



# Western News

DECEMBER 3, 2015  
Volume 42, Number 7

For and about WMU faculty and staff

## Board of Trustees meeting scheduled

The final formal meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees for 2015 will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8, in 157-159 Bernhard Center. The agenda will be released shortly before the meeting.

## Commencement ceremonies set

Three commencement ceremonies will be held Saturday, Dec. 19, in Miller Auditorium for groups of graduating students. The fall ceremonies are for: 9 a.m., colleges of Aviation, Education and Human Development, and Health and Human Services; 12:30 p.m., colleges of Fine Arts and Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Haworth College of Business; 4 p.m., College of Arts and Sciences and Extended University Programs.

## Band to play at today's Lions game

The 295-member Bronco Marching Band is in Detroit today to entertain more than 70,000 fans during halftime when the Detroit Lions take on the Green Bay Packers. The celebrated band was invited by the Lions administration to play at the nationally televised NFL matchup at Ford Field. Known as "The Sound of Western," it is one of the nation's premiere college marching bands.

## Employee photo session is Dec. 4

Faculty and staff members as well as professionally active retirees are encouraged to have their official University photos taken between 9:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, in Walwood Hall's Heinig Emeriti Lounge.

No appointment is required. Employees may have electronic copies for personal use and request cropped photos for use in directory listings on [wmich.edu](http://wmich.edu). Photo files are not automatically sent. For more information, visit [wmich.edu/universityrelations/photography](http://wmich.edu/universityrelations/photography) or contact Sue Beougher at [sue.beougher@wmich.edu](mailto:sue.beougher@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-8402.

## Kocher to be feted at all-employee event

The annual holiday reception for all faculty and staff members will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8, in the Bernhard Center Ballroom. The event is sponsored by the WMU Board of Trustees and President and Mrs. John M. Dunn. During the event, there will be a special tribute to Betty Kocher, longtime secretary to the Board of Trustees.

## Time to exchange sick, annual leave

Staff Compensation System employees and Police Offices Association members may be eligible to exchange 25 hours of sick and annual leave for a \$300 University contribution to their 403(b) tax-deferred savings plan. To qualify, they must have participated in the savings plan for the entire 2015 calendar year. Visit [wmich.edu/hr/forms](http://wmich.edu/hr/forms) to download the 403(b) Sick/Annual Leave Exchange Authorization form, which must be returned to Human Resources in December.

## NeoVent duo wins new innovation prize

The creation of a life-saving medical tool for use in developing nations has resulted in a WMU student team capturing the top spot in the Collegiate Inventors Competition, a program of the National Inventors Hall of Fame sponsored by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the AbbVie Foundation.



From left, Barnett, John and Rocca at the inventors competition (Photo courtesy of 2015 Invent Now Inc.)

Senior Joseph Barnett of Kalamazoo and recent alumnus Stephen John of Portage were named winners of the undergraduate gold medal during an event held Nov. 17 at the patent office's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. The duo took home a

\$12,500 cash prize with the win against undergraduate finalists from Columbia, Harvard, Johns Hopkins and Penn State universities as well as the University of Virginia.

Winners were announced at an awards ceremony hosted by Mo Rocca, "CBS Sunday Morning" correspondent

and host of the Henry Ford's "Innovation Nation." Leading up to the ceremony, finalists showcased their inventions and interacted with thousands of patent and trademark examiners, sponsors, media and the public at the Collegiate Inventors Competition Expo, held Nov. 16-17.

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## Input sought campuswide for strategic plan update

All students and employees are being asked to help shape WMU's future by responding to an online survey launched this week by the University Strategic Plan Transition Team.

WMU's senior leaders authorized the 2015 University Strategic Plan Revision Stakeholder Survey to aid in WMU's transition from its inaugural three-year strategic plan to a revised plan that will guide the institution for a five-year period ending in 2020.

In a Dec. 1 email message, WMU President John M. Dunn asked members of the campus community to contribute to the process by participating in the stakeholders survey, which will remain open at [wmich.edu/strategic](http://wmich.edu/strategic) through Monday, Dec. 14, and which also is open to WMU alumni as well as area community members.

"The information you and your colleagues provide will be reviewed by the University

Strategic Plan Transition Team and assimilated into the new plan," Dunn said in the email message. "Please take a few moments to provide the kind of insights and feedback only you can offer."

WMU's three pillars—being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged—remain at the core of the effort to update the existing strategic plan. The update also will retain five strategic goals, but with revised language and reorganized objectives that are prioritized with the aid of survey respondents.

