone to the next level and set our system up to automatically capture data and generate reports for us."

The Pilot Plants already do recyclability testing for a number of national and international brands, such as Starbucks. Many of those companies are now looking to continue advancing their sustainability goals to include compostability.

According to the USDA, between 30% and 40% of the country's food supply ends up in landfills.

"If these types of materials go into a landfill without oxygen, the process is anaerobic, which creates methane," Pschigoda adds. Methane is a harmful greenhouse gas, estimated by the Environmental Protection Agency to be more than 25 times as potent as carbon dioxide in terms of trapping heat in the atmosphere. "Alternatively, we can break these items down quickly in compost, which will allow the release of CO2 and make a good, healthy soil conditioner that will go back to farmland."

Jason Wang, a paper science Ph.D. candidate, led the installation and development of the new compostability testing lab. His experience makes him one of the few North American experts in this type of equipment and setup.

"It was a challenge for me; we kind of started from scratch. But it aligns with my Ph.D. expertise, developing innovative green technologies to promote sustainability," he says. "I like that challenge, and it's been a great adventure."
Four faculty receive Fulbright Scholar awards, including one Distinguished Scholar Award

Fulbright Scholars build lasting educational connections between the people of the United States and other countries. The following Western awardees will contribute their expertise to make a difference around the world.

Dr. Chansheng He is the recipient of the Fulbright University of Leeds Distinguished Scholar Award, one of only 38 Distinguished Scholar Awards granted globally out of more than 440 Fulbright Scholar awards for next fiscal year. A professor of geography, environment and tourism and a Distinguished Faculty Scholar, He will spend six months at Leeds University in the United Kingdom looking at the interactions between human, socioeconomic, ecologic, geomorphic and hydrological systems that affect the water cycles in a river basin and using that information to address the global water supply crisis.

Dr. D. Eric Archer, associate professor of higher education leadership, will travel to Albania to help support the development and implementation of a comprehensive internationalization plan for the public higher education sector in Albania. That plan includes integrating global perspectives throughout teaching, research and service in higher education.

Dr. Sandra Borden, professor in the School of Communication and director of the Center for the Study of Ethics in Society, will be traveling to the University of Navarre in Spain to conduct research for an international research collaboration for retheorizing journalism’s ethical responsibilities in Western democracies in light of emerging political, social and technological realities. These include changes in the practices of journalists and news consumers and increased political polarization.

Dr. Shannon McMorrow, assistant professor of interdisciplinary health programs, will travel to Uganda to conduct research and teach at the Makerere University School of Public Health. Her teaching and research will expand critical public health knowledge and skills by teaching students, training faculty in online teaching and conducting photovoice research to generate powerful visual evidence to inform policies and programs for Congolese refugee women in Uganda.

Jazz program earns accolades in prestigious competition

DownBeat’s 45th annual Student Music Awards netted Western students wins from what’s considered the most prestigious competition in jazz education. Gabe Bertolini was recognized for Graduate College Outstanding Performances in the tenor saxophone category; Faith Quashie was honored in Undergraduate College Outstanding Performances in the vocal jazz soloist category; and the WMU Advanced Jazz Ensemble was the Graduate College Winner for jazz combo.

Check out In Tempo on page 34 to see Western faculty honors.
Advertising students take first place in national competition

For the first time in WMU history, a team of 30 Haworth College of Business advertising and promotion students won first place in the American Advertising Federation’s National Student Advertising Competition. The presentation team members were Katherine Caldwell, Molly Farrell, Hannah Korbel and Thomas Ziolkowski, and they were supported by 26 other team members.

Engineering team places in top 3 in national castings competition

Five Western students placed in the top three out of 41 universities in the 2022 Cast in Steel Challenge, which was held during the American Foundry Society’s Cast Expo. Team members at the event include Sean Derrick, Juan Foo, Levi Koebe, Rehan Manimaleth and Aaron Matthew Martindale. The competition challenged students to use modern casting tools to creatively design and produce a functioning version of a Celtic Leaf Sword.

Sky Broncos precision flight team places 8th in national competition

The Sky Broncos placed eighth overall at the 2022 Safety and Flight Evaluation Conference (SAFECON). WMU’s team accrued 187 points during the event, placing fourth for ground events and 10th for flight events. The team also placed sixth for the judges’ trophy. Team members include Kyle Albrecht, Umid Avchiyev, Bazil Azeem, Jessica Bernin, Morgan Carstensen, Evin Cooper, Brock Fransen, Evan Hoyle, Tyler Iverson, Angelo Molina, Nicolas Olnhausen, Carter Peterson, Antonino Serra and Jack Skoczen.

Sleeping Giant Capital closes $10 million in funding, enhancing partnership with WMU

Sleeping Giant Capital, a West Michigan-based investment and growth platform, closed a $10 million funding round to scale operations, with a focus on empowering women professionals in acquiring and growing businesses. The funding secured by Sleeping Giant Capital enhances the partnership with Western’s Haworth College of Business, allowing more students to benefit from transformational experiences and showcasing the college as a leader in business education.

Launched in 2020, Sleeping Giant Capital was founded by Drs. Derrick McIver and Doug Lepisto, who serve as managing partners of the firm as well as co-directors of the Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy at the Haworth College of Business. The firm seeks to take majority positions in established companies with $1.5 million to $4 million in annual cash flow.

As a platform, Sleeping Giant Capital connects West Michigan stakeholders including investors, executives, current business owners, future business owners, WMU Haworth undergraduate students and advisors. The platform offers resources and capabilities including mentorship, technology, growth strategy consulting and office space. By acquiring and growing businesses, the platform generates financial, social and educational returns to stakeholders in the West Michigan community, including a portion of returns that are donated to WMU Haworth’s Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy.

Sleeping Giant Capital also offers for-credit practicums to leadership and business strategy undergraduate students. Sleeping Giant Capital provides space, mentorship, technology and strategic connection to cultivate real, impactful and transformational learning experiences.

“WMU Haworth strives to be a leader in innovation and business education nationally,” says Dr. Satish Deshpande, dean. “The opportunity that this provides our students benefits them tremendously. Being able to develop skills, capabilities and character through real experiences, alongside executives in their field, makes WMU students stand out among their peers.”
Emily Whitenack, BA '22, learned valuable skills as a special education intern at Portage (Michigan) Central Middle School.
Dear friends and colleagues,

As the summer draws to a close, numerous Bronco students just concluded or are soon to complete productive summer internships, co-ops and other experiential-learning activities. Other students are gearing up to engage in this kind of in-the-field applied learning while taking classes during the fall or later this academic year.

At Western, we're proud that better than 90% of our students will have taken part in at least one experiential-learning activity and many will have completed several of them by the time they graduate. These opportunities provide valuable hands-on learning, connections to mentors and often represent steppingstones to begin a career.

We take pride in our students’ experiential-learning productivity because tying excellent classroom instruction to applied experiences gives our students an incredible advantage. Experiential education effectively works in concert with formal classroom instruction to deepen learning, boost students’ confidence in their skills and abilities, confirm a chosen career path or even provide fruitful redirection to a new professional realm to explore.

And because our students don’t wait until after graduation to make a measurable mark outside the classroom, they leave Western career ready and understanding how to pursue their purpose in life. It’s no coincidence that our experiential-learning statistic is like our post-graduate success rate. Our most recent survey of graduates showed that 93% had a job or were continuing their education. Moreover, alumni who completed an internship were “three times as likely to have a job related to their degree and two times as likely to be satisfied with their job compared with peers who did not have an internship.”

