Event marks Phi Beta Kappa chapter’s 20th year

An early April induction of up to 81 top juniors and seniors will mark the 20th anniversary of WMU’s chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation’s oldest and most prestigious honors organization.

The Tuesday, April 10, ceremony will bring the membership total for the WMU chapter to nearly 1,502 since the University was authorized in 1997 to shelter a chapter, formally installing the honorary society in 1998 during a spring ceremony.

Securing the right to have a chapter was a 28-year effort at WMU and a goal of then-President Diether H. Haenicke, from the start of his 13-year presidency to the successful realization of the effort just months before his retirement.

Phi Beta Kappa was founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Today, just 286 colleges and universities are authorized to shelter chapters. Members have included 17 U.S. presidents, 40 U.S. Supreme Court justices and 136 Nobel Laureates. Phi Beta Kappa members have ranged from John Quincy Adams and Eli Whitney to Robert Frost, Condoleezza Rice and E.J. Dionne.

The motion of the organization is to foster and recognize excellence in undergraduate liberal arts and science education. Eligibility requirements include being among the top 10 percent of a graduating class’s degree candidates in the liberal arts and sciences.

Discussion to focus on richness, wisdom of diversity

Kalamazoo County will focus on the richness and wisdom that diversity brings to the workplace when it holds its annual diversity program Tuesday, April 10, in Cherry Hall Auditorium.

Juana Bordas will present “Salsa, Soul and Spirit in a Multicultural Age” as the featured speaker for Kalamazoo County’s 20th annual Respecting Differences program. Bordas, a specialist in leadership development and diversity training, will present her talk at 9:30 a.m. and again at 1:30 p.m. Both presentations are free and open to the public, and will include an on-stage American Sign Language translator.

The 2018 Respecting Differences program will utilize practices from many cultural traditions to not only illustrate the richness and wisdom that diversity brings to the workplace, but also to motivate people to grow their leadership skills.

The presentation will draw upon ideas in Bordas’ 2007 book titled “Salsa, Soul and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Nation.” As the world becomes flatter and globalization creates a world village, Bordas contends, it is imperative that people have the cultural flexibility and adaptability to inspire and guide people from the whole rainbow of humanity.

Given that perspective, Bordas has developed a multicultural leadership model that offers leaders and employees new approaches to increase their interpersonal effectiveness with.

Input sessions slated for South Neighborhood

Work to redevelop part of the Main Campus into the new South Neighborhood will kick off next month with two days of input sessions designed to get campus community views on what a new student center should include and look like.

The input sessions are set for 4 to 6 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, April 12, in the Bernhard Center lobby. The sessions are the first steps in an initiative announced last fall to transform the area of campus adjacent to Stadium Drive into a new campus gateway that is more connected with the community and offers eye-catching appeal to prospective students and campus visitors.

“We’re just getting started with planning for the student center,” says Vice President for Student Affairs Diane Anderson. “We want to get students’ best thoughts and ideas on what that facility will be like and how it can meet the needs of current and future students. As a matter of fact, we’d love to see students flood those two sessions and really become deeply involved.”

Work currently planned for the South Neighborhood includes:

• Development of a sub-campus master plan, to be completed in October;

• Construction of a new student center to open in 2021;

• Demolition this May of Elmwood Apartments;

• Construction of new student housing in the Elmwood footprint, with groundbreaking set for spring 2019.

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Enrollment open for variety of summer camps

Numerous camps are being offered by WMU for young and old this summer. They include summer camps in July and early August at the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project in Niles, Michigan, for youth and lifelong learners. More information about these events is available at wmich.edu/summer.

In addition, parents are invited to consider taking advantage of the Campus Kids Summer Program offered by the Children’s Place Learning Center. This program will run from June 18 to Aug. 24, and each week will feature a different theme with special-interest topics. For fees and other details, visit wmich.edu/childcare/programs/campuskids.

Various other camps are being held in June, July and August for young people in preschool to high school and beyond. A listing of all camps, with new listings added as information becomes available, can be found at wmich.edu/admissions/camps. Some scholarships are available.

Retirement receptions

Alice Wheelrey, Dining Services, will be honored for her 27 years of service during a reception from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, March 30, in the President’s Dining Room of the Bernhard Center.

Debra Berkley, human performance and health education, will be honored for her 33 years of service during a reception from 12:30 to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 14, in the foyer of the Fetzer Center. RSVP to Amy Seth at amy.seth@wmich.edu or (269) 387-3759.

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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.

