Commencement takes place Saturday

Two commencement ceremonies will be held Saturday, June 24, in Miller Auditorium for groups of graduating students. This will be the last time President John M. Dunn will lead WMU’s graduation exercises, as he is scheduled to retire July 31.

The summer events are a 9 a.m. ceremony for graduates of the colleges of Aviation, Education and Human Development, Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Health and Human Services; and a 12:30 p.m. ceremony for graduates of the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Fine Arts, Extended University Programs, and Haworth College of Business.

Board of Trustees meeting scheduled

The next meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees will be held Thursday, June 29, in the Bernhard Center. The agenda includes consideration of promotion and tenure recommendations as well as budget and tuition recommendations.

The meeting will start at 11 a.m. Additional agenda information will be released online in WMU News at wmich.edu/news shortly before June 29.

Time to register for Bronco Bash

The 37th annual Bronco Bash is set for Friday, Sept. 8, on the Sangren Pedestrian Mall. The early registration deadline for booth space is Monday, July 31. Applications submitted after that date will be assessed a $25 late fee and processed pending available booth space. The deadline for late application is 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 25.

Bronco Bash is WMU’s communitywide welcome-back-to-WMU festival. For more information, including an explanation of event policies as well as how to apply for a booth, volunteer at the event or become a sponsor, contact the student coordinators in the Bronco Bash office at (269) 387-0283.

Learn about employee tuition discount

An information session for employees interested in learning more about the University’s tuition discount program is set for noon Wednesday, Aug. 16, in 254 Bernhard Center. The session will include presentations by the Office of Admissions, the Graduate College, Extended University Programs, Human Resources, the university studies program, and the Center for Academic Success Programs. For details, visit wmich.edu/admissions/guest/employees.

Digital system set to streamline faculty activity reports, CV updates

A new digital reporting system for professional activities will be piloted on campus in August and is expected to be ready for full faculty participation in the fall. The new Faculty Activity Reporting System—FARS—is designed to provide an online process for faculty members to submit Professional Activity Reports in a single location and, through that tool, automatically generate updated curricula vitae or biographical material for personal and professional use.

With the click of a trackpad, faculty members will be able to create different forms of their bio or vitae,” says Associate Dean Keith Hearit, College of Arts and Sciences, who has been co-coordinating the initiative with Fen Yu, institutional research. Access will be simplified as well, he says, by offering a single sign-on location through GoWMU.

Incoming President Edward B. Montgomery and first lady Kari (Photo by Mike Lanka)
Archaeological activities at Fort St. Joseph enthral young, old

The Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project, sponsored by WMU and the city of Niles, Michigan, is hosting a summer series of book clubs and an open house that will begin meeting this fall.

Discussions of the three books begin Wednesday, Sept. 20, and continue through late November. The book clubs are open to the greater campus community. Books are provided free of charge to the first 10 people who sign up via email sent to ethicscenter@wmich.edu. To participate in a club, people must sign up no later than one week before the group's first meeting.

The featured books are “Black and Blue: The Origins and Consequences of Medical Racism” by John Hoberman, “The Left Hand of Darkness” by Ursula LeGuin, and “The Harm in Hate Speech” by Jeremy Waldron.

For more information, visit wmich.edu/ethics. Questions may be directed to Sandra Borden, center director, at sandra.borden@wmich.edu.

BTR Park set to host 12th annual cycling criterium

Registration is open for the annual CyclingLawyer.com Criterium, set for Saturday, July 8, on the Parkview Campus.

The day of competition—which attracts 250-300 cyclists from the Midwest and awards more than $6,000 in cash and other prizes—begins at 8 a.m. and features a 1.1-mile circuit around the college’s Floyd Hall. The circuit has three 90-degree turns and multiple sweeping turns that excite spectators as well as racers.

This is the 12th year WMU and its BTR Park will host a criterium—a series of timed races lasting 45 to 90 minutes across several categories for men, women and juniors.

For 2017, there will be a kids’ bike race for youth 12 years of age and under at noon, with no registration required. Smoked Down BBQ is the official food vendor, and will be on site from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. offering food and beverages.

The night of Friday, July 7, a bike cycling clinic for men, women and children will be staged on the race circuit. Pre-registration is free, or $10 the day of the clinic, space permitting.

For more information details, visit wmich.edu/btrcriterium and type BTR Park Criterium in the event search box.

Receptions

Katharine Cummings, Barbara Harris and Jerry Pilsbury, teaching, learning and educational studies, will be recognized for her 47 years of WMU service during a retirement reception from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 27, in Sangren Hall's second-floor Wegenke Plaza.

