Campus gears up for Homecoming week

The end of this month marks two of WMU’s most festive three-day occasions—Homecoming and Family Weekend. This will be the second time the University’s Homecoming and Family Weekend, set for Friday through Sunday, Oct. 1-3, have been combined to create a rich array of on-campus activities.

The 2010 Homecoming theme is “Unmask your Bronco Spirit.” The festivities will actually begin Monday, Sept. 27, with the student-oriented Qdoba Homecoming Kickoff at 4 p.m. at Goldsworth Valley Pond. Other free student events include the Western Games at 11 a.m. Friday at the pond followed by the Soapbox Derby at 2 p.m. on Gilkison Ave.

The highlight of Homecoming will be the 2 p.m. football game Saturday, Oct. 2, against the University of Idaho. Bronco alumni and their families are invited to start revving up for the game at 11:30 a.m. by attending the Alumni Association PepFest being staged off of Oakland Drive Campus by the Health and Human Services Building. This tailgate event will feature food and music and is the official Homecoming celebration for alumni of all ages. The deadline to purchase tickets is Saturday, Sept. 25. Other Homecoming events of note are:

- The Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner Friday, Oct. 1. The 2010 award recipients are 

Fall enrollment surpasses 25,000 students

In increases in the number of new students at all levels of instruction have sent enrollment surging past the 25,000 mark. The official tally of students enrolled stands at 25,045—469 students or 1.91 percent more than last year. The increase seen in the annual fall census, completed Sept. 14, is reflected across the University in more beginning undergraduates, more students at the master’s level and more doctoral students.

The raw numbers also indicate a significant increase in the retention rate—the percentage of students who return following their freshman year. Retention has been a major focus of campuswide efforts in recent years, with a number of initiatives launched to identify and provide additional support for students who have difficulty transitioning from high school to college.

WMU President John M. Dunn announced the enrollment figures during his annual State of the University address Sept. 16, thanking members of the campus community for their work in establishing a welcoming and supportive environment in which students can be successful.

“We have significant growth in the number of new students at all levels,” Dunn told those attending. “As important as that growth is, I find myself even more encouraged by the fact that we have achieved a major increase in our freshman-to-sophomore retention rate...due to your efforts to reach out to help students during those all-important first months on campus.”


Dunn address focuses on achievement, discovery

WMU kicked off its academic year Sept. 16 with a convocation that honored achievement campuswide and outlined the University’s challenges, goals and aspirations in an address by President John M. Dunn.

The event featured Dunn’s annual State of the University address, as well as a series of awards honoring faculty and staff achievements. Dunn began his address, titled “Focus on Discovery,” by announcing that WMU had exceeded expectations for enrollment (see related story on this page).

WMUK 102.1-FM, the University’s public radio station, recorded the entire address. To listen to the recording, visit www.wmuk.org to and click Newsroom.

The text of the president’s remarks are posted at www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2010/09/038.shtml. Included are links to related articles spotlighting the 12 faculty and staff members who received awards during the convocation.
WMU gearing up for 2010 United Way campaign

WMU has set a goal of $275,000 for this year's campus United Way campaign, which began Sept. 16. Campaign organizers hope to surpass last year's giving record and increase WMU's community impact. But, to accomplish that ambitious feat, campuswide participation will be necessary.

WMU's United Way Advisory Board began distributing pledge cards to all faculty, staff and retirees last week. Gifts can be made as one-time donations by cash, check or credit card, or as pledges, payable by payroll deduction, credit card or direct deposit. Representatives are available to talk briefly about United Way, distribute pledge cards and answer questions about contributions. Representatives are available to talk briefly about United Way, distribute pledge cards and answer questions about contributions. Representatives are available to talk briefly about United Way, distribute pledge cards and answer questions about contributions.

WMU will begin its annual pledge drive Sept. 16. The campaign continues through June 30, every other week during the fall and spring semesters and once a month during the summer. Pledge cards can be returned by mail, by phone or online.

For questions or to schedule a meeting, contact wmu-united-way@wmich.edu.

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Transformation of Bernhard Center takes next step

Much of the main floor of the Bernhard Center was completely renovated this summer as part of ongoing efforts to create a building that can better serve as a welcoming center for visitors and the hub of student activities and campus life.

“The University is committed to transforming the Bernhard Center into a ‘true’ student union, one that serves as the living room of WMU, and we continue to welcome the involvement of students in the entire process,” says Diane Anderson, vice president for student affairs.

New entryways, updated decor and restrooms, comfortable seating areas and an LCD information display are the latest visible improvements. The improved student lounge has varied functional and comfortable furnishings, including TVs, to accommodate many uses. Less than one year ago, offices for Student Activities and Leadership Programs moved from Faunce Student Services Building to the Bernhard Center, and the new Student Organization Center opened on the building’s main floor.

The Bernhard Center is located at the center of West Campus and serves as WMU’s student union, as well as a key site for holding major public events.

