Dunn continues donation tradition

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder has appointed Ron Kitchens of Portage and Shani Penn of Detroit as new members of the WMU Board of Trustees.

Kitchens, chief executive officer of economic development agency Southwest Michigan First, will serve an eight-year term ending in 2024. He replaces James Hettinger, whose term expired at the end of 2016.

Penn is chief of staff to Chancellor Veronica Conforme of the Education Achievement Authority of Michigan. She will serve a term ending in 2024 and replaces Mary Asmonga-Knapp, whose term also expired at the end of 2016.

Kitchens has led Southwest Michigan First since 2005. In addition, he serves on the Collaborative Development Council for the Michigan Economic Development Corp. Prior to taking the reins at SWMF, he was CEO for six years of the Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corp. His background includes experience as a consultant and in local and national politics.

Penn, a 2000 alumna of WMU, has served in her current position with the EAA since 2015. Before that, she was senior strategy advisor to Gov. Snyder for three years. Her background in southwest Michigan manufacturing.

The institute will house the new Bachelor of Fine Arts in product design announced this past fall. It will also serve as a base around which key southwest Michigan corporate partners can focus their product design and development needs.

“WMU is uniquely positioned to prepare the next generation of product designers,” says WMU President John M. Dunn. “Jim and Lois Richmond, through their generosity, have made an investment in this region’s future by helping us create an innovative industrial design program that will combine form, function and manufacturing. This is the latest chapter in their long, thoughtful commitment to strengthening the ties that bind our campus and our community.”

Product design program is object of $3 million gift

A Kalamazoo couple with a passion for the arts and a history of executive leadership in the community has given $3 million to support the creation of a new product design and innovation facility at WMU.

The gift from James and Lois Richmond will make possible the new interdisciplinary entity that will be named for them. The Richmond Product Design and Innovation Institute will combine the resources of WMU’s colleges of Fine Arts and Engineering and Applied Sciences as well as the Haworth College of Business. Industry involvement includes some of the top names in manufacturing.

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The Richmond gift will be used for renovations to 28,000 square feet on the first and third floors of Kohrman Hall. The renovations will include studios, presentation spaces and laboratories dedicated to innovation, fabrication, rapid prototyping, 3D printing, and woodworking and metalworking. Architectural work already is underway, and the

Continued on page 4

Pool award

Kim LaViolette, landscape services, won a new automobile up to a value of $30,000 through a sweepstakes run by the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region.

WMU President John M. Dunn surprised her with the announcement Dec. 14 by driving up in a sponsor’s car outside of the Bernhard Center and holding up a set of keys. According to the United Way, 6,801 contributors qualified for this year’s sweepstakes drawing.

A longtime donor, LaViolette said she’s glad to make a difference through United Way and “it’s important to help people who need help.”

Continued on page 4
College of Aviation's gift-giving elves still flying high

Pilots from the College of Aviation helped make Christmas merrier for more than 5,000 children and adults in foster care around the state.

Some 200 Michigan pilots participated Dec. 3 in Operation Good Cheer, a statewide effort begun in 1971 by caring individuals who encourage discussion about ethics. Leading the book clubs are Ashley Atkins, philosophy; Tyler Gibb, Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine; Kathy Purnell, research office; and William Santiago-Valles, emeritus in African studies.

All book clubs are open to the general public as well as the WMU community. People may sign up by sending an email to ethicscenter@wmich.edu. The Ethics Center will supply the books. For details, visit wmich.edu/ethics.

MLK celebration already underway

Campus and community events continue this month and into March to honor Martin Luther King Jr. Major activities occur Monday, Jan. 16, and were announced in December. Also Monday, a series of nine sessions on addressing threats to justice will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in 208-210 Bernhard Center. For details, visit organizewmu.info.

