Board of Trustees meeting scheduled

The next meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees will be held Tuesday, Oct. 6. The timing and location, and information about the agenda, will be released shortly before the meeting.

Friday mixer to be held for employees

A Fridays with Friends faculty-staff mixer will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. The event follows the annual Academic Convocation and includes light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

Free faculty, staff photo session set

Employees are encouraged to have their official University photos taken between 9:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, in Walwood Hall’s Heinig Emeriti Lounge. No appointment is required. Employees may have electronic copies for personal use, but photo files are not automatically sent. Direct questions to Sue Beougher at sue.beougher@wmich.edu or (269) 387-8402.

CHEA Award applications due Oct. 14

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation is accepting applications for the 2016 CHEA Award through Wednesday, Oct. 14. The award was created to encourage and enhance attention to student learning outcomes. Interested faculty and staff members should complete the application available at chea.org and submit it to the Office of the Provost.

Health center offering flu shots

The Sindecuse Health Center is offering vaccinations to WMU employees, students and retirees, in certain cases at no charge. Vaccinations are available by appointment at Sindecuse from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays as well as from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Thursdays.

No appointment is necessary to attend the College of Aviation clinic Monday, Oct. 5, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 1224 Aviation Education Center, Battle Creek.

To make an appointment to get vaccinated at the Sindecuse Health Center, visit wmich.edu/healthcenter or call (269) 387-3287. Visit wmich.edu/news/2015/09/26562 for more details about vaccination-related insurance reimbursements and other cost details.

Annual Study Abroad Fair slated

WMU students and the public are invited to take their first step toward planning an overseas learning experience as part of their degree program by attending the annual Study Abroad Fair from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 14, in the Bernhard Center’s East Ballroom. The free event will showcase the more than 90 programs WMU offers in some 40 countries.

WMU launches new state autism resource

Michigan Lt. Gov. Brian Calley and a number of state legislators and officials were at WMU Sept. 11 to help open a major new resource for Michigan families—Western’s Evaluation Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental disorders—known as WECAN.

WECAN is part of WMU’s Multifaceted Autism Center of Excellence. It opened for client appointments Sept. 14. Families who visit the new facility in the Unified Clinics will be able to work with an interdisciplinary team specializing in autism spectrum disorder to have their children’s skills assessed along with family needs.

They will receive a diagnosis along with individualized treatment recommendations, if appropriate. The assessment will be based on high-quality, autism-specific assessment tools, observation, interviews and the team’s clinical expertise.

“Western Michigan University is the best in this field, anywhere in the nation and probably anywhere in the world,” Calley told opening event attendees while lauding the University’s work in training professionals and providing services for children and families.

“It totally changes the direction of people’s lives...And Kalamazoo is way ahead of the curve in putting partnerships and expertise together with the local educational system.”

First Western Heights residents to showcase new hall

Western Heights, a revolutionary new take on the idea of a traditional student residence hall, will be showcased by the people who know it best—its first residents—during an open house set for 3 to 5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 12.

The two Y-shaped buildings are the first major housing initiative for incoming students that has been completed in decades. Their amenities, building design, social benefits generated and environmental strengths are expected to set the new standard for campus living across the state and nation.

Completed just days before 740 residents moved in for the fall semester, Western Heights uses design innovation to promote a sense of community and encourage socialization among students. The complex is built to LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—specifications and offers living space organized into 23 “houses” that are home to 33 students each.

Open house attendees will be able visit select houses and individual rooms as well as public areas. A fly-through video and additional information is available at wmich.edu/housing/westernheights.

Four of 10 campuswide award winners announced

Editor’s note: The six other 2015 campuswide award winners were announced in the Sept. 10 Western News. They will be honored during the Academic Convocation Oct. 2 (not Oct. 12 as erroneously reported in the previous issue). Among those receiving Universitywide honors during this year’s Academic Convocation from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall will be Joseph G. Reish and Juan M. Tavares, Distinguished Service Award winners, and Allison Downey and Michael Nassaney, Distinguished Teaching Award winners.

Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes one staff member and one faculty member who have built careers that emphasize exceptional service to WMU and the larger community.

• Joseph Reish has been dean of University Libraries since 2002 and was interim dean and then dean of the Lee Honors College for a decade. He has been a driving force behind the development of numerous major initia-
Graphic novel expert to give talk for common read

An expert on graphic novels and comics will help put this year’s common read book in perspective when she presents a public talk at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14, in the Bernhard Center Ballroom. In addition to perusing vendor booths and getting one-on-one benefits information at the expo, attendees may go to workshops delivered on a wellness, financial and health plan track. The latter track includes a MPSERS workshop. Participants also may register for Fitbits and other door prizes and even get their annual wellness screening or a chair massage. Visit wmich.edu/hr/benefits-expo for details.