That’s why I’m so pleased and grateful that we will be able to expand the experiential-learning opportunities for students thanks to the Empowering Futures Gift. As you will read on the following pages, part of that incredible $550 million contribution has been earmarked to help fund a new Paid Internship Program to support a variety of on-the-job experiences for our students.

As a result, many more students will be able to demonstrate to themselves—and future employers—their drive to seize and leverage opportunities to benefit a world that needs their talents. That’s the Bronco advantage.

Sincerely,

Edward Montgomery, Ph.D.
President
PREPARING TO PROSPER

Hannah Kalleward, center, is helping develop safety procedures for GPI's new K2 paper machine, the largest of its kind in North America.
Students are jump-starting their careers through internships and research activities this summer. But long gone are the days of filing papers and fetching coffee. Our Broncos are doing the real work, making lasting and innovative impacts on their industries while gaining extraordinary knowledge both in and out of the classroom.

Md Marsad Zoardar has helped Graphic Packaging International (GPI) save more than a million dollars annually with his engineering skills—and he's still in college.

"This is a great place to work, and I love every moment of being here," says Marsad, a computer engineering student working on industrial automation and machine programming through a co-op with the control engineering division in GPI's Kalamazoo converting plant. "I have done many large projects. Some of them have a pretty significant contribution to our production."

His projects have ranged from designing a roller for press equipment that reduces scrap to designing a carton-shingling apparatus. It's valuable industry experience that's helped solidify his career goals.

"It showed me who I am, what I like to do and what I will continue doing in the future," he says. Marsad hopes to continue with GPI as a control engineer after graduating in December 2022. "I love the work environment, the team I work with and the people I am around. This is a very supportive place for me."

Marsad is one of a number of Western students gaining valuable industry experience through internships and other hands-on learning opportunities. Western's most recent Post-Graduate Activity Report shows 91% of graduates reported having completed at least one experiential-learning activity, ranging from internships and co-ops to capstone projects and involvement in extracurricular organizations. Those experiences often turn into jobs; the same survey shows 93% of Broncos were employed or continuing their education within six months of graduation.

"Our students are known for their hard work, grit and career readiness based on their learning in the classroom, participation in our career-focused programs and experiential-learning opportunities," says Lisa Garcia, interim assistant vice president for community partnerships. "Time and time again employers have told me that when they hire WMU interns, they know they are hiring students who are well-prepared to handle the many challenges and demands of the workplace."
Western has a large portfolio of local, national and international business partners. In addition to GPI, companies and organizations like Stryker, Kellogg's, Eaton, Landscape Forms, Ascension Borgess, Bronson Healthcare, Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency (KRESA) and Zoetis, among many others, often tap into the Bronco talent pipeline for interns and employees.

"Forging strong partnerships with businesses and organizations in our community benefits everyone," Garcia says. "Businesses and community partners can access the talent they need, and the University is able to share its expertise, which helps to create a better community for all. Our students can find internships and learning opportunities that help them gain valuable, real-world experience to prepare them for their best future."

While internships give Broncos an edge in their job search, financial barriers can limit access. Bolstered by the Empowering Futures Gift, Western's Paid Internship Program launching soon will offer wages for meaningful, resume-worthy work experiences for students—especially first-generation students and those in historically marginalized populations—to explore their career options.

"With paid internships, employers are able to attract broader candidate pools and see greater commitment from their interns to the position, and they will typically give paid interns more significant responsibilities," says Evan Heiser, senior director of career and experiential education.

MAKING AN IMPACT

Jen Sova draws on the skills she honed at Western, where she earned bachelor's degrees in audiology and speech-language pathology and a master's in speech-language pathology, as the administrator of KRESA's Early Intervention and Special Services. Job-related skill-building played a crucial role in her own career path.

"Hands-on learning is key to being prepared for the workforce," she says. "Getting to implement techniques and strategies while having onsite mentorship gave me confidence in my abilities as a speech-language pathologist."

Now she has become one of those mentors, working with a number of Western students who assist with learning and behavioral needs of children in preschool special education programs.

"We're really lucky to have a resource like Western; having the intern boost allows us to keep that intensity that we need in our program," Sova says. "We couldn't do what we do without them."

Molly Mattes completed her practicum with KRESA as a master's student. Now as a doctoral student pursuing a Ph.D. in psychology with an emphasis in behavioral analysis, she works as the practicum supervisor for two undergraduates and five master's students working in KRESA's childhood special education classrooms.

"I think the area where I've grown the most is working on a collaborative interdisciplinary team. Learning to work with others, in multiple capacities, has helped me grow both professionally and personally," Mattes says.

"There are so many opportunities for learning and growth at WMU."
Just three weeks into her internship, Alya Al-Harrasi has seen a new passion blossom.

“It’s eye-opening to be here. I’ve never worked with children with autism, so this is a new experience for me. And I think I’m going to go into the field now and see how it goes,” says Al-Harrasi, who is studying data science and behavioral science at Western. “It’s incredible working with these kids and seeing them develop new skills.”

“The most rewarding experience I have had is working with one of my students who previously did not wear his shoes, and I was able to write and implement a shaping procedure to work on having him wear shoes for longer durations. Now, he wears them consistently,” adds Alex Becker, a behavioral analysis master’s student. “I have already received a lot of hands-on experience, which is vital.”

THE BRONCO ADVANTAGE

Mike Doss, GPI’s president and chief executive officer, knows the value Western students can bring to companies: He was once in their shoes. Doss began working for GPI—then known as James River Corp.—in 1990 when he was completing his MBA in finance at Western. He earned a bachelor’s degree in industrial marketing from the University a year earlier.

“I’m really proud (of my Bronco roots). Students at Western get a great education, they come out of school and do meaningful work, and we have those kinds of opportunities.”

Alex Fleck is a full-time GPI employee by way of an internship. A dry end assistant superintendent on the company’s new K2 paper machine, he interned in GPI’s tech lab as an undergraduate paper engineering student. The experience led to his full-time job with the company.

“I had already worked with them. They had worked with me and they knew what I was capable of, so they were willing to hire me,” he says. The strong set of skills he built in Western’s program, in addition to two other industry internships with Verso Corp., helped him stand out among his peers.

“The connections really helped as well as the opportunities to get out in the field and perform real work. The classes also give you a good background; you learn the science of pulp and turning trees into paper and the different aspects of the machines,” he says. “The labs were really cool too; we got to work on a lot of the same testing equipment that is used in the mills, and we also got the opportunity to run trials on the Western pilot paper machine.”

Western’s facility gives students a primer for the technology they’ll work on in the industry.

“The coolest thing about my current internship is the opportunity to work on a state-of-the-art paper machine that is less than a year old,” says Hannah Kalleward, a paper and chemical engineering double major who is currently working in operations on K2 as well as helping to develop safety procedures for the machine. She hopes to continue with the company full time as a process engineer once she graduates. “My internship experiences at GPI have confirmed that I chose the right career path.”
Immaculata James has had a passion for politics since working as an activist in her home country of Malaysia. She has served as a summer legislative aide in Michigan’s capital city for Sen. Sean McCann, handling relationships with constituents, volunteering at events in the 20th district and conducting research for legislation.

In her role, the political science major is able to work on a broad range of tasks, including legislative projects, policy research and fieldwork. One day she may be reaching out to constituents to get their feedback about McCann’s performance or answering their questions on legislation and policy; another day she might be volunteering at events like the Kalamazoo Pride festival or Kalamazoo Community Roundtable.