Questions on the survey are designed to gain feedback about the respondents' areas of interest and about their views on the strategic plan's goals and objectives as well as the University's current and future aspirations and challenges. It asks respondents to consider and rank strategic goals being considered and

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*May you have  
a peaceful  
and joyous  
holiday season.*

—John and Linda Dunn

# Around campus and beyond

## Major holiday concerts scheduled

Two major holiday concerts have been scheduled, and tickets for both are available at [millerauditorium.com](http://millerauditorium.com) or by calling (269) 387-2300.

First up will be “A Choral Christmas,” the annual show featuring the University Chorale, Cantus Femina and Collegiate Singers. It will be presented at 4 and 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, in the First Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo.

WMU’s best jazz groups will appear next in a “Jazz for the Holidays” concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, in Miller Auditorium. The program will feature works by Duke Ellington and Vince Guaraldi, Christmas classics like “Jingle Bells,” and a special holiday sing-along. Performers include the University Jazz Orchestra; Advanced Jazz Ensemble; faculty members Keith Hall, Tom Knific, Andrew Rathbun and Jeremy Siskind; and the world-famous Gold Company.

## Talk to address Islam, political mood

Juan Cole will talk on “Engaging the Muslim World” at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, in the Fetzer Center as part of the comparative religion department’s Islam in Global Perspectives speaker series. In

the wake of recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Mali and an increasing level of fear and hostility toward Muslims across North American and European nations, the renowned Middle East expert will discuss how misconceptions about Islam affect America’s social and political climate.

## Clean farming is subject of talk

Ben Martin, owner of Soil Friends, an environmentally clean produce farm, will speak at 8 a.m. Friday, Dec. 11, in 2150 Schneider Hall. The free event begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Reservations are required and can be made at [wmich.edu/business/e-rsvp](http://wmich.edu/business/e-rsvp) or by calling (269) 387-6059.

## Event slated for kids of all ages

The Oaklands will be hosting a Polar Express Event from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12. Kids of all ages are invited to stop at stations that include cookie decorating, holiday ornaments, artwork, hot chocolate and photos with Santa, to receive tickets for their chance to win free tickets to the Feb. 20 performance of Golden Dragon Acrobats Present Cirque Ziva at Miller Auditorium. Visit [wmich.edu/oaklands/believe](http://wmich.edu/oaklands/believe) for details.

## Collaboration subject of new book

James P. Cousins and Wilson J. Warren, history, have co-written a book with Gordon P. Andrews from Grand Valley State University titled “Collaboration and the Future of Education: Preserving the Right to Think and Teach Historically.”



Cousins



Warren

Published by Routledge and released in November, the book focuses on a decade-long collaboration among the WMU and GVSU history departments and Portage Central High School’s social studies department.

Educational reforms have encouraged the creation of efficiency models in pursuit of a unified way to teach. “Collaboration and the Future of Education” provides systematic models and examples of ways that history teachers can compete with and effectively halt this transformation. Relying on original research and a maturing body of secondary literature on historical thinking, the book illuminates how collaboration can create real historical learning.

## Honor society recognized with award

Anthony P. Helms, Lee Honors College, is the advisor for WMU’s Alpha Lambda Delta national honor society chapter, one of nine chapters nationwide to receive a 2014-15 Order of the Torch Award. The award was bestowed in recognition of the chapter’s continued excellence over the past year.



Helms

In addition, the chapter had three first-year students recognized with national scholarships, and in October, a WMU representative was part of a panel presentation at the National Leadership Workshop in Orlando, Florida.

WMU is one of just three schools to win the Order of the Torch in consecutive, eligible four-year increments since 2003. In terms of the total chapters of ALD, WMU rates in the top 1 percent in this category.

## Anthropologist earns book award

Kristina Wirtz, anthropology, has received the 2015 Edward Sapir Book Prize from the Society for Linguistic Anthropology for



Wirtz

“Performing Afro-Cuba: Image, Voice, Spectacle in the Making of Race and History.” Wirtz received the honor Nov. 21 during the American Anthropological Meetings in Denver.

Her book, published by the University of Chicago Press last year, analyzes a variety of performances and the ways they construct Cuban racial and historical imaginations, thereby marrying racial studies, performance studies, anthropology, and semiotics.

The Sapir prize goes to a book that makes the most significant contribution to the understanding of language in society, or the ways in which language mediates historical or contemporary sociocultural processes.

