Middle school math is target of nearly $4 million in NSF funding

The National Science Foundation has awarded $3.94 million to a four-year statewide effort based at WMU and designed to help districts implement new middle school math programs developed to boost student achievement.

The Middle School Mathematics Reform Project, dubbed MRP by its directors, is a collaborative effort between WMU, the Michigan Department of Education and school districts around the state to help middle schools align their curricula with the state’s new Curriculum Framework in Mathematics.

Using $767,291 in NSF funding awarded for the first year of the effort, researchers are already hard at work setting up a statewide network of five regional centers that will provide training for a minimum of 75 leadership teams from districts in every corner of the state. The project is designed to provide extensive training in mathematics content and teaching methods based on current research.

“There are wonderful new mathematics programs available to districts now, but those new programs require teachers to learn more mathematics content than they currently have. And they must learn to teach that content and assess student progress in very different ways,” says Robert Laing of WMU, who co-directs the project with WMU’s Ruth Ann Meyer. “This project sets up a statewide network of middle teachers and administrators with the training and support they need.”

New programs have been developed under the auspices of the NSF and have been rated as “excellent” by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Laing says participants in MRP will have a chance to become familiar with those programs. They are: Connected Mathematics, published by Dale Seymour Publications; MathScape, published by Creative Publications; and Themes from McDougal Littell Publishing Co. (Continued on page four)

DIGGING INTO DEVELOPMENT—With shovels flying, University and community officials collaborated on a well-attended ground-breaking Nov. 16 to start the first phase of development that will turn WMU’s Lee Baker Farm into a new engineering complex that will include a business, research and technology park. Enjoying the celebratory moment were, from left: Kalamazoo Mayor Robert B. Jones, President Floyd; Mayor Meyer, an emerita in mathematics and statistics, and Laing are longtime specialists in elementary and middle school mathematics, and Co-directing MRP with them are Charles R. Allan, mathematics specialist with the Michigan Department of Education, and Mark Jenness of WMU’s Science and Mathematics Program Improvement Project. WMU’s Sandra R. Madden is over.

Season’s Greetings

To all members of the University community,

we extend our best wishes for a joyous holiday season.

May the new year be filled with peace, understanding, good health, and happiness and may your hearts be filled with hope.

Carmento and Elson S. Floyd

Historian pulls off publishing ‘hat trick’ with 2 books and video series on early Christianity

Paul L. Maier, the Russell H. Seibert Professor of Ancient History at the University and an expert on the rise of Christianity, has completed two new books and a video series.

The books, “The New Complete Works of Josephus” and “Eusebius: The Church History,” have been published by Kregel Publications of Grand Rapids, Mich. The video series on “The Odyssey of St. Paul” has been released by Tobias Communications of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

The new 1999 volumes are Maier’s translation of historical records left by Flavius Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian, and Eusebius (A.D. 260 to 339), the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. Maier translated their writings from the original Greek.

His video project is an eight-segment, four-hour documentary on the life and travels of Paul of Tarsus, who is sometimes referred to as “the co-founder of Christianity.” Maier wrote and directed the series and serves as its host. The voices of other historians, and Eusebius (A.D. 260 to 339), the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. Maier translated their writings from the original Greek.

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1,956 to receive degrees during Dec. 11 commencement ceremonies

The University will award 1,956 degrees during commencement ceremonies Saturday, Dec. 11, that also will honor WMU alumni James Paul Hickey, an ABC News correspondent, and Charles Perricone, speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives.

There will be three ceremonies in Miller Auditorium: one at 9 a.m. for graduates of the Haworth College of Business, the College of Fine Arts and the College of Health and Human Services; one at 11:30 a.m. for graduates of the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Aviation, and the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; and a final ceremony at 2 p.m. for graduates of the College of Education and the General University Studies Program.

Both Perricone and Hickey will receive honorary doctor of public service degrees. Perricone, a 1989 graduate will be honored at the 9 a.m. ceremony. Hickey, a 1969 alumnus, will receive his degree at the 11:30 a.m. ceremony.

Among this fall’s graduates will be 1,488 who will receive bachelor’s degrees, 450 master’s and specialist degree recipients, and 18 who will be awarded doctoral degrees.

Guest tickets will not be required to attend the ceremonies. If the auditorium fills to capacity, guests may view commencements on a large screen television in 3512 Knauss. All three ceremonies will also be shown live on channel 7 of EduCABLE, the campus cable system, and on Community Access channel 30.