While her tasks cover a broad range of topics and policies, she says tourism has been a long-time interest.

The experience as a legislative aide "has taught me to work as a team toward a goal set ... and, above all, being curious and asking questions to increase my knowledge."

McCann, a proud Bronco alumnus who participated in the Capital Internship Program as an undergraduate political science student at Western, understands the impact such internships can have.

"It’s fantastic to be able to stay connected to a program that provided me with such phenomenal opportunities," he says. "I’m proud to give WMU students a place where they can learn about state government and engage with our community. I look forward to seeing some of our current capital interns return to Lansing as legislators or staff in the future."
On the labor and delivery floor, Cade Hine is witnessing the birth of his own career.

"I knew after my first day that's where my passion was."

As a nurse extern, he's involved in just about every aspect of the birthing process.

"I've seen multiple babies born ... and I've seen the look on the mothers' faces as they get to hold their babies for the first time. I have personally held a first-time mom's hand while she was getting a C-section, and I was able to comfort her throughout the procedure," he says. "I've helped set up the OR for surgery, spent a day working triage and so many other things. I absolutely love my job."

Western's Bronson School of Nursing is the reason Hine, who grew up in Ypsilanti, Michigan, chose to come to Kalamazoo.

"We gain a lot of hands-on experience outside the classroom and build a lot of relationships with nurses and management. So when the time rolls around for internships or externships, we all have worked in an area of the hospital that we love the most," he says. "Western's nursing program really is superb at helping students build connections and get set up for success."

A Kalamazoo Promise Scholar is now crafting the story of future scholars to come. Senior Ca'Jon Martin is a copywriting intern for the program that offers free college tuition to graduates of Kalamazoo Public Schools, writing content for the organization's website and social media platforms.

"I want the content that I create for The Kalamazoo Promise to push the organization's goals in any direction that is beneficial," the public relations major says. "I hope that after this internship, I can be a better writer not only for clients but for myself as well."

Of his many responsibilities, it's the new connections he's made with community partners that is most exciting about the experience.

"I love that I have the opportunity to improve my interview skills with every encounter I have," says Martin about his first internship. "I have grown to invest in myself and my abilities. Seldom do I second-guess myself because of the opportunities I've had to grow as a well-rounded individual and an even more confident professional in the field of public relations."
The sky is not the limit but the goal for Yewon Lee; one day she hopes to be flying through the air in an aircraft she built herself. Western has given her the space to put that dream within reach.

With a solid foundation in aircraft schematics as well as engine and airframe technology, the aviation flight science and technical operations double major is expanding her skills on electrical systems as an avionics intern with Duncan Aviation. Yewon spends her days learning how to route wires for things like aircraft instruments, warning lights and sensors.

"It's the first time I have been able to put my work into an airworthy plane," she says, remembering her first assignment at Duncan rerouting wires from start to finish on a client's aircraft. "It was cool because I did all the work by myself."

An international student from South Korea and the College of Aviation's 2022 Presidential Scholar, the internship will bolster a resume that also includes professional ratings and certifications obtained while completing her studies.

"As I learned everything I wanted, I could dream more," she says. "I really appreciate Western for bringing my dreams back."

Yewon Lee
Avionics intern at Duncan Aviation, Battle Creek, Mich.
Serving up skills, marketing students Dominic Gee and Karina Luco both landed summer internships at Dom’s Kitchen and Market in Chicago.

As a packaging intern, Gee helps revamp and improve catering packaging and plan company events. Besides learning about the food industry and business, he hopes to immerse himself within the company and create new connections.

“I have stepped out of my comfort zone multiple times,” he says. “Professionally, by stepping out of my comfort zone, I have improved my communication skills and I’m more willing to put myself out there to make new connections.”

Luco secured an internship in category management, analyzing data and applying that knowledge to business practices. This summer she’s been part of the team working on the assortment and visual representation of products on display at Dom’s second location, which requires her to be in the new building measuring, planning and envisioning the blueprints.

“I am hoping to grow my knowledge of the food marketing industry and ... learn how to analyze data, as well as build my professional affiliation,” she says.

After graduating in the spring, her dream is to open a plastic-free grocery store. The internship “is a perfect opportunity for gaining knowledge to help my plan, as well as helping me learn how to cater to specific customer needs.”

Dominic Gee
Packaging intern at Dom’s Kitchen and Market, Chicago

Korina Luco
Category management intern at Dom’s Kitchen and Market, Chicago
It's not all fun and games—toys are serious business for Isabella Waite. She's spent her summer at toy giant Melissa & Doug's headquarters in Wilton, Connecticut, working to devise the next great way for kids to play.

"A typical day at work for me involves lots of ideation, sketching, digital rendering and even making realistic prototypes of toys," says Waite.

While the specifics of her projects are top secret, she's hopeful we'll see toys she helped design on store shelves next year.

Waite won over her interviewers with the dynamic portfolio she's built in the Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation, based in the College of Fine Arts.

"The blending of business, engineering and fine arts courses within the product design program has helped me become a well-rounded designer and approach projects with the entire process of launching a product in mind," she says. "I have had numerous experiences that helped spark my creativity and passion for design."

When NASA's Psyche spacecraft launches next year, headed for an asteroid between Mars and Jupiter, Margaret Mooney's research will be hurtling through space along with it.

A NASA Space Technologies Graduate Research Opportunities fellow, Mooney is tasked with investigating the fundamental physics that drive unstable plasma dynamics in hollow cathodes.

"Cathodes are the very heart of Hall thrusters" which will be used on both Psyche and in NASA's upcoming Gateway mission, which NASA calls "humanity's first space station in lunar orbit to support NASA's deep space exploration plans."

"My fellowship allows me to study incredibly exciting and complex plasma physics phenomena that no one has investigated before," says Mooney, a mechanical engineering doctoral student who is currently on an internship rotation at the Naval Research Laboratory. "To develop novel concepts and link them to already discovered physics is my dream. Through this fellowship opportunity, I have also met the top people in my field and even worked with these people I highly respect."

Mooney, who earned her bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from Western in 2018, has also interned at the NASA Glenn Research Center and NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. She plans to apply the concepts and techniques she acquired in the field to her upcoming thesis research.
As a kid playing on football fields around Highland Park, Michigan, Brandon Harlin grew up idolizing NFL players. Now he's working side by side with them as a communications intern with the New York Giants. From managing media profiles and launching a new website to help players tackle press coverage, Harlin is seeing his dreams of sports management come to fruition.

"Just the ability to grab and coach players for camera time is cool; it's like I'm their PR coach," says Harlin, whose ultimate goal is to lead a sports franchise.

Harlin built a strong foundation for this experience through a previous internship with WMU Athletics.

"I can have an educated say in a lot that I do (with the Giants) outside of what I'm required. The WMU internship taught me hard work and to be a sponge for knowledge."

As his internship with the Giants progresses, Harlin is looking forward to gaining more experience and knowledge of the game and his position within a professional sports organization.

"I arrived (at Western) a boy from a small town with no clue where to go. Now I'm a man in the Big Apple with an actual path," he says. "I know this will unlock many more doors for me."
EXPANDING THE HORIZONS

The world is more connected than ever, and the Global Engagement Program (GEP) offers students the opportunity to not only discover it but build leadership and global skills to make them more marketable in their future careers. The first cohort just completed the four-year program, leaving behind tools that will open a world of global learning opportunities for K-12 students.
"I witnessed firsthand these students' growth ... how they learn to be flexible and adaptable and how this helps to develop their emotional intelligence. This kind of exposure to the world assists in the development of an individual's knowledge of themselves," says Dr. Paulo Zagalo-Melo, associate provost for global education.

