Across-the-board excellence soars to new heights

Why be normal?

Western Michigan University may have started out normal, but it didn't stay normal for long.

After all, why be ordinary when you can be extraordinary?

That philosophy has been a cornerstone of the institution since it was founded at the dawn of the twentieth century as a regional preparatory school for teachers.

Western Michigan Normal School, as it was named then, soon advanced to the head of the class, earning a reputation for consistently training large numbers of exceptional teachers.

Not content to rest on their laurels, the institution's visionary leaders made sure "the normal" kept up stride for stride as America grew and confronted new challenges. They broadened academic programs, built new and exciting partnerships, researched innovative education strategies, and did a whole lot more. In short, wherever possible, they pushed the so-called "envelope."

As WMU spread its wings and began to soar, it blossomed into a comprehensive, nationally ranked university that today numbers among the best higher education institutions this nation has to offer.

Decades of decisive action and old-fashioned hard work propelled WMU to the unprecedented level of excellence and renown it currently enjoys. Now, with the next millennium fast approaching, University leaders are setting their sights even higher.

"As a university, we continue to grow in stature," President Diether H. Haenicke said during last fall's "State of the University" address. "We're an ascending national university, poised to rise to the next level in everything we do."

Clearly, words like "average," "ordinary," and "normal" haven't suited WMU for a long time. The list of its national rankings and outstanding accomplishments just keeps growing.

In 1996, for example, U.S. News and World Report placed WMU in the "major leagues of American higher education" for the seventh consecutive year. This was the same year the University distinguished itself by:

- Enrolling yet again some of the most academically talented freshmen students in the state and nation.
- Hiring nearly 100 superbly qualified new faculty members.
- Achieving new records for grant funding and private support.
- Beginning construction of one of the most sophisticated science research complexes in the Midwest.
- Leading all Michigan universities in the number of undergraduate international students.
- Playing host to scholars from around the world at acclaimed WMU-sponsored international conferences.

The University has earned its reputation as a quality, national institution. Its students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends built a foundation of excellence that has stood the test of time. Maintaining the momentum to climb higher mountains will be the next great adventure.

The future is filled with unbelievable opportunities, Haenicke said in last year's "State of the University" address. But it's also filled with potential obstacles, he warned.

"Our rise to the level of national recognition has brought along the joy and challenge of competing on the national level—competing for faculty, for research funds, and for students," he said.

Although Haenicke noted that WMU is doing well in all three of those categories, the president stressed that the University can't afford to become complacent, especially in the area of service delivery.

"Our students and their parents look at quality and price; quality and convenience—that is, flexibility and accessibility," he said. "We're to be held accountable for how we spend the public tax dollar, how we spend our time, how much our students learn in our classes, and we have to convince a critical public why we should have lifetime appointments or tenure when that isn't a way of life anymore for most other Americans."

But unlike many of its sister institutions, he added, WMU is on the rise and making dramatic progress.

"Behind us lies another banner year," he said. "We're moving forcefully forward on the national scene. We are indeed an ascending national university. There seems to be no limit to what we can do if we resolve to do it together."

See related story starting on page 3
State appropriations process continues

WMU seeking recognition for its unique status

Western Michigan University continues to seek a mid-tier funding floor that would recognize its unique status as Michigan's only public Doctoral I university, officials said after the state Senate approved a 4.5 percent increase in state appropriations for WMU and most other public universities.

"We are pleased with this increase and that it is substantial enough to what was originally recommended," said Keith A. Pretty, vice president for external affairs and general counsel. "But we continue to seek recognition of our position as the state's fourth largest and most complex university."

The executive branch's initial recommendation was for an across-the-board 2.5 percent increase while the House of Representatives approved a 5.5 percent increase for higher education. Final action was not expected before the end of June.

At 4.5 percent, WMU's increase would be $4.7 million, for a total appropriation of $104.8 million for the state's 1997-98 fiscal year that starts Oct. 1. WMU seeks a percentage increase that is greater than the one recommended by the state, Pretty said.