Professor helps Alaskans do their taxes

Fritz Allhoff, philosophy, headed a group of four WMU students who recently helped hundreds of rural Alaskan residents prepare their tax returns. This was the fourth year Allhoff has led a tax-assistance delegation to remote villages in Alaska.

It took planes and snow machines to get there, but the intrepid group visited four rural Alaskan villages as part of the Internal Revenue Service’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program.

This year, group members spent five days and completed 300 returns for villagers in Kalag, Koyuku, Napaskiak and Nulato. Numerous other volunteer groups worked with people in other locations around Alaska, visiting 150 native villages and doing about 7,000 returns.

Educat or, researcher named ACE Fellow

Andrea Beach, educational leadership, research and technology, has been named a fellow of the American Council on Education for the 2018-19 academic year. ACE is the major coordinating body for all the nation’s higher education institutions.

Following nomination by the senior administration of their institutions and a rigorous application process, 45 fellows were selected this year. At the conclusion of the year, they will return to their home institution with new knowledge and skills that contribute to capacity-building efforts.

Beach, who joined WMU’s faculty in 2003, is co-director of the Center for Research on Instructional Change in Postsecondary Education, which she co-founded in 2014. In addition, she founded the Office of Faculty Development and was its director from 2008 to 2015.

Her research centers on organizational change in higher education, support of innovation in teaching and learning by faculty from diverse learning communities, and faculty development as a change lever. She has been the principal investigator or co-PI on several NSF-funded grants.

Student supervisor, employees feted

Alexia Alexander, student financial aid, is WMU’s top staff supervisor of student employees for 2018. Her selection was announced at a Feb. 22 recognition reception during the 32nd annual Student Employee Appreciation Week.

Also earning awards were Jon Curtis, Gary L. Belleville Undergraduate Student Employee of the Year, and Kimberly Carroll, Graduate Student Employee of the Year.

Alexander is interim associate director of financial literacy, planning and outreach. Her unit promotes, educates and supports a holistic and inclusive financial wellness culture at WMU. She was cited for being a “great supervisor and mentor,” as demonstrated in part by her willingness to take a personal interest in student employees; share her skills, knowledge and expertise; and provide career guidance as well as constructive feedback.
WMed's inaugural class celebrates big day, prepares for next step

The envelopes, please.

All at once, as the clock struck noon on Friday, March 16, the 48 students from the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine's Class of 2018 learned where the next step in their journey as medical professionals—residency training—would take them.

The excitement was all part of Match Day, a time-honored event that was held at medical schools across the country March 16. The event was a culmination for WMed's inaugural class, as the course of their medical careers was determined with the opening of an envelope and they learned where they will spend the next three or more years in residency training.

"As a new medical school with students participating in the Match for the very first time, we are thrilled that 100 percent of our medical students matched to a residency slot, as it is a very competitive process," said Kevin Kavannaugh, assistant dean for Career Development at the medical school.

"It has been my privilege, along with our faculty, to work closely with WMed students to assist them in identifying their specialty choice in preparation for the Match," Kavannaugh added.

Board of Trustees sets standards, procedures governing University policies

The University's governing board has formally approved a set of standards developed by a campus task force that are designed to formalize and govern the way policies are developed, reviewed and shared with the campus community.

The WMU Policy Development Policy, dubbed by task force members as "the policy on policies," has been in development for more than a year. It was approved by the WMU Board of Trustees at its March 14 meeting following a presentation by Jessica Swartz, general counsel's office.

The major impetus for the policy on policies was a dictate by the Higher Learning Commission—the University's accrediting body. Swartz and Jody Brylinsky, institutional effectiveness, led the task force and will oversee follow-up implementation of the new set of standards.

Sabbatical leave granted to 34 faculty members

During its March 14 meeting, the WMU Board of Trustees granted sabbatical leaves to 34 faculty members for all or part of the 2018-19 academic year.

The leaves subsequently noted by duration allow time to engage in research, creative projects and other work that promotes professional growth and development.

Effective for the fall 2018 semester: Kyle Brink, management; Martha Councell-Vargas, music; Cat Crochett, art; Amy Damashek, psychology; Jessica Frieder, psychology; Yuri Ledyava, mathematics; Terrence Mietherhuten, aviation science; John Sosk-Ch., civil and construction engineering; Jennifer Paltoe, management; John Tamis, physics; and Mary-Louise Totton, art.

