Unified Clinics receives $1.5M state appropriation

WMU is slated to receive a $1.5 million state appropriation for its Unified Clinics, a multi-specialty group practice that annually serves more than 5,000 patients in southwest Michigan and beyond and operates under the auspices of the College of Health and Human Services.

State Sen. Margaret O’Brien, who was instrumental in securing the funding, formally announced the allocation during a news conference Oct. 2.

“WMU’s Unified Clinics provides invaluable health care services to some of southwest Michigan’s most underserved,” O’Brien says. “I advocated for needed funding to ensure the University can provide the best possible care for its clients, many of which are children. Kalamazoo area residents should be proud to have such a great organization in our backyard.”

The Unified Clinics is a collective of 10 specialty teaching clinics that provide an array of services, including autism evaluation, behavioral health services, child-trauma assessment, hearing treatment, low-vision services, occupational therapy, speech therapy and women’s health services. WMU student practitioners and supervising professionals provide the care and treatment.

Affordability is a major need for the clinics’

Esports initiatives gaining widespread interest

They came, they saw, they conquered—or tried to. That was the game plan for many eager members of the campus and local community attending the Oct. 5 grand opening of the state-of-the-art WMU Esports Arena.

The event was held in two stages, with invited guests and news media swarming the facility for a morning gathering and members of the public filtering in during the afternoon open house.

Most of the visitors were as impressed by the arena’s colorful lights, pro-quality sound system and spacious auditorium seating for 190 spectators as they were by its sophisticated gaming computers and related technology.

“We heard about this through one of the University’s tweets after we got out of class in Battle Creek and decided to check it out,” one senior aviation student said from behind the gaming PC he was test driving at the open house. “I didn’t expect this, especially because it’s an old-style theatre. But the arena is definitely amazing.”

The study also determined that WMU supports 16,690 direct, indirect and induced jobs in the local area.

“Imagine the home side of Waldo Stadium with every single seat filled. That’s how many jobs we’re talking about,” says Ron Kitchens, chief executive officer of Southwest Michigan First and a WMU trustee.

“I believe that if our region is to thrive in the future, we must grow the portion of our workforce that has earned a bachelor’s degree. We are currently 20 percent below the national average. WMU is an enormous help. It can enable us to attract young professionals here, and we can entice them to stay.”

Students have an impact during their time in Kalamazoo. Each WMU student adds $11,500 to the local economy.

“It’s wonderful to see students in local businesses,” Kitchens says. “They bring vitality to our community. But they also bring resources. When you see four students..."
Artifacts collection to be dedicated
The Roselle Havens Artifacts Collection will be dedicated Sunday, Oct. 14, in the Zhang Legacy Collections Center. The ceremony will include a showing of the film that inspired the collection, “The Abandoned Bride.” Refreshments will be served at 2 p.m., the dedication will take place at 2:30 p.m., and the film will be shown at 3 p.m.

Free campus shredding event slated
WMU students, faculty and staff are encouraged to “get their shred on” by participating in a free campus-wide shredding event Friday, Oct. 19, in common professional or personal documents and media are properly destroyed and recycled.

The event is set for 10 a.m. to noon in Lot 41 near Sargent Hall. A truck with several 95-gallon containers will be provided by Data Guardian for drop-off. If documents are in recyclable containers such as paper or cardboard, the entire container can be placed into the bins or directly on the truck.

All plastic and metal must be removed, but there is no need to remove rubber bands or paperclips. CDs, DVDs, VHS and floppy disks will also be accepted but must be placed in a separate container. No hard drives will be accepted. For disposal of hard drives, or more than 15 boxes of documents, contact Data Guardian directly.

For those with questions or who are unable to make the event and have materials to be disposed of, contact Data Guardian at (269) 327-6555.

Western Wellness events scheduled
Several events are taking place this fall to help WMU employees stay fit and healthy. Registrations are due on varying dates by visiting the Events page on the Western Wellness website at wmich.edu/wellness.

A Mason Jar Salad Workshop has been set for 11:15 a.m. to noon Tuesday, Oct. 16, in 3015 Student Recreation Center. In addition, a Movement Matters Challenge will run from Oct. 28 to Dec. 1. Registration for two- to four-person teams will be open from Oct. 17 to 28.

There will also be an Empathy Lunch and Learn session from 12:05 to 12:55 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 8, in 157 Bernhard Center.

IF conference to be held in November
Government, industry and academic leaders in information technology and marketing will headline a conference focused on “E-Commerce and Digital Marketing” on campus beginning at 7:15 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 15. The Western Michigan IT Forum will be held in the Fetzer Center with sessions for industry, academic and student participants.