"Neither can the University afford to remain thirteenth in the level of funding unless it charges its students," he said. "The issue is not so much the percentage increase of tuition and fees as it is the actual additional cost to students, which will be moderate compared with costs at higher-tuition institutions."
The exceptional is business as usual at WMU

Teaching and Research
Some of the most respected and innovative academic programs in the United States have been introduced or refined by Western Michigan University.

A pioneer in several important disciplines, WMU is recognized as a comprehensive, national university. It's also earned an international reputation in fields as diverse as blind rehabilitation, paper science, medieval studies, graph theory, and substance abuse treatment.

Graduating with a WMU degree helps pave the way for success in today's competitive marketplace. And the six academic colleges that bestow these degrees aren't about to slow their ascent to even higher levels of excellence.

**College of Arts and Sciences**
WMU's largest academic unit, the College of Arts and Sciences, offers more degree programs to more students than any other college and supports the largest collection of laboratories and research centers on campus.

In recent years, the college has instituted several quality-oriented initiatives at both the undergraduate and the graduate level. These initiatives not only preserve and advance excellence, they also ensure students are well prepared for today's changing world.

For instance, the college's revised Liberal Education Curriculum requires undergraduate students to explore areas such as responsible decision making, critical thinking, social pluralism, and formative ideas as well as the more traditional liberal arts fields.

In addition, the college has strengthened its emphasis on providing graduate-level programs and conducting research. This has led to the development of several new programs designed to dovetail with the college's expanding research role and to address new societal needs.

A few other Haworth College of Business contributions to WMU's academic excellence include:

- Resuming the master of business administration degree program so it's more "user friendly" and responsive to today's business environment.
- Sponsoring international trade conferences and setting up its own student exchange programs with universities abroad.
- Offering the country's first undergraduate major in integrated supply management, which has been nationally recognized for its bold innovation and practicality.
- Bringing the first master of business administration degree live by satellite to individuals and companies across Michigan.

**College of Education**
The College of Education is one of the largest preparers of education professionals in the United States. In Michigan alone, more than 8,000 alumni are teaching and nearly 1,000 others are serving as school administrators, supervisors, and counselors.

Committed to the ideal that learning is a lifelong process, the college offers comprehensive programs for educators at all levels as well as a variety of non-teaching programs. All of these academic programs are fully accredited, attesting to the stature of each curriculum.

Research conducted by the college's faculty and students often impacts education at both the state and the national level. This research emphasizes applied experiences and prepares students to work in a culturally diverse, ever-changing technical society.

A few other College of Education contributions to WMU's academic excellence include:

- Earning praise from the National Council for Accreditation of Teachers for having an Intern Teaching Program that's exemplary and a model for the rest of the country.
- Directing one of the largest projects in Michigan to connect schools to the Internet and other worldwide computer resources.
- Implementing one of the first early intervention programs to reduce reading failure in the country and the first such program in Michigan.
- Strengthening graduation standards, such as being one of the nation's first universities to require a science/mathematics minor for all elementary education majors.

**College of Engineering and Applied Sciences**
With a commitment to academic excellence and hands-on learning, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences continues to gain national recognition.

In 1996, for example, U.S. News and World Report ranked the college in the nation's top thirty undergraduate engineering programs among comparable institutions. In addition, employers consistently commend WMU engineers for their scientific knowledge and willingness and ability to work as part of a team.

The college maintains close relationships with business and industry, ensuring that it keeps pace with scientific advances and that its programs and equipment are relevant and up to date. These relationships are most visible in WMU's laboratories, where industry scientists team up with faculty members to develop new products and unravel scientific mysteries.

A few other College of Engineering and Applied Sciences contributions to WMU's academic excellence include:

- Housing both paper and printing pilot plants on the same campus, making WMU the only university in the world with this superior technical capability on site.
- Establishing the Center for Excellence in Image Processing and Materials, which is developing easy-to-use recyclable, safe, and non-polluting materials for the federal government and American business.
- Developing special customized programs for Michigan employers, such as the bachelor's degree in manufacturing engineering that's offered only in Muskegon.
- Helping to sponsor more than twenty student organizations, giving budding engineers an opportunity to learn more about various careers and to rub shoulders with professionals in their field.