The program officially launched in 2018. Students in the first cohort took global studies classes together during their first year and completed study abroad experiences in Lisbon, Portugal, and across Ireland.

"The Global Engagement Program at WMU really impacted me because it allowed me to learn about other countries and experience different cultures, which is not something I got to do a lot of previously," says Kara VanderKamp, of Kalamazoo, who graduated in April with a bachelor's degree in public and nonprofit administration.

"It's something that's really important to me because I love other cultures, I love to travel and I've always wanted to see the world. And Western's given me a great opportunity to do that," adds Nick Besta, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who graduated in April with bachelor's degrees in anthropology and communications. "I got to learn about countries and actually be there and see it, which I think is so much more valuable than simply reading about it or listening to a lecture. It changed me and made me want to go to other places and keep learning." While the COVID-19 pandemic hampered some plans for long-term study abroad, a core group of students from the 2018 cohort continued to the program's final phase: A capstone project focused on expanding global education in K-12 classrooms to promote cultural understanding.

"It's so easy at a place like Western—with our extensive study abroad program and the globalization classes that we were able to have—to interact with international students and to experience other cultures. But high schoolers and middle schoolers don't necessarily have that opportunity," says Owen Kilpatrick, a music education and saxophone performance student from Lansing, Michigan. "It is really meaningful to be able to share what we've gained from international travel in a format like this that's easily accessible to anyone, regardless of the resources they have available, and to inspire them to do their own explorations of other cultures."

GEP students designed an innovative digital curriculum using Google Classroom slides. They interviewed several international students at Western and created a slide for each of their home countries—places like Egypt, Bahrain, Nigeria and the Dominican Republic. Each slide also includes opportunities to learn about that particular country and culture, from clips of traditional music to books and artwork.

"From a social studies perspective, we're preparing students for a globalized world in which we can't even imagine. If we can't connect students to other cultures and people and philosophies outside of their sphere now, then we're not doing an adequate job as educators preparing them," says Dr. Brianne Pitts, assistant professor of teaching, learning and educational studies, who served as a collaborating faculty mentor on the project. The group presented its project to a group of teachers in the Kalamazoo area who shared the lessons with more than 850 K-8 students. More than 90% of the teachers indicated they had taught less than 10 lessons on global studies from their provided curriculum previously.

"Exposing elementary students to other cultures, to other people, it's a big plus. I really appreciate this initiative of creating awareness and also appreciating other people and other cultures," says Tongriang Daspan, a participating student from Nigeria. The cohort presented its work, "International Bitmoji Classrooms: Developing Understanding of Students' Global Perspectives," to students and educators from around the world at Western's first ever Global Leadership Conference in April. Group leaders hope to see their efforts expanded and new voices and experiences added by future GEP scholars.

"It definitely made me appreciate other cultures more. Now, I'm actually seeking out those experiences. ... I feel much more comfortable traveling."

—VanderKamp

Growing Together

The Global Engagement Program is designed for a cohort of students to grow together through a four-year curriculum, forming connections with a diverse group of peers in disciplines across campus, increasing cultural competencies and building global awareness.

"The exposure (students) have to cross-cultural experiences, international perspectives and the commonality of global challenges helps them understand the world they live in," Zagalo-Melo says. "No matter where they will be for the rest of their lives ... they need to understand the globe's interconnectedness, the power of interdisciplinary problem-solving and the potential impact of individual and collective choices."

Students build camaraderie in a cohort with peers outside their own major or college, exposing themselves to different perspectives while also having a community to grow and experience the world.

"Our first trip to Portugal was really interesting, because we got to interact with different businesses and educational institutions there. That kind of showed us what the difference in the economic structure is there compared to what we're used to and how the growing tourism industry affected people who had been living there," Kilpatrick says.

Students also had the benefit of having Zagalo-Melo, who is from Portugal, as their tour guide. VanderKamp enjoyed taking in the history that happened there. Things that took centuries to build are still standing," she says. "It definitely made me appreciate other cultures more. Now, I'm actually seeking out those experiences. ... I feel much more comfortable traveling."

While ideal for incoming students, the Global Engagement Program is open to students of all levels.

"Seeing these first GEP graduates and hearing about the impact the program had on them and their journey at WMU makes me even more excited about the future of this program," Zagalo-Melo says.
that the University's graduate program has traditionally ranked in the top of 50 occupational therapy programs nationally by U.S. News & World Report.

And just this past spring, the department welcomed its first cohort of students in the new occupational therapy assistant bachelor's degree program. This program of study prepares a student to sit for the exam to become a practicing occupational therapy assistant or, alternatively, progress to graduate study.

"It gives our students lots of flexibility," Hock says.

The department's next goal is to grow a fellowship program in collaboration with Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"Our first fellow will begin this fall to work with patients who have experienced a neurological injury, such as traumatic brain injury, stroke or spinal cord injury. This fellowship will involve research activity, supervising students in the WMU teaching clinics and teaching content within the occupational therapy doctorate program," Hock says.

Among the department's many points of pride is the open access journal. Founded in 2072, the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy is peer reviewed with a mission to publish high-quality articles focused on applied research, practice and education.

"There's only one other journal in the country like it," says Hock, who serves as the publication's managing editor. "It's free and interactive, open to everybody. Fred Sammons is our sponsor."

Sammons, who was named one of the 100 Most Influential Occupational Therapists by the American Occupational Therapy Association, is also the donor who made the Sammons Center for Innovation and Research in Occupation-based Technology on Western's campus possible—a center that fosters innovation in the profession.

"The occupational therapy department is always innovating and changing based on needs in the profession," Hock says.

The department runs as many as a dozen faculty-led fieldwork clinics on campus and in the community, with students providing hands-on services.

"Our clinics are mostly pro bono and serve people who are uninsured and underinsured. Students can see their professors as clinicians outside of the classroom while gaining valuable experience themselves."

In July 2022, the Department of Occupational Therapy formally celebrated 700 years of achievement. Faculty, alumni, donors and supporters came together for continuing education programs, student poster presentations, campus tours, an occupational therapy historical artifacts exhibit, cohort reunions and an alumni art exhibit.
BETTING ON an adventure

Bryan Cranston brings story of alumnus who beat the lottery to the big screen
A retiree in a sleepy town stumbles on a lottery loophole, finding a way to take luck out of the equation and make millions. The Hollywood script practically wrote itself and had actor Bryan Cranston chomping at the bit to play the part. It's a good thing—writing isn't really Jerry Selbee's thing.

"My spelling is terrible—absolutely terrible!" It posed some challenges in more writing-intensive, graduate-level courses he took at Western in the 1970s. "(One) instructor said, 'You know, you're the worst speller I have ever seen. How did you ever get into graduate school?'"

The truth is: He almost didn't. But what he lacks in grammar sense, he more than makes up for in mathematical skills. In fact, Selbee's understanding of probability is likely the only reason he made it into Western's program, having flunked the required English proficiency test once.

"The second time I took it, I knew mathematically that if you don't know a question and you're given four choices—A, B, C, D—pick one of those letters and always answer your questions you don't know with that same letter. I picked B. So there were five or six questions on the test I didn't know ... and I passed the test on the exact minimum."

Selbee, BBA '66, MBA '77, always had a knack for numbers—he tested at a college level in math when he was in middle school—but if you'd asked him while he was taking night classes at Western the exact probability his life would be made into a major movie, his calculations likely would have landed near zero. He wasn't trying to strike it rich or become famous, he just wanted to get off the production line.

