Employee records updates due soon

All faculty and staff members are asked to review their personal records and make changes as necessary by Monday, Sept. 21. Updates are needed to assist the University in providing an accurate campus directory, developing effective emergency plans and meeting federal reporting guidelines. Updates received after the deadline will not be reflected in the 2015-16 WMU Directory.

Areas to review focus on privacy wishes, emergency contacts, campus as well as home addresses and phone numbers, and ethnic group affiliations. To make changes to personal data, visit the My Self Service channel in GoWMU. Select Employee Self Service, then Personal Information Summary. Visit wmich.edu/hr/personaldata for an explanation of WMU’s privacy flag and other details.

HIGE units move to new building

To better serve WMU’s growing international student population, International Admissions and Services and Immigration Services have moved from Ellsworth Hall to the third floor of Faunce’s east wing.

Event slated for part-time faculty

Part-time instructors at WMU are invited to attend the Part-time Faculty Community Connection from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, in 212 Bernhard Center. The event is being hosted by members of the Professional Instructors Organization, the union for all part-time faculty at WMU. Register at piowmu.org/events. Along with lunch, the agenda will include relevant conversations about instructors, and their work and vision; planning for 2015-16 contract negotiations; small group discussions about part-time faculty goals and priorities; and celebration of the part-time faculty community and its impact at WMU.

Two union contracts approved

New three-year contracts have been reached with the Teaching Assistants Union and Local 1668 and Council 25 of the American Federation of State, Country and Municipal Employees—AFSCME.

The TAU contract includes a wage increase of 1 percent in each of the contract’s three years for doctoral associates not yet awarded candidacy, plus wage increases set at 2 percent for years one and two and 3 percent for year three for graduate assistants, doctoral graduate assistants and doctoral associates who have been awarded candidacy.

AFSCME provisions include wage increases or one-time payments ranging from 1.75 to 2.25 percent in year one, 2 to 2.25 percent in year two and an additional 2.25 to 3 percent by year three. Wage increases also vary annually depending upon skill set, employee group and whether lump-sum payments are made to base pay.

Six of 10 Universitywide award winners announced

Editor’s note: The 10 recipients of Universitywide awards being bestowed during the 2015 Academic Convocation are being announced in Western News in two installments. The remaining four recipients will be announced in the Sept. 24 Western News. This year’s convocation is set for 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 12, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall.

Among those receiving Universitywide honors during this year’s Academic Convocation are Luigi Andrea Berto, 2015 Emerging Scholar Award; Charu Zheng He, 2015 Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award; and 2014-15 Annual Make a Difference Award, Kevin Knutson, Caroline Ray, Terri Riemland and Michiko Yoshimoto.

Emerging Scholar Award

This award acknowledges the accomplishments of WMU faculty members who are among the rising stars in U.S. higher education. It celebrates the contributions of those who are in the first decade of their WMU careers and have achieved national recognition and demonstrated outstanding promise to achieve renown in their continuing work.

• Berto is an associate professor of history. He is a medieval Latin historian who has carved out an international reputation for his body of new scholarship. In the past seven years, he has produced two books of original historical interpretation and scholarly editions and translations of medieval Latin texts, among other scholarly writings.

Berto’s nominators cited him for the remarkable quantity and quality of his research. They also noted that leading authorities praise the rigor of his scholarship and say it is helping to shape his field of study.

Continued on page 8
Olympic gold medalist to speak

Olympic gold medalist Billy Mills will speak on campus about his success when he visits campus Monday, Sept. 21. He will talk at 11:30 a.m. in 1001 Wood Hall about his support system growing up in poverty on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

In his speech, titled “The Resilience Factor,” he will discuss how he started running to channel his energy after being orphaned at age 12. His determination led him to the 1964 Olympics, where he shocked the world and came from behind to win the gold medal in the 10k race.

Mills is Oglala Lakota, or Sioux, and he credits his culture with helping him achieve his goals. To give back to the community, he helped found the Running Strong for American Indian Youth and became the organization’s national spokesperson, traveling to American Indian communities throughout the United States and speaking to young people about healthy lifestyles and taking pride in their heritage.