**College of Fine Arts**
The College of Fine Arts has always been on the cutting edge of education in the visual and performing arts. The first college of fine arts in Michigan, it maintains this edge through quality instruction and superb facilities.

The college's four acclaimed, nationally accredited units offer exceptional programs in art, dance, music, and theatre. And they provide some of the best facilities Continued on page 4
Facilities Improvements

In the last decade, WMU has invested nearly $320 million in construction projects to build for the twenty-first century and beyond. Its ascendency as a high-quality national institution wouldn’t have been possible without such a well-planned investment in its future. That foresight has led to a rich mix of modern classrooms, cutting-edge laboratories, stately historic buildings, and sophisticated computing and communication facilities, all in beautifully landscaped surroundings. While major projects have garnered most of the limelight, dozens of smaller, less noticeable enhancements have spruced up campus and contributed to the comfort and health of students. For instance, WMU has: remodeled heavy-traffic offices to improve service; wired all of campus for data hook up; installed brown and gold flags, banners, and signs. (More athletic and recreational facility changes are described on page 5 in the WMU section.)

Even Buster could use a refresher course

Even Buster Bronco, WMU’s resident mascot, needs a refresher course now and then. After all, he’s been preoccupied with $50 million in improvements to his favorite athletic and recreational stomping grounds. The three-phase construction project was begun in 1991 and expanded and remodeled Read Fieldhouse, transformed the old Gary Physical Education Center into the large, state-of-the-art Student Recreation Center, and spruced up Waldo Stadium with permanent lights, more seating, and a gold-trimmed facade complete with lightning signs. More athletic and recreational facility changes are described on page 5 in the “Bronco Athletics” section. Surveying his domain today, Buster might start his tour at the heart of West Campus. In 1991 this area became an information paradise with Waldo Library’s expansion and renovation in conjunction with construction of the University Computing Center. Those two facilities give students and West Michigan residents ready access to a wealth of worldwide information resources. Their distinctive look and connecting clocktower also provide a feast for the eyes, especially with the 1994 addition of the Fountain Plaza and its Trustee Fountain water sculpture, which celebrates the WMU Board of Trustees’ thirtieth anniversary.

A similar building trend for the city lies just a few steps away by the redesigned Fine Arts Plaza. Encircled by Miller Auditorium, the Dalton Center, and the Gilmore Theatre Complex, this area offers some of the nation’s best fine arts facilities. It changed markedly in 1993 when a new $5.4 million educational wing was added to look towards Theatre and York Arena to create the 2,900-square-foot imaging center, a 3,700-square-foot animal facility, and a BL-3 laboratory that meets stringent requirements for conducting research with highly contagious viruses. It will be one of the few research facilities in American higher education equipped with a high volume air movement system with separate atmospheres for each of the various laboratories. It also will be the only place in the country where geology teachers and researchers have year-round, in-house access to a variety of drilled wells.

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among Carnegie Doctoral I institutions today, facilities into a Rounding out the top five are preferred the Kalamazoo and grounds to at how far growth and development has occurred in Kalamazoo and St. Joseph/Benton Harbor, Battle Creek, and Lansing. beyond, from its burgeoning aviation complex in Battle Creek to its regional centers in Muskegon, Grand Rapids, St. Joseph/Benton Harbor, Battle Creek, and Lansing.

International Education

WMU has gone global in a big way—with its students, faculty, and opportunities for international experiences. “The bottom line is that in today's global marketplace, doing business effectively requires competence in other languages and real-life experience living in other cultures,” says Dr. Howard J. Dooley, executive director of WMU’s Office of International Affairs. “To meet these challenges, the University has developed a comprehensive strategy for internationalization.