This year, for the first time, video of the commencement may also be viewed online at the time of the ceremonies and for 30 days after the ceremony. The site address is: www.wmich.edu/wmu/commencement.

Music for the ceremonies will be performed by the Western Brass Ensemble and the Michigan Concert Band.

Happy holidays and a joyous new year to all.

Clyde Brickley, associate provost
BOTT will meet Dec. 10

The Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet Friday, Dec. 10, in the Comball Building at the Business College. The time of the meeting and times and places of board committee meetings will be available at Western News press time.

1998-99 gifts to WMU reach nearly $11 million

Gifts to the University amounted to nearly $11 million in 1998-99 and includes an increase of $2.9 million or 38 percent in gifts to the WMU Foundation, according to reports presented to the Board of Trustees in October.

"These figures represent the continued commitment of individual and corporate donors who share our vision for Western Michigan University and whose generosity is made possible by our outstanding associate vice president for development and secretary of the foundation," said Gifts to the Paper Technology Foundation Board approves retirements of seven faculty and four staff members

The faculty members retiring with 26 years or more credit are: Michael D. Swords, professor of science education, and Lawrence L. Tyler, professor of sociology.

The seven faculty members retiring with 26 years or more credit are: John M. Carney, professor of art, 34 years; Philip P. Roehling, professor of management, 28 years; Robert I. Sundick, professor of anthropology, 31 years; Michael D. Swords, professor of science studies, 28-1/2 years; and lawrence L. Tyler, professor of sociology, 30 years, effective April 2000.

The four staff members retiring are: Lois McPherson, a customer service building custodial and support services, 19-1/2 years, effective Aug. 31, 1999; Richard F. Simon, a maintenance roofer in the maintenance services area of physical plant, 18 years, effective Aug. 31, 1999; Richard C. Snyder, director of Miller Auditorium, 12 years, effective June 30, 2000; and Anne E. Thompson, director of compensation and employee relations in the Department of Human Resources, 18-1/2 years, effective Aug. 31, 1999.

Weight discrimination rampant in workplace, management researcher Roehling discovers

Deep prejudice against overweight people in the workplace has been identified in a study published this month by a WMU faculty member.

Roehling maintains that weight discrimination is more common than discrimination against other protected characteristics, including race, gender and religion.

"If you have three people apply for two jobs and two of them have the same objective qualifications, but one is an ex-felon, one is an ex-mental patient and one is overweight, the one person who won't get a job is the overweight person," Roehling said.

"The overweight person is evaluated more negatively than the ex-felon or the ex-mental patient.

"The worst-case scenario is to be overweight and female, Roehling says. Even slightly overweight women have a harder time getting a wage bonus. They actually earn a little bit more."

Unlike victims of race or gender discrimination, who are often little heard, victims of weight discrimination can do Roehling, Roehling says. Of all the states only one-Michigan has a law against weight discrimination. However, some cities have laws against discrimination based on appearance.

"There is a chance that there has been a lack of passing more legislation on the state level or possibly federally to prohibit the prac-

WMU experts are a hit with national media

Calls from the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, an interview with the BBC and stories in newspapers around the nation kept Mark Roehling, management, busy for much of November.

"This story was a natural, but it took a tremendous amount of work by everyone," Roehling said. In March, those efforts were enhanced by the addition of the resources of the University's media relations, did with Roehling for "News Call," an audio feed provided to radio stations around the state. Because of the news potential of the topic, the information was shared with public relations at several national media outlets.

"We had a phenomenally successful year in terms of raising the profile of the University by promoting faculty expertise," said Matt Kurz, associate vice president for university relations.

"It's becoming routine to see the work of our faculty members featured in such publications as Forbes, the San Francisco Examiner and the Chronicle of Higher Education."

Kurz says that such placements have been a major focus for staff members in recent years, and little things that "are the result of WMU's membership in such publications.

"Every day, we're working to make the same kind of placements with faculty members across the campus."

Recent major WMU media placements are the focus of a new addition to the University Web site. "WMU Makes the News," a link on the university relations Web site (www.wmich.edu), lists major non-local stories about WMU that have appeared in 1999.

Visit the site and see how the WMU experts are hitting the news.
Thirty-seven faculty and staff members added to 25 Year Club

Thirty-seven faculty and staff members who have been with WMU for 25 years or more to continue in a continuous, co-operative service to the University were eligible for induction into WMU's 25 Year Club at the annual College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Senate luncheon Tuesday, Nov. 30, in the North Ballroom of the Bernhard Center.