In 2012, he was awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second highest civilian award in the country, by President Barack Obama for his work with Running Strong.

The event is free for students and other members of the campus community. It is being sponsored by WMU’s Foundation Scholars Program, Seita Scholars Program being sponsored by WMU’s Foundation, and the Vertical Atmosphere. Lemmer is an expert in both physical and non-intrusive plant diagnostics. They will be using a novel combination of tethered and launched balloons with pyranometers to conduct their AMS research.

Student’s poetry book wins award

Iliana Rocha, a doctoral student in English, has penned a book of poetry that won the 2014 Donald Hall Prize for Poetry and now has been published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. The book, “Karankawa,” examines the ways people construct or reconstruct their individual histories.

Rocha was raised in Texas, and her work was inspired by the Karankawa Indians, who lived along the Texas coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Her aunt lived in the region gener- ally inhabited by the Karankawa Indians, and her passing was the impetus for the collection.

Rocha has been working on her poetry collection for 10 years. She is entering her fourth year of studies at WMU and plans to graduate in April 2016.

Independent publishers honor prof

Brian C. Wilson, comparative religion, has won a silver medal in the biography category of the 2015 Independent Publisher Book Award competition. The awards annually honor the world’s best independently published books.

Wilson was honored for his book “Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living,” which is about Battle Creek’s health and wellness past and its central figure, John Harvey Kellogg, who was the great-grandson of cereal magnate W.K. Kellogg.

The book was published by Indiana University Press in September 2014. To a large extent, Wilson wanted to use the book to correct misperceptions about Kellogg perpetuated in works of popular culture, such as the novel “The Road to Wellville” and subsequent film by the same name. It is available at amazon.com and from the Indiana University Press at iexpress.indiana.edu.
Obituaries-Notifications received in July and August

Editor’s note: Visit wmich.edu/news/obituaries for more details about these WMU family members.

Lester F. Baird, a retired plumber in the maintenance services, died Aug. 20. He was 66.

John “J.B.” M. Barney, a retired electrician in maintenance services, died June 13. He was 60.

James W. Dempsey, emeritus coordinator of transfer relations and a former acting director of admissions and orientation, died July 12. He was 84.

Joseph J. Eisenbach, emeritus in special education and a former chair of that department, died June 25. He was 92.

Dorothy L. (Bladt) Franzen, emerita in education and professional development, died May 9. She was 91.

Shelley S. Grant, a former manager of building support services, died April 1. She was 56.

MaryAnn Haws-Johnson, a retired coordinator of what is now the Swain Education Library, died May 12. She was 76.

Buster C. Howell, retired material handler in landscape services, died Jan. 23. He was 81.

Judith A. Kirk, coordinator of authority control in University Libraries, died March 20. She was 57.

John W. Racine, a supervisor of computer labs for information technology, died July 21. He was 53.

Dr. Ernest E. Rossi, emeritus in political science and a former administrator, died Aug. 7. He was 86.

Leonard E. Srackangest, a retired supervisor in building custodial and support services, died March 8. He was 70.

Robert I. Sundick, emeritus in anthropology, died June 29. He was 71.

M. Noreen VanderBeek, a retired finance clerk in accounts payable, died June 1. She was 96.

Robert S. Wirbel, a retired administrator of safety in the Division of Environmental Health and Safety, died Nov. 1, 2014. He was 87.

Dr. Lawrence Ziring, emeritus in political science and an emeritus Schneider Professor of International Relations, died July 17. He was 86.
The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during August.