President Haenicke wants to boost the number of domestic students studying abroad for a semester or more to at least 100 per year.” Dooley says, “and to recruit new faculty with international expertise and experience at a rate of up to four to six a year, building a cadre of up to fifty new international faculty over the next decade.

WMU is well-positioned to achieve such goals. Starting with the enrollment of its first international student a half century ago, it began making a name for itself as a major “importer” of those who are studying abroad.

More comings and goings planned

Among Carnegie Doctoral I institutions today, WMU is second only to Florida International University in the number of international students enrolled in degree programs. Moreover, WMU ranks among the nation’s top fifty universities in terms of international population and enrols the largest number of undergraduate international students in Michigan.

This year, the University has 1,742 students from 90 other countries, representing 6.8 percent of total enrollment. The largest contingent, 763 students, is from Malaysia, where the University has a “twincing” program with Sunway College. Rounding out the top five are Japan, India, Thailand, and South Korea.

The twinning program is a unique arrangement enabling students to complete the first two years of their WMU degree in their home country. The University currently has a twinning program with Hong Kong Baptist University in addition to Sunway, but WMU officials are exploring other such arrangements with universities in Singapore, Indonesia, and India.

Efforts to expand the University’s role as an “exporter” of American-born students have revolved around expand-
Alumni Association announces new life members

At the WMU Alumni Association would like to take this opportunity to welcome our newest members. We would like to commen

Dennis Archer

Mayor returns to school

Detroit Mayor Dennis W. Archer, B.S. '65, returned to campus March 11 to participate in the Haworth College of Business Distinguished Speaker Series.

In his presentation, "Detroit: A Partnership between Private and Public Sectors," Archer traced the city's history and touched on job creation, management and business collaborations that may lead to its revitalization.

"The Haworth College of Business provides an invaluable opportunity for us to carry on from the oper-

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Robert E. Akina, BBA '92, retired after 42 years in the public schools of Michigan. Ada Brown recently accepted a position as an at-


Diane M. Day, B.A. '73, has joined Travelers Insurance in East Windsor, Conn., as an advertising manager.


Richard Kendall, B.S. '71, received the Montor (ODU) Public Schools Excellence in Teaching award in May 1996. In September, Kendall was selected to be recognized in the National Association of Professional Baseball Coaches' magazine, For the Record.

Anita M. Siebker, B.S. '71, is a professor of English at Davenport College.

LL (Jeffrey R. Sprinthall, B.S. '99, recently returned from a six-week tour of duty in the Mediterranean, Adriatic, and Red Sea with Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 152 aboard aircraft carrier USS Enterprise.
The exceptional is business as usual

continued from page 5

Durrell left his post as defensive coordinator at the University of Louisiana to take over the Bronco football coaching staff and moved to Texas to take over the Bronco football coaching staff. He headed the search committee that brought John M. VanderVen, Dr. Oct. 30, 1996, in Kalamazoo. The Bronco football coach Bill Wilkinson says. "It's a first-class facility for lifting and conditioning," head coach baseball coach Bill Wilkinson says. "The University Arena and recreational facilities are extremely functional, especially for athletic purposes. When recruits see the place, they really get excited." Elsewhere in Read, student-athletes have access to a modernized athletic training and development area in the new team facility that serves as home to Bronco men's and women's basketball, soccer, and volleyball. The arena houses a fully-equipped weight room that is used by all eighteen varsity teams.

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A message to our readers about the Westerner

Editor's note: The following letter is from Matt Kurz, B.A. '89, assistant vice president for external affairs and director of the Office of Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications.

This is the last issue of this newspaper you will receive. It will be replaced, come fall, with a new University magazine, and it's taking shape right now.

On October 7, Assistant Vice President for External Affairs and Director of Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications, Vice President for External Affairs and Director of Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications, shows that the Westerner is in good hands.

We decided it was time to look at one of WMU's major publications, the Westerner, and take it to the next level. Our goal is to reflect the move of the whole University to the next level—in teaching, in research, and in public service.

To achieve that goal, we've reached out to alumni, donors, and other friends of the University as well as to students and faculty members to get their sense of what they liked about the Westerner and what they'd like to see in a new magazine.

