Officials examine higher education’s future

The future of higher education in the state will be explored when Michigan Lt. Gov. John D. Cherry visits the WMU campus to take part in a high-profile panel discussion set for 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24, in Schneider Hall’s Brown Auditorium.

The “Forum on the Future of Higher Education in Michigan” also will feature WMU Trustee William D. Johnston, who is president, director and chairman of Kalama zoo-based Greenleaf Companies, and Timothy J. Greene, WMU provost and vice president for academic affairs. John M. Dunn, WMU president, will moderate the forum, which is sponsored by the University’s Emeriti Council.

The event will begin with each of the three panelists making a short presentation before taking questions from the audience. Cherry will speak on “A Statewide Perspective on Michigan Higher Education.” Johnston will focus on “Higher Education and Economic Development in Southwest Michigan,” while Greene will explore “The Relationship of WMU to Other Michigan Colleges and Universities.”

The wide-ranging program, which is free and open to the public, is expected to cover such issues as state funding and tuition, access, the economic climate and Michigan’s need for a work force with higher education credentials.

Service, emerging scholar award recipients named

WMU has named two recipients each for this year’s Distinguished Service and Emerging Scholar awards.

The two service award winners are Styay Asefa, economics, and Abraham Poot, industrial and manufacturing engineering and mechanical and aeronautical engineering.

The pair will each receive a plaque and a $2,000 honorarium.

Asefa, a WMU faculty member for 28 years, is Kuanchin Chen, business information services.

Poot, a 13-year WMU employee, has served since 2001 as the advisor to the Sunseeker Solar Car project. His commitment to students was among the primary qualities those nominating him singled out.

He was praised for having “a profound impact” on all of the varied people he comes into contact with, serving as a mentor to hundreds

Academic Convocation

The annual Academic Convocation ceremonies will take place at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 30, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall.

The event will feature President John M. Dunn’s State of the University address, as well as the presentation of WMU’s 2008 Distinguished Faculty Scholar, Distinguished Service, Distinguished Teaching and Emerging Scholar awards.

For and about WMU faculty and staff

Officials seeking master plan input

WMU officials are soliciting input from members of the University community and the general public to help in a 2008 review and update of the Campus Master Plan, which provides priorities and guidelines for future physical development. Planning workshops and input sessions are set in 2009. For more information, contact David Dakin at david.dakin@wmich.edu or 387-8543.

WMUK plans short fund-raising drive

The University’s public radio station, WMUK, will once again shorten its pledge drive and reduce on-air pledge hours by more than 50 percent during pledge drive week. The station’s fall campaign will be short as well as “skinny” in the middle, with only one hour of on-air pledging in both the morning and evening on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 21-22.

All listeners are encouraged to donate prior to the drive, which has a goal of raising $200,000 and is scheduled to begin Saturday, Oct. 18. To contribute online or volunteer, go to www.wmuk.org and click the “pledge” button or “volunteer” link.

Award workshops slated for faculty

Two more workshops remain for those interested in the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award. Workshops have been scheduled in the Bernhard Center’s Brown and Gold Room at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 22, and 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 23.

The deadline to apply for FRCA awards is up to $10,000 is 4:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5. For more information, go to www.wmich.edu/researchfunding/frca.html or contact Walter Worthy at walter.worthy@wmich.edu or 387-8282.

Help available for troubled students

Using a new, confidential online form, faculty, staff and students may share their concerns about a student whose behavior is troubling and persist despite efforts to intervene. Information submitted goes to the upper right portion of the page. A valid Bronco NetID and password are needed to access the form. Contact Suzie Nagle at suzie.nagle@wmich.edu or 387-2150 with questions.

continued on page 4
Around Campus

24th Barking Tuna Fest starts today
Mates of State will headline WDR's 24th annual Barking Tuna Festival, today through Saturday, Oct. 16-18. The annual festival aims to unite students and community members by attracting serious indie acts that would not otherwise be seen in Kalamazoo. Go to www.wdr.org for a complete lineup of acts, costs and other details.

Speaker to discuss disability, health
John E. Crews, a lead scientist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a WMU alumus, will speak on “Disability and Health Matters: The Intersection of Public Health and Disability” at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 21, in 1010 College of Health and Human Services Building. A reception will follow.

Program to focus on wind energy
John Patten, manufacturing engineer- ing, will answer the question, “Is Wind Energy in Your Future?” during a talk from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 22, in 126 Chemistry Building. Patten, who was instrumental in adding the wind turbine to the Parkview Campus, will discuss WMU’s plans for wind turbines and Michigan’s wind energy potential.