50 Years—Rudolf J. Siebert, comparative religious studies.
45 Years—Howard J. Dooley, history, and Donald Nelson, computer science.
40 Years—Chuck J. Forman, landscape services; Barbara L. Harris, teaching, learning and educational leadership; and Timothy R. Kellogg, business services.
35 Years—Staye Asefa, economics; Daniel J. Farrell, management; James A. Gilchrist, Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Edward L. Hartness, art; Dean R. Johnson, electrical and computer engineering; Jon R. Neill, economics; Darcey M. Stevens, family and consumer sciences; Patricia L. Sihasky, art; John A. Tanis, physics; and Robert G. Trenary, computer science.
30 Years—Jadul Artur, mechanical and aerospace engineering; Prima Artur, mechanical and aerospace engineering; Debra S. Berkey, human performance and health education; Steven Darrell, Bernhard Center Dining Service; Wei-Chiao Huang, economics; Inayat U. Mangla, finance and commercial law; Allen J. Schwenk, mathematics; Andrew S. Tagowskii, business information systems; Jay S. Treiman, mathematics; and Roy V. Zimmer, University Libraries.
25 Years—Kent Baldwin, philosophy; Susan L. Coates, interdisciplinary health programs; James M. Crowe, counselor education and counseling psychology; Satish Deshpande, Haworth College of Business; Paul Pancella, physics; Sharon S. Russell, lifelong learning and education; William A. Sause, geosciences; James W. Smith, public safety; Benjamin Torres, Spanish; Susan Uchumaru, music; Daneen Wardrop, economics; Mark V. Wheeler, economics; Klayton T. Woodworth, WMUK; and Huizhong Zhou, economics.
20 Years—Mary Z. Anderson, counselor education and counseling psychology; Paul Anderson, physician assistant; J. Kevin Corder, political science; Charles E. Crawford, sociology; David Curwen, dance; Tycho K. Fredericks, industrial and entrepreneurial engineering and engineering management; Jan Gabel-Goes, business information systems; Thomas W. Goreczyca, physics; Cheungkeng He, geography; Matthew L. Higgins, economics; John Allan Jelies, biological sciences; Bharti J. Karbana, speech pathology and audiology; Joseph M. Kayany, communication; Mary D. Loney, communication; James B. Lewis, human performance and health education; Elena B. Lisovskaya, sociology; John Lychener, music; Timothy McNeill, philosophy; Richard G. McMullen Jr., Center for Academic Success Programs; John B. Miller, chemistry; Dewei Qi, chemical and paper engineering; Laurie Hays Rivera, accounting; Silvia Rosbach, biological sciences; David S. Smith, music; Paul R. Solomon, art; Jocelyn D. Steinke, marketing; and Charline C. Winn, English; Delores D. Walcott, interdisciplinary health programs; and Elena M. Wood, admissions.

15 Years—Todd J. Barkman, biological sciences; Sheena Mynette Bolton, College of Health and Human Services; Paul Ciccanetti, sociology; Minami P. Cohen, business information systems; Mark G. Cannons, chemical and paper engineering; Vincent Desroches, world languages and literatures; James A. Eckert, marketing; Jerri L. Fiula, industrial and entrepreneurial engineering and engineering management; Johnson Haas, geosciences; Lynne Heasley, history; Loren Heun, statistics; Kevin High, College of Aviation; Kathryn L. Hillbrand, speech pathology, and audiology.

10 Years—Donald Kane, biological sciences; Cynthia Klekar, English; Karen M. Lancendore, marketing; Helene Landon, Valley #1 Dining Service; Mahendra S. Lawoti, political science; Thaowephan Leangpibul, marketing; Leseck T. Liljen, computer science; David M. Longjohn, admissions; Edwin Anton Martini, Extended University Programs; Heather M. McGee, psychology; Casey Douglas McKittrick, English; Nancy C. Meister, student affairs; Christine Moser, economics; Patrick A. Niemi, rheumat; Susan V. Piazza, special education and literacy studies; Viviane Ruelot, World languages and literatures; Rebeca A. Scheffers, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Brian Schmidt, College of Aviation; Scott Slawinski, English; Kenneth H. Smith, music; Yumi Takahashi-Ed, arts and sciences advising; Ron Van Houten, psychology; Michael F. Vlassis, Miller Auditorium; Uladaj Raj Wage, public affairs and administration; Philip G. Walcott, physician assistant; Carolee B. Webber, family and consumer sciences; Peter W. Welhouwer, political science; and Kristina Wurtz, anthropology.

