Grant focuses on STEM instruction reform

A $1.4 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to WMU will be used to enhance undergraduate introduction to science, with the goal of attracting and retaining more students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics—the STEM disciplines.

The grant is one of just 37 awards made by the institute this year to American research universities invited to compete in the institute’s 2014 funding round. A total of 203 universities were invited to apply, and the eventual winners were selected after three rounds of peer review.

The five-year research and development effort will be co-directed by three biological sciences faculty members: Renee Schwartz, John R. Geiser and Graduate College Dean Susan R. Stapleton, a longtime science and education researcher who is a previous HHMI grant recipient.

WMU’s research effort, titled “Developing Scientists as Teachers: Developing Students as Scientists: A Dual Approach to Transforming the Culture of Undergraduate Biology Education,” will be centered on the University’s introductory courses in biological sciences.

The extensive work will focus on both reforming the curriculum and enhancing the professional development of the faculty members and teaching assistants who introduce

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WMU receives national Climate Leadership Award

WMU is one of six institutions nationwide selected to receive a 2014 Climate Leadership Award in recognition of innovation and leadership in sustainability.

The awards program, now in its fifth year, recognizes higher education institutions that “demonstrate innovative and advanced leadership in education for sustainability and climate mitigation and adaptation.”

The awards are presented annually to signatory institutions that are part of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment by Second Nature, a national nonprofit organization that works to transform higher education to create a healthy, just and sustainable society.

“The United States National Climate Assessment demonstrates that human-driven climate change is no longer a problem for the future—it has moved firmly into the present as campuses and communities across the country increasingly feel its impacts,” says David Hales, president of Second Nature.

“There is much more work to be done as we prepare to live in the climate of the future. More than ever, higher education has a critical role to play as this year’s Climate Leadership Award winners demonstrate with their leadership and exemplary actions.”

This year’s winners were among 20 finalists that represented the diversity of U.S. higher education institutions.

Earlier this spring, all 20 finalists participated in an online video competition featuring each campus’ respective sustainability accomplishments. The WMU video was the top vote-getter in the video competition, garnering nearly 9,000 votes.

“This process has been extraordinarily

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Sessions set to explain employee, dependent enrollment benefits

University employees who want to explore the idea of using their WMU tuition benefit for themselves or a family member to pursue a degree or to take personal enrichment classes will be offered a series of opportunities to

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Discover. Explore.

Board of Trustees meeting slated

The next meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees will be held Tuesday, June 10. Starting times and information about the agenda will be released shortly before the meeting. Most board meetings are held on campus at the Bernhard Center.

Financial planning visits canceled

The planned June 11-12 campus visits by TIAA-CREF representatives have been canceled. Instead, the representatives will be on campus Tuesday, June 10; Wednesday, June 11; Thursday, June 12, and Friday, June 13. To schedule a private consultation for investment or retirement planning, visit tiaa-cref.org and click Consultations and Seminars under Services. If unable to register online, call the scheduling group at (800) 732-8353.

Repairs close SRC east entrance

The Student Recreation Center east entrance (facing Parking Lot No. 13) is closed for repairs through Sunday, Aug. 31. Patrons may access the building through the south (facing University Arena) and west (facing the Bernhard Center) entrances. ADA accommodations are available at both entrances. Visit wmich.edu/rec for more SRC news.

Education college publishes magazine

The College of Education and Human Development recently published the first issue of its magazine, Professional Reflections. The magazine showcases college faculty, staff, students and alumni, as well as college news and events. Visit wmich.edu/education and click the link on the right side of the page to view the inaugural spring 2014 issue. The magazine will be published at the end of each fall and spring semester.

Campus cafés reduce hours

The University’s six campus café locations are open but operating on summer hours. These hours vary for each café and may be found by visiting wmich.edu/dining or calling (269) 387-4888. Café offerings include grab-and-go sandwiches, pizza, salads, vegetarian choices, hot soup, fruit, bagels, snacks, desserts, fountain and bottled beverages, and Western Grounds coffee, a self-branded fair trade and organic coffee.