## Course evaluation participation focus of study

A pilot study aimed at boosting student participation rates in the University’s online course evaluation system is set for the 2016 spring semester and will include evaluation of all courses at WMU.

The pilot study is one of two central tasks assigned to the University’s Joint Committee on ICES system—Instructor and Course Evaluation—as a result of the 2014 contract negotiations between the University and the WMU chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

The joint committee’s second task was to review and recommend practices that will boost student response rates for the system. That task led to the determination

that WMU’s ICES is not capable of being upgraded to add features important to increasing student participation rates and must be replaced. Until a new online system is in place, the current system will be altered to accommodate the pilot study.

Right now, faculty members can opt out of having their courses evaluated, but during the spring pilot study, all courses will be evaluated. However, during the pilot study, faculty members will have the opportunity to have their evaluation results returned solely to them, and not also provided to department chairs or deans as is currently the case.

Faculty rights regarding use of course evaluation data are protected within the parameters of the pilot study. The joint committee will have aggregate data to review on whether or not the pilot study change increases student participation rates in the evaluation of courses.

There also will be a concerted effort to promote the importance of evaluating courses at WMU as well as to provide educational materials to faculty members to help them best work with ICES to secure the type of information that benefits them as instructors.

The Joint Committee on ICES was formed in October 2014 with equal representation from the Faculty Senate, WMU-AAUP and provost’s office.

## Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at [wmich.edu/hr/jobs](http://wmich.edu/hr/jobs). Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

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## Communitywide events planned to celebrate MLK's life, legacy

Activities at WMU and across the broader Kalamazoo community are slated to begin in January to honor slain civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr.

"Equity in Action Uniting Community" is the theme of this year's celebration, which features numerous events that are free and open to the public. Scheduled events include a convocation, march, day of service, and educational programs and presentations.

Activities will cumulate Thursday through Tuesday, Jan. 14-19, at WMU, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo Valley Community College and downtown Kalamazoo.

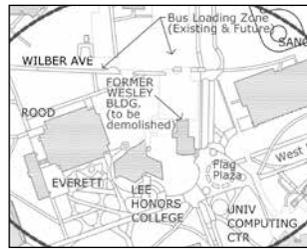
More information is available on the MLK Celebration website at [wmich.edu/mlk](http://wmich.edu/mlk).

## Time set aside to share improvement ideas

Students and employees are invited to a programming workshop and open house from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, in the Bernhard Center's first floor lounge to provide input on development plans for the Center Residential Neighborhood.

Christopher Pyzik, planning, space management and capital projects, notes that the neighborhood encompasses several key areas of focus in the University's master plan. They include the site around the Wesley Foundation, which is scheduled to be demolished.

Pyzik says Facilities Management is seeking input on development project issues such as how to enhance WMU branding



Center neighborhood project area

and identity for the "crossroads" part of the neighborhood area as well as how to improve the bus loading zone and areas around the flagpoles and pedestrian mall.

The afternoon's activities will feature an overview of the center neighborhood project goals and context from 3 to 3:30 p.m. by a design team from SmithGroupJJR. That presentation will be followed by an open house for walk-up discussion with project principals until 6 p.m.

## New student pay schedule becomes effective Jan. 1; certain forms due Dec. 9

A new, simplified pay schedule for students will go into effect at WMU Jan. 1 to coincide with this year's incremental increase in Michigan's minimum wage.

The new schedule has three basic levels and three steps within each level. In addition, it includes an SEQ level, which replaces the existing Q level for highly skilled positions that require a pay rate that is above the highest rate available through the pay schedule's basic levels.

Under the new system, Student Employee Level 1, Step 1—SE1.1—will be set at the state minimum wage of \$8.50 per hour. Positions falling below that will automati-

cally be adjusted to the new minimum, as students cannot be paid less than minimum wage starting Jan. 1.

WMU units employing students do not need to submit a transaction form to effect the change to the new pay structure with its new rates. However, employers wanting other changes in the Jan. 1 pay rate must submit a transaction form to Human Resources no later than Wednesday, Dec. 9—the W26 pay period.

Student employers were able to check the new rates through the Kronos Timekeepers or Data Management report starting Nov. 24 by using an effective date of 1/1/16 to

view the changes. Also, Human Resources began accepting Student Employee Online Transaction forms for Jan. 1 pay rate changes.

