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Department of English

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Thursday, September 6, 2012

[Tisha Pankop Named WMU English Department 2012-2013 Distinguished Alum](#)

The Western Michigan University Department of English has named Ms. Tisha Pankop as the department's 2012-2013 Distinguished Alumna.



Ms. Pankop is in her 18th year of teaching at Loy Norrix High School in Kalamazoo. She holds a B.A. and a M.A from the Western Michigan University Department of English. Under her supervision, the Loy Norrix “Knight Life”, the student newspaper has won many prestigious awards from the Michigan Interscholastic Press Association, including the top rating for Michigan High School newspapers, The Spartan Award in 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2011. Among her many honors are Golden Pen award winner—top journalism teacher in Michigan for the 2005-2006 school year, MEA Human Rights 2008 Elizabeth Siddall Award, Excellence In Education, Significant Educator Award (5 times), and National Board Certification, 2006.

Her students have engaged in multiple local, national, and international partnerships and projects that have enhanced cross-cultural understanding and community tolerance. From 2000-2005, Ms. Pankop's students worked collaboratively with WMU School of Communication faculty member Sue Ellen Christian to publish a special edition of the newspaper each year addressing the topic of teaching tolerance in Kalamazoo County. One special edition was inserted in the local newspaper and had a circulation of 70,000 readers. Likewise, in the 2006-2007 school year, her Loy Norrix High School student newspaper published a special edition through a pen pal experience with students from St. Kizitio School in Kampala, Uganda. After exchanging letters, the Loy Norrix reporters printed the special edition newspaper focusing on schooling, culture, and human-interest articles.

“Tisha Pankop is an excellent representative of our department and all our graduates who go onto outstanding teaching careers in English language arts,” states Dr. Jonathan Bush, Chair of the WMU

Department of English. "We are excited to honor her excellence in teaching, commitment to her profession, and dedication to social justice in Kalamazoo and beyond."

Ms. Pankop will represent the WMU English Department at distinguished alumni events during WMU's Homecoming, October 5-6, 2012. She will also be a featured speaker at the department's 2012-2013 Award Ceremony, Friday, March 22.

Posted by [Jonathan Bush](#) at [1:19 PM](#)