Five Years—Betty A. Adams, Mallinson Institute; Jennifer Anne Brown, nursing; Christina D. Chin, art; Martha Anne Counsell-Vargas, music; Joseph Brian Erskine, Residence Life; Susan Freeman, gender and women’s studies; Nicholas J. Gooch, landscape services; Anne-Marie Ousdy-Oulai, business information systems; Sally E. Hadden, history; Christopher Alan Hoffmann, physics; Dean F. Kruse, Residence Life; Thomas Dale Lynema, information technology; Whitney Monchier, dance; Thibe N. Nuss, English; Nolan B. Patton, Residence Life; Jessica R. Pelkey, marketing; Staci Perryman-Clark, English; Shannon Sauer-Bettler, construction division; Elizabeth Hollie Terlet, Theatre; Gayle A. Thompson, human performance and health education; and Katherine N. Young, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Summer Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 30, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during July.

30 Years—Mary J. Amster, maintenance services; and Joseph Kretovics, education; leadership, research, and technology.
25 Years—Patricia A. Amsterburg, Extended University Programs; Heather M. Andrus, College of Aviation; Jill M. Hermann-Wilmarth, teaching, learning and educational studies; and Sandra M. Williams, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
20 Years—Barbara J. Loney, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs; and Marilyn J. Shriver, WMU-Battle Creek/Lansing.
15 Years—Barbara L. Harris, teaching, learning and educational leadership.
10 Years—Margaret Shelton, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs; and Sandra M. Williams, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Five Years—Patricia E. Villalobos, art.
The University’s internationally recognized center for English language instruction is one of just six programs worldwide to already have achieved a second reaccreditation by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation.

The CEA reaccredited WMU’s Center for English Language and Culture for Internationals—CELCIS—for a 10-year period through 2025 following a comprehensive self-study and site visit in April. CELCIS has been providing intensive English language instruction at WMU since 1975. The WMU program was initially accredited by CEA in 2000. It was one of the first programs in the Midwest to earn the designation and was reaccredited for an additional 10 years in 2005.

“This accreditation sets our program apart from other language schools and inspires the excellence we are dedicated to maintaining,” CELCIS Director Tom Marks says. “CEA is the accepted accrediting body for intensive English programs—not only in the U.S. but all over the world. It is the gold standard recognized by students, faculty and instructors, and our international by-earners, recruiters and agents.”

CEA was founded in 1999 by English language professionals as a specialized accrediting agency to provide a means for improving the quality of English language teaching and administration through accepted standards. It conducts accreditation reviews in the United States and internationally.

Specific standards are evaluated during the accreditation process, including mission, curriculum, faculty, facilities, equipment and supplies, administrative and fiscal capacity, student services, recruiting, length and structure of the program of study, student achievement, student completion and program development.

CELCIS provides instruction in English as a second language for non-native speakers who will use English to study at an American college or university or in their workplaces. Students travel from around the globe to study in CELCIS, with the top four countries of origin being Saudi Arabia, China, Japan and Iraq. An average of 200 students enroll in the program each semester, and some 500 students enroll each year.

Classes opened this fall with the campus community looking forward to numerous events that turn the spotlight on WMU’s history, traditions and continued growth.

Special celebratory events

The Department of Geosciences, formerly the Department of Geography, is about to begin a year-long celebration to commemorate its 50th anniversary. First up is Alumni Rally Weekend from Friday through Sunday, Sept. 18-20. The geology department was separated from the Department of Geography and made a new academic unit July 1, 1965. Details are available by visiting wmich.edu/geology.

• More than 25,000 students and other members of the WMU community are expected to gather for the annual Bronco Bash on the pedestrian mall in front of Sangren Hall from 3 to 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11. The free event is a huge celebration welcoming students to the campus and to Kalamazoo. It features games, live entertainment and more than 450 booths, providing information about WMU, the woes of area merchants and local volunteer opportunities. Food is available for purchase.

