WMU/KVCC partnership boosts transfer rate for minority students

Minority students are finishing their studies at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and transferring to Western Michigan University, thanks to a three-year-old program that has just received funding for the 1992-93 school year. A $64,623 grant from the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Minority Equity was awarded recently to continue both schools' participation in the Michigan Equity Project, which is designed to increase the number of minority students transferring between partner two- and four-year institutions.

The WMU/KVCC partnership, called Project Focus, is a structured support system through which students can move between their two-year and four-year college careers and become successful.

Project Focus, says the initiative epitomizes what a Westem Michigan University program and Student Affairs Committee at 9 a.m.; and Board of Trustees meeting at 1 p.m. for 1992 as well as a recommendation for the WMU this past December, and Robert P. Mendelowitsch, a Kalamazoo businessman could lend a hand in Project Focus, looks on. Moorehead, who monitors students' academic progress weekly, is one of two WMU students working on the project. Ewing is a psychology major and one of 150 KVCC students now enrolled in the three-year-old program designed to boost the number of minority students who transfer to the University.

Focus program in 1989 after hearing about it from Executive Director Maxine Gilling, coordinator of Project Focus. Moorehead, who set up the project with Mendelowitsch with electrical engineering faculty members in the electrical engineering program. While working to develop the technical components of the program, he also spent many hours studying the art of lipreading.

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A joint project between a WMU student and a Kalamazoo businessman could lend a new meaning to the phrase, "Read my lips." The two have collaborated to come up with plans for a "Liperator," the computerized device attaches to the telephone of a hearing impaired person to translate voice communication into a sequence of lip movements that appear on a video display. Those with the equipment would actually be able to lipread their telephone conversations.

Yair Mantelwich, who received his master's degree in electrical engineering from WMU this past December, and Robert P. Slager, a hearing aid specialist at the Hearing Aid Center of Kalamazoo, have been working for the past year on developing the device. Although it has yet to be manufactured, the Liperator has received an award in a national competition and is attracting widespread interest from the scientific community.

Slager, who has worked in the hearing aid industry for some 30 years, came up with the idea for the product several years ago. "Persons with hearing loss have great difficulty on the telephone, especially when there is noise in the background," he says.

Most hearing losses, he says, are caused by the deterioration of the hearing nerve or its lack of development. Persons with this type of hearing loss can pick up some frequencies that others - usually the low-pitched tones - better.

"So the person with this hearing loss will have difficulty understanding," he says. "This problem is further complicated when there is noise in the background, as the frequencies of noise are primarily in the low end of the hearing range. Therefore the movement of the lips with the Liperator will augment hearing.

A prototype of the Liperator.

"We think that what Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo Valley Community College have done is a two -fiddle partnership," he says. "It is a partnership based on our common goal of helping students who, with encouragement and support, can transfer successfully to a four-year institution, and it is based on giving hope to students and belief in what they can accomplish.

"We have used their work as a model to show other universities what a university can accomplish when this kind of partnership is built. We've encouraged other universities to grow from the WMU and KVCC experience."

Henderson, who is director of Project Focus, says the initiative epitomizes what a WMU program and also is part of an initiative called Project Focus.

"If we are to remain competitive in higher education, and also to remain competitive in the world of commerce, we must learn to live both of these worlds at the same time," he says. "We can accomplish this by working together, and that is exactly what we are doing in Project Focus.

"We are working to develop the technical components of the program, he also spent many hours studying the art of lipreading.

Two Project Focus students will be the first to receive their undergraduate degrees during April commencement ceremonies at WMU, with more following in the fall.

Slager credits Mendelowitsch with being "very helpful in developing the technology" that analyses a voice signal received from the telephone. The instrument breaks down the stream of words into phonemes, the smallest units of speech that distinguish one utterance from another. Factors such as frequencies and inflections are taken into account. Once the phonemes are identified, the computer matches each to a corresponding lip shape. These shapes are then shown in the form of human lips on a video display.

"So much can be taken from the program to work on," says Gilling. "We think that what Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo Valley Community College have done is a two -fiddle partnership."
**WMU/VCVC partnership**

(Continued from page one) Project Focus students meet with project staff members weekly while at VCVC and monthly after they transfer to the University. Academics, social and financial problems, and fears concerning all emerge during the monitoring sessions. Instructors at VCVC report a noticeable difference between the Project Focus students and other minority students on campus when it comes to academic performance by the monitored students is apparent as the semester unfolds. VCVC faculty who have seen what a difference the program can make, have been referring me to that.

Gilling says "outstanding support" from the faculty and staff at VCVC and access to tutors through that college's tutoring lab have been crucial to the success of the project.

The Project Focus involvement in WMU campus activities also is a major component of Project Focus. Gilling and her staff organize lunch and two Saturday events each semester. Gilling and her staff organize an even visit during the Spring semester.

The course is taught by a WMU faculty member and modeled on a similar course that has been successfully used to familiarize WMU freshmen with how to use University resources.

**Liperato**

(Continued from page one)

A production of the powerful drama, "The Meeting," and a jazz festival highlight the February events being planned to celebrate Black History Month at the University. Marin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm never met during their lifetimes, but what would have transpired if they had? "The Meeting," a play by Jeff Stetson, is a fictitious account of a confrontational dialogue between the two. The Division of Minority Affairs will present three performances of "The Meeting" during the month. The first will be shown from noon to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, in the Dalton Center Recital Room. The second will be shown from noon to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, in the Ford Auditorium. The third will be shown from noon to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10, in the Miller Student Center. After an initial screening, Mendelsohn, who now serves there and receives this cultural event, will begin at 7 p.m. in the WestBallroom of the Bernhard Center.

A film titled "Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice," will be shown from noon to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, in the Dalton Center Recital Room. The film is a production of nonviolent protest and the "by any means necessary" approach of Malcolm X are representative of the two ends of the Black struggle spectrum, the play explores the similarities as well as the differences of the two leaders who worked to achieve equality for African-Americans. Tickets are $8 and will go on sale Monday, Feb. 6, at various campus locations including the Division of Minority Affairs in 201-A Ellsworth Hall and the lobby of the Student Service Building. For the Tuesday performance, special "Student Night" tickets will be available for high school students and $4 for University students. For more information, please contact the WMU-Kalamazoo Partnership office at 629-5326.

A gospel choir concert will begin at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, in the DeVries Recital Hall. In addition to the WMU Gospel Choir, the Festival Choir will perform, accompanied by local churches, including Mount Zion Baptist Church and Galilee Baptist Church, throughout the month of February, culminating at the Student Union where the feature artist is scheduled to appear.

The event is free and open to the public. Advance reservations are strongly encouraged. For more information, call the WMU Office of University Relations at 629-5111.

**Cable shows planned for Black History Month**

In observance of Black History Month, the WMU cable programming office has scheduled video showings each Monday during the month of February. The shows will feature documentaries on a variety of topics of interest to the African American community.

The cable programming office is part of the Department of Radio/Television/Communication. The department is housed in the Communication Building on North Campus. The office can be reached at 629-5111.

**WMU-Kalamazoo Partnership**

(Continued from page one)
Search for dean of business college under way; committee plans to recommend finalist by April

The search committee for the dean of the Haworth College of Business has its work cut out for it, as applications for the position were due yesterday.

The committee, chaired by Dean Leonard R. Jones, representing engineering and applied sciences, is seeking a replacement for Darren G. Jones, who has announced his intention to resign the dean's job and return to his academic position in business information systems faculty.

Soliciting information is currently being done by rewriting the position description to update it and to clearly define the scope of the job and its requirements. Based on the description, the committee developed a recruitment plan and materials with the help of the search firm, Krinsky & Associates of Pasadena, Calif.

Advertisements currently are appearing in journals and the committee expects to begin the screening process soon.

The committee plans to narrow the initial field to five or so candidates, who will be invited to campus in April. Their visits will include forums that will be open to the University community.

"We hope to complete the process by the end of April and to have our recommendation to the provost," Lamberson said.

Copies of minutes of the search committee meetings, as well as the position description and advertising materials, are available by calling the McKee Alumni Center at 7-6179. The forum will be led by Janice E. Brown, assistant dean of the College of Business.

On Campus

The new committee is to make "full use of the prior work" of the Undergraduate Studies Council and an ad hoc committee appointed last summer by the provost, according to the resolution that created the committee.

The following list of vacancies is currently being posted through the Job Opportunity Program and vacancies available to external applicants. Interested students are invited to bring their résumé to career planning and job search, the workshops will cover topics ranging from networking skills to planning your career.

Search for dean of business college under way; committee plans to recommend finalist by April

Members of General Ed Committee named

Donald R. Schreiber, chemistry, has been appointed chairman of the Faculty Senate ad hoc General Education Committee by the senate president.

He is one of 13 persons named to the committee, which was expanded to accommodate 14 by adding a member to each of the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business, and the College of Education.

The senate voted Nov. 7 to establish the committee "to recommend to the senate a strengthened academic affairs committee and to clearly define the scope of the business information systems faculty.

Richard T. Burke, vice president for business information systems faculty. Burke will be the speaker. A continental breakfast will start the meeting at 7:30 a.m. at the Patrons. Norman Terry, vice president of the CEO Focus and Business Park: A Key to Kalamazoo's Future will be the focus of the next breakfast meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 11. Burke will discuss the proposed research and business park, which would be located on the university's 51st Street and Road and Parkview Avenue, Last April, the Board of Trustees authorized the University administration to proceed with master planning for the development of such a park.

The program is part of a series of breakfast engagements sponsored by WMU and its Alumni Association. The cost is $5 for WMU students and $7 for non-members. Persons are required to make reservations by Thursday, Feb. 6, by calling the McKee Alumni Center at 7-6179.

Teleconference to explore sexual orientation issues

WMU will be a part of a national teleconference Thursday, Feb. 6, focusing on issues faced by faculty, staff and students related to sexual orientation on campus.

The teleconference, titled "Understanding the Issues of Sexual Orientation: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Concerned Students," will begin with a discussion by a national panel of experts at 1:30 p.m. in the Peters Campus Center's Basement Conference Room, followed by a 3:30 p.m. session with representatives of local colleges and universities and the Kalamazoo community.

The event is presented by the National Association of Gay and Lesbian Students of the University of Michigan, the National Gay and Lesbian Student Alliance, and the National University Teleconference Network. It is being sponsored at WMU by the Division of Student Affairs. For more information, persons may call 7-2123.

Media

Lewis H. Carlson, history, discusses the changing nature of the Olympic games on "Focus," a one-minute interview produced by newswriters, "Focus" is scheduled to debut Saturday, Feb. 1, at 10 a.m. on WKPR AM (1420) and 4:54 p.m. on WMPR-FM (99.1).
Faculty members share their expertise with talented high school students

Dan Wright fits in with his fellow students when he is working in the University’s Aerospace Engineering Department. He is a student of anthropology and aeronautics; Paul J. Eeni has served as a KAMSC mentor for the past three years. The pair, working with Richard B. Hathaway, mechanical and aeronautical engineering, explains the principles that produce lift in an aircraft. Hathaway is using a wind tunnel to explain how air passing over the aircraft affects the lift produced. The pair is studying airfoils, which include airplane wings, tails and stabilizers, to determine drag coefficient and improve lift. Their research is part of a major project arranged through the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center. He is one of six KAMSC students currently working with WMU faculty in mentorships.

Throughout the semester, students are required to present their work to fellow students, parents, mentors and other interested parties. Wright made a presentation on his project earlier this month with a series of color slides and overheads explaining the workings of holographic, vibration and wind tunnel testing and the computer applications he learned in order to carry out his work. Admitting he had some rather vague goals in mind when he began his project, Wright waxed enthusiastic over the testing procedures he learned to use and the way he was able to help Hathaway, an aircraft engineering major, lay the groundwork for a project she will complete this winter as both her senior engineering project and an Undergraduate Research Award winning project.

Wright, whose father is a pilot, says he spent so much time on this project that he wanted to learn some of the techniques used in aeronautical engineering. For the biggest challenge he faces is how much time he spent on the project. He averages about seven hours a week in campus labs and devotes another three hours to journal writing and classroom work. He became interested in the work that last December he asked if he could continue for a second semester. Wright has enough time on his hands to have a chance to see and work with the student whose project got started last fall, Wright says. He is currently helping Hathaway collect data for her work, which is aimed at improving aircraft lift by vibrating the surface of an aircraft to reduce drag.

Tuesday, the student has been accepted to study music at Harvard University next year, worked under Lisa Derry’s supervision as a music student and has learned how to play violin, cello and piano. That composition was submitted to Harvard along with her academic application. A trio of musicians performed the piece, which is written in neo-romantic style, at her mentorship presentation earlier this month.

Thursday, a violist and pianist, has an interdisciplinary background; according to Derry, and her work surpasses any fresh- man work Derry has encountered in her years of teaching.

UPDATING LIFE—Loy Norris High School senior Dan Wright, left, holds a cutaway sample of an airfoil as he and WMU Professor Wendy Hollfort listen to Richard B. Hathaway, mechanical and aeronautical engineering, explain the principles that produce lift in an aircraft. Hathaway is using a wind tunnel to explain how air passing over the aircraft affects the lift produced. The pair is studying airfoils, which include airplane wings, tails and stabilizers, to determine drag coefficient and improve lift.

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