"Once I got my bachelor's degree, they made me a supervisor," says Selbee, who started working at the Kellogg's factory in Battle Creek his senior year of high school—the same year he married his sweetheart, Marge. They enjoyed a modest small-town life, raising six children while Jerry Selbee moved from Kellogg's to Upjohn and Post Cereal before the couple bought a convenience store to run in Evart, Michigan, where he would eventually retire.

That's when things got interesting.
GOLDEN YEARS

One day in 2003, while he was at his old convenience store chatting up the new owner, Selbee happened to pick up a brochure for a lottery game called Winfall. The progressive jackpot game would roll winnings down to lower prize levels once the jackpot hit $5 million.

"It was a unique game that I was not familiar with, and I looked at the structure of the game and decided within three minutes that the game could be profitable if no one won the jackpot. So the next step was to determine what the probability was of somebody winning the jackpot," Selbee says.

This is where some of his Bronco business skills were put to the test. He quickly calculated the probability of no one winning the top prize at about 85%; a risk and reward analysis helped him determine the minimum return on investment he would need was 18%.

"I knew that the game would work as long as the numbers remained reasonably constant. And that's what happened," he says.

Never a gambling man, Selbee spent some time convincing himself to test his theory. He remembers going on an ice fishing trip with his son and son-in-law shortly after making the discovery.

"I had already determined this game could be successful, but I couldn't believe it. It was too easy," he remembers. "So I tried to talk to Matt and Dave about that, and they said they didn't want to hear anything about the lottery. 'Forget it.' So we spent three days out there and all I could do is think about the fact that this had to work."

When he got back to Evart, he couldn't stand it any longer and decided to play $2,200 when the next rolldown hit.

He lost $50.

"I should have gotten two four-number winners, mathematically. I got one," he remembers. "So I knew I hadn't played enough to compensate for the variance."

The next time he played, he bought $3,400 worth of Winfall tickets. He won $6,300. He decided to test his theory one more time, shelling out $8,000 on tickets. He won $15,700. At that point, he knew he had to let his wife in on what he'd been doing. Luckily, Marge was all in.

While their strategy wasn't illegal, Jerry Selbee decided to create the corporation GS Investment Strategies to ensure everything was above board. Then he invited his friends and neighbors to join in and buy shares to increase the volume and in turn increase the profits.

"One of our members, the father of one of our sons-in-law, had to change CPAs at one point," Selbee says. "His new CPA went through all of his stuff and called him and said, 'I need to meet with you guys.' So they went to the office and he said, 'I gotta tell you, I'm a little concerned. It looks like you have a gambling problem!' And he said, 'No, no, this is the best thing since frosting on a cake!'"

MOVING ON UP

The group played 12 times in Michigan before the state shut down Winfall due to lack of sales in 2005. But a relative quickly keyed Selbee in on a similar game, Cash WinFall, in Massachusetts with even better odds—a more than 92% chance no one would hit the jackpot. So he and Marge took their operation on the road, driving 13 hours every five or six weeks to a convenience store in Sunderland.
At the height of their playing, they were betting more than half a million dollars at a time—Jerry and Marge watched machines print tickets for 12 hours a day each—then spending a week or two in a motel going through all the tickets by hand. To many, it would have been tedious work. But the Selbees saw it as an adventure and a way to enjoy their time together. “It was the sense of accomplishment of doing something different than retired life,” he says. “It was fun! And to me personally, it was satisfying knowing what I thought would work actually did.”

They didn’t blow their winnings on anything lavish, buying a truck and a camper to tour some national parks and helping some of their grandchildren pay for college. But the fun couldn’t last forever. A reporter from the Boston Globe noticed the Selbees and a group of college kids from MIT were consistently winning big; she published two stories that led to a state investigation. It determined the Selbees didn’t do anything illegal, but the state eventually shut down the game once the cat was out of the bag on the loophole.

The Selbees and their friends made their last play in 2012. They never won a jackpot, but they did make chump change either. “In Michigan when we won, we averaged over 60% return each time. In Massachusetts when we won, we averaged between 28% and 34% return each time we won. But we won 42 times out of 43. So it paid off pretty good,” Selbee says.

Selbee wasn’t very familiar with Cranston or Bening—he’s “not a moviegoer”—but he got to know them both pretty well. The stars each spent several days in Evart getting to know the town, talking on the front porch swing and eating at local dives. “(Cranston) must have been watching me pretty closely, because he picked up on some of my habits,” Selbee says. Cranston even walked into the local barbershop and asked for a “Jerry Selbee haircut. ... That’s why his hair in the movie looks exactly like mine. And he copied my glasses. ... Our kids saw and said, ‘Oh my gosh, he looks almost just like you!’ after seeing the movie.”

In June, Paramount flew Jerry and Marge to New York to walk the red carpet at the Tribeca Film Festival and get the movie star treatment. “Every 5 feet Marge and I would have to stop and get our pictures taken and give an interview.”

Back in Evart, population 1,700—a small fraction of the 150,000 people that attended the festival in New York—the Selbees are happy to be back to their quiet life, enjoying their family and occasionally reminiscing about their lottery adventure. “Life goes on. And if you see something that can be advantageous, either to yourself or others, it’s a good thing to be able to do it,” Selbee says. And if he happens to stumble upon another lottery loophole while doing light reading at the convenience store? “Absolutely, I would do it again!”

HOLLYWOOD CALLING

As they say, when one adventure ends another begins. And so it went for the Selbees, who were thrust into the national spotlight following a 2018 Huffington Post article by Jason Fagone. He spent a couple of years talking with Jerry over cups of coffee and Sudoku during visits to Evart. A crew from “60 Minutes” quickly followed and, before they knew it, the Selbees were fielding calls from more than a dozen producers wanting to make their story into a movie. “It was quite an experience. I don’t know how to describe it: flattering and awe-striking at the same time,” he says. “I knew all along that the story could make a movie, but I didn’t know that it actually would.”

Soon Selbee would get the news Hollywood heavyweights Bryan Cranston and Annette Bening would be playing him and his wife on the big screen.

“I felt it was a breath of fresh air kind of story,” Cranston told Radio Times. "Over the 90 minutes, it would be a feel-good movie—and coming out of COVID and the lockdown, this is the first project I wanted to do. And it was good for me to do it, because I felt a sense of community as well."

In June, Paramount flew Jerry and Marge to New York to walk the red carpet at the Tribeca Film Festival and get the movie star treatment. “Every 5 feet Marge and I would have to stop and get our pictures taken and give an interview.”

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Director David Frankel and actors Bryan Cranston and Annette Bening spent several days in Evart getting to know the Selbees.
Paying bills, saving money and learning how to stick to a budget are just a few of the skills that everyone needs to be financially responsible. However, those skills have not typically been taught in school. This will change in Michigan in coming years.

In June, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed a bill that will require financial literacy education in high schools beginning in 2024. Students will be required to take a personal finance course as part of their graduation requirement, making Michigan the 21st state to require financial literacy courses. The importance of this type of education is evident in those who struggle with it—which is more than half of Americans. The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority finds about 66% of Americans are financially illiterate. Michigan is looking to put the next generation in a better position to navigate the stressors of modern life.