• Local organizations have joined forces with the Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender Student Services to stage the fourth FallFest from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 13, in the Student Recreation Center. Open to all local students and community members, this free event celebrates community as well as welcomes LGBT people to town. It features information about supportive resources, food and a variety of entertainment.

Infrastructure-related events

• The WMU Board of Trustees July 8 voted to name the building that houses the engineering college for WMU’s sixth president, Dr. Elson S. Floyd, who died in June. Elson S. Floyd Hall will be the new name for the massive College of Engineering and Applied Sciences facility that was begun during Floyd’s presidency.

• The University’s governing board July 8 unanimously approved making Heritage Hall the new official name for the building that will house the WMU Alumni Center. Heritage Hall, the site formerly known as East Hall, has been under renovation since mid-2014 to become the center’s home. It is slated to open during the 2015 homecoming weekend Oct. 23-25.

A premier English language program, CELCIS annually attracts hundreds of students. [Photo courtesy of CELCIS]
Fall News

Share your viewpoint in faculty, staff survey

Members of the campus community have an opportunity to share their views about promoting student persistence to graduation. That opportunity is taking the form of a survey that is open through Friday, Sept. 18, and being deployed by the Broncos FIRST team in the Center for Research in Instructional Change in Postsecondary Education.

Faculty and staff members with access to WMU email should look for the survey link in their email inbox. Employee groups without computer access will have an opportunity to take a paper version of the survey.

The goal of the survey is to identify what areas may impact students’ persistence toward graduation at WMU. The next step will be to use existing professional learning communities to study those factors so the University can transform its graduate rate.

Broncos FIRST is getting support from a more than $3.2 million grant that the University received in 2014 from the U.S. Department of Education’s First in the World Grant program. Co-directing the WMU grant project are Andrea Beach, education leadership, research and technology, and Charles Henderson, physics and Mallinson Institute for Science Education.

Visit wmich.edu/changeresearch/broncosfirst/survey for more information about Broncos FIRST.

Several new administrators appointed

Recent personnel moves have resulted in seven faculty and staff members assuming new administrative positions within the University.

• James P. Cousins, history, was named interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, effective Aug. 17. Cousins has been serving as director of undergraduate studies for the history department. He is replacing Jonathan Bush this fall while Bush is completing an American Council on Education Fellowship.

• Carol R. Dedow was named the deputy chief of the Department of Public Safety and began her new duties in July. Dedow has been a WMU police officer for 31 years and most recently was serving as captain of services in the parking division. She replaces Blaine D. Kalafut, who has retired.

• Joseph Kuchenbuch, formerly program director at Psychological Consultants of Michigan for 14 years, was named director of Behavioral Health Services in the United Clinics, effective June 15. Kuchenbuch replaces Thomas W. Blackmon, who has retired.

• Mary D. Lagerwey, nursing, was named director of the WMU Bronson School of Nursing, effective July 1. Lagerwey has served as interim director of the school since Jan. 1.

• Jeffrey Schulman, English, was named director of the Medieval Institute, effective July 1. Schulman has been on the English faculty and an affiliated faculty member of the institute since 2002. She replaces James M. Murray, who has returned to the faculty.

• Ann A. Tyler, speech pathology and audiology, was named associate dean of the College of Health and Human Services, effective July 1. Tyler has served as chair and professor of speech pathology and audiology since coming to WMU in 2007. She replaces Dr. Richard G. Long, who has returned to the faculty.

University implements preferred-name policy for both students, employees

WMU has adopted a preferred-name policy that allows students to be identified by the first name they prefer rather than their legal name in a wide range of campus settings and activities.

The legal names will still be used for enrollment, transcripts, diplomas, financial aid e-learning and certain federal reporting, students will be free to select the first name of their choice for class lists, email, ID cards, the GoWMU computing portal and campus directories.

With this move, WMU becomes one of just 146 schools around the nation and five in Michigan that have adopted some form of preferred name policy, according to Campus Pride, a national service and advocacy group for LGBTQ and ally student leaders and campus organizations.