Events continue throughout the week and include the first installment of WMU’s spring Lyceum Lecture Series Wednesday, Jan. 18. The series has an overall theme this semester of “Fulfilling America’s Promise: Racial Equity and Justice.” For a complete, up-to-date list of MLK-related events, visit wmich.edu/mlk.

Get involved in global engagement

WMU is offering numerous global engagement opportunities this month for members of the campus and surrounding communities. Highlights include study abroad expos and the grand opening of the Global Lounge in the Bernhard Center. For details, visit wmich.edu/news/2017/01/37213.

Equity, learning spaces is event topic

The next Educational Community Credit Union Forum will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24, in 1920 Sangren Hall. Register at mywmu.com/editorum. Details are available at wmich.edu/education/eccu-forum.

Learn about lifelong learning classes

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at WMU will kick off its winter/spring semester during its annual January thaw from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18, in the Kalamaoozoo Arts of the Arts. The event is open to area residents who want to learn more about this semester’s 51 courses and six trips. To register, call (269) 387-4200. Coarse registration for institute nonmembers will start Wednesday, Jan. 18.

Next employee mixer scheduled

A free Gold Gathering lunch buffet for WMU employees has been set for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 26, in the President’s Dining Room of the Bernhard Center. RSVPs are requested at wmich.edu/provost/goldgatherings.

Exchange

For sale—Three-bedroom ranch house, 7 miles from campus in Oshkomo on 3.5 acres of trees. Built for a person in a wheelchair: roll-in shower, no steps. On a slab with in thematic chapters, emphasizing culture and sport, the political uses of sport, topics, such as the business of sport, material culture and sport, the political uses of sport, and gender and American sport. The text offers an interdisciplinary analysis of American leisure. Those topics are dealt with in thematic chapters, emphasizing the influence of sport on American society.

Physician pens realistic novel

Richard R. Roach, Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, is the author of three self-published novels, all through iUniverse. His most recent book, “Never a Woman,” came out last year and is a story about the power of the human spirit as a Kenyan teenager attempts to overcome seemingly insurmountable anguish in order to find love, success and joy.

The protagonist is a Kisii girl from western Kenya who refused female genital mutilation as part of her tribe’s puberty rites and survives an attempt from her father to kill her. Tribal prejudice, AIDS, human trafficking and higher education are some of the topics covered in the book.

Roach, an associate professor of internal medicine, based the main character on interviews of hundreds of women when he previously worked in Kenya and Rwanda. He has been teaching in the medical school since its inception and has direct contact with patients in his role supervising internal medicine and medicine/pediatric residency students. His other two books are “Releasing Lisa” and “Saving Skunk.”

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New appointments to key leadership positions announced

Four WMU employees recently were named to new leadership positions.

Sherine O. Obare, chemistry and formerly interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was appointed the associate vice president for research, effective Dec. 1. She replaces Paula D. Kohler, who retired from the University at the end of June. Obare, who has been a key player in numerous campus initiatives, has garnered more than $4.5 million in external funding for her research, particularly efforts that focus on developing novel materials and technologies with environmental applications.

She has served as interim associate dean of arts and sciences since February 2015, served as chemistry associate chair and graduate advisor prior to that, and was an acting director of the Africana studies program.

Two of the new appointments are to

Grad student research published in top journal

An unusual examination of the practical therapeutic applications of mindfulness combined with a senior faculty member’s commitment to community service has led seven graduate social work students to have their first professional paper accepted for publication in one of their discipline’s most prestigious journals.

“An Environmental Scan of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on University and College Campuses” was published in the December 2016 issue of the internationally acclaimed Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare. The newly published researchers are Kaley J. Cieslak, Lehanna E. Hardy, Natalie S. Kyles, Erika L. Miller, Becky L. Mullins, Katelyn M. Root and Christina M. Smith.

The students undertook and completed their original research project in addition to their regular coursework in a section of Evaluation of Social Work Practice taught by Rick Grinnell. Grinnell says it is rare for social work students to be published in a refereed journal, and their success in doing so indicates the importance of their topic in addition to their commitment to advancing social work practice through research.

