Ringers needed for Day at the Kettles

A WMU Day at the Kettles is planned for Saturday, Dec. 2. WMU students, alumni, and faculty and staff members are asked to serve as volunteer ringers during the Salvation Army’s Red Kettle campaign. Ringing shifts of two or more hours are available between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. at locations throughout Kalamazoo County and in the nearby Plainwell-Otsego area. Volunteers may decorate their kettle, wear WMU apparel and sing the WMU Fight and Alma Mater songs. Individuals and groups may register to volunteer by contacting the Salvation Army’s Penny Allen, at penny_allen@usc.salvationarmy.org or (269) 741-0834.

WMU at center of national STEM network

University researchers have parlayed a series of grants and connections with some of the nation’s leading higher education organizations into an effort that positions WMU at the central hub of a network of national educators working to build systemic change that will boost undergraduate academic achievement.

Andrea Beach and Charles Henderson, who lead WMU’s Center for Research on Instructional Change in Post-Secondary Education, have just received a new $905,141 award from the National Science Foundation to support the Accelerating Systemic Change Network, or ASCN. This national network builds on lessons they and other U.S. researchers have learned about improving instruction in the disciplines known as STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The network’s focus will be on using those lessons learned to create systemic change and build learning environments that will improve student achievement.

“Knowing what needs to be done does not equal knowing how to move an institution or department toward that goal,” says Beach, educational leadership, research and technology.

Nursing wins $2 million grant to boost diversity

What started with a modest $5,000 WMU grant has grown into a nearly $2 million federally funded, four-year project to recruit, retain and graduate more underrepresented students into the nursing profession.

Fostering greater diversity in the nursing profession is vital, says Mary Ann Stark, nursing and the grant’s principal investigator.

However, she notes that many students who come from underrepresented minority groups have various challenges, such as financial issues, being graduates of underperforming K-12 schools, and having different social and educational backgrounds than white students.

Ann Tyler, health and human services and a driving force behind the college’s diversity and research efforts, says one of the reasons greater diversity is important is that it helps increase the equity in health care services.

Three University researchers snag prestigious NSF prize

Three researchers—the most in any single year at WMU—have each earned a coveted National Science Foundation CAREER award and associated five-year grant, a top prize for early career scientists who show promise as leaders in their disciplines.

The recipients are: Wendy S. Beane, biological sciences; Elena Lithinova, physics; and Fahad Saeed, computer science, electrical and computer engineering, and the Parallel Computing and Data Science Laboratory. They are generating new knowledge and real-world solutions to advance such areas as human health, nuclear physics, computational science and medicine, as noted in stories in the summer 2017 WMU Magazine at wmich.edu/magazine.

Those who earn CAREER awards have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the missions of their departments or organizations, according to the NSF.

Beane is using her $800,000 award grant to investigate the impressive regenerative abilities of planarian flatworms. The signals that control the animal’s adult stem cells, causing them to divide and produce new tissues, are not well-understood.
Men’s soccer team moves up to No. 5 in the nation

At No. 5 in the country, the men’s soccer team is now the highest ranked Mid-American Conference team in the United Soccer Coaches Poll.

The No. 5 ranking is the highest for the Broncos in school history. As of Western News press time, the Broncos also were ranked in several other formats. CollegeSoccerNews had WMU in No. 5, Soccer America at No. 7 and TopDrawerSoccer at No. 6. WMU is 14-2-1 overall and 4-0-0 in the MAC.

Book signing set for Disney volume

Walt Disney’s travels, including the animation pioneer’s substantial connections to Kalazmoo and WMU, are chronicled in a book by Christopher Tremblay, former WMU associate provost for enrollment management. A book signing for “Walt’s Pilgrimage: A Journey in the Life of Walter Elias Disney” is planned from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 8, in the Zhang Legacy Collection Center. Tremblay will present an overview of his book at 4-30 p.m.

Exchange

For sale—Two-story contemporary home on wooded lot. Four bedrooms; 2.5 baths; kitchen with custom maple cabinets, granite countertops and stainless steel appliances; family room with fireplace and wet bar; finished basement; and deck. Kalamazoo on wooded lot. For more information, visit bit.ly/22N21Q or contact Tracey Kauppila at (269) 964-4544 or tracey.kauppila@wmich.edu.