Todd Mora, program manager of the Sanford Center for Financial Planning and Wellness, is in the business of promoting financial wellness throughout the Kalamazoo area. He sees this development as a great opportunity to start students out with foundational finance skills. "I hope that all students will come out of the personal finance classes with an awareness of how to use money to achieve their goals as well as the major pitfalls to avoid," he says. "I am optimistic that this new requirement will help students graduate high school with a basic knowledge of financial terms and concepts."

One of the main lessons missing for young people today, Mora says, is the ability to gauge the long-term impact of current financial decisions. Convincing a student to save $10 instead of stopping for expensive coffee can be a hard sell, but it's one that can have a major impact over time. "We teach students about present bias: The tendency to put instant gratification ahead of future needs. When your present bias is strong, you will put off saving to the detriment of your financial future," he says. "Helping young people see themselves in the future and understand what their needs will be is essential to future success."

Over the next two years, school districts will be working to develop a curriculum to fulfill the financial literacy requirement. Mora advises teachers: "Teaching personal finance is no different from teaching mathematics or English. The challenge is developing and delivering engaging lessons that resonate with students."

The Sanford Center for Financial Planning and Wellness has worked with local schools and the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency to put on financial reality fairs and other events, showing that learning financial literacy can be fun. The center also runs a Dollars and Sense summer camp each year for students in the local community.

Jim DeMello, chair of the Department of Finance and Commercial Law, is excited about the possibility for the Haworth College of Business to partner with area schools. "I see this bill as a great opportunity for WMU Haworth to use our expertise and knowledge to help schools develop and implement this curriculum," he says. "The Sanford Center for Financial Planning and Wellness has already branched out to Grand Rapids, offering a financial literacy camp in collaboration with Grand Rapids Community College. We hope to have many more opportunities to do the same with other local school districts."

Mora says this bill is a good step in the right direction, but financial wellness starts at home. "I would encourage every parent to talk to their children about money and personal finance from their perspective. Parents are the greatest influence on a child's financial life. The sooner they start helping their children with responsible personal financial decisions, the sooner their child will be on the path to financial independence."
Bronco brilliance on Broadway

Darren Johnston, BA '09, gets to work in his new office at the storied Paramount Building in New York City. The theatre performance graduate turned Broadway producer has received three prestigious Tony Awards for his work with production company No Guarantees on "The Lehman Trilogy" (2022 Best Play), "Company" (2022 Best Revival of a Musical) and "Hadestown" (2019 Best Musical).
Bill Thompson, BBA '65, celebrates the return of Bronco football practice with head coach Tim Lester at Waldo Stadium.
Why I Give

Staunch. Ardent. Fierce. Any of these words could describe Bill Thompson’s pride for Western Michigan University, but they’d probably fall short.

For more than 50 years, Thompson has been giving to Western, generously supporting WMU Athletics, College of Education and Human Development, School of Music and Haworth College of Business. He’s a Bronco sports fanatic, remaining a season ticket holder for football, men’s basketball and hockey for five decades and counting. He also served on WMU’s Grand Rapids Alumni Golf Outing Committee for nearly 40 years. So, there’s no doubt he bleeds brown and gold.

“There are many things to love about WMU, starting with my relationships with administrators, faculty, staff, students, former students and lifelong friends,” says Thompson. “I believe I received a wonderful education and am very proud of my University as well as the faculty and graduates who continue to enhance my degree through their accomplishments.”

Thompson has fond memories of attending Waldo Stadium to watch the freshman football team on Thursdays with his father, followed by several visits with his aunt to Hyames Field for baseball and the basketball gym on Oakland Drive. When he was a student at Western, he joined Delta Sigma Pi, the University’s professional business fraternity, and played on the football, basketball and softball teams. The fraternity’s football and softball teams won intramural championships.

“Attending varsity games was a regular part of daily life for me,” he says. “And since I was a student, there have been many, many memorable away-game football trips as well as many basketball and hockey trips.”

A few highlights from these trips include Western’s football team winning the Mid-American Conference (MAC) Championship and playing in the Cotton Bowl in 2017; the men’s basketball team winning the 2014 MAC Tournament Championship and having the opportunity to play in the NCAA tournament; and last, but not least, the hockey team earning a No. 1 seed in the 2022 NCAA Hockey Tournament.

Seeing Bronco student-athletes become successful contributors both in competition and in the classroom has been a constant source of inspiration for Thompson.

“Watching their careers blossom, I couldn’t be prouder,” he says.

Because his and his late wife’s estate plan includes a significant contribution to the University, future generations of student-athletes and students will benefit from his devotion to WMU, too.

“My only regret is we won’t be able to witness the fruits of this contribution,” Thompson says. “But we hope our support will help worthy students enjoy the same educational opportunities we were so fortunate to experience.”

Continuing a legacy

Money was tight for Thompson’s family when he was growing up. His father died when he was just 12 and his sister was 14.

“Our mother was determined to still give us a college education, and Western turned out to be a perfect fit for both of us,” he says. “My sister was a music major and had a long and illustrious teaching career. I wound up deciding to be an accounting major.”

In 1965, Thompson graduated with a bachelor’s degree in accounting from what’s now the Haworth College of Business. After graduation, he worked for Ernst & Ernst CPA firm (today’s Ernst & Young) for almost three years as an auditor.

“The education, training and practical experience from WMU were invaluable and have served me well all my life,” he says.

Gratitude is a big part of the reason why he and Gail, his beloved wife of 57 years who passed away earlier this year, became such steadfast Western donors. Another reason is a shared love of music; Thompson started taking clarinet lessons at 8 years old.

“I continued when I got to WMU, playing in both the University Symphony Orchestra and the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra,” he says. “My wife was a Spanish major in the School of Education, but we met because of music. She also played in both orchestras.

“We fully enjoyed our time on campus from the moment we met in the parking lot of what was then Harper Maybee Music Hall,” he adds.

Thompson’s father-in-law had a connection to music as well. He owned Malecki Music, Inc., a Grand Rapids-based dealer and distributor of sheet music. Thompson left public accounting, began working with his father-in-law and eventually bought the business with his brother-in-law. Malecki Music became the second largest in the industry with branch operations in Iowa, Washington, California and Missouri.

In 2004, he and his brother-in-law sold their company. Thompson then dedicated himself full time to his philanthropic passion: WMU.

“Giving back just seemed like the right thing to do and that belief has never wavered,” he says. “My wife and I found that it’s very easy to be supportive of our programs and student-athletes as well as the University’s colleges that touched and helped mold our lives.”

Why I Give 31
Georgia Ann Moss, BA ’73, MA ’81, MA ’06, of Muskegon, Michigan, authored the children’s book “Uncle Buddy,” a family story of wisdom, love and good snacks.

Don Pluta, BS ’77, was inducted into the Michigan High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame (MHSCA). On Sept. 25, the longtime Holly (Michigan) High School wrestling coach will join 13 other coaches from across the state to be recognized as 2022 Hall of Fame inductees for their achievements on the field, in the arena and in the classroom.

Debra House, BS ’81, was named executive director of Legal Aid of East Tennessee.

Michael J. Kelly, BS ’94, has been appointed to the role of 12th Judicial District Court magistrate in Jackson, Michigan.

Kristin M. Beltzer, MPA ’94, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission for a term ending June 12, 2023. Beltzer is CEO and founder of KB Collaborative, a business and executive management consulting business.

Robert Carl Bischoff, BA ’86, is a member of the food service staff at Naval Station Great Lakes, the U.S. Navy’s largest inland recruit training facility, in North Chicago, Illinois.

Lisa Pollina, BS ’97, is a member of the board of directors for Energy Recovery Inc., a global manufacturer of energy recovery devices for oil and gas, chemical and water industries, headquartered in San Leandro, California.