Obituaries—wmich.edu/news/obituaries

Chuck Comer, emeritus in health, physical education and recreation and a former assistant football coach, died Dec. 13. He was 79. Comer joined the faculty in 1968 and retired in 1997 after 29 years.

George M. Dennison, a former provost, died Jan. 3. He was 81. Dennison came to WMU in 1987 and left in 1990 to head his alma mater, the University of Montana.

Charlie H. Harris, a former member of landscape services, died Sept. 21, 2015. He was 91. Harris joined the staff in 1981 and retired in 1991 after 10 years.

Kandess-Tui Ross, a Human Resources assistant senior, died Dec. 29. She was 60. Ross joined the staff in 1989 and had been employed in Human Resources 27 years.

Kamlesh Sharma, emerita in biological sciences, died Dec. 21. She was 78. Sharma joined the faculty in 1981 and retired in 2003 after 22 years. Survivors include her husband, Visho B.L. Sharma, professor emeritus of arts and sciences.

John E. Walker, a former industrial design teacher, died Dec. 27. He was 76. Survivors include Gay S. Walker, interdisciplinary health programs. A memorial service is set for 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 15, in Kalamazoo’s People’s Church.

Search committee releases presidential profile

The Presidential Search Advisory Committee has completed a critical document in its work to find WMU’s ninth president. Armed with feedback from 17 campus community forums, the committee has developed a Presidential Profile that describes the campus’ goal of finding “a courageous, visionary and resourceful academic leader who will enable us to leverage our strengths, advance our stature and help us shape an enduring identity.”

The committee’s profile outlines the opportunities and challenges the University’s next president will encounter as well as the personal and professional qualities the campus wants that person to possess.

It has been published on the committee’s website, wmich.edu/presidentialsearch.

The document includes a description of the University and community as well as a list of 10 critical duties and responsibilities and 16 important characteristics and qualifications the successful candidate should possess.

Trustee William Johnston, who chairs the search committee, noted in a Dec. 13 report that the committee is the largest and most diverse group ever put in place to serve the campus community by identifying a new president.

Members of the committee, he said, used the community forums to gather “front-end” input. Committee members and consultants were listening carefully to the feedback.

The committee hopes to identify a candidate to recommend to the Board of Trustees by the end of the academic year. The interview round is expected to begin by late February or early March.
Time to review winter weather policies, procedures

Winter hours are in effect for WMU's snow removal crews, who must plow, shovel, scrape and de-ice more than 26 miles of roads and 120 acres of parking area, 39 miles of walks, hundreds of doorways, and 200,000 square feet of steps and ramps.

Plow schedules cover snow and ice removal activities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Providing there is not a major storm, most main campus areas will be clear of snow and ice before the majority of students and employees arrive each day.

Any snow removal needs regarding special activities or weekend events should be relayed to the landscape services office with a Facilities Management event request form or by calling (269) 387-8514. Provide as much advance notice as possible.

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Product design program is object of $3 million gift

Jim and Lois Richmond are both WMU graduates and have a long history of community involvement and philanthropy, particularly in relation to the arts at WMU as well as in the Kalamazoo community.

Entities involved in the new institute project include Whirlpool, Tekna, Newell Brands, Stryker, FabriKal, Landscape Forms, Eaton and Southwest Michigan. First, Bob Brown and the Monroe-Brown Foundation provided key initial funding.

“Nursing a Dream”

Skinner grew up in Kalamazoo and lives in the city with her college-age son and their dog. She’s an active church member, big fan of football at all levels, and likes to craft, refurbish furniture and “live vicariously” through the people she advises on travel. She’d love to travel more, herself.

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Governor appoints new trustees

also includes work as advisor and chief of staff to Detroit Emergency Manager Kevin Orr and a series of positions of increasing responsibility with Daimler Chrysler Financial Services and Chrysler Financial.