President funds seven innovation initiatives

The results of a campus-wide search for ideas that are “truly transformational” were unveiled by President Judith I. Bailey Feb. 15, when she announced the selection of seven proposals to receive one-time monetary awards through her President’s Innovation Fund.

The initiatives were selected from among 80 proposals submitted from literally every corner of the WMU campus. “I am delighted not only with the caliber of the proposals submitted, but with the kind of energy and creativity the competition has sparked campuswide,” Bailey said. “We had 80 teams submit ideas for consideration, and their ideas showed great energy and creativity, as well as a commitment to the University’s goals and mission. Many of the proposals focus on our engagement with the communities we serve. Others use technology in ways that will serve our students and our state and nation.”

The announcement marked the completion of a competitive process designed to provide cash awards to turn good ideas into reality. Bailey established the President’s Innovation Fund last fall, using unrestricted gifts. Work on the funded proposals could begin as soon as next month.

The president made the final selections after receiving the advice and recommendations of a nine-member review panel led by Dean Nicholas Andreadis, Extended University Vice President. The amounts of the innovation awards, the names of the project directors and the project descriptions are:

- $289,448 to Kevin Abbott, Office of Information Technology, for an effort aimed at using digital media in the performing arts;
- $383,000 to Subra Muralidharan, chemistry, to establish a Center for Nanoenabled Instrumentation and Nanofabrication;
- $116,898 to Allen Webb, English, to integrate virtual reality development at WMU’s Grand Rapids campus;
- $402,232 to Marc W. Perkovic, chemistry, for a project, Center for Nano-enabled Instrumentation and Nanofabrication;
- $26,512 to Kathleen Wong, communication, to develop an online curriculum module on diversity and engineering;
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Planning well under way for University’s 2006-07 budget

The University’s budget planning for 2006-07 has moved into high gear. Campus officials are reacting to the governor’s budget recommendations revealed Feb. 9 and are planning testimony for a State Senate hearing scheduled this week on campus as well as planning to discuss the budget at upcoming WMU Board of Trustees meetings.

The state appropriation process began on a sour note for the University, when the governor’s 2007 budget was unveiled, revealing a puzzling and disappointing recommendation for WMU’s funding for next year. The governor’s budget called for a substantial increase to Michigan’s state universities, with appropriation increases to individual universities ranging from a high of 3.86 percent to Lake Superior State University to a low of 1.55 percent to WMU. The governor’s budget proposes a 2 percent increase for each of Michigan’s other three research universities. The recommendations were based on a funding formula applied to 12 universities that used such criteria as financial aid, graduation rates, affordability and the number of graduates with math, science or education degrees.

Senior Vice President Greg Rosine, advancement and legislative affairs, questioned the application of the formula to only one of the state’s four research universities—WMU—and noted the small

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Feb. 24 deadline to register for equity in classroom conference

The 16th conference on "Equity in the Classroom" will take place March 19 through 21 at the Holiday Inn Lansing, West Convention Center. The Theme for this year's conference is "A Global Perspective—a Local Mandate."

The annual event focuses on achieving parity in enrollment, retention and graduation for underrepresented minority students and academically and economically disadvantaged students in higher education.

It is aimed at faculty, staff, administrators and faculty search committee members who are willing to implement new ideas and strategies in campus programming, curriculum and faculty recruitment.

In addition to WMU, the conference is being sponsored by 19 of the state's other public and private colleges and universities and two programs of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, GEAR UP Michigan and the King-Chavez-Parks Initiative.

Conference registration fees and included meals are paid by higher education institution members that support the equity conference. Registration is facilitated through each institution's delegation coordinator. Conference attendees must register through their institution's coordinator by Friday, Feb. 24.

WMU's coordinator is Martha Warfield, student affairs and multicultural affairs. To contact Warfield, send e-mail to martha.warfield@wmich.edu. A complete conference brochure, with registration form, is available online at www.conference.wmich.edu/conferences.

Bailey voices support for rigor in high school curriculum

During testimony before a state Senate Education Committee hearing in Kalamazoo this week, President Judith I.Dotter Warren saidWMU's mathematics department deans emphasized the need for greater rigor and higher expectations of all of our students so that they can make the most of their potential and our state's future.