Higher education focus of forum

“Higher Education: A Solution to the Michigan Crisis” is the topic of a 3 p.m. forum Thursday, Sept. 30, in 210 Bernhard Center. Speakers at the free, public event include Michael Boulus, executive director of the Presidents Council of State Universities of Michigan; David Hecker, president of the Michigan affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers; and Howard Bunsis, chair of the Collective Bargaining Congress of the American Association of University Professors.

WMU participants will include commentators Ron Kramer, sociology; and C. Dennis Simpson, physician’s assistant. Invitations will be made by President John M. Dunn; Peter B. Feldman, Faculty Senate president; and Paul Wilson, WMU-AAUP president.

Get vaccinated before influenza season arrives

Vaccination against flu and meningitis will be offered at campus clinics and on a walk-in basis at the Sisdecke Health Center.

The seasonal flu and meningitis vaccines are available to WMU students, faculty and staff members and their eligible dependents, and WMU retirees.

“HINI is one of three strains of flu viruses in the seasonal vaccine this year,” says Kristine Hanson, Sisdecke. “So, only one vaccination is needed.”

Beginning Monday, Oct. 4, vaccinations will be administered in Sisdecke on Mondays, 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m.; and Thursdays, 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m.

The planned clinic schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 1207 Aviation Education Center, College of Aviation, Battle Creek, Mich.
- Thursday, Sept. 30, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 3131 Sisdecke (geared for WMU retirees).
- Wednesday, Oct. 13, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Student Commons, Health and Human Services Building.
- Tuesday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 157 Bernhard Center.
- Tuesday, Oct. 26, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., room TBA, Engineering and Applied Sciences Building.
- Tuesday, Nov. 10, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., indoor tennis courts, Student Recreation Center.

For cost, insurance and other details, go to www.wmich.edu/wmunews/2010/09/048.shtml or call (269) 387-3287.

Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 50, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during September.

- 50 Years—Paul L. Maier, history
- 40 Years—Jeffrey W. Decker, Facilities Management-landscape services, and Suzanne M. Timmer, Office of the Provost
- 35 Years—Jeanine M. Bartholomew, College of Health and Human Services; Amy L. Burns, College of Education and Human Development; Nannette R. Morningstar, Bronson School of Nursing; and Diane M. Schuld, Facilities Management-construction
- 30 Years—Jeanine M. Bartholomew, College of Health and Human Services; Amy L. Burns, College of Education and Human Development; Nannette R. Morningstar, Bronson School of Nursing; and Diane M. Schuld, Facilities Management-construction
- 25 Years—Paula Armstrong, speech pathology and audiology; Dana Ball, Facilities Management-landscape services; Sue A. Beougher, university relations; Valerie J. Levenske, Dining Services-Valley #1; Laurie E. Riley, Facilities Management-building custodial and support services; Ellen M. Miller, Dining Services-Bernhard Center; Lisa K. Soule, Facilities Management-maintenance services; Joseph D. Truppa, Facilities Management-maintenance services; and John Alashar Eugene Waltz, registrar’s office.
- 20 Years—Paul E. Schneider, Lawson Ice Arena, and Iverne E. Thompson, WMUK
- 15 Years—Susan C. Bland, Sindecuse Health Center; James Calhane, development; Susan M. Henker, registrar’s office; Tracey Anne Henry, College of Aviation; Jeffrey Carl Landers, Facilities Management-powerplant; and Brenda J. Thomas, financial aid and scholarships
- 10 Years—Jose L. Cardoza, Facilities Management-building custodial and support services; and John Alashar Eugene Waltz, registrar’s office.

Facilities Management-maintenance services; and John Alashar Eugene Waltz, registrar’s office.

Harrison to be honored

William B. Harrison III, curator of the geosciences department’s Michigan Geological Repository for Research and Education, is the recipient of the highest award bestowed by the Eastern Section of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists.

Harrison will receive the 2010 Gale Award during a multi-award ceremony from 4:45-5:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 26, in the Radisson Plaza Hotel’s Stone Theatre. The free program is open to the public and part of the ES-AAPG’s annual meeting, which is being held in the Radisson Sept. 25-29.

The award recognizes distinguished geoscientists whose outstanding accomplishments and contributions to their profession and its applications have been directed toward bettering society. WMU is co-hosting the meeting, Harrison and WMU’s Robb Gillogly, geosciences, are co-chairing the event.

Obituaries

Milton J. Brawer, professor emeritus of sociology, died Sept. 5 in Kalamazoo. He was 84.

Brawer joined the faculty in 1960 and retired in 1995 after 35 years of service. He served as acting director of the Center for Social Research in 1968-69 and as University ombudsman from 1970 to 1974.

Active in several campus organizations, Brawer also served stints as president of WMU’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors and secretary of the Faculty Senate Executive Board.

Alan H. Jacobs, professor emeritus of anthropology, died Sept. 13. He was 80.