Effective for the 2018-19 academic year: David Burme, finance and commercial law; Steven Carr, computer science; Christina Chin, art; Sue Ellen Christian, communication; Sime Curkovic, management; and Olivia Gabor-Peretz, professor of world languages and literatures; Megan Grunert Kowalke, professor of chemistry; David Lembeg, geography; Debra Lindstrom, occupational therapy; John Petrovic, mathematics; Dewei Qi, chemical and paper engineering; Cynthia Runnning-Johnson, world languages and literatures; Laura Van Zoest, mathematics; and Zijiang Yang, computer science.

The policy will govern the development, approval process, distribution and review schedule that a policy must meet to carry the force of becoming a University policy. The new measure becomes effective immediately and applies to new policies and those currently under development. Units will need to perform a rolling review of existing, approved policies so they may be adjusted to meet the new format and standards.

A campuswide policy committee will be charged with ensuring each new or revised policy meets the requirements of the new, board-approved measure. A regularly scheduled review process will put existing policies in line to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Other critical elements that are part of the policy on policies include:

- Clear definition of what a University policy is as well as categories of policies that exist;
- Description of what should be in a policy, including naming conventions, a summary of its contents, identification of responsible office, policy category, approval date and expected review date;
- A format template for the full text of each policy;
- A website, now in development, for each policy and those categories of policies that exist;
- Ultimate publication of all policies on WMU's current policy page at wmuich.edu/policies.
On Campus with the Gobeil brothers

Painters and brothers Gerry and Michael Gobeil work in different shops and are on different shifts at WMU. But the pair are continuing a tradition set by four generations in their family.

Their great-grandfather started painting trains in Montreal, followed by their grandfather who opened a painting business after World War II. Their father started painting for his father and uncle when he was just 14. Nicknamed “Frenchy” because he is from Canada and has a thick French accent, the Gobeils’ father still works for his own business today.

“There is a long history of painters in our family. We both worked for our father, who worked for his father,” says older brother Gerry, who came to WMU almost six years ago to work in the remodel shop. His team is assigned to a specific space and, depending on the funding and the building, will coordinate that remodel with project managers and designers on campus. A current project is remodeling parts of West Walhoul Hall.

Younger brother Michael has worked as a painter and glazer for about a year and a half with the third-shift night crew. Working from 11 p.m. to 7:30 a.m., Michael and his co-workers spruce up the common spaces on campus—hallways, lobbies, bathrooms and areas for the student population. Because they do their work in highly visible areas during a time when people are not there, there often is a “Wow, it’s been painted” reaction when people come into an office the next day and see their work, he says.

In both of their Facilities Management subunits, the brothers’ busiest times are in the summer, when students are gone and they can focus on their work without the foot traffic.

Besides being painters, the two also are U.S. Army veterans. Gerry was part of a border patrol in Germany during the tearing down of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Michael was deployed twice during Operation Iraq Freedom in 2004-06 and 2008-09.

They grew up just miles from WMU in Portage and remember riding their bikes through the campus, marveling at the beautiful landscaping and character of the buildings.

Michael still lives close by in Kalamazoo and plans to enroll at WMU in June to study general business or interior design while continuing to work at the University. Gerry lives in Otsego, Michigan, with his wife and his youngest child, a son who is a freshman in high school. He also has another son and a daughter, both grown, and a new grandson.

WMU is semifinalist for 2018 innovation award

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi has selected WMU and five other semifinalists for its 2018 Excellence in Innovation Award. The $100,000 award, given once per biennium, recognizes an institution for achievement in finding powerful answers to important local, regional, national or global challenges.

The semifinalists were chosen from a large pool of applicants representing multifaceted projects at colleges and universities across the nation. The six semifinalists were selected based on the project’s ability to achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes to create systemic large-scale change.

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Discussion to focus on richness, wisdom of diversity

Dakin says websites for the various projects are under development and will include online feedback mechanisms for the campus community.

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Phi Beta Kappa event

With just over 100 public universities approved for a chapter, WMU remains among an elite group both nationally and in Michigan. In the state, only four public universities are authorized to have Phi Beta Kappa chapters.

In addition to WMU, they are Michigan State University, the University of Michigan and Wayne State University. Four Michigan private colleges also are part of the Phi Beta Kappa network.

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South Neighborhood input

David Dakin, director of planning, space management and capital projects, says that in addition to campus planning staff, the input sessions will be attended by a team from Cannon Design and Stantec, which are consulting firms hired to help develop the new center and housing. The firm Perkins & Will will be present to solicit input on the sub-campus master plan.

Construction on the student center as well as the new student housing is slated to begin in 2019. Future plans for the South Neighborhood include mixed-use facilities other than student housing.

Dakin says websites for the various projects are under development and will include online feedback mechanisms for the campus community.