Due to the high volume of forms expected to be submitted for processing, requests for pay increases that are received after the Dec. 9 deadline may not see the pay changes until pay period W30. In addition, pay decreases cannot be retroactive. So if the Dec. 9 deadline is missed, pay decreases will become effective with the next payroll.

Michigan's Workforce Opportunity Wage Act, passed in 2014, called for gradual increases in the state's \$7.40 minimum hourly wage as follows: \$8.15, Sept. 1, 2014; \$8.50, Jan. 1, 2016; \$8.90, Jan. 1, 2017; and \$9.25, Jan. 1, 2018. To see the pay rates that will be in effect through 2018, visit the Career and Student Employment Services website at [wmich.edu/career/campus/payrates](http://wmich.edu/career/campus/payrates).

Direct questions about student pay rates or levels to Career and Student Employment Services at [wmich.edu/career](http://wmich.edu/career), [broncojobs@wmich.edu](mailto:broncojobs@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-2745. Direct questions about student online form processing to Human Resources at [wmich.edu/hr](http://wmich.edu/hr), [hr-hris@wmich.edu](mailto:hr-hris@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-3620.

### Student dancers to perform

The annual Fall Showcase, a free concert of dances choreographed and performed by WMU dance students is set for 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall's Dance Studio B, 3. Seating is limited.



**First Heritage Hall dedication commemorated**—Calling the recently opened Heritage Hall "a jewel" that had become "the place we all wanted it to be," U.S. Rep. Fred Upton set the tone for a Nov. 23 anniversary celebration of the building's original 1905 dedication.

Some 125 invited guests attended the luncheon—the first formal event to be held in the hall's remodeled ballroom. Sharon Carlson, University Archives and Regional History Collections, was the keynote speaker for the luncheon. She called the University's newly renovated birthplace "a very tangible part of the important town and gown relationship in the community" and tied the establishment of WMU to a period of tremendous growth for Kalamazoo. (Photos by Mike Lanka)



## Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during December.

**35 Years**—Arthur R. McGurn, physics, and Peter J. Strazdas, Facilities Management.

**30 Years**—Ali M. Metwalli, finance and commercial law; Mary E. Pratt, landscape services; and Ralph Tanner, electrical and computer engineering.

**25 Years**—Patrick A. Benton, College of Aviation; Patricia M. Negrevski, Evaluation Center; Kelly L. Penskar, telecommunications; Teresa M. Ventimiglia, university relations; and John D. Winchell, University Libraries.

**20 Years**—Joel Boyd Jr., Center for English Language and Culture for International

Students; David Ladd, student financial aid and scholarships; Lois Lemon, chemical and paper engineering; and Thomas C. Marks, Center for English Language and Culture for International Students.

**15 Years**—Louann A. Bierlein Palmer, educational leadership, research and technology; Alamgir Choudhury, engineering design, manufacturing and management systems; Teresa Crumpton, speech pathology and audiology; Ann C. Mathis, mechanical and aerospace engineering; Norm Risk, College of Aviation; Janice L. VandeVusse, Sindecuse Health Center; Eric Vangsnes, physician assistant; and Annette M. White, Sindecuse Health Center.

**10 Years**—Jeannyne M. Depoian, blindness and low vision studies; Linda L. Dillon, College of Aviation; Lori B. Farrer, teaching, learning and educational studies; Andrew A. Henderson, Center For Disability Services; and Kim W. Ketchum, Paper and Printing Pilot Plant.

**Five Years**—Blaine N. Edgell, maintenance services; Janet S. Hahn, interdisciplinary health programs; Jon Matthew Haskell, Unified Clinics; Gary R. Jensen, maintenance services; Jerry E. McLaughlin, counselor education and counseling psychology; James Aron Phillips, maintenance services; Judy Seymour, speech pathology and audiology; and Steven Garrett Smith, Sindecuse Health Center.

## On Campus with Linda Dillon



ANOTHER NEW CHAPTER  
(Photo by Eric Epplett)

Linda Dillon started her career with WMU almost 10 years ago as a financial assistant in the College of Aviation, and she quickly realized her ambition was to work more with people.

Now as an administrative assistant, she helps with operations, administrative duties, and sets up meetings with students and instructors in addition to supporting the executive director of flight operations and other staff members at the college.

She also organizes the college's bi-weekly safety committee meetings, works closely with the chief flight instructor and helps issue student grades.

Her caring personality has helped her grow into her role as "the WMU mom" for the college, having an open door to all students.