The event is open to the public. Registration is $125 for general admission and free for WMU employees and students. Registration includes a continental breakfast and buffet lunch. The event is hosted by the Department of Business Information Systems. To register, visit wmich.edu/itforum.

Service anniversaries—October
The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 35, 30, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during October.

35 years—Sue T. Murray, multicultural affairs; Robert R. Vandylinder, Dining Services; and Lonnie Weseling, Lawson Ice Arena.

30 years—Juanita Snell and Art S. Williams, both building custodial and support services.

20 years—Kate Hennessy, information technology.

15 years—Muralidhar K. Ghanatasa, mechanical and aerospace engineering.

10 years—Diana C. Bloun, arts and sciences advising; Paul DeVries, intercollegiate athletics; Diana Berkshire Heart, research; Eric L. Leun, Sindecuse Health Center; Lee A. Ryder, Haenicke Institute; and Ermajo J. Salinas, development and alumni relations.

Five years—Grant K. Allers, public safety; Dawn M. Burghardt, registrar’s office; Aleks Janis Copeland, College of Aviation; Alex Goresch, information technology; Lashonte Delacy Holloway, custodial and support services; Jennifer Jean Johnson, family engagement; Andrew M. Martin, West Hills Athletic Club; Mary Elizabeth Osborn, Davis Dining Services; and John A. Yellich, geological and environmental sciences.

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.

Staffer recognized for leadership
Diana Hernández, multicultural affairs director, received El Concalo’s 2018 Quetzalcóatl Award in recognition of her stature as a professional Latinx leader who has been working, contributing, supporting and advocating for the well-being of the Latinx community in Kalamazoo.

Hernández received the accolade during an award ceremony as part of the Nuestra Raíces Gala Sept. 28. During the ceremony, U.S. Rep. Fred Upton read a state legislative proclamation passed in her honor.

In announcing its award, the nonprofit El Concalo, formerly the Hispanic American Council, cited Hernández for her passionate support of the area’s Latinx community as well as advocating for WMU’s Latinx students so they can succeed in college. Under her leadership, WMU recently secured a federal College Assistance Migrant Program grant worth more than $2 million to support first-generation undergraduate students who are migrant or seasonal farmworkers.

In addition, Hernández has been selected as one of the Top 50 Latinas in Michigan by the governor-appointed Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan.

Counselor reelected state board chair
Pat Munley, professor and chair of counselor education and counseling psychology, has been reelected chair of the Michigan Board of Counseling.

Munley is in the fourth year of a second four-year term on the board. He was appointed to the body by Gov. Rick Snyder in 2011 and has been serving as its chair since 2013.

The Michigan Board of Counseling has regulatory and disciplinary responsibility for professional counselors in the state. It licenses and oversees the practice of Michigan’s more than 9,200 professional counselors.

Munley is a licensed professional counselor and psychologist and fellow of the American Academy of Counseling Psychology and the American Psychological Association.

English professor pens poetry book

In the age of the wide but often shallow lens of new technology, Olsen takes a nod from Robert Frost and Gary Snyder, laying bare people’s need to return to the roots of things, where they can find their voice. He revels in language that is intensely authentic rumination on human isolation.

Olsen teaches creative writing and literature courses and is the author of five collections of poetry. His work has appeared in numerous prestigious journals, and he has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts creative writing fellowship and many other honors.

Munley
Richmond product design, innovation center officially opens

The 28,000-square-foot Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation was formally unveiled Sept. 27 during a grand opening ceremony in Central Kohrman Hall. Renovations to create the state-of-the-art facility for WMU’s year-old product design program on the first and third floors of Central Kohrman began in December and were finished this summer in time for fall classes. The facility features studios, presentation spaces and laboratories dedicated to rapid fabrication, rapid prototyping, 3D printing, woodworking and metalworking.

The nearly $7 million project to renovate Central Kohrman to support the needs of an innovative product design program was made possible by corporate and individual donors, including Jim and Lois Richmond. The couple, both alumni and longtime WMU benefactors, contributed $3 million to the project.

The institute “is truly far beyond anything we ever imagined it would become,” Jim Richmond says.

“Just a few weeks ago, Lois and I had the honor of touring the building, which included getting a detailed description of each area and how students will use this creative layout, working independently and in groups on design projects,” The Bachelor of Fine Arts in product design draws its curriculum from fine arts, engineering and business to develop professionals who will specialize in designing products that combine form, function and manufacturing. Launched in fall 2017 with its first cohort of students, the program was created to meet current and future design and manufacturing needs in southwest Michigan and beyond.