"I consider the changes you have proposed to Michigan's high school curriculum to be crucial to the future of our state and the well-being of our citizens," Bailey said in her testimony. "We need more rigor and higher expectations of all of our students so that they can make the most of their potential and our state's future."

Michigan is considering a new high school core curriculum that includes four years each of mathematics and English, three years of science and social studies and two years of a foreign language.

One criticism of the new curriculum is that school districts lack the teaching staff to implement changes, especially in the areas of math and science.

Bailey pointed to extensive efforts that have been under way at WMU for years and have been under way at WMU for years and are aimed at both training new teachers and helping inservice teachers enhance their skills in those areas.

One longstanding initiative, the Core Plus Mathematics Project, focuses on developing a four-year high school math curriculum for all students as well as providing training for the teachers who implement it. Another program housed at WMU is aimed at academically talented students from 50 Michigan school districts.

To read Bailey's complete testimony, go to www.wmich.edu/president/.

Lynde-Recchia writes new book

Molly Lynde-Recchia, foreign languages, has written a book in Old French about the legendary poet Martial.

Titled "La Vie seint Marcel de Lymoges," it is a scholarly edition of 13th century text and is accompanied by critical notes and an introduction in modern French.

Lynde-Recchia has taught at WMU since 1993. A specialist in medieval French literature and translation, she previously wrote "Prose, Verse, and Truth-Telling in the Thirteenth Century."

Davidson edits essay collection

Clifford Davidson, emeritus in English and medieval studies, has edited a collection of essays titled "The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages."

The book features 26 authors from nine countries who focus on interdisciplinary aspects of both secular and religious drama.

The essays originally published in the Early Drama, Art and Music Review, a publication connected with an international research project housed in the Medieval Institute under Davidson's direction for 27 years. Davidson has written, edited, co-written or co-edited more than three dozen books and for 33 years, co-edited the international journal, Comparative Drama.

Feffer play opens at 7:30 tonight

Steven Feffer, English, will have a single performance of his play "Mr. Rebbetzin" open the Playwrights in Process series at 7:30 p.m. today in the Whole Art Theatre in downtown Kalamazoo.

All four plays in the series will be presented as fully staged readings. Admission is free.

Feffer, whose plays have been produced by theatres nationwide, has won a number of national playwriting awards. "Mr. Rebbetzin" chronicles the life of a young New York musician of questionable ambition, who suddenly learns he may be the lost rabbinical heir of a struggling Hasidic Jewish sect—the Lubovskijes.

Xiong presents talk at Harvard

Victor C. Xiong, history, was invited by the Fairbank Center and Harvard University's Department of East Asian languages and civilizations to give a Feb. 13 talk on the "Life and Reign of Emperor Yang (569-618) of the Sui Dynasty."

The talk was based on his most recent book, "Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty: His Life, Times and Legacy."
Obituaries

Herbert S. Scott, emeritus in English, died Sunday, Feb. 12, at the Sitemap Center in St. Louis. He was 75.

Scott who retired in 2004, served as a professor of English from 1968 to 1998, when he was named the Owen Frostic Professor of Creative Writing. He received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

The founding editor of the WMU literary press New Issues Poetry & Prose, Scott wrote such acclaimed books of poetry as "Discourses," "Groceries" and "Directions." His most recent book, "Sleeping Woman," was published by Carnegie Mellon University Press. A musical presentation inspired by poems in "Sleeping Woman" was staged in the Dalton Center Recital Hall earlier this year.

Prior to joining the WMU faculty, Scott was an instructor at Southeast Missouri State College from 1966 to 1968. He earned a bachelor's degree from Fresno State College in 1964 and a master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1966.

A local memorial service is to be held at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 25, in Kanley Chapel with a reception following at 5 p.m. in the Lee Honors College.

Donations in Scott's memory may be made to New Issues Press in care of the WMU Foundation or the School of Art and Design Challenge Grant in care of the Southern Illinois University Foundation.

Herbert D. Warren, emeritus in chemistry, died Friday, Feb. 10, in Kalamazoo. He was 73.

Warren came to WMU in 1963 and retired in 1996. He taught and conducted research in analytical chemistry and the history of chemistry, and was a long-standing member of the American Chemical Society and the History of Science Society.