Campus cafés and their locations are: Bella Vita Café, College of Health and Human Services building; Bernhard Café, Bernhard Center; Flossie’s Café, Sangren Hall; Parkview Café, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences building; Plaza Café, Sprau Tower; and Schneider Café, Schneider Hall.

Western News to go on hiatus soon

The final issue of Western News for the summer will be distributed Thursday, June 19. The deadline to submit items for that issue is 5 p.m. Friday, June 13.
Students rack up six DownBeat Awards for third year in a row

WMU students have done it again, landing six coveted DownBeat Student Music Awards for the third straight year.

“The efforts of our students and our faculty are simply world class,” says Tom Knific, director of the jazz studies program. “We could not be more proud.”

Results of DownBeat’s 37th Annual Student Music Awards were announced in the June issue, which is now on newstands. This year’s honorees, award category and director or professor are:

- Four Corners, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Lisa Coons, director;
- Four Corners, Small Vocal Jazz Group, Undergraduate College Winner, Knific, director;
- Bryan Blowers, Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist (guitar), Undergraduate College Winner, Knific, professor;
- Aaron Garcia Band, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Undergraduate College Winner, Lisa Coons, director;
- Four Corners, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Undergraduate College Outstanding Performances, Knific, director;

Exhibition features Rizzolo works

An art exhibit exploring recent works by Lou Rizzolo, emeritus in art, as well as a group of students he taught while on the Frostic School of Art faculty in the painting area is on display through Friday, June 13. Titled “Lou Rizzolo: Lo Spirito in Volo,” the exhibit is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Richmond Center’s Monroe-Brown Gallery. Admission is free.

Winning performances

This year’s honorees, award category and director or professor are:

- Bryan Blowers, Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist, director;
- Undergraduate College Winner, Knific, director or professor are:
- Four Corners, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Lisa Coons, director;
- Four Corners, Small Vocal Jazz Group, Undergraduate College Winner, Knific, director;
- Bryan Blowers, Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist (guitar), Undergraduate College Winner, Knific, professor;
- Aaron Garcia Band, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Undergraduate College Winner, Lisa Coons, director;
- Four Corners, Blues/Pop/Rock Group, Undergraduate College Outstanding Performances, Knific, director;
- WMU Jazz Orchestra, Latin Group, Graduate College Outstanding Performances, Knific, director; and

Football, homecoming dates set

The Broncos will host five home football games this fall, including its homecoming match Oct. 25 against Ohio University.

WMU opens its 2014 season Aug. 30 at Purdue University and its home campus with the annual ComUniverCity Night Sept. 20 against Murray State University. Other home contests will be against the University of Toledo, Eastern Michigan University and Northern Illinois University.

The Nov. 28 home game against NIU will be broadcast on either ESPN or ESPN3. Visit wmubroncos.com/football for more information about the upcoming season.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/jobs. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.
Employees must replace Bronco Cards by Oct. 1

Faculty and staff members are encouraged to replace their Bronco Cards before the beginning of the 2014-15 fall semester. Cards must be replaced by Oct. 1, as a new card design has been introduced.

In addition, cardholders will need to have a new photo taken. Visit the Bronco Card office on the first floor of the Bernhard Center between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday to avoid crowds visiting campus for New Student Orientation.

Employees are encouraged to replace their Bronco Cards this summer rather than wait until the fall rush.

Researcher, grad advisor named associate dean

Christine Byrd-Jacobs, professor of biological sciences, will become the Graduate College’s associate dean, effective July 1 pending approval of the WMU Board of Trustees.

In her new role, Byrd-Jacobs will provide leadership in graduate curriculum and program development, assessment and review, and graduate student and graduate faculty success, among other areas.

A faculty member since 1996, she serves as her department’s graduate advisor and studies regeneration of the adult brain after injury, utilizing the zebrafish olfactory system as a model. She is an active researcher who has secured nearly $2 million in grant funding and has served as sole investigator on four major grants from the National Institutes of Health.

Byrd-Jacobs has mentored nine master’s level students, three doctoral students and 71 undergraduate students, and she has served on the thesis committees for an additional 42 students.

She teaches in the classroom at both the undergraduate and graduate level and has been involved in curriculum reform, including taking the lead to develop a professional development course for graduate students in biological sciences.