Event to showcase ArtPrize projects

In conjunction with the Frostic School of Art, WMU-Grand Rapids will present a venue reception for its 2015 ArtPrize exhibit from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 26, in the University Grand Rapids facility at 200 Ionia Ave. SW in Grand Rapids. The event will feature 32 art projects and include juror and curator Vicki Wright, from the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. Visit bit.ly/1PnWZr to register.

Three free career fairs are coming up

Three career fairs will be held next month. The Graduate and Professional School Fair is set for 1 to 6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 5, in the Bernhard Center East Ballroom (visit wmich.edu/career/wmufs/gradfair15). The Engineering Expo is set for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14, at the Parkview Campus. The Broadcast Media Career Fair is set for noon to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 20, in Brown Hall (visit michiganbroadcastcareers.com).

Professor invited to White House

Kyle Brink, management, was recently invited to the White House as part of a national initiative to improve diversity in the public safety and first responder workforce.

The initiative is a collaborative effort involving the White House, Department of Labor, Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and International Association of Firefighters. Brink was one of a handful of industry experts invited to the initial meeting at the White House in July.

Brink, who has developed employment selection procedures for public safety units since 2003, also has served as an expert witness in several discrimination cases related to employment selection in public safety, including overseeing the development of fair and valid selection procedures for public safety departments under court supervision as a result of past discrimination.

Program director’s test published

Nickola Nelson, interdisciplinary health sciences director, has co-created a recently published, groundbreaking assessment to test listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of students ages 6-18.

Nelson developed the test with Elena Plante, University of Arizona; Nancy Helm-Estabrooks, Western Carolina University; and Gillian Hotz, University of Miami. Named the Test of Integrated Language and Literacy Skills, or TILLS, the test was recently published by the Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Inc. in Baltimore. The publication coincides with a time when there is an international effort to heighten awareness of the relationships between language and reading disorders.

This past May, Nelson was invited to give the keynote address and teach a master workshop and seminar based on the TILLS research and related clinical research at the national conference of Speech Pathology Australia in Canberra, Australia.

Facilities head elected president

Peter J. Strazdas, associate vice president for Facilities Management, is the 2015-16 president of the APPA: Leadership in Educational Facilities organization, formerly named the Association of Physical Plant Administrators. Previously Strazdas has served the national association as president-elect and secretary-treasurer. He also is a past president of Michigan’s APPA chapter.

Strazdas has been with WMU for more than 35 years and is now employed in his third facilities-related career area—facilities and operations. In prior years, he worked in construction as well as taught.

In his current WMU post, Strazdas heads a department whose 500 employees take care of 151 buildings covering 8 million gross square feet and 1,200 acres of land. “I practice management by walking around,” he says.
For the fourth time in 10 years, the marketing team for Extended University Programs has won a national award for a WMU campaign aimed at prospective students.

The Welcome to Someday campaign earned a Silver Award in the mixed media campaign category of the 2015 University Professional & Continuing Education Association Marketing Award program.

The EUP team, comprised of Megan Anderson, Leah Smith and Joel Krauss, executed the campaign in summer 2015. As a comprehensive recruitment campaign, EUP’s regional locations and online education options were promoted through video, digital advertising, email, print, outdoor and community event sponsorships.

The campaign was planned and written by the EUP team. Media buying and graphic design services were supported by Chris Hunt and Debbi Kreps, university relations, and Kalamazoo-area designers Sandy Wachowski and Tammy Collins.

A particular highlight of the campaign is a suite of four videos, which feature WMU regional locations, including videos that showcase WMU’s presence in the Battle Creek, Grand Rapids and Metro Detroit communities. The EUP videos, which can be viewed at bit.ly/1LyC2Gh, were filmed and edited by Kalamazoo-based Rhino Media and created to align with the existing Go West video that is a core part of the University Relations Go West campaign.

The campaign board will be on display with other winning categories. The UPCEA holds its annual Marketing, Enrollment and Student Services Seminar in Denver, Colorado, in November.

U.S. News puts WMU among best universities for 25th year

For the 25th consecutive year, WMU appears on U.S. News & World Report’s list of “best national universities,” continuing its presence among schools the magazine calls the top tier of colleges and universities in the United States.

The 2016 ranking of nearly 1,800 four-year colleges and universities was released by U.S. News Sept. 9 and is available online at usnews.com. A print edition will appear at newstands late this month.

WMU is listed in the top tier among 280 national institutions. It is among seven schools tied in the ranking at No. 187. Also in August, WMU was named a 2016 “Best in the Midwest” school by Princeton Review.

Overcoming gang life is subject of diversity series talk

A former gang member who is now a nationally recognized speaker and educator will visit campus Wednesday, Sept. 30.

Paul Hernandez will present a free talk in spring 2016 and expected to be completed in summer 2016 to coincide with completion of the new Valley Dining Center. (Schematic courtesy of Facilities Management)

Overcoming gang life is subject of diversity series talk

A former gang member who is now a nationally recognized speaker and educator will visit campus Wednesday, Sept. 30.

Paul Hernandez will present a free talk on “Breaking Chains: From Gangs to Graduation” at 5 p.m. in the Bernhard Center Ballroom. Hernandez will share his personal story and discuss hardships faced by students and how to transcend obstacles as well as pursue passions. Attendees may stay for a roundtable discussion and refreshments.

While on campus, he also will present two workshops that day for WMU employees.

The morning program is for instructors wanting to learn ways to connect with students and prepare for an increasingly diverse student population. The afternoon program is for staff members wanting to build rapport with students while creating relevant as well as life-changing student experiences.

For event details, contact WMU’s Chris Robinson at christine.robinson@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5087. For the full list of this year’s Real Talk Diversity Series events, visit wmich.edu/diversity/realtalk.

Sichel Series is new, improved

Six experts on China are taking a close look at the emergence of the Asian nation as an economic and political superpower when they visit WMU as part of the restructured Werner Sichel Lecture Series.

Next up will be Wing Thye Woo from the Department of Sociology at the University of California at Davis, speaking from noon to 1:15 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 7, in 159 Bernhard Center. The landscape architecture firm of O’Boyle Cowell Blalock will present the proposed schematic design concept (above) for improvements to the area around Goldsworth Valley Pond. The project includes native and wetland plantings at the pond’s perimeter to provide a buffer for wildlife and filtering of stormwater discharged into the pond. New gathering spaces and walking paths along the water’s edge also are planned. Construction is scheduled to start in spring 2016 and expected to be completed in summer 2016 to coincide with completion of the new Valley Dining Center. (Schematic courtesy of Facilities Management)
University introduces ‘be healthy’ social media contest

A social media contest is kicking off an effort to measure and improve health at WMU.

The contest, #BeHealthyWMU, is an interactive initiative to promote healthy behaviors among WMU students and employees. It invites members of these groups to post photos and videos in social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram, using the hashtag #BeHealthyWMU.

This semester, specific health topics will be selected to motivate the campus community to participate. The content published will provide insights into the knowledge that people have about healthy behavior. Information related to the monthly topic will be shared in #BeHealthyWMU and participating units’ social media accounts.

Every two weeks, the most creative and inspiring content posted will be judged by students and rewarded with a prize. A #BeHealthyWMU logo is available to be used for health and wellness-related events, programs and initiatives around campus. The contest is part of WMU’s Healthy Campus 2020 collaborative. Visit wmich.edu/healthycampus to learn more.

WMU launches new state autism resource

WECAN is one of several elements of the WMU Autism Center of Excellence, which was funded by a special $4 million appropriation by the Michigan Legislature that is administered through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

The funding for service and training is designed to increase Michigan’s capacity to train professionals and expand services so that families will not have to wait so long for diagnosis and treatment.

“This new center is an important tool that will allow our faculty and staff to put their expertise to work on behalf of families and schools in a way that will significantly move the needle as our state and communities work to improve both the quality and timeliness of autism-related services,” WMU President John M. Dunn said. “Years of research and service in applying behavioral analysis to the field will mean families will see an expansion of support and training that will improve quality of life.”

WMU’s Autism Center of Excellence is an umbrella organization under which a number of initiatives fall. Stephanie M. Peterson, psychology department chair, co-directs the Autism Center of Excellence with Wayne Fugita, psychology. Directing WECAN is Ann Tyler, speech pathology and audiology and associate dean of the College of Health and Human Services.

Whether visiting the Sports Medicine Clinic in the Sindecuse Health Center for physical therapy, athletic training or treatment of an injury, chances are you’ll be greeted by April Eby. As the clinical coordinator for the facility, Eby handles the day-to-day functions of the medical office, serves as its office manager, and coordinates the schedules of its physicians, physical therapists and athletic trainers. It’s a job that is busy year round, especially when students have returned to campus.

A certified medical assistant and registered orthopedic technologist, Eby also is trained to set casts and splints, and assist physicians with other procedures.

“The surgical technologies of today are much less invasive, and the recoveries are shorter and better,” she observes.

Eby, who joined WMU’s staff in 1999, grew up outside of Ferndale and moved to Canada after getting married. She was a pharmacy technician part time there while raising her children. After returning to the United States, she worked for three years as a medical office assistant with the former Cardiology Associates, now Bronson Advanced Cardiac Healthcare.

She and her husband Peter live in Portage and have three children. Two of them, son Michael and daughter Lindsay, are students at WMU. The couple’s eldest daughter, Alicia, earned both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from the University.

Eby was a freelance photographer in the Detroit area for many years and still considers photography a hobby, along with golfing, gardening and quilting—now that she recently finished her first quilt. Although a self-proclaimed “news hound,” she’s not a television watcher, relying instead on publications, the Internet and other information sources.

The Ebys have two dogs. The one brought home most recently is a little Havanees rescued from a puppy mill in Indiana. Doing pet visitations in nursing homes with their silver Lab Wilaby is something Eby loves and wishes she could do more often.