"I really like watching the students progress and become adults. Our graduates are really respected out there, and I feel like I'm part of that. Watching them bloom is very fulfilling," she says. "It's nice to watch these kids grow from hardly being an adult to going out in the real world. It's also bittersweet; you don't want to lose them, but they are going on to the next chapter of their lives."

Early next year, Dillon is moving on, too, as she plans to retire from WMU in January.

Originally from the Chicago area, she was a legal assistant for a law firm in that city for seven years and also owned a travel agency. She also worked as a flight manager representative for United Airlines in Miami, and was at that job on Sept. 11, 2001. She explained that she could do "just about everything but fly the planes and disciplinary matters."

"We had pilots stranded during 9/11, but I was amazed by how many pilots and so many others asked if they could help. Even as large as the network was for United, aviation is a very small community. It was like a family; everybody really joined in to help," Dillon says.

She has been married to Bob—yes, Bob Dillon, but Linda says "Don't ask him to sing!"—for almost 42 years, and they live in Battle Creek. The couple has two grown daughters and a grandson. In retirement, she expects to relocate to Minneapolis, where her grandson and one of her daughters live.

## Ethics center sponsors contest for 'Star Wars' fans

The Center for the Study of Ethics in Society is probing the outer reaches of the galaxy by holding a contest to find out the ethical lessons people have learned from the "Star Wars" action films.

The center's contest is titled "The Most Important Thing I Learned about Ethics from 'Star Wars.'" The contest asks area residents far and wide to write about their favorite ethical take-away from the famous film and book series.

Those wishing to enter are asked to post their answers on the center's Facebook page by Monday, Dec. 7, and could win a 1996

Kenner Tusken Raider action figure in the original box.

The winner will be announced Friday, Dec. 11, a week in advance of the general opening of the latest film, "The Force Awakens," set to hit theatres Friday, Dec. 18.

Entrants should limit their posts to 100 words and may include a "selfie." Entries will be judged based on originality and depth. Selected posts will be featured on the ethics center's website at [wmich.edu/ethics](http://wmich.edu/ethics).

To post an entry, visit [facebook.com/wmuethics](https://www.facebook.com/wmuethics). Organizers say, "May the force be with you."

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## NeoVent duo wins new innovation prize

Barnett and John's invention, NeoVent, which has now earned five national innovation prizes, is a respiratory support mechanism designed to treat critically ill infants, particularly those who live in developing nations.

NeoVent converts a low-tech respiratory device into one that provides the additional benefit of a ventilator, but at much less cost. The invention could help thousands of babies in underdeveloped parts of the world.

Earlier this year, Barnett and John were named winners of the Lemelson-MIT National Collegiate Student Prize Competition; Brian Patrick Thomas Entrepreneurial Spirit Award at WMU; 2015 James Dyson Award, U.S. Division; and 2015 Biomed-

ical Engineering Society competition for undergraduate biomedical and bioengineering students.

A critical part of the team was Peter Gustafson, mechanical and aerospace engineering, who has been the team's advisor for more than two years. As advisor to the winning undergraduate prize team, he too was honored at the Nov. 17 awards event.

Barnett and John also were helped by a Research and Creative Activities Award they received from WMU's Lee Honors College, and they were a part of the Haworth College of Business student business accelerator, Starting Gate.

Visit [bit.ly/1NGoolS](http://bit.ly/1NGoolS) to watch a YouTube video explaining their work.

## New education benefit offered

Beginning with the spring semester, WMU's one-time application fee will be waived for eligible employees who take undergraduate or graduate courses for academic credit under the University's tuition discount program.

The waiver will occur automatically if employees enter EM190316 on their online admissions application. That code should be entered in the Event Code/Application Fee Waiver box in the "Additional Student Information" section of the graduate application and in the Fee Waiver Code box in the "Additional Information" section of the undergraduate application.

For tuition benefits details, visit [wmich.edu/admissions/guest/employees](http://wmich.edu/admissions/guest/employees).

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## Input sought for strategic plan

includes open-ended questions for specific comments on strategic planning.

After incorporating the survey results, a draft revised plan will be shared with students and employees in January. The campus community will have an opportunity to provide additional input through March. A final plan is expected to be sent in late March to the WMU Board of Trustees.

For more information about the survey or strategic planning at WMU, visit the strategic planning website at [wmich.edu/strategic](http://wmich.edu/strategic) or contact Jody Brylinsky at [jody.brylinsky@wmich.edu](mailto:jody.brylinsky@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-2314.