“From my first days on campus five years ago, it was apparent that our local corporations had a great need for design talent,” says Daniel Guyette, College of Fine Arts dean.

“There were dozens of positions they could not fill, and this was impacting their ability to compete and thrive. As a state university, it’s our responsibility to meet the needs of our state and region by providing quality programs to educate our young adults for promising careers. That’s why we created the product design program and the Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation, and the response from students and the corporate community has been exceptional.”

In addition to their University-based studies, students in the program are placed within industry settings during summer residencies with the anticipation that those positions will become permanent jobs after graduation.

University trustees approve retirements of six faculty, 22 staff members

The WMU Board of Trustees acted on numerous personnel matters Sept. 12.

Faculty retirements
All of the faculty members who are retiring are doing so with emeritus status. Their names, positions, and effective dates of retirement are: Christine Browning, mathematics, effective April 30, 2019 (change in date only); Linwood Cousins, social work, effective June 30, 2019; Donald Meyer, economics, effective May 1, 2024; Shaila Rao, special education and literacy studies, effective Aug. 31, 2021; David Smith, music, effective Aug. 31, 2018; and Huizhong Zhou, economics, effective Dec. 31, 2021.

Staff retirements
William Adams, building custodial and support, effective April 1, 2018; Barbara Banks, Bronx Express, effective Sept. 1, 2018; Thomas Cook, maintenance services, effective Aug. 1, 2018; Terri Culver, accounting services, effective July 1, 2018; Debra Dement, landscape services, effective Aug. 4, 2018; Ruth DeVoy, Valley Dining Service, effective Sept. 1, 2018; Luacia Dixon, Student Financial Aid, effective Aug. 1, 2018; Timothy Ender, information technology, effective Sept. 1, 2018; Francies Frazier, building custodial and support, effective Aug. 1, 2018; David Gehram, accounts receivable, effective July 1, 2018; Lasena Jennings, Human Resources, effective Aug. 1, 2018; Nancy Knoes, information technology, effective Aug. 7, 2018; Judith Medendorp, special education and literacy studies, effective Oct. 1, 2018; Betty Merrifield, Ballroom Dining Service, effective Aug. 23, 2018; Delores Minshall, information technology, effective Aug. 1, 2018; Charles Overberger, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, effective Aug. 11, 2018; Johnny Paige, Bernhard Center, effective Aug. 1, 2018; Allan Posse, information technology, effective Sept. 1, 2018; Julie Rickert, fine arts academic advising, effective July 29, 2018; Eric Schipper, maintenance services, effective Aug. 11, 2018; Sharon Stoken, building custodial and support, effective May 1, 2018; and Leah Wiser, Sundance Health Center, effective July 1, 2018.

Faculty resignations
Joseph Fernandez, interdisciplinary health programs, effective Aug. 14, 2018; Hisao-Chin Kuo, special education and literacy studies, effective Aug. 21, 2018; Nora Lewis, music, effective Aug. 14, 2018; Laura Pawuk, music, effective June 30, 2018; and Sally Thelen, Center for English Language and Culture, effective June 22, 2018.

Other personnel matters
Promotions were granted to Lauren Foley, political science, effective Aug. 15, 2018; and Hyun Bin Kang, statistics, effective Aug. 15, 2018. In addition, a sabbatical leave was granted to Hector Diaz, professor of social work, effective fall 2018.

Obituaries

Dennis Boyle, retired registrar, died Sept. 11. He was 87. Boyle joined the staff in 1965 and retired in 1993 after more than 27 years of service.

Gerald Carl Schwemmin, a former controller, died Sept. 11. He was 88. Schwemmin joined the staff in 1966 and retired in 1992 after 26 years of service to the University. A Celebration of Life will be held at 1 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 28, at Weber’s Restaurant in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Jess Morgan Walker, emeritus in education and professional development, died Aug. 17. He was 84. Walker joined the faculty in 1965 and retired in 1989 after 24 years of service.
Esports initiative garnering broad interest

Esports at WMU

The WMU Esports Arena is located on the corner of Oakland Drive and Oliver Street in what was previously known as the Little Theatre. The facility, which had been rented out periodically for the past several years, now serves as home base the Esports Club at WMU.

The club grew out of the University’s League of Legends registered student organization and is one of WMU’s formal sports clubs. But instead of donning uniforms and taking to the court or turf, players don headsets and sit behind gaming machines, going head to head in the virtual world of online competitive video gaming.

Although quickly gaining in