Gregory C. Johnson, MPA ’91, of Wixom, Michigan, was appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan State Transportation Commission for a term ending Dec. 21, 2024. Johnson was the senior vice president and Michigan area manager of WSP USA and has served as deputy director of the Michigan Department of Transportation. He is currently a program administrator for the Oregon-Washington Interstate Bridge Replacement Program.

Doug Wood, MBA ’93, chief administrative officer and senior vice president at Sweetwater Sound, a leading retailer of musical instruments and professional audio equipment in Fort Wayne, Indiana, was named to the board of directors of Star Financial Group.

Jennifer Rupp, BA ’98, was named President and CEO of Michigan Humanities, the state’s affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.


Matthew Harris, BBA ’98, was named chief procurement and supply chain officer at Bensenville, Illinois-based Fortune International, the country’s leading processor, distributor and importer of quality seafood, meats and gourmet products.

Paul S. Davies, MA ’98, principal of The Mediator Group, LLC, was added to the board of directors for Guiding Light in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Kristen Plichta, BA ’99, MBA ’08, is executive vice president of Intandem Credit Union in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She has 28 years of experience in the credit union industry and has been on the Intandem team since 2017.

BeeJay Dothard, BA ’00, was appointed by St. Mary’s County Public Schools as principal of Great Mills (Maryland) High School.

Jeffrey W. Parsons, BA ’00, MPA ’12, of Kalamazoo, was appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Citizen-Community Emergency Response Coordinating Council for a term ending Dec. 31, 2025. Parsons is an emergency management specialist with the Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management.

Maurice Ware, MA ’00, was named chief executive officer of Oesterlen Services for Youth in Springfield, Ohio.

George Grant Jr., PhD ’02, Penn State Berks chancellor, was named to the Lehigh Valley Business Power 30 for Higher Education, a list of individuals who hold positions that give them the ability to shape their communities and influence the quality of life through education.

Megan Wood, BA ’03, was named executive director and chief operating officer of the Ohio History Connection.

Lorne Deacon, BBA ’03, was promoted to president of Hatco Corporation, a commercial food-service equipment manufacturer headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Virginia Platek, BA ’05, a global English and AP language and composition teacher at Battle Creek (Michigan) Central High School, was named a winner of the 2022 Excellent in Education Award from the Michigan Lottery, which was established to recognize outstanding public school educators across the state. Winners of the weekly award are eligible to be selected as the Educator of the Year.

Jennifer Rupp, BA ’98, was named President and CEO of Michigan Humanities, the state’s affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Suzan Louis, BSN ’00, MSN ’13, is the 2022 recipient of Glen Oaks Community College’s prestigious E. J. Shaffer Award for Teaching Excellence. She is a professor of nursing at the college in Centreville, Michigan, and was recognized at commencement ceremonies on May 6.

Carrie Moore, BA ’07, a former Western women’s basketball standout, was named head coach of The Friends of Harvard Women’s Basketball program in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Jody L. Keisner, MFA ’07, will publish her memoir, “Under My Bed and Other Essays,” this fall.

Shaun Kellogg, MA ’08, was named interim executive director of the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation.
Sean Black, BBA '14, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Craft Beverage Council for a term ending Sept. 30, 2022. He currently is director of merchandising for alcohol for retailer Meijer Inc.

Terry Foor, MA '15, was appointed director of development for the Center for Open Science in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Jeffrey Oesch, MA '17, was named assistant principal of Airport High School in Carleton, Michigan.

Spencer Vanderheide, MA '17, a teacher at Kenowa Hills High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was named the 2022 Educator of the Year and will receive $10,000 from the Michigan Lottery's Excellence in Education program.

Nicholas Young, BS '20, was hired as an athletics compliance coordinator at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

Alumna awarded Pulitzer Prize for poetry

Famed poet Diane Seuss, BA '81, MSW '83, of Niles, Michigan, has been awarded a 2022 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for "frank: sonnets," a collection of poems that Seuss describes as a memoir in sonnets. Her subjects include the early loss of her father, being raised by a single mother, her son's drug addiction and living in New York City in the mid-1970s.

The collection also won the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry, National Book Critics Circle Award and LA Times Book Prize.

The Pulitzer Prize committee described Seuss' work as "a virtuosic collection that inventively expands the sonnet form to confront the messy contradictions of contemporary America, including the beauty and the difficulty of working-class life in the Rust Belt."

Presented by Columbia University, the Pulitzer Prize is an annual prize awarded for excellence in fields including journalism, photojournalism, fiction and nonfiction books, drama, poetry and music, and it is primarily awarded to U.S. citizens and U.S.-based publications. It is widely considered to be one of the most prestigious honors in these fields.

"For 'frank: sonnets' to have received such recognition, including the Pulitzer Prize, has been both unbelievable and an incredible gift," Seuss says. "This is never what I expected of life when I was growing up in a rural, working-class town in Southwest Michigan. I'm honored readers have seemed to feel seen and heard by the poems in this collection."

Born in Michigan City, Indiana, she has taught at Kalamazoo College, Colorado College, University of Michigan, Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast MFA program. Seuss was a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow and a recipient of the 2021 John Updike Award from the Academy of American Arts and Letters.

Seuss has completed a draft of her sixth collection, "Modern Poetry," which will be available in 2024 from Graywolf Press. She is also working on a collection of essays.

Her work has appeared in publications such as the Missouri Review, Poetry, Gulf Coast, The New Yorker, The New York Review of Books and The New Republic.
"Made in Kalamazoo—Trios and Duos" Keith Hall (2022)

Keith Hall, assistant professor of jazz drum set and jazz studies, describes his new album "Made in Kalamazoo" as a "love letter of sorts" to a city he's been immersed in for two decades, which he reveres for its "vibrant arts community, dynamic industries and vital personal connections." A drummer and composer who has played and recorded with a number of renowned musicians, this effort marks his debut as a leader.

The album, which earned 4.5 stars from critics in DownBeat magazine, features three solo pieces that pay tribute to legendary drummers Billy Hart, Elvin Jones and Max Roach. Other songs on the 20-track volume—some affectionately named for the city's favorites: "Kzoo Brew" and "The Promise"—include fellow Kalamazoo transplant and associate professor of jazz studies Dr. Andrew Rathbun on saxophone, bass clarinet and effects, as well as seven-time Grammy winner Robert Hurst III on bass.

Hall, who began teaching at the University in 2005, holds a bachelor's degree in jazz studies from Western as well as a master's from Queens College in New York.