The option went live on University electronic record systems Aug. 28—just in time for the start of the fall 2015 semester. The option reflects the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, WMU officials say, and is expected to be popular with students who wish to adopt either a gender-specific or gender-neutral name. It also will appeal to WMU’s sizeable international population, many of whom like to choose a first name that helps them more easily assimilate.

The preferred name option also extends to campus employees who can change their preference though Human Resources. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to use preferred first names in their interactions with students and in all WMU communications except where use of a legal name is required by University business.

For more information about the change, the areas in which preferred names will be used and how to go about using the option, visit wmich.edu/registrar/policies/preferred-name.
Year-end strategic planning report details accomplishments

On the eve of transitioning to an updated five-year strategic plan, WMU in July released a year-end report detailing outcomes achieved during the third year of its initial three-year plan.


In addition, the report includes selected success stories from a variety of campus units as well as a brief update on how the plan’s tactical action communities and their project action teams are being transitioned as strategic planning becomes more integrated into WMU’s culture.

Known as The Gold Standard, the University Strategic Plan began being updated this summer. That effort is continuing this fall, with the goal of a 2015-20 version being ready for a soft implementation in early 2016.

WMU lauded for societal impact, outstanding value

WMU has been named both a top national university and one of the best higher education value in the Midwest by Washington Monthly magazine.

The bimonthly magazine that covers the nation’s politics, government, culture and media released its 2015 College Guide Aug. 24. Its latest list puts WMU at No. 92 among national universities and No. 13 in the Midwest in the Best Bang for the Buck category.

The report says significant efforts were made to address all areas associated with prioritizing strategic initiatives that, if accomplished, would have the greatest impact on the University.

It identified the areas that need the most focus as enrollment management and diversity of the staff profile, degree completion, increasing research expenditures, and maintaining a robust global and experiential learning experience for WMU students.

Progress also was reported in the area of WMU’s strategic plan management, with growth observed in the areas of leadership, strategic thinking and planning, alignment, and priority measurement.

Among the steps highlighted were integrating strategic planning with enterprise risk management, implementing a campus-wide program review, improving data collection and progressing toward a centralized reporting system with more consistency in terminology and accountability in reporting.

Campus United Way campaign officially underway

WMU will launch its 2015 United Way campaign at 9:15 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 17, in front of Sangren Hall with the help of Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell, WMU administrator and Portage Mayor Peter Strazdas, regional United Way CEO Mike Larson and WMU’s Robert Miller, associate vice president for community outreach.

They will join Buster Bronco to kick off the campaign to raise $275,000 as part of the larger “Change the Story” campaign of the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region. Distribution of pledge cards to all faculty, staff and retirees is underway.

Those who make any new, undesignated gifts of at least $50, or undesignated gifts that have increased from the previous year by $25, automatically are entered in a drawing by the regional United Way for up to $30,000 toward a new vehicle from one of the sponsoring dealerships. In order to be included in this drawing, pledge forms or completed entry forms must be received at the WMU Office of the President by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 11. The winner will be announced Thursday, Dec. 10.

This year, the regional United Way is again offering an opportunity to post on Facebook or Tweet a personal story of support for the campaign through links on its website, changedstory.org. By using the tag #changedstory and making it easy for people to “donate” a tweet or post, the organization hopes to build awareness and support for the campaign.

For more information on the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region, visit changedstory.org. For questions about making a pledge or donation, or to schedule a United Way meeting for a campus unit, contact wmu-united-way@wmich.edu.

Help sessions scheduled on Library Search engine

In May 2015, University Libraries introduced Library Search, a simplified and centralized way to conduct research.

It combines the library catalog with hundreds of databases to provide expanded results for books, articles and audio-visual materials. Both students and employees are encouraged to attend a drop-in session to learn more about the new search tool.

Sessions have been set for Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 1 to 3 p.m., and Wednesday, Sept. 23, from 2 to 4 p.m., in Room 2809 of the Swain Education Library.

For more information, visit libguides.wmich.edu/librarysearch or contact Michele Behr at (269) 389-5611.

WMU’s culture.
Being a Bronco is almost a way of life for alumnus Erasmo “Mo” Salinas, assistant director of WMU-Grand Rapids. Salinas came to the University as a student and has built both his academic and professional careers here.