Among other campus and scholarly memberships, Byrd-Jacobs serves as vice chair of the Graduate Studies Council and is a member of the Academic Program Review and Planning Project Management Team.

Trustees authorize nine new degree programs to be offered starting this fall

In response to student, work force and other evolving needs, WMU will offer nine new degree programs this fall, plus several new concentrations.

The University’s governing board approved the curricular changes in April. As a result, WMU offered more than 240 degree programs in 2013 but will offer more than 250 when the fall 2014 semester begins.

New degree programs
• The Master of Science in aerospace engineering responds to demands from students in the undergraduate aerospace engineering program, which has seen astounding growth in the past decade. It also should draw those who are already employed at Michigan aerospace companies and international students.

• The entrepreneurship major will be offered through the Haworth College of Business, but a universitywide entrepreneurship minor open to all students will be offered as well.

• The majors in secondary inath and August will be printed in the first fall issue of Western News.

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 35, 30, 25, 15, 10 and five years of service during June:

35 Years—Cheryl L. Swik, payroll and disbursements, and Mark S. Hall, building custodial and support services.

30 Years—Billie A. Blake, Haenicke Institute, and Jeanne Baron, university relations.

25 Years—Kirk B. Dillery, maintenance services; Robert Landeros, management; and Robert B. Eversole, biological sciences.

15 Years—Angela M. Maddon, student financial aid and scholarships; Cathy J. Johnson, Bernhard Center; Cynthia L. Seedoff, Medieval Institute; Donald J. Weber, College of Arts and Sciences; Emedelia D. Cruz, multicultural affairs; Jayson D. Rose, development and alumni relations; John C. Cermus, civil and construction engineering; Kevin L. Darlow, West Hills Athletic Club; Nancy G. Dyksterhouse, president’s office; Nathan E. Lutz, public safety; and Sandra Stephens, College of Education and Human Development.

10 Years—David W. Montgomery, music; Marideon Micheals, Sindesuce Health Center; Richard M. Griben Jr., social work.

Five Years—Amy S. Vleck, social work; Bruce E. Carpenter, chemistry; Louise Ann Wurst, anthropology; and Nick Alan Schmidt, building custodial and support services.

Service

Editor’s note: Service anniversaries for July and August will be printed in the first fall issue of Western News.

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 35, 30, 25, 15, 10 and five years of service during June:

35 Years—Cheryl L. Swik, payroll and disbursements, and Mark S. Hall, building custodial and support services.

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Five Years—Amy S. Vleck, social work; Bruce E. Carpenter, chemistry; Louise Ann Wurst, anthropology; and Nick Alan Schmidt, building custodial and support services.

The Bachelor of Science in freshwater science and sustainability was developed in partnership with Northwestern Michigan College. Students may enroll in the bachelor’s-only version of the program offered on WMU’s main campus or earn an associate degree at NMC first and seamlessly transfer to WMU-Traverse City to complete the final two years of coursework.

The majors in secondary integrated science education, elementary/middle school mathematics and elementary/middle school integrated science reflect changes in state legislation and teacher shortage areas.

The Bachelor of Science in multimedia arts technology-music will give students the high-tech knowledge they need to enter exciting new fields of music production, which increasingly is being done on laptop computers.

Recreation management and sport management are coded as majors and will eventually supersede the recreation major.

Other curricular additions

An industrial/organizational behavior management concentration for the psychology doctoral program.

An audiology concentration for the interdisciplinary health services major, allowing entrance to the audiology doctoral program through an accelerated graduate program option.

A child life concentration in the family and consumer sciences major, allowing entrance for child life specialist certification.

A behavioral specialist concentration for the master’s in special education-master teacher option to train behavioral consultants who will help teachers manage students.

A trauma practice across the life span specialization for the social work major.

Obituary

William “Bill” Doolittle, a former WMU head football coach and athletics fundraiser, will be remembered during a memorial service from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 22, in the Seelye Center.
Miller Auditorium announces lineups for Broadway, Spotlight series

Miller Auditorium’s 2014-15 season will include a variety of entertaining shows for young and old. Its PNC Broadway in West Michigan Series will include “Jekyll & Hyde,” “Sister Act,” “Elf: The Musical” and “Disney’s Beauty and the Beast,” while the Broadway Plus Series will include the Blue Man Group and “Peter and the Starcatcher.”