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Innovation Programs. The innovative idea had to advance the mission of WMU, have a significant impact on student education or University outcomes, produce measurable results, be feasible to implement and be led by individuals with expertise and experience.

Bailey says she relied on the review panel’s recommendations as she made her final funding decisions. “The panel did a wonderful job of analyzing the proposals to determine if they were truly innovative and would significantly enhance the University’s core mission,” she noted. “I looked at all of the proposals as well, and found myself not only in agreement with the panel’s findings, but also left with a deep appreciation for the care and integrity that group brought to the process.”

Budget planning $1.7 million increase that will result does not begin to meet the University’s rising expenses. “We suffered in the affordability area because ours is the only graduate intensive university subjected to the formula, and matching our graduate costs and tuition against non-research universities put us at a disadvantage. It makes no sense,” Rosine says. The governor’s budget, he notes though, is just the first step in a long process. That process will move on this week as President Judith I. Bailey testifies before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, led by Sen. Mike Goschka. The hearing will take place at 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 24, in the Dalton Center’s Multimedia Room. University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman, Grand Valley State University President Mark Murray and Ferris State University President David L. Eisler also will testify at the event.

Later this spring, the campus community will get a look at budget projections for next year as well as scenarios that address the stresses continuing to plague WMU’s general fund budget. Trustees agreed last year to a budget that contained a $6.75 million shortfall—a move designed to spread a larger budget shortfall over a two-year period. Because of continued enrollment decline this year and the rising costs of contractual compensation increases and energy rates, last year’s shortfall remains and has grown.

With the possibility of a state appropriation that does not even cover inflationary increases, the budget outlook for 2006-07 looks stark, Rosine says. “That’s a message we’ll be sharing in Lansing throughout the coming months,” he says. “But even boosting our increase to 2 percent for next year will not solve the issues we face. It will help, but we have a lot of work to do on campus to plug that budget hole.”

On Campus with Jennifer Wendling

Jennifer Wendling is one of the last people graduate students meet in the final months before they graduate. As coordinator of theses and dissertations in the Graduate College, Wendling is responsible for reviewing and clearing these culminating works, putting on formatting workshops to help students make sure these works meet WMU guidelines, and assisting students with scheduling and announcing their oral dissertation defenses.

“I understand where the students are emotionally and academically at this final stage in the educational process,” she says. “I try to make it as smooth as possible by being accessible to them, answering their questions, encouraging them and lending a sympathetic ear when needed.”

Wendling, who also manages the Graduate College Web site, revises and shepherds 25-35 dissertations and 30-40 theses through the system each graduation period.

“It’s a lot of work to do in a short period of time, but I don’t ever want a student not to graduate on my watch,” she says. “It’s really rewarding to see them through to the end. I want to make sure they go out on a high note, with scholarly theses and dissertations and a good feeling about WMU.”

Wendling earned a bachelor’s degree in English from WMU and was hired full time as assistant to the vice president for research in 2000, then moved to the Graduate College as assistant to the dean. She was named to her current post in January 2005.

In her spare time, the Kalamazoo native enjoys yoga, walking, kayaking, writing and reading. Additionally, she tutors adults through the Kalamazoo Literacy Council and also will soon be volunteering as a reading tutor at a local elementary school.

Sindecuse Health Center offering physical therapy at West Hills Athletic Club

The University’s Sports Medicine Clinic, located in the Sindecuse Health Center, recently began offering physical therapy services on the lower level of the West Hills Athletic Club.

Services at the West Hills location are available to any club member and include personal consultations, evaluation and treatment, performed by a licensed physical therapist from the Sports Medicine Clinic.

Services are limited to orthopedic care, involving pain or dysfunction related to the muscular and skeletal systems, primarily in the lower back, neck, shoulders, knees, ankles, elbows and hip areas.

No referral is needed for the initial evaluation; however, a written referral or prescription from a physician is required for treatment.

Physical therapy services are generally reimbursable through medical insurance programs, and the WMU Sports Medicine Clinic is a Blue Cross Blue Shield participant.

Prospective patients should contact their insurance companies with questions about their specific coverage.

For more information, contact William Arborgast in the WMU Sports Medicine Clinic at william.arborgast@wmich.edu or 387-1248.