Kai Chapman, development and alumni relations, will be recognized for his 27 years of WMU service during a retirement reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, June 23, in the Heritage Hall Café.

Ray Kezecius, Facilities Management, will be recognized for his 27 years of WMU service during a retirement reception from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 27, in the Heritage Hall Café.

Staff retirements

Editor’s note: The following retirements are based on when the Board of Trustees approved them. Some retirements have yet to take effect. For specific retirement dates, visit wmich.edu/trustees/agendas-minutes, select a meeting month and click the Personnel Report link.

March 2017—Staff retirements: James Brown, maintenance services; Fawn Callen, information technology; John DiBrito, landscape services; Darleane Grant, building custodial and support services; Timothy Kellogg, business services; Lynn Lee, field placements; Conn Macon, construction; Laurie Miles, building custodial and support services; Joyce Parsons, Facilities Management; and Matthew Tomczak, information technology.
Fall Convocation slated

WMU's 2017 Fall Convocation is set for Friday, Oct. 6, on the second floor of the Bernhard Center. An annual tradition, the convocation features each year's State of the University Address, preceded by the presentation of campuswide awards that the University bestows on its faculty and staff. This year, the award presentation begins at 11 a.m. for recipients of three Distinguished Faculty Scholar Awards, three Distinguished Teaching Awards, two Distinguished Service Awards, one Emerging Scholar Award and four Make a Difference Awards. Following the award presentations, new WMU President Edward B. Montgomery will give his first State of the University Address. Following the address, a reception will be held for Montgomery, who will be inaugurated Friday, Sept. 15, as WMU's ninth president.

Convocation day starts with a morning program that includes presentations by the 2016 Distinguished Teaching Award winners as well as speakers representing WMU's Teaching With Technology Symposium and Assessment in Action Subcommittee. To register for a morning program event, visit wapps.wmich.edu/workshops. Direct questions to Susan Daniels at susan.daniels@wmich.edu or (269) 387-2383.

Hockey team thanks supporters

The hockey Broncos will thank their supporters during a Friends and Alumni Weekend Friday and Saturday, July 28-29. Friday, participants will be treated to an alumni hockey game at Lawson Ice Arena followed by a reception at the Fetzer Center. The reception will provide an opportunity to socialize, have something to eat and drink, and participate in a silent and live auction. Saturday events are a lunch followed by the Bronco Hockey Ring of Honor induction, a 18-hole best-ball scramble for the Friends and Alumni Cup, and a catered dinner, all at the Moos Golf Club in Portage, Michigan. Registration for all events costs $175, or people may register on a la carte basis. To register, visit wmugolfoutings.com. For more details, call Lynn Ross at (269) 387-3049.

Linda Dunn honored by women’s groups

WMU’s first lady, Linda Dunn, is one of three area women who were honored June 13 with the inaugural Kalamazoo round of achievement awards made by the Michigan Women’s Foundation and Kalamazoo chapter of the Links Inc.

Dunn was awarded a 2017 Courage and Achievement Award during a community-wide dinner celebration in Kalamazoo. Among her fellow honorees were Grace Lubwama, CEO of the YWCA of Kalamazoo and Ronda Stryker, board member for the Stryker Corp. Previous recipients of the award at other locations in Michigan over the past 30 years have included first lady Betty Ford, singer Aretha Franklin and General Motors CEO Mary Barra.

Dunn was honored for the leadership, dedication and sense of humor she has brought to a lifetime of volunteer activities in the communities where the Dunn family has lived. Those efforts range from founding a still-thriving soup kitchen in Oregon to serving in Michigan on the Foster Care Review Board of Kalamazoo County. Locally, she also has been actively involved with the Kalamazoo Symphony, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Friends of the Richmond Center.

The Michigan Women’s Foundation is a statewide organization focused on developing the next generation of women leaders, accelerating women’s entrepreneurship and advancing Michigan’s women’s agenda. The Kalamazoo chapter of the Links Inc. serves the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek communities by providing scholarships and transformational program activities to enhance the development of young women and area youth.

Director named to lead product design institute

A practiced product designer and industrial design educator will soon take the reins of the Richmond Institute of Product Design and Innovation, an interdisciplinary unit currently being developed.

Michael Elwell, assistant professor of industrial design at the University of Notre Dame, will serve as director of the Richmond Institute as well as join the Gwen Prostic School of Art as an associate professor of art.

He will officially begin that leadership role in August, just prior to the fall semester, the arrival of the program’s first cohort of students and the beginning of construction on Kohrman Hall, which is being renovated as the institute’s future home. The institute is named for James and Lois Richmond, who contributed $3 million toward the renovation.