One way we've done this is the use of focus groups in Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, and Detroit. It's been enlightening.

To give the new magazine the best possible look, we've turned to our own Design Center—one of the University's leading academic programs. Tricia Hennessy, professor of art and director of the center, has recruited a group of four top design students to help us develop this look.

They've been laboring for much of the winter semester and spring session, coming up with a wide range of cover designs and inside treatments from which we can choose—for everything from letters to the editor to major features to something a little different at the back of the book. It's been wonderful to work with these bright, talented students.

The Design Center group, in turn, has been working with our magazine development team. That includes Mike Matthews and Jeanne Baron, the magazine's editors, and Michael Hefele, its art director. Dave Smith, director of graphics and design, serves as production coordinator.

We hope the new magazine will reflect the depth of our traditions as well as the height of our aspirations. We want our readers, to get the best possible picture of WMU as an ascending national university whose growing reputation for academic excellence fosters both pride and commitment.

Let us know what you think. Send me a letter, a note, a fax, or an e-mail message, and tell me what you want to see in a new University magazine. Then look for the results this fall!

What do you think?

We'd appreciate your feedback. Give your response to the following questions.

What have you liked about the Westerner?

What haven't you liked about the Westerner?

What would you like to see in a WMU magazine?

Return your answers to the Office of Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications at: Walwood Hall 240 West; Western Michigan University. Kalamazoo, MI 49008-3999.

E-mail: kuez@wmich.edu Fax: (616) 387-8422

Student team will be catching a lot of rays during ultimate college road trip

Sunseeker 97

With thoughts of summer sun and cross-country travel dancing in their heads, an exhausted but elated group of Western Michigan University students on June 11 unveiled their dream car for the ultimate college road trip.

The students, members of the design and development team for WMU's solar-powered race car, Sunseeker 97, have been working against the calendar and clock all spring. Nearly every spare moment has been devoted to getting ready for this year's Sunrayce, a 1,200-mile cross-country contest that pits WMU's vehicle against solar cars built by engineering teams from nearly forty other colleges and universities.

Sponsored by General Motors, EDS, and the U.S. Department of Energy, the ten-day race begins June 19 in Indianapolis, Indiana, and concludes in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This year's team hopes its shorter, lighter, and faster Sunseeker design will allow WMU to improve its previous race record.

The University captured eighth place in the 1990 inaugural Sunrayce and came in nineteenth in 1995. WMU achieved this nearly perfect top-ten showing while competing against teams from such schools as Stanford University, Ohio State University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, Yale University, and the University of Michigan.

This year, Sunseeker will tackle a route that's identical to 1995's, except that the course ends in Colorado Springs rather than Golden, Colorado. Along the way, racers will pass through or stop at solar-powered towns brimming with residents who are experienced and enthusiastic Sunrayce watchers.

Smith Center Campus, an overnight stop during the competition, has the distinction of being the town formally linked to the Sunrayce through the Sunrayce Adopt-A-Town program.

Steve Hunt, Sunseeker project manager, and Laura Jones, the team's Adopt-A-Town coordinator, visited the municipality last November, taking information about solar energy and WMU to area schools and the local Chamber of Commerce.

Above: Western Michigan University's design and development team for Sunseeker 97 drew members of the media to campus June 11 for the unveiling of its completely redesigned solar race car. The event took place near Red Fieldhouse and the Student Recreation Center—fifty days before the car was scheduled to compete in its fourth Sunrayce, a national intercollegiate contest.

But those weren't the only activities on the agenda for Hunt, a graduate student in computer science, and Jones, an elementary education major. When Sunseeker and its competitors pull into Smith Center on Day Seven of the race, the competing teams probably won't be able to avoid seeing some of the 300 "W" posters the two distributed during their visit. But even more meaningful will be the presence of many of the children Hunt and Jones met while making educational presentations at Smith Center schools.

"We went there to show off our car and give the kids information about solar energy," Jones says. "We wanted them to learn something from our team's experience."