Football science to be revealed
Physicist and author Timothy J. Gay will reveal the science behind the game of football during a public talk called “Football Physics” from 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 22, in 1104 Rod Hall. Gay’s creative explanations have been featured by NFL Films as well as news outlets such as ABC News, ESPN and the New York Times.

Events turn spotlight on autism
A lecture series and colloquium will turn the spotlight on autism this month. The 26th annual Van Riper Lecture Series, titled “Social Communication and Interaction for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders,” will take place Thursday and Friday, Oct. 30-31, in the Fetzer Center. Preregistration is required by tomorrow. To register or obtain details, go to www.wmich.edu/hhs/ssa/vanriper/lecture.htm or call 387-8045.

The fifth annual Rider Colloquium will be Tuesday, Oct. 21, from 3 to 4 p.m., Friday, Oct. 24, in the Fetzer Center. Preregistration, which is required, should be completed by Monday, Oct. 20. To register or obtain details, go to www.wmich.edu/ridercolloquium or call 387-7260.

Lecture series focuses on disasters
The 2008-09 Werner Sichel Lecture-Seminar Series is bringing the economic impact of natural and unnatural disasters into sharper focus. The series begins Oct. 1 and will run through April 8. All presentations will take place from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday in 3508 Knauss Hall. The next talk will be on “Hurricane Recovery: Responsibility and Financing.” Go to www.wmich.edu/wmsnews/2008/09/062.html for complete series details.

Froston series to feature Czech writer
Readings of works by the leading Czech writer Arnolt Lustig, followed by a question-and-answer session with the author, will be presented beginning at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 28, in the Little Theater. The event is part of the Gwen Froston Reading Series sponsored by the University’s Creative Writing Program.

Public events part of conference
A talk on “What’s Morally Wrong With Homosexuality?” by Wayne State University’s John Corvino and an urban-folk concert by Liz Snavely are being presented in conjunction with WMU’s first regional Student Leadership and Activist Development Conference. Corvino, who is being cosponsored by the Center for the Study of Ethics in Society fall lecture series, will give the conference keynote talk at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 23, in the Fetzer Center’s Kirsch Auditorium. The concert by Snavely, who performs under the name LVM-2B (Love ‘n’ music), starts at 9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24, in the Bernhard Center on the Bronco Mall Center Stage.

Business paper gets excellence award
A paper by three business professors has been named a winner of the 2008 Emerald Literati Network Awards for Excellence. The paper, titled “Evaluating Lap-HS-based Equity Mutual Funds Using Risk-Adjusted Measures,” was written by Onur Arugaslan and emeritus Ed Edwards, both in finance and commercial law, and Ajay Samant, associate dean of the business college.

Their work was one of three Highly Com- mended papers. This is the second time Aru- gaslan has won one of the Emerald Literati Network awards, which recognize the efforts of authors and editors and celebrate the outstanding contributions many have made, not only to journals, but also to the body of knowledge itself.

Professor appointed to national post
Ellen Brinkley, English, has been appointed to the College Board’s Advanced Placement English Course and Examination Review Commission. She is among a dozen members nationwide who will review current College Board documents related to high school courses and realign the second time Arugaslan and Edwards are included with each posting.

Staf award deadline nearing
Nominations for the fall round of WMU’s semifinal Make a Difference awards are due by Oct. 31.

Make a Difference is a campuswide peer-to-peer program that recognizes WMU staff members for their outstanding accomplishments and daily investment of energy and creativity.

Go to www.wmich.edu/makeadifference for complete series details.

Jobs
Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources Web site at www.wmich.edu/hr/careers-at-wmuh.htm. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

DeAnna Burt, a doctoral student in educational leadership, has received a $14,000 As- sociation for the Study of Higher Education/ Lumina Fellowship for 2008-09. The fellow- ship, one of only nine given nationally this year, promotes and supports the development of new research questions, methodologies and frameworks for the study of topics related to college choice, financial aid and student retention.

Burt is completing a dissertation titled “African American student persistence: A study of the effects of advising intervention.” She has worked at Baker College in Muskegon, Mich., for nine years, most recently as dean of technology since 2003. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from WMU, both in business.
Music school adds several new pianos to its instructional repertoire

A dream that’s been on the mind of many School of Music faculty members and administrators started blossoming Oct. 2, when eight more Steinway pianos were delivered to the Dalton Center.

Silvia Roederer, the school’s keyboard area chair, explains that a concerned group started meeting several years ago and came to a consensus that the quality of WMU’s instruments wasn’t keeping pace with its ever-growing number of high-quality music students.