Prior to joining the faculty at Notre Dame, Elwell worked as an industrial design professional for companies including Coachmen Recreational Vehicles, Radio Flyer and Processit, a design firm near Cleveland, Ohio. He has worked on products ranging from automotive to housewares, and he holds a patent for his award-winning prescription pill container opener and label magnifier, the “Magnifying Medi-Grip,” which is now licensed to Jokari Inc.

Elwell earned Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees in industrial design from the universities of Notre Dame and Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, respectively. With his extensive education and experience in the industrial design field, he is expected to provide insight and direction as the Richmond Institute of Product Design and Innovation takes shape.

“My goal is to create a contemporary program that is responsive to today’s design landscape, one that encourages students to deeply consider the interactions between people and products,” Elwell says.

College of Health and Human Services to celebrate new program’s first cohort

The College of Health and Human Services will recognize the first cohort in its new Health Career Connections program with a Friday, June 30, celebratory luncheon.

Earl M. Washington, dean of the college, will host the luncheon for the 12 students and their families to mark the program’s final day of activities for this year.

The event will be attended by WMU President John M. Dunn and other officials from across the campus. Leaders from organizations that donated to the program from the state of Michigan and health care institutions throughout southwest Michigan also will be in attendance.

The Health Career Connections program, announced last March, is for select incoming first-year students who plan to major in a health or human services discipline and come from underprivileged and medically underserved areas of Michigan. It is hoped that these students will return to their home areas after graduation to improve the diversity, quality and availability of health care. Washington began her college career this year in a similar program in Mississippi.

Those accepted into WMU’s program receive full scholarships to cover the cost of tuition, housing and meal plans to live in a campus residence hall during the summer session while earning six hours of academic credit.

They are selected from students residing in the 19-county catchment area of the Western Regional Area Health Education Center, which is housed in the College of Health and Human Services.

Nancy Cretsinger, the college’s director of academic and student services, says the students in the first cohort are truly exceptional.

“The students in this group have achieved great things academically, and many of them have overcome great challenges to do so,” Cretsinger says. “Talking to these students is nothing short of inspirational.”

For more information about the Health Career Connection program, visit wmich.edu/hshe/programs/connection.
The state and nation will be followed by additional celebratory events that are still in the planning stages. Details about the Miller ceremony and other inaugural activities Sept. 15 will be announced later this summer, but those interested in attending should plan to save the date.

Montgomery’s appointment as WMU president was announced April 12. He comes to the University from Georgetown University, where he serves as dean and professor of economics at the McCourt School of Public Policy. He succeeds John M. Dunn, who is retiring after a decade of service as president.

Collegiate presidential inaugurations in the United States originated with the nation’s nine colonial colleges in the 17th century and established the custom of formally acknowledging a change in leadership at a school’s highest level.

Today, an inaugural ceremony is regarded as a public opportunity to celebrate a university’s past and traditions as it transitions into the future.

Network keeps guests connected

Visitors to campus this summer, and any other time, can easily stay connected using the WMU Guest network. Campus visitors and others, using BitTex or RIS formats.

As a result, Hearst says people will not have to complete multiple requests for the same data and WMU and its various units will be able to collect more meaningful data to use in important campus objectives.

Training will be available for faculty when the system is rolled out this fall.

WMU president to be inaugurated Sept. 15

Continued from page 1

Digital system set to streamline faculty activity reports, CV updates

Banner records will prepopulate some of the data into the system that faculty previously had to enter, and an August pilot testing by interested faculty on campus will help prepare for a full launch at the beginning of the fall semester. Academic deans have just completed the process of approving their respective updated PAR formats.

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Law school frees man

used against Watkins does not meet today’s scientific and legal standards. In 2013, the FBI disavowed testimony by FBI-trained analysts, finding they often overstated their conclusions. The Detroit lab analysts, trained by the FBI, tied Watkins to the crime scene based on a single hair. Earlier, a witness testifying against Watkins recanted his story.

“Hair comparison is not based on science; it is simply a lab analyst’s subjective opinion and has no place in our criminal justice system,” says Marla Mitchell-Cichon, director of the WMU Cooley Innocence Project. “This is why a statewide review of hair comparison cases is critical.”

Mitchell-Cichon commended Professor Kim Worley and the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office for working with her office to resolve the case. The prosecutor’s office agreed that the new scientific standards are “newly discovered” evidence.

Mitchell-Cichon also noted that over the years, Watkins never stopped fighting for his freedom. He never gave up on the belief that the truth would come out. His loved ones also got their wish; he will attend a family reunion in August.

After screening 5,500 cases, the WMU Cooley effort has led to four exonerations. It is part of the Innocence Network, which has been credited with the release of more than 350 wrongfully accused prisoners through the use of DNA testing.