Purchase the album at keithhall.bandcamp.com.
In Memoriam

Shirley A. (Dalby) Guerin, BA ’43, CT ’48, April 18, 2022, Swartz Creek, MI
James E. Mackay, BA ’48, May 7, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Donald Wayne Douglas, BS ’50, May 6, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Robert Earl Tassell, BS ’52, April 4, 2022, Frankenmuth, MI
Barbara Jean (Hanshue) Baker, BA ’53, May 1, 2022, Sutons Bay, MI
Robert E. Bakeman, BS ’53, May 5, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
William Henry Griessel, BS ’54, June 2, 2022, Richland, MI
Ethlynn Marie (Roegner) Dewitt, BS ’54, March 21, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Dolores Mary (Foster) Hayden, BS ’54, CT ’52, April 25, 2022, Wayland, MI
Catherine J. (Woodworth) Keniston, BS ’54, May 6, 2022, Fairview, MI
John Charles Wattles, BS ’55, April 15, 2022, Port Myers, FL
David Richard Balcom, BS ’56, MA ’65, May 21, 2022, Richland, MI
Jerome Wesley Ganzel, BS ’56, April 26, 2022, Highland Township, MI
Lyle Bernard Huggett, BS ’56, MA ’59, April 15, 2022, Paw Paw, MI
Ray C. Arndt, BS ’57, MA ’64, March 27, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Leland E. David, BS ’57, March 17, 2022, Naples, FL
Roger O. Sousley, BS ’57, March 24, 2022, Wayland, MI
Margaret J. (Mazurek) Haig, BS ’58, April 24, 2022, Grand Haven, MI
Melinda L. (Slayton) Stibal, BA ’59, MA ’68, April 25, 2022, Coloma, MI
William Ray Bennett, BBA ’60, March 17, 2022, Grand Haven, MI
Kenneth T. Houscek, BBA ’60, March 18, 2022, St. Charles, IL
Carolyn Alice (Leah) Kline, BS ’60, MA ’77, April 28, 2022, Portage, MI
James G. Zboril, BS ’61, May 1, 2022, Rochester Hills, MI
Robert Edwin Gaff Jr., BBA ’61, May 2, 2022, Elkhart, IN
Carolyn A. (Curtis) Chormann, BS ’61, MA ’76, March 18, 2022, Naples, FL
Doreen Marie Grimmink, BA ’62, March 31, 2022, Grand Haven, MI
Martin James Drenchen, BBA ’62, May 3, 2022, Pentwater, MI
Richard L. Scholler, BBA ’62, May 3, 2022, Grand Haven, MI
Robert Wirtz, BA ’63, MA ’69, March 22, 2022, East Lansing, MI
Ed Brewer, BBA ’63, March 20, 2022, Houston, TX
Margaret Ann (Chiodo) Thomas, BA ’64, April 13, 2022, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
Garry Lee Kieft, BBA ’64, April 2, 2022, Spring Lake, MI
John H. Flintoft, BS ’64, April 21, 2022, Mattawan, MI
James Edward Beadle, BBA ’66, March 17, 2022, Augusta, MI
Marvin Jane Hartsell, BS ’65, April 15, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Carol Anne (Haeferle) Haskett, BS ’65, MA ’68, March 28, 2022, Westminster, CO
Alvin E. VanderKlay, BS ’65, April 3, 2022, Kentwood, MI
Jane Dell Welbourne, BS ’65, MA ’71, May 16, 2022, Las Vegas, NV
Mary Ann (Bodine) Bimerle, MA ’65, March 25, 2022, Hartford, MI
Jack C. Estep, BS ’66, March 19, 2022, Lenior, NC
Nancy Ann Miller, MA ’66, March 18, 2022, Mio, MI
Jack Sage, BS ’67, April 8, 2022, Dorr, MI
John Thomas Morberg, BBA ’67, MBA ’70, March 24, 2022, Margate, FL
James M. Stanish, BS ’67, May 13, 2022, Tulsa, OK
Dale David Stiensma, BS ’67, April 22, 2022, Richland, MI
Caralee (Wright) Nietering, BA ’68, CT ’58, MA ’72, March 24, 2022, Grand Haven, MI
Celestia Rue Bell, BS ’68, April 7, 2022, Flint, MI
Jay Lee Stickle, BS ’68, MA ’73, May 2, 2022, Kentwood, MI
Hermina Emma Sikkema, MA ’68, May 6, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
Donald Fryling, BA ’69, MA ’77, March 27, 2022, Noblevisle, IN
Kay Burton, MA ’69, March 18, 2022, Spakone, WA
Virgil W. Bopp, SpEd ’69, May 14, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
Janice Koprowski, MA ’70, MA ’74, SP ’00, March 26, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
Donald O. Swartzlander, BA ’70, March 28, 2022, Allegan, MI
Joyce Elaine (Zoet) Weber, BA ’70, MA ’79, March 22, 2022, South Haven, MI
Marilyn R. Simmons, MSLS ’70, March 23, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
Joe Moulder, BS ’71, MA ’75, April 28, 2022, Otsego, MI
Myra Joyce Schuiteman, BS ’72, May 7, 2022, Fremont, MI
David Lee Backhaus, BBA ’72, April 16, 2022, McHenry, IL
David Charles Tully, BS ’72, March 18, 2022, Onomowoc, WI
Nicholas S. Carava III, BBA ’74, April 21, 2022, Seymour, IN
Douglas Edward Thompson, BBA ’75, April 19, 2022, Grand Rapids, MI
Diane Lynne Coghlin, BS ’75, April 13, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Timothy R. Jenney, MA ’77, April 4, 2022, Owasso, OK
Marian Mae (Greanya) Gay, MA ’78, April 16, 2022, Avon Park, FL
Robert B. Koch, MA ’78, April 5, 2022, Louisville, KY
Trudy Lane Daum, BA ’81, MA ’88, April 25, 2022, Auburn, NY
Brenda S. (Tarnow) Basak, BS ’82, April 25, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Bryan James Mead, BS ’82, April 21, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
James Stephen Deckard, MA ’82, May 5, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Glenda Rose (Putman) Bos, BA ’84, May 18, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Cynthia Kae (Anderson) Andrews, BS ’84, April 17, 2022, Rockford, MI
Paul R. SAXON, BS ’85, March 20, 2022, Winston-Salem, NC
Terry A. Telfer, MA ’87, March 23, 2022, Temperance, MI
Susan Martha (Burns) Ray, BA ’90, April 28, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Lisa Marie McCormick Shaw, BSE ’90, May 5, 2022, Jackson, MI
Kim Duane Lathwell, MA ’91, May 3, 2022, Frankfort, MI
Eugenia Ann (Hunter) Juister, MA ’92, April 27, 2022, Saginaw, MI
Patricia O’Donnell-Gibson, MA ’92, April 6, 2022, St. Joseph, MI
Thomas Victor Stanfield, BBA ’93, April 13, 2022, Vicksburg, MI
Kenneth James Laurence Jr., BBA ’00, April 21, 2022, Clarkson, MI
Thomas Carl Smalley, BBA ’00, May 2, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Jessica Catherine (LesCallett) DeVoe, BA ’01, April 22, 2022, Lima, OH
Kassidi Grace Krzykwa, BS ’20, April 3, 2022, Sparta, MI

Emeriti Faculty
Michael J. Barcelona, professor emeritus of chemistry, April 20, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
George T. Beech, professor emeritus of history, June 28, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Joel Boyd Jr., master faculty specialist emeritus for the Center for English Language and Culture for International Students (CELCIS), June 20, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Adrian "Ed" Edwards, professor emeritus of finance and commercial law, March 29, 2022, Bluffton, SC
Wayland D. Gardner, professor emeritus of economics, April 17, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Gilda Greenberg, professor emeritus of humanities and social sciences, April 4, 2022, Durham, NC
Michael L. Miller, associate professor emeritus of art, May 7, 2022, Prescott Valley, AZ
Lovette Teichert, master faculty specialist emerita for the Center for English Language and Culture for International Students (CELCIS), April 13, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Marion H. Wijnberg, professor emerita of social work, May 8, 2022, Kalamazoo, MI
Alex Clark, BS '20, taking in a view above the clouds during his first skydiving experience in tandem with his instructor. Registered Student Organization Skydive Broncos allows affordability and accessibility for students to push their limits and experience Earth 11,000 feet above. (Photo courtesy: Skydive Allegan)