It was agreed that the time had come to support the enormous and costly effort to acquire new instruments. Working with Steinway dealer Wilbur Miller, the group explored the possibility of turning WMU into an “all-Steinway school,” which means 90 percent of the music school’s piano inventory has to be Steinway-designed instruments.

“That name carries quite a bit of prestige, as the Steinway brand of piano is largely agreed upon by artists to be the best-quality instrument,” Roederer says. “Almost all of the important concert halls in the United States, as well as many abroad, have Steinways. This month’s delivery of new pianos represents a very significant first step in our longer-term goal.”

Thus far, 14 new pianos have been acquired in a four-year replacement program that has targeted 99 of the instruments for purchase. When completed, the all-Steinway project will cost more than $2 million. Nearly one-half of the total project cost has been raised through donations funds.

The instruments being acquired range from $9,000 to $60,000, depending on their size and brand.

Roederer notes that WMU has 129 pianos in the Dalton Center’s performance halls, classrooms, rehearsal spaces, teaching studios, practice rooms, dance studios, music therapy rooms and backstage dressing rooms.

The School of Music enrolls 360 undergraduate music majors, 35 of whom are piano majors, and 70 graduate students. All music majors must have some piano skills by the time they graduate.
Emerging Scholars

Natalia “Cris” Obreiter is the only full-time WMU staffer working with the otherwise all-military personnel in the Haworth College of Business’ Department of Military Science. But the 4-foot, 11-inch dynamo definitely holds her own.

Obreiter, nicknamed “the Hammer,” was a sergeant in the U.S. Air Force for nine years. She came to WMU in 1994 as a secretary for a College of Health and Human Services program. In 2000, she became the office associate for military science, which has about 150 ROTC cadets and 10 military faculty on three-year rotations.

“I joined the Air Force after high school graduation in the hopes of seeing the world, and stayed at my first installation for nine years.” Obreiter says. “Initially, I worked as an aircraft mechanic on the KC-135. But I weighed 93 pounds and the tool box was 75 pounds, so they moved me into the administrative field.”

During her enlistment, she served in the Quality Assurance, Public Affairs and Safety offices. Her favorite assignment, though, was that of base Security Police augmentee, for which she received training in riot control and use of various weapons.

At WMU, Obreiter spends much of her time working with students and agencies such as the Department of Defense, ensuring paperwork is properly completed and maintained to both University and military standards. She also manages 11 fund and cost centers, coordinates classes; schedules annual and special events; including commissioning ceremonies; teaches a class on Army Family Teambuilding; serves as the ROTC facility’s building coordinator; and even helps shovel the sidewalks.

“I like to think of myself as the battalion mom. The cadets come in as freshmen and are kind of scared and nervous. You watch them develop over the years, and then you cry when they go through commencement—it’s like they’re your kids,” she says. “I keep a big map on my wall that shows where they’ve gone. Some are captains now with families of their own, so I now have battalion grandkids.”

Obreiter enjoys taking WMU classes for her own edification, as well as gardening, reading, and watching stock car races and hockey—“pretty much anything where a fight or a crash could break out!” She met her “awesome” husband, David, in the Air Force. He is in the guard and will be deploying for active duty in January. The couple has one daughter, who is attending WMU, as well as one son.

On Campus with Cris Obreiter

10 study abroad grants available for faculty, staff

Qualified WMU employees may take advantage of 10 grants of $1,500 each being offered to offset the expenses of a Mexican Language and Culture study abroad opportunity in Querétaro, Mexico.

Mexican Language and Culture will run from July 5-18 during the 2009 Summer II Session in Querétaro. It is being offered by the Faculty Senate International Education Council and Haenicke Institute for Global Education in collaboration with the Department of Spanish.

The deadline to apply for this special two-week program is Monday, Nov. 24. Participants will study Spanish language and Mexican culture and take part in two fieldtrips. Eligible applicants must complete Spanish 1010 or test out of the equivalent level by the end of the Summer I Session.

To apply, go to www.wmich.edu/studyabroad and click the “Faculty and Staff Information” menu link for a downloadable application.

For more faculty development information, visit the Haenicke Institute at http://international.wmich.edu or contact Brett Bequist at brett.berquist@wmich.edu or 387-5890.

Graduate open house set

Prospective students are invited to “Explore New Worlds” by attending an open house that will showcase WMU’s numerous graduate and professional programs.

The Graduate College’s 2008 Graduate Program Open House will take place from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 23, in the Bernhard Center’s South Ballroom. The free event allows undergraduate students from around the region, employees of area businesses, and others thinking about furthering their educations to explore their options at WMU.

Representatives will be on hand to discuss the University’s more than 100 certificate, master’s, specialist and doctoral programs, as well as to answer questions about applications, financial aid and other issues.