A first generation, low-income student, he worked 30 hours a week while going to school full time and wasn’t able to participate in an internship. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in marketing in 2006 but soon discovered he needed more work experience.

So the Shelby native took a radio advertising sales job in Muskegon, only to be laid off during the Great Recession. His future wife, Angela, a fellow WMU graduate who works at Grand Rapids Community College, encouraged him to switch gears. It was good advice. His engaging personality and commitment to education along with his bilingual abilities in Spanish and English landed him a job with the University’s admissions office in 2008. After a week’s intensive training, Salinas was on the road recruiting.

“I really learned to appreciate what the University leadership is trying to do with the three pillars and diversity and all those other components that really, truly make Western Michigan University the nationally recognized institution that it is today,” he says.

Salinas, who completed a master’s degree in higher education and student affairs at WMU, assumed his current post in April. He was already familiar with Grand Rapids, having done recruiting there as well as being a Caledonia resident. Salinas fills in for the WMU-Grand Rapids director, coordinates and assists with daily operations, and does community outreach. He also works with WMU’s academic departments to schedule all Grand Rapids courses for future offerings and develops three-year projections for future offerings.

“The best part is I get to work for my alma mater. I get to promote the institution that has essentially provided me the skills that have helped me to become what I am today,” he says. "And I love the people I work with. Just as with the main campus, it’s all about the students and how we can provide them the very best experience and education possible.”

Salinas enjoys spending time with family, especially Angela and his 2-year-old daughter, and likes to play golf with friends. He confesses to being a passionate alumnus who wears Bronco gear down to his cufflinks, attends every home football game and considers tailgating for Western his No. 1 hobby.

On Campus with Erasmo Salinas

Six of 10 Universitywide award winners announced

Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award

This honor is WMU’s highest award for a faculty member. It recognizes those whose work constitutes a significant body of achievement that is widely recognized within the national and international academic communities.

• (Chansheng) He is a professor of geography who has been a WMU faculty member since 1995. He is an expert in water resource modeling and assessment as well as integration of geographic information system and simulation modeling for watershed management.

Nominators lauded him for his outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in addressing and raising awareness about a wide range of issues related to water resources management. They also praised him for his innovative yet practical research, high level of professional and scholarly activity, and resourceful collaborations.

Annual Make a Difference Award

This award goes to staff members who have made exceptional contributions to the University. It is the highest honor WMU bestows specifically to non-faculty employees for their service.

• Knutson has been director of academic advising in the College of Arts and Sciences since 2006. He began his WMU career in 1994 as a residence hall director and has been serving in student advising roles since 2000. Those nominating Knutson almost unanimously praised him for going the extra mile to support students and ensure they succeed. They also cited him as an expert advisor, and a great mentor and role model.

• Ray joined the staff in 2008 as an employer relations/recruiter in the Haworth College of Business Career Center. She was promoted to career development specialist in the Career Center in 2013. Ray was consistently praised for going above and beyond her job duties to help students succeed and for spending countless hours on volunteer projects, especially the Reclaim the W program for previously academically dismissed students that she helped build.

• Yoshimoto is program manager for the Soga Japan Center, a position she has held since joining its staff in 2014. She is praised for dramatically increasing WMU’s regional profile through her outstanding organizational abilities, tireless outreach and hard work, and boundless energy.

Continued from page 1

WMU to be key player in national initiative

Seniors. Together, they are integrating ink formulation, printing processes and sensor technology development in a way no other university has replicated.

“This is not a center for research, it’s a center for manufacturing,” Joyce says of FEAT. “The focus of the center will be to assist industry in the scale-up of their technologies and to identify new technology needs in the process. We will be working on technologies that will protect our military and enrich the lives of U.S. consumers.”

Joyce says obtaining funding to launch the FHE Institute was an extraordinarily competitive and multi-step, two-year process. Now, she adds, WMU’s role will be to work with materials suppliers to build a materials registry and to assist companies in the scale-up of their technologies.