Around campus and beyond

Russian expo, conference scheduled

The 100th anniversary of the fall of the Romanov dynasty and the 1917 Soviet Revolution will be recognized Saturday, Nov. 4, during the Russian Cultural Expo and Conference. The free event is being sponsored by WMU’s Department of English and the Kalamazoo Russian Cultural Association from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Brown Hall.

It will feature lectures and presentations, as well as performance of a play and a reading. Participants will include Russian scholars from WMU and other universities. For descriptions of the presentations, visit kzaorca.org.

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Event focuses on pairing of efforts

Ronald Kramer, sociology, will draw parallels between efforts to control crimi-
nal behavior and reduce climate change when he speaks at 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, in the Bernhard Center’s Brown and Gold Room.

The presentation, titled “ Criminal Jus-
tice, Social Justice and Climate Justice,” is free and open to the public and will be followed by a reception. It is part of the Center for the Study of Ethics in Society’s fall 2017 lecture season

International Education Week slated

International Education Week will be held Sunday through Saturday, Nov. 12-18. Activities at WMU feature student groups, academic departments and units across campus highlighting the various countries and cultures represented at the University.

The public is invited to attend International Education Week events, most of which are free. For details, visit wmich.edu/internationalactivities.

Generational differences are talk topic

Human resource consultants from HRM Innovations will co-present on generational differences in the workplace at the next Mercantile Bank of Michigan breakfast talk.

Retail reception

Ed Khuk, information technology, will be honored for his 30 years of service to the University from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14, in Heritage Hall.

Exchange

For sale—Two-story contemporary home on wooded lot. Four bedrooms; 2.5 baths; kitchen with custom maple cabinets, granite countertops and stainless steel appliances; family room with fireplace and wet bar; finished basement; and deck. Kalamazoo Promise eligible. Price: $339,900. Contact: Jaqua (269) 217-4311 (MLS 17049971).

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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.

Employees to be feted at aviation event

Three people with WMU employment ties will be honored during the College of Aviation’s 2017 recognition dinner and induction ceremony for new members of its Hall of Honor. The event will be held at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3, in the Bernhard Center.

Being inducted into the Hall of Honor will be WMU’s Pat Benton and the late Herbert El- lingter, as well as Duncan Aviation represented by Chairman Emeritus Rob-
tert Duncan. In addition, WMU’s Tony Dennis will receive an award.

Benton, aviation, retired earlier this year after investing more than 40 years of his career with the aviation college. He is a 1980 alumnus of the college and was instrumental in building the aviation maintenance program.

Ellinger, emeritus in transportation technology, came to WMU in 1942 as a flight instructor and served the University for more than 41 years.

Dennis, now who is director of recruiting and retention for the WMU Graduate Col-
lege, will receive the college’s Excellence in Diversity Award. He was recruited by the late WMU President Elson Floyd to increase the number of women and minorities going into aviation careers.

For more information, visit bit.ly/22N21Q or contact Tracey Kauppila at (269) 964-4544 or tracey.kauppila@wmich.edu.

MAC names three academic fellows

Kieran J. Fogarty, interdisciplinary health sciences; Maarten Vonhof, biological sciences; and Devon Yaman, Haworth College of Business, have been named 2017-18 inaugural Academic Leadership Development Program Fellows. They are among 36 faculty and administrators from Mid-America’s American and European institutions who were selected.

The MAC Academic Leadership Development Program is a new professional development program to identify a select group of faculty and administrators in an effort to develop, prepare and enhance their ability to be effective academic leaders. It features opportunities to work together and is highlighted by two workshops.

This year’s workshops will be Nov. 6-8 at Kent State University and Feb. 19-21 at WMU.