Big shows in the Lake Michigan Mailers Spotlight Series are the “The Nutcracker,” “Stomp” and “Pinkalicious.”

The best way to receive discounted tickets and priority seating is through subscriptions. WMU employees receive an additional 15 percent discount on tickets, but only for shows presented as part of a Miller Auditorium series. Subscriptions are available now. Single-show tickets will go on sale several weeks before each performance.

Subscriptions may be purchased for all four PNC Broadway in West Michigan Series shows, with an optional add-on of the Broadway Series Plus shows. To get a Flex Pass subscription, patrons must select at least four shows from any of the 2014-15 season offerings.

For more information about the upcoming season lineup, group discounts or subscription options, visit millerauditorium.com or call the Miller Auditorium Ticket Office at (269) 387-2300 or (800) 228-9858.

Sessions set to explain employee, dependent enrollment benefits

Additional sessions for both employees and their offspring will be scheduled during August. Sessions should contact Hennessy at millerauditorium.com or call the Miller Auditorium Ticket Office at (269) 387-2300 or (800) 228-9858.

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Climate Leadership Award

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Grant focuses on STEM undergraduates to the scientific experience. It aims to combat the dramatic loss of prospective scientists that occurs in the first months of U.S. students’ college careers. According to the Hughes Institute, nearly 40 percent of the 3 million students who annually enter college do so with the intent to major in a STEM discipline. Only 40 percent of those prospective science students go on to earn a bachelor’s degree in that STEM discipline. Most switch majors during their first two years, with 80 percent of minority students switching during their first year.

WMU’s planned curricular changes will include making sure that students have an authentic scientific experience in their first science classes on campus. Other elements will include the use of peer leaders; development of science learning communities for students, student peer leaders, teaching assistants and faculty members; and faculty professional development opportunities that include workshops for both WMU and regional STEM faculty.

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On Campus with Brenda Hamlyn

Brenda Hamlyn, coordinator of veteran registrations, has learned a few things about military procedure. That’s because Hamlyn is the first point of contact at WMU for military personnel and their eligible dependents seeking to broaden their educations.

“I help military students get their educational benefits started and guide them through both the Veterans Affairs and WMU enrollment process,” Hamlyn says. “It’s very rewarding to know that maybe you had a little part in helping them reach their goals.”

Once students are enrolled, she deals with mounds of paperwork as well as constantly changing government regulations—all the while, working with the GIs as they cycle on and off active duty or through their regular two-week National Guard stints.

“We have to keep up with drops and adds, check tuition and fees, and make sure all the classes students register for will count toward their degree,” Hamlyn says. “Every couple of weeks throughout the semester, we have to report every change in hours for the degree. Then at the end of the semester, we have to report who graduated.”

She notes that WMU enrolls 570 military students and their dependents and is rated as one of the nation’s top military-friendly schools. She says the number of family members attending school is increasing because veterans can now split their 36 months of educational benefits among themselves and eligible family members. Hamlyn says the upick also is a reflection of long-standing University policies, such as offering in-state tuition to all veterans and their dependents and having a dedicated advocacy office to support them.

“Veterans come in, really, to get their degree and move on with their civilian life. They’re a great group of students. I try to make them feel at ease, and sometimes provide a listening ear,” she says. “A good majority are older students. Some have seen a lot. It takes a bit for them to adjust. They just need a little extra understanding and TLC.”

Hamlyn came to the local area in 1985 when her husband, Greg, landed a job here. She worked part time for eight years with at-risk K-1 students in the Portage Public Schools while their children were young. The Portage couple have two children, Brad, a WMU alumnus, and Laura, as well as two young grandchildren. Hamlyn stays busy with family and church activities. “We’re starting a second generation of basketball and soccer players,” she says, “so weekends are once again filled with meeting at the soccer fields and gyms.”

Gratifying,” says WMU President John M. Dunn. “The competition allowed us an opportunity to reflect upon our many accomplishments, as well as have some fun and celebrate those achievements. Now, winning the award raises the bar and challenges us to tackle the next level of work.”