The club, which will now have 322 active and 356 retired members, was founded in 1982 with 98 charter members.

The annual luncheon this year's banquet were: Nancy A. Ebsly, University libraries; Janice K. Argue, and contractors; Sondra J. Barrett, School of Social Work; John W. Benson, foreign languages and literatures; David J. Blow- er, School of Education; J. Lawrence Janis, communications; Patricia A. Brown, finance and commercial law; Mary Ann Buchanan, occupational health and safety; Larry W. Campbell, psychology (retired 1999); Barbara V. Caras-Tomczak, Haworth College of Arts and Sciences; and chairperson of mathematics; Donald A. Graham, Computer Services; and chairperson of business and finance; Lowell E. Crow, marketing; Thomas L. Deckard, aviation (retired 1999); Sandra J. Edwards, occupational therapy; William B. Emmert, Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance; and chairperson of physical plant-remodeling services; Leigh W. Fitzgerald Jr., political science; Robert O. LaDuke, blind rehabilitation; Marshall H. Liberek, College of Arts and Sciences; Pamela G. Liberek, admissions and orientation; Randall K. Lung, Brink Printing Services; Janice Luzuta, WMU Apartments; Kenneth M. MacCann, physical plant maintenance services; Bruce Nafelf, art; Carl D. Nef, power plant; Peter G. Nouthouse, communications; Howard J. Ross, public safety; Kanti S. Sandhu, University Video Services; Beatrice Sicil, University libraries; Janet B. Stuckrakangast, physical plant-administrative services; Larry J. tenHarmel, English; Wil B. Emmert, Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance.

The 25 Year Club was established by the Board of Trustees to recognize the valuable contributions made to the University by its employees who have completed their careers at WMU. New members receive a 25-year service pin and framed certificate; and they may choose from a selection of commemorative gifts. New, active and retired members are guests of the University for the evening.

This year's banquet began with the presentation of the William B. Emmert Award, presented to an individual who exemplifies spiritual integrity and dedication to the University and its employees. The award is named for the late WMU employee who devoted his career to the University by itsemployees who have completed their careers at WMU. New members receive a 25-year service pin and framed certificate; and they may choose from a selection of commemorative gifts. New, active and retired members are guests of the University for the evening.

On campus

A. Bruce Clarke, who served the University as provost, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and chairperson of mathematics and statistics, died Nov. 26 in Kalamazoo. He was 72.

Clarke was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, in 1927, earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1945 and his Ph.D. from Brown University in 1950. He served as the faculty of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Michigan and rose through the ranks to become a full professor there. He came to WMU in 1967 to take a position as professor and chairperson of the Department of Mathematics, a position he held until 1977.

In 1978, he became dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and in 1988, he was named WPAC's vice president of academic affairs. In 1990, he was named provost and vice president for academic affairs. In 1991, he retired as provost, with emeritus status, in 1991. A memorial service is planned for 4 p.m. Nov. 30 in the University Center. Memorial contributions in honor of Clarke may be sent to the WMU Foundation for the University in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

Alfred R. Connable Jr., a Kalamazoo business and civic leader who was a member of the first WMU Board of Trustees, died Tuesday, his family said. He was 95.

Connable, who was a WMU trustee from 1964 to 1967 and the board's first vice chairman, was also a member of the Michigan State University regent from 1942 to 1958. In the latter position, he was chosen by his fellow regents to chair a task force on faculty members during the 1950s.
Acquisition of the press was made possible by a $270,000 commitment from Flint, one of the fastest growing areas of the printing industry. Admiring one of the first presses, "Scrap" Cox, of INX Corp. and a director of the WMU Foundation; H. Howard Schmotter to head GMAC research task force

Read WMU's only daily "newspaper" page. WMU News is the only site at our University that is updated every day," says Matt Kurt, assistant vice president for University relations. "That includes weekends and holidays. If there is news of importance to students and faculty from around the state, also is helping to guide the effort. The MRP will train district leadership teams across the state to help schools prepare for a dramatically new mathematics curriculum in the 2002-03 Michigan Educational Assessment Program. That test will reflect the new mathematics framework as well as the state's discipline and national standards for mathematics education.

The training will help districts address the causes behind serious achievement problems among the state's middle school students. Only 28 percent of Michigan's eighth-grade students achieved at or above proficiency level in math in the 1996 round of testing in the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

"We're telling teachers and administrators around the state they cannot afford not to participate in this project," Lainio says. "It's an effort to 'scale-up' middle school mathematics education on a statewide basis and get students ready for both MEAP 2002 and the 21st century." Meyer notes that in an effort to prepare for the new MEAP, districts are asking teachers to select new teaching materials that address the new content students will need to know. But many of those teachers do not have an adequate mathematics background to address the new content.

"The problem is that most middle school teachers are most comfortable with the mathematics curricula they are currently using," Meyer says. "They're not yet adequately informed to select a new program or even to be comfortable teaching with the new materials."

The MRP will provide training for teachers in that new content as well as help in both selecting and implementing a new curriculum that is right for each individual district.

Meyer and Lainio have been holding meetings at sites around the state to recruit districts to the project. They have been surprised by the level of enthusiasm they've encountered and grateful for the opportunity to meet with school districts that have come sensitized to the differences they'll need to address among districts.

"Each district is facing different issues in implementing the new mathematics curriculum as well as differences in the level of teacher support and commitment," Meyer says. "We almost have to design a model for each participating district," Meyer says.

Calendar

**Thursday, Dec. 2**
Art exhibits (through Dec. 9), printmaking by Mary Brodbeck, MFA Degree Show, Ronnda Gallery, East Hall; paintings by Lisa Matlock, M.A. Degree Show, South Gallery, East Hall; reception, Friday, Dec. 3, 5-7 p.m.
March to the Millennium Lecture Series, "Walter Benjamin's Apocalyptic Eschatology: Messianic Interruptions of the Historical Continuum of Force and Counter-Force," Rudolf J. Sieber, comparative religion, 3512 Knauss Hall, 7:30 p.m.
*University Theatre production (through Dec. 5), "Tis the Season," Shaw Theatre: Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 2-4, 8 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 5, 2 p.m.

**Friday, Dec. 3**
Department of Biological Sciences seminar, Bruce Bejeck, WMU biological sciences, 1718 Wood Hall, 3:30 p.m.
*Hockey vs. Ferris State, Lawson Ice Arena, 7 p.m.
*The Nutcracker ("Nutcracker" and Saturday, Dec. 4), performance by Ballet Internationale and the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Miller Auditorium: Friday and Saturday, 2 and 7:30 p.m.
*University Theatre, 3512 Knauss Hall, 7:30 p.m.
*Western Film Society showing (through Dec. 5), "Besieged," Campus Cinema, Oakland Recital Hall; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 3 and 4, 6 and 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 5, 2:30 and 5 p.m.
*Hockey vs. Ferris State, Lawson Ice Arena, 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Dec. 4**
*Choral Christmas Concert, School of Music’s Women’s Chorus and Collegiate Singers, Dutton Center Recital Hall, 8 p.m.

**Sunday, Dec. 5**
*Holiday Jazz, annual holiday concert by School of Music’s jazz faculty and ensembles, Miller Auditorium, 3 p.m.

**Monday, Dec. 6**
Teatrical readings (and Dec. 8) one-act plays written by student playwrights, presented by student and area performers, different works each night, 3021 Brown Hall, 8 p.m.; reception on the 10th floor of Sprau Tower after each night's presentation.

**Friday, Dec. 10**
Board of Trustees meeting; times and locations to be announced
Holiday Reception sponsored by the Board of Trustees and President Floyd, South Ballroom, Bernhard Center, 2:30-4 p.m.
*Kalamazoo Film Society showing (through Dec. 12), Ziad Doueiri's "West Beirut," Campus Cinema, Oakland Recital Hall; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 10 and 11, 7 and 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 12, 2:30 and 5 p.m.

**Saturday, Dec. 11**
Commencement, Miller Auditorium, 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

**Sunday, Dec. 12**
25th annual Harlem Christmas Concert, Miller Auditorium, 2 p.m.

**Monday, Dec. 20**
*Men's basketball vs. Marshall, University Arena, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, Dec. 22**
*Men's basketball vs. Marist College, 7 p.m.

**Friday, Dec. 24**
*Holiday Jazz, annual holiday concert by School of Music's jazz faculty and ensembles, Miller Auditorium, 3 p.m.

**Monday, Jan. 3**
University offices open

**Wednesday, Jan. 5**
Winter semester classes begin
*Women's basketball vs. Toledo, University Arena, 7 p.m.

*Admission charged