“W "W "W This will be an excellent tool to enhance the growth and development of future leaders in higher education and is another way in which the MAC can provide value to its membership beyond intercollegiate athletics,” MAC Commis-

Dr. Dennis

Dr. Yaman
University earns geospatial sciences status

WMU and its Department of Geography have earned a designation through the Centers of Academic Excellence in Geospatial Sciences—GS—Program. The program is jointly sponsored by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or NGA, and the U.S. Geological Survey. Institutions must apply to participate in the program. WMU earned its GS excellence designation along with an additional specialty area designation in Navigation and Location. Depending on what status they applied for, institutions could receive a GS designation and optional designations in any of 10 specialty areas.

Before granting Centers of Academic Excellence status, NGA and USGS assess each applicant’s GS curricula, research and development, faculty and student successes, and related capabilities that align with the agencies’ mission needs.

Children’s Place grant supports student-parents

The Children’s Place Learning Center on campus has been awarded a four-year federal grant totaling $510,000 for the partnership involving the U.S. Department of Education and the College of Education and Human Development. The grant, called Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program, or CCAMPIS, provides $179,734 each year for the next four years. WMU is one of only four Michigan institutions could receive a GS designation in Navigation and Location. Depending on what status they applied for, institutions could receive a GS designation along with an additional specialty area designation in Navigation and Location.

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WMU at center of national STEM network

Beach says change is slower than it should be, in part because no organization coordinates new initiatives and findings.

“People interested in changing the undergraduate STEM experience are all over the place, geographically, and people in different disciplines have difficulty connecting with each other,” Beach says.

Henderson, physics and Mallinson Institute for Science Education, says ASCN will be a bridge between explicit academic knowledge about change in the STEM disciplines and the on-the-ground knowledge of active teachers and change agents. The researchers will be carefully looking at the intersection of theory and change strategies, and their focus will be on framing the network around big questions.

The new NSF award was preceded, in 2016, by a $794,612 grant from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, as well as smaller scale support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Association of American Universities—AAU.

The 2016 funding allowed ASCN partnered with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities to bring 40 higher education institutions together for a workshop on diversity and inclusion in undergraduate STEM education. In August, the network launched a Change Agent Institute for Scaling and Sustaining Institutional Change, a yearlong team-based professional development experience to support systemic change.

The new NSF funding will support a five-year network development initiative that will officially begin in January 2018. In addition to WMU’s Beach and Henderson, the work will be led by Linda Slakey of AAU and the Association of American Colleges and Universities and Maura Borrego of the University of Texas Austin. Henderson notes the ASCN will be centered at WMU.

Nursing wins $2 million grant to boost diversity

“This project will be a model from which our other programs in the college can learn as they also strive to foster greater diversity in their professions.”

Problems underrepresented students face make it much harder to make the transition to college and are mirrored in the state’s nursing demographics, Stark says. As of this year, 83.2 percent of nurses are white, 6.3 percent are black and 1.6 are Latino. But the general population breakdown is 75.4 percent white, 14.2 percent black and 5 percent Latino.

With the help of the $5,000 grant from the Office of Faculty Development, Stark and other nursing faculty members were able to assemble a group of faculty and students to identify common academic and personal issues that can impede the success of underrepresented students, who are called “scholars” under the program. Their contact with a student navigator under the watchful eye of a faculty mentor has been beneficial, with the scholar, navigator and faculty mentor all getting together to come up with a plan for the scholar.

Of the 14 scholars initially included in the program, all have been successful academically. Armed with the $2 million grant, the program is poised for much wider success. Almost half of the grant money goes directly to the scholars for wider success. Almost half of the grant money goes directly to the scholars for scholarships or stipends. The rest goes to pay for mentoring and to hire student scholars or navigators.

Researchers snag NSF prize

Litvinova’s award, and accompanying $475,000 grant, support a project that implements novel ideas about nuclear dynamics and benchmarks the theory with the newest experimental data. It has implications for understanding the elemental composition of the universe and predicting the evolution of stars and galaxies.

Searc’s $502,000 CAREER grant supports his work to develop computer algorithms capable of analyzing massive amounts of genomic and proteomic data—information on genes and proteins—more efficiently than any previous techniques. What the algorithmic tools uncover about genes and proteins could advance drug development and personalized medicine.