Jacobs, one of the world’s foremost experts on the Maasai people of Africa, retired in 1996 after 22-1/2 years of service. He came to WMU in 1974 as chair of anthropology and stepped down from that post in 1978. Among his many other administrative posts were African Studies Program chair from 1976 to 1979 and resident director of WMU’s winning program at Sunway College in Malaysia from 1990 to 1992.
Ronald Schubot, a systems analyst in information technology, started playing around with computers in high school. But it wasn't until he came to WMU in 1970 to study engineering andaced his computer classes that he realized this budding field was for him.

Schubot switched majors and graduated in 1980 among the University's first full class of students with a bachelor's degree in computer science, then immediately began working on a master's degree. A year later, the assembly language programming that he was doing as a graduate student got him noticed. WMU hired Schubot full time to do operating systems programming in the academic computing area.

"Primarily, my job is to analyze a situation where a product or system isn't working or something new needs to be done and come up with a solution," Schubot explains.

You type a command on the computer and it does something for you. If I've done my job right, things just happen and you'll never notice me." Schubot mainly works on Windows server solutions now, and he's leading the project to implement active directory file sharing for student-related applications and resources.

He's also responsible for maintaining the OpenVMS operating system, which remains in use processing physics research as well as BroncoNet ID accounts.

The only staffer left who knows OpenVMS inside and out, Schubot has played a role in the creation of all of WMU's student BroncoNet ID accounts. He's been working behind the scenes since campuswide computing was in its infancy and also helped develop the University's first in-house e-mail system, CONFER group conferencing system, and applications allowing faculty to post grades online and students to view them online.

"This is an interesting and challenging job. It's a collaborative effort and I get to work with a lot of nice people," he says. "But it's always changing. In some cases, you have a total upgrade and have to learn how to do things all over again."

Schubot has long been involved in WMU's Administrative Professional Association and sings in his temple choir. But most of his spare time is taken up by amateur radio. The Kalamazoo resident belongs to two local amateur radio clubs and has served as president of both. He holds the highest-level amateur radio license available and has been trained and vetted so he can participate in Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services, which allows him to serve in a variety roles during floods, tornadoes and other disasters as well as to represent RACES on the Kalamazoo County Disaster Committee.

Making it work. (Photo by Jeanne Baron)

Students sought to lead RACE exhibit-related discussions

Up to 40 WMU students are being recruited to help facilitate discussions regarding race, coinciding with a national touring exhibit coming to Kalamazoo Oct. 2.

Prospective participants must attend a two-part training session from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6, and from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 9, at the exhibit, "RACE: Why Are We So Different?" in the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

Exhibit organizers are looking for dynamic, social justice-minded students with diverse socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds to facilitate discussions on campus with other students about the exhibit. Those chosen must be able to facilitate at least two conversations throughout the fall.

Through film, still photography, interactive components and programming, the exhibit invites people to explore race as well as the impact of race as an economic, political and cultural construct. It will be hosted by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum downtown through Jan. 2. Visit www.raceexhibit.org/wmich for more information about becoming a student facilitator or to apply. For more information about the RACE exhibit and related events, contact Zarinah El-Amin Nareem at zarinah.el-amin@wmich.edu or (269) 387-6324.

WMU trustees OK creation of two academic centers

The WMU Board of Trustees approved the creation of two academic centers July 23.

The College of Health and Human Services Center for Gerontology will advance research, education and service as well as the University's longstanding gerontology programs and services Center for Gerontology will advance research in aging and will actively pursue external funding.

The Haworth College of Business Center for Sustainable Business Practices will promote global sustainable business practices and be led by Andrew Targowski, business information systems.

It will promote those concepts and practices as businesses across the world face the challenges of a lack of resources, declining business ethics and globalization issues.

Students, faculty, staff, business partners, non-profit organizations and community representatives will examine current business practices and policies to help achieve sustainable alternatives.

Homecoming

Homecoming: continued from page 1

Leslie Wilk Braksick, a nationally recognized leadership coach; Richard Allen Griffith, a federal judge; and William D. Johnston, head of the Greenleaf Companies and a WMU trustee. The deadline to purchase tickets is today.

• A reunion for WMU's Bronson School of Nursing and alumni of the former Bronson Methodist Hospital School of Nursing Oct. 1-2. For details, visit www.wmich.edu/bhs or contact Anil Maurya at anilmav s@wmich.edu or (269) 337-7931.

• The Campus Classic 5K and 1K run/walk Oct. 2. There will be on-site registration.

• A WMUsc Showcase Spectacular scholarship benefit concert featuring School of Music students, faculty and ensembles. Visit www.wmich.edu/homecoming for details about these and other Homecoming events.

Leadership coach to give talk

A nationally recognized leadership coach, business consultant, author and speaker will kick off the 2010-11 Haworth College of Business Distinguished Speaker Series. Leslie Wilk Braksick will talk on "Leadership in a Changing World: Stand Tall or Tap Dance?" at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30, in Schneider.

To attend, register by today at cassada@wmich.edu or (269) 387-6059.