Employee records updates due soon
All faculty and staff are asked to review their personal records and make changes as necessary by Monday, Sept. 19. 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 2016-17 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.

Groups slate meetings; fall event set
WMU’s two nonbargaining employee groups for members of the Staff Compensation System have set general membership meetings from noon to 1 p.m. in 157-158 Bernhard Center. The Administrative Professional Association will meet Wednesday, Sept. 21, and the Professional Support Staff Organization Tuesday, Oct. 4.

Also, APA will hold a fall social gathering from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, by Mike Lanka Auditorium. Keep watching its website at wmich.edu/apas for details. For more about PSSO, visit wmich.edu/pssso.

Honorary degree nominations open
Following a policy approved by WMU trustees, the Honorary Degree Committee is seeking nominations of individuals to be considered for honorary degrees in 2017.

The committee will accept nominations through the end of September and review them in October and November. Its recommendations for up to three nominations will be made to President John M. Dunn no later than Dec. 1, with the intent that any degrees approved be awarded during April commencement.

Last year, a single honorary degree was awarded to French composer Michel Jean Legrand during a private ceremony that took place in conjunction with the Gilmore Keyboard Festival. New nominations should be sent to committee Chair Kathryn L. Hillenbrand at kathryn.hillenbrand@wmich.edu. Guidelines for nominations and details about the evaluation and selection process can be found online at wmich.edu/policies/honorary.

Western News returns from hiatus
Western News has returned from its summer hiatus. For submission information and fall 2016-17 issue dates, go to the masthead on page 2. For the entire 2016-17 production schedule, visit wmich.edu/westernnews.

President Dunn to retire at end of 2016-17
After serving for 10 transformative years and awarding some 50,000 academic degrees to students, WMU President John M. Dunn plans to retire, effective June 30, 2017.

Dunn, who is WMU’s eighth president, announced his retirement in a message to the University community Aug. 1. In the message, he described plans for a coming year full of work still to be completed, and he noted he was announcing his retirement date now, only to “ensure that the trustees, in consultation with the University community, have adequate time to conduct a national search for the person who will become the ninth president of WMU.”

Dunn, whose contract extends through June 30, has accepted a WMU Board of Trustees request to serve in the capacity of president emeritus for the year following his tenure as president. That agreement was built into his most recent contract extension.

“I will undertake assignments, as determined by the trustees and the president-designate,” Dunn wrote. “My intent is to be helpful, but not intrusive, in the leadership and direction of the new president.”

Board of Trustees Chair Kenneth Miller followed Dunn’s message with one of his own, praising Dunn’s accomplishments and outlining the board’s next steps in the process of identifying the next WMU president. Miller, who led the search that brought Dunn to WMU in 2007, noted the level of accomplishment during Dunn’s tenure.

“In just nine short years, President Dunn’s record of accomplishment and the transformation he has led on campus and in the community have been remarkable,” Miller said. “We are, today, a markedly different and stronger University than we were in 2007.”

Among the initiatives most often cited in describing the Dunn presidency are the launching of the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, establishment of a forum to “ensure that the trustees, in consultation with the University community, have adequate 2016-17 issue dates, go to the masthead on page 2. For the entire 2016-17 production schedule, visit wmich.edu/westernnews.

The University’s annual convocation to kick off the new academic year will be a daylong celebration and collaborative gathering this year.

The event, now called the Fall Convocation to distinguish it from the Spring Convocation that debuted in February, will take place Friday, Sept. 30, and be based at the Bernhard Center. Activities will be wrapped around the two events that marked the former fall Academic Convocation—the campuswide awards ceremony recognizing achievement in teaching, research and service, and President John M. Dunn’s State of the University address.

The awards ceremony will begin around 10:45 a.m. in the Bernhard Center’s South Ballroom and be immediately followed by the State of the University address. Nine faculty and staff members are being honored as recipients of Distinguished Teaching, Distinguished Service, Emerging Scholar and Annual Make a Difference awards (see Page 6 for profiles of the winners of two of these awards).

The daylong Fall Convocation will begin at 8 a.m. on the second floor of the Bernhard Center with a continental breakfast and keynote talk as well as with the fourth
Proposed campus wayfinding plan ready to be shown

Members of the University community will have an opportunity Monday, Sept. 12, to view and comment on elements of a proposed new exterior signage system being developed for the main campuses.

In a session set for 3 to 5 p.m. in the first-floor lounge of the Bernhard Center, the nationally recognized wayfinding design firm Cloud Gehshan Associates will present an overview of the work underway. Topics include ways to:

• Improve the experience of visitors, students, and faculty and staff members in navigating the campus environment.

• Provide a hierarchy of signage elements for campus approach, arrival, circulation, parking and buildings.

• Develop a consistent nomenclature for naming campuses, streets, buildings and landmarks, including some name changes.

• Maintain a consistent and appropriate image for the University.

• Include consideration of different modes of arrival and transportation, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles and buses.

The event will feature a presentation of the proposed plan from 3 to 4 p.m., a question-and-answer period from 3:30 to 4 p.m., and an opportunity for participants to interact individually with members of the design team from 4 to 5 p.m.

Input from students and employees is being sought on these important campus improvements that will be implemented in 2017. Refreshments will be provided.

Jobs

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

University continued making improvements all summer long

Throughout the summer, WMU continued to make news and move forward on numerous fronts. A major project was completed at the Parkview Campus, a photovoltaic array of some 4,000 solar panels on 8.5 acres of land immediately west of Floyd Hall funded by Consumers Energy. The array was activated Aug. 15 and will generate 1 megawatt of electricity—enough to power 200 typical homes—for Consumers’ electrical grid.

Customers can subscribe to the solar garden program and support renewable energy as well as receive energy credit on their monthly bills, based on the amount of energy produced by the facility.

The project included a small educational solar garden that Bradley J. Bazin, electrical and computer engineering, says students and faculty will use for research. Also, the whole facility will be an educational resource for schools and the local community, demonstrating how solar power works.

While the Parkview Campus was “under construction,” so was Walwood Hall and the Graduate College. To better meet the needs of graduate students, the college extended its operating hours and relocated to a larger, renovated space in Walwood Hall.

The college is open until 6 p.m. through Friday, Sept. 9, and will be open every Thursday until 6 p.m. the rest of the academic year. And an open house is planned to help meet the needs of new students.

A worker affixes panels to one of the two arrays in the new solar research garden. (Photo by Bradley Bazin)

Donations to help complete the renovation of Prospect Hill’s former buildings and artifacts reclaimed from some of Prospect Hill’s former buildings. It honors a pivotal early employee who suggested that brown-eyed susans be the inspiration for WMU’s school colors. As an added bonus to this revitalized section of East Campus, the Heritage Hall renovation won a 2016 Governor’s Energy Excellence Award for Best Public Project. The 110-year-old facility, which is WMU’s birthplace, was the least energy efficient building on campus before being renovated and now is one of the most efficient and environmentally sophisticated buildings in the region.

Another initiative successfully completed was a five-day pilot project testing the efficacy of using goats as an environmentally friendly way of helping to control invasive vegetation in campus woodlots. The test site, a small overgrown tract of property on the south side of Goldsworthy Valley Pond, attracted numerous campus and Kalamazoo community members to observe the 10-goat feeding frenzy. In the coming months, landscape staff members will review what the animals did and didn’t eat, keep tabs on the test site’s regrowth, and seek grants and other funding to rent the goats again this coming summer.

If sufficient funding can be found, current plans call for bringing the goats back next spring for about 15 weeks to work on the remaining area around the test site. Ultimately, landscape services would like to set the goats to work on the same and different campus areas for the next 3 to 5 years as well as integrate them into the curriculum as an education or research initiative.

Workers also finished the Goldsworthy Valley Enhancement Project, just in time for the new Valley Dining Center’s opening. The project included extensive landscaping around Goldsworthy Valley Pond as well as dredging the pond and filtering out decades of fine materials deposited through storm water discharge.

Visitors to the area will be able to travel across the pond’s new footbridge, which is safer for year-round use thanks to built-in snow-melt technology. They also will enjoy “eating out” in a new, sturdier gazebo outfitted with picnic tables.

Walking paths, seating and gathering spaces have been added around the much-cleaner pond. Plus, native and wetland flora are being planted around the pond to provide a buffer for wildlife.

Ducks already have returned to the area, but alas, the pond’s resident swans will not be returning. To prevent stress, they were relocated to the Parkview Campus for the duration of the enhancement project. They have now grown roots there and will remain at their new home.

Obituaries—notifications received over the summer

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

Robert Campbell, a former financial services specialist in student financial aid and scholarships, died June 11. He was 69. Campbell joined the staff in 1982 and retired in 2010 after more than 28 years of service.

Thomas J. Carr, a former associate vice president for operations in business and finance, died July 15. He was 87. Carr joined the staff in 1962 and retired in 1988 after more than 26 years of service.

Norma Cook, a former baker in Dining Services, died June 22. She was 94. Cook joined the staff in 1974 and retired in 1984 after 10 years of service.

Frederick J. Dobney, a professor of history, died Aug. 19. He was 72. Dobney came to WMU in 2000 as provost and returned to the faculty in 2002.

Onsi B. Fares, a former language specialist in the Career English Language Center for International Studies, died April 29. He was 91. Fares came to WMU in 1976 and retired in 1995 after 19 years of service.

Leander C. Jones, emeritus professor of Africana Studies, died July 2. He was 81. Jones joined the WMU faculty in 1974 and retired in 2003 after more than 29 years of service.

Marcia L. Thompson, a former Human Resources assistant, died April 20. She was 67. Thompson joined the staff in 1997 and retired in 2010 after 13 years of service.

Western Student Association leaders help spruce up the landscape around Heritage Hall. (Photo by Cheryl Roland)

If enough funding can be found, this eating machine should be back next year. (Photo by Jeanne Baron)
Gary Barton, Auxiliary Enterprises and a level-28 Pokémon Go player, took time out this summer to teach "Draw 'Em All" participants in Battle Creek to draw Pokémon creatures. (Photo courtesy of the Battle Creek Enquirer)
Event held to showcase Valley Dining Center

WMU formally launched its new Valley Dining Center during a Sept. 1 event that gave members of the campus and Kalamazoo communities their first look at the facility.

After months of having their appetites whetted by tales of a new restaurant-style dining center on campus, attendees were able to take self-guided tours of the center and its nine restaurant-style venues. The $36 million Valley Dining Center encompasses 61,000 square feet and provides a spectacular view of the recently reopened Goldsworth Valley Pond natural area. Built to surpass LEED silver and upgraded Goldsworth Valley Pond, the center features a first-floor convenience store and café called Café 1903 and second-floor private dining rooms suitable for mealtime meetings.

The Valley Dining Center is expected to be a particularly popular destination because of its variety of daily dining choices, attractive surroundings, and ample seating options.

Food is prepared in front of the guests in a series of micro-restaurants on the second floor: Traditions, Cilantro’s, Pastaria, Pacific Plate, Blazin’ Bronco, Fresh Creations, My Pantry (an allergen-free zone) and Sweet Sensations. The center also features a first-floor convenience store and café called Café 1903 and second-floor private dining rooms suitable for mealtime meetings.

Campus looking forward to festive annual events

Fall Convocation makeover

As the new academic year begins, many WMU students will need a little help to start off on the right foot.

With that in mind, organizers behind the WMU Food Pantry appreciate faculty and staff members helping to restock the pantry. Generous donations already have come in, but items are always needed.

Among the foods especially low in early fall are: rice, pasta, jam, jelly, honey, fruit, cooking oils, condiments, nuts, breakfast foods, herbs and spices, shelf-stable milk, backpack snacks, desserts and 100 percent juice drinks.

For more about the pantry, its drop-off locations and other information, visit bit.ly/2hJbVwN.

Community policing officer slated for neighborhoods near WMU

A college guide unveiled Aug. 29 by the government and politics publication Washington Monthly ranks WMU among the nation’s top universities for producing graduates and research that will make a difference for the nation.

WMU is one of four Michigan universities heading into a new academic year that made the top-100 list of national universities. The magazine ranked WMU at No. 64, while the University of Michigan and Michigan State and Michigan Technological universities came in at nos. 21, 38 and 67, respectively.

WMU’s performance in the student earnings category was No. 26 nationally, while its community service and loan repayment performance both came in at No. 33.

In a separate value ranking, called Best Bang for the Buck, WMU came in at No. 50 for Midwest schools. In addition, it ranked No. 93 on the magazine’s new assessment of the Best Colleges for Adult Learners, the nation’s first-ever such ranking.

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Fall Convocation makeover

annual Teaching and Learning Bash. After lunch from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. on the Sangren Pedestrian Mall (rain location is the Bernhard Center’s South Ballroom), the day will conclude with Teaching With Technology and Assessment in Action activities.

More information will be provided closer to the Fall Convocation on the WMU News website at wmich.edu/news.

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Fall News

Campuswide award winners to be feted at Fall Convocation

Editor’s note: Four campuswide award programs will be celebrated during the Fall Convocation. This issue recognizes winners from two of those programs. The remaining winners will be recognized in the Sept. 22 issue (see Page 1 for details about the convocation).

Distinguished Service Award
This award recognizes one staff member and one faculty member who have built careers that exemplify exceptional service to WMU and the higher education community.

• Howard J. Dooley was cited for the dedication and integrity he has brought to his many WMU roles while serving as both an administrator and a history professor since 1970. He has held executive posts such as assistant dean of international education and chief international officer.

• Amy J. Seth joined WMU’s staff 28 years ago and has been director of University Recreation since 2000. She has worked tirelessly to promote the health and well-being of the University community, bringing energy and innovation to programming and events. She also has been heavily involved in a variety of key campus committees, as well as contributed her skills to promoting WMU pride, serving fellow employees as a leader of the Administrative Professional Association, and supporting the broader community through activities such as being a loaned executive officer for the United Way and a longtime advocate for the Kalamazoo Tourism and Ambassador Program.

Annual Make a Difference Award
This award is the highest accolade WMU bestows specifically on non-faculty employees for their service.

• Sheila Atherton, associate director of accounts receivable, began her WMU career in 1999 and was promoted to her current position in 2006. Her nominators were nearly unanimous in their praise of her dedication to customer service, exceptional skill set and compassionate nature. As a result of her repeatedly taking on extra responsibilities to solve complex issues for students and parents, she has been a key player in developing WMU’s supportive and caring university climate.

• Earl Conner joined the staff in 1997 as a skills training specialist in the Center for Disability Services and has been a custodian for the past 17 years. He has worked in a variety of campus buildings, including residence halls, and is known for having a strong work ethic and providing outstanding customer service. He also earns high praise for his welcoming and jovial personality, as well as participating in volunteer activities, especially the We Care Committee, which supports people both on and off campus.

• Stacy L. Thinnes has been an employee since 1986 and began working in intercollegiate athletics in her current post of assistant athletic director for special events in 2005. She goes above and beyond to ensure that events such as CometUniverCity are rousing successes and is a constant “cheerleader” when representing WMU to the broader community. In addition, she has taken a lead role in efforts to integrate intercollegiate athletics into University committees and events, particularly recruitment events.

• Cindy Town has been a senior administrative assistant in institutional equity since 2010 but a staff member since 1978. Her nominators consistently cited her for her hard work, office innovation and professional competence, as well as the outstanding support she provides to her unit and WMU. She has worked on countless committees and projects, and has been involved in numerous initiatives that make the University a welcoming, affirming and safe place to learn and work.

Academic program advancements expand career possibilities for WMU students

Several exciting academic-related advancements that are in the works will expand opportunities for WMU students.

Among the most significant is the Florida Commission for Independent Education’s approval of two provisional licenses for WMU to operate a Florida campus in Punta Gorda and in Riverview, where the WMU Cooley Law School already is located. The approvals pave the way for WMU to offer undergraduate pilot training and aviation maintenance technology programs and several other high-profile programs, especially in health and human services disciplines, in Charlotte and Hillsborough counties. Final approval must come from the Higher Learning Commission before WMU and its Florida partners can begin offering programs to students.

Progress also was made this summer when a new bachelor’s degree completion plan for nursing students at both WMU and Kalamazoo Valley Community College was formally signed Aug. 23. Under the four-year plan, dual-enrolled nursing students will take summer classes at WMU while earning their associate degree from KVCC. After graduating from KVCC and attaining their registered nurse—R.N.—certification, students finish their Bachelor of Science in Nursing at WMU in just one year.

Meanwhile, a signature part of the University’s Fostering Success Coach Training program has been getting national kudos and is the base for a new service to increase opportunities for students around the nation. The program, which helps former foster care youth find college success, recently completed its first year of offering professional training to more than 200 new coach mentors working in nine states.

WMU Fostering Success organizers have now launched a fundraising effort that will allow them to continue the training program on a sound financial footing, offer trainee scholarships, and expand the coach training staff, resources and tools. For more information on making a gift or becoming a sponsor, visit mywmu.com/fostersuccess.

On another academic front, the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine has reached two more milestones that keep the school on track in its quest to secure full accreditation from two crucial accrediting bodies.

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education granted provisional accreditation to the school in June while the Higher Learning Commission granted the school candidate status for accreditation at the beginning of July.

Importantly, the HLC action meant the medical school could begin the application process with the U.S. Department of Education to participate in federal student financial aid programs.
Revised University strategic plan now in effect through 2020

Now that the new academic year is under way, faculty and staff members across the campus are stepping up their efforts to implement WMU’s updated strategic plan.

Called The Gold Standard 2020, the refined and expanded plan sets the institution’s fundamental direction for the next five years. WMU trustees adopted this roadmap for the future in March, following nearly a year of work guided by a transition team led by Jody A. Brylinsky, associate provost for institutional effectiveness.

“We’ve refined and expanded the original Gold Standard 2015 plan to address the core tenets of that initial three-year strategic plan,” Brylinsky says, noting that 2016-17 is a baseline year for the revised plan. “WMU remains focused on being a learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged institution.”

Revised plan features

Consistent with the original strategic plan, The Gold Standard 2020 identifies five overarching institutional goals for the University community to work on and lists specific strategies that can be employed to achieve them.

Dean candidates being sought

Qualified internal candidates are encouraged to apply for the position of dean of the Lee Honors College. Review of applications begins Monday, Sept. 12. Visit the provost’s web page at wmich.edu/provost/administrative-searches for more details.

The full posting is at wmich.edu/hr/jobs.

Western Wellness effort offers number of new ways to be well and stay fit

The Western Wellness initiative is offering new programs this fall, adding to its blossoming efforts to spread health and wellness across the WMU campus.

The debuting programs include one on diabetes that will meet at noon three successive Thursdays beginning Nov. 3. It is open to people who have diabetes, are pre-diabetic or have family members with diabetes.

Also new is Learn to Lift, a three-week weight training program introducing participants to new, preloaded weight machines and cardio equipment in the Student Recreation Center’s recently revamped 8,000-square-foot weight room. A five-week Strength Training 101 class also is being offered.

Participants will start with free weights and machines and learn weightlifting basics. Both classes meet twice a week.

The Healthy Weigh is another new offering.

It is a comprehensive, evidence-based program designed to help people achieve health, wellness and weight management goals through nutrition, physical activity and behavior changes. The program started in February, and a second group is now meeting through November.

To broaden its appeal and extend well-being to all WMU employees, Western Wellness offers a wide variety of programs, classes and services throughout campus. It also has redesigned its website.

In addition, Table Talks are being offered from 12:05 to 12:55 p.m. the first Friday of each month in the Bernhard Center’s Faculty Dining Room. Led by facilitators from Holtry & Associates and HelpNet, discussions center on a variety of topics impacting health and well-being today, including caregiving for aging adults, communicating with children and putting more laughter in your life.

A big focus of Western Wellness is urging benefits eligible faculty and staff to sign up for WMU’s $240 wellness incentive. The incentive amount is incrementally deducted from employees' health plan contributions from employees' health plan contributions each pay period throughout the calendar year. Signing up to take advantage of the incentive is quick and easy by following three steps: Complete the online health risk assessment, attend a biometric screening and participate in a health coaching session.

Eligible employees who do not take health insurance through WMU may still participate but will not receive the benefit reduction. The biometric screening can be done by scheduling an appointment with Holtry & Associates online at holtynhpc.com or the Sincere Health Center by phone at (269) 387-3282, or through a primary care provider who fills out and mails in a Primary Care Provider form.

All employees are eligible to participate. If both spouses work at WMU, the individual paying for their benefits will receive the benefit reduction. For more information about strategic planning at WMU, visit the updated University Strategic Plan website at wmich.edu/strategic or call the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at (269) 387-2380.

In addition, the document organizes goals by category, is written in a more user-friendly style and embraces the principles of enterprise risk management to identify and address challenges that could prevent WMU from successfully accomplishing its long-term goals.

The goal categories are:

• Learner Success,
• Academic Excellence,
• Discovery and Collaboration,
• Inclusive Excellence and Equity, and
• Sustainable Stewardship.

All told, those goals are accompanied by 24 objectives and 100 high-impact strategies that are being prioritized as part of the plan’s implementation.

The plan’s objectives and strategies are being supported by a stronger set of metrics that will measure progress and allow for responsiveness to internal and external changes that impact WMU going forward.

Institutional Effectiveness Measures will be used to monitor critical University functions, as well as provide evaluation for continuous quality improvement throughout the strategic plan’s implementation and resource allocation processes.

Implementation steps

Brylinsky says vice presidential areas and their units across campus are expected to integrate the strategic plan’s goals and objectives into their daily work. Semiannual monitoring and data collection will be done to assess the extent to which benchmarks are being met.

“Ideal units will be aligning their divisional strategic plans with The Gold Standard 2020 in the coming months, appointing enterprise risk action teams that will prioritize elements of the plan, and developing accountability measures that will show progress toward the plan’s goals,” she says.

“We’re developing a quick reference guide to assist the campus community in that process. Rather than include all 100 of the high-impact strategies in the strategic plan, it will list the highest priority strategies that senior leaders have linked to each objective in the plan.”

All faculty and staff members will be mailed a copy of the quick reference guide in coming weeks. The guide also will include the Institutional Effectiveness Measures that the University is using to help gauge how it is performing in relation to the strategic plan’s goals. In addition, plans call for enterprise risk management training to be made available in October 2016 for those participating in enterprise risk action teams.

For more information about strategic planning at WMU, visit the updated University Strategic Plan website at wmich.edu/strategic or call the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at (269) 387-2380.

Broncos head into new sports season with brand refresh

Intercollegiate athletics has completed a subtle design evolution to stay modern and consistent, and appeal to the next generation of Broncos.

The brand refresh includes an improved athletics website as well as updates to merchandise, promotional materials, and the primary athletics logo along with other marks.

The primary athletics logo is now a block “W” behind the traditional Bronco head, which better connects athletics and academics. In addition to using WMU’s school colors of brown and gold, the new designs and athletic apparel use black, gray and white to represent current trends and also use bolder, non-serif fonts.

The football program is using the updated primary logo, along with a set of customized marks represented by the ghost Bronco—a leaner, yet recognizable, version of the traditional Bronco head. The program’s “Row the Boat” mantra is being maintained.

Logos and other elements of the new branding initiative can be seen throughout the enhanced wnumbbronscom.com website and in the branding guide that is available by clicking WMU Athletics Brand under the Athletics tab.
Strike Gold ad campaign designed to demonstrate WMU’s value

A call to define “gold” as the heart of the WMU identity is at the core of a new marketing campaign developed internally by campus professionals and rolled out on Sept. 1.

With phrases like “Strike Gold,” an infusion of sharp angles in graphic materials, a new accent color and a unique photographic style, the campaign was launched with a new 30-second television spot that is being seen around the state. The TV network and cable buys mean the spot will be seen during broadcasts of NCAA football games as well as prime time and highly rated cable programs in West Michigan, Lansing and Detroit.

The campaign was developed by a campuswide group—the Integrated Marketing Team—made up of messages that matched the WMU brand. A coordinating digital campaign also was launched Sept. 1 and includes search engine marketing, digital display ads and the use of Spotify throughout Michigan. On Sept. 5, billboards carrying the WMU message went up in the Kalamazoo, Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids and lakeshore areas.

The campaign was developed by a campuswide group—the Integrated Marketing Team—made up of those charged with various marketing roles at WMU. The group worked with a team from university relations to transform the findings of 2015 marketing research into a new set of messages that matched the WMU brand.

A new 60-second video can be viewed at wmich.edu, while the 30-second TV spot can be found on the University’s YouTube channel. Campaign resources will be available online Sept. 15 at wmich.edu/universityrelations/gold.

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Kelsey Patterson
On Campus with Kelsey Patterson

Kelsey Patterson is one of the many Dining Services staffs WMU students count on while away from home. A nutrition services specialist, she helps ensure students have access to healthy foods that meet the special dietary needs they often have.

“When students come here, it’s a big transition because their parents have been taking care of them for a long time,” Patterson says. “Sometimes they experiment with different foods, and that can be dangerous. We get real familiar with those students.”

She notes that just sitting at a table where someone has eaten peanut butter could cause anaphylactic shock in highly sensitive people. So, she requires students to report their dietary issues to Disability Services for Students and include medical documentation.

That way, they can be excused from class if issues arise and be given individualized meal plans or, if necessary, individualized prepared meals.

Patterson is the first person to fill the nutritionist position established in 2012. She earned a bachelor’s degree in dietetics from WMU in 2010 and did her “fifth year,” a required internship, through the University of Michigan Health System’s University Hospital.

Directly assisting students takes up about 50 percent of her time at the start of the fall and spring semesters. Much of her other time is spent responding to questions from students and employees about the foods being served on campus, helping Dining Services develop its menus and policies and procedures, and helping student affairs recruit students and market its facilities.

Patterson also serves on a strategic planning subgroup for her division and is involved in the dietician group of her professional association. Plus, she works on special WMU projects, such as helping to create the allergen-free zone called My Pantry in the new Valley Dining Center, which initially will offer completely gluten- and peanut-free products.

“The Dining Services management team has really supported me, and I feel that I’ve grown so much as a professional and a person,” she says. “Everybody in student affairs wants to see each department succeed. It’s such a positive experience.”

Patterson is married to Ryan, a fellow WMU alumnus, and her aunt, Kelly Ackerson, teaches nursing here. The Portage, Michigan, resident enjoys recreational boxing and kickboxing, working out at the Student Recreation Center, visiting Michigan’s many microbreweries and specialty restaurants with Ryan, and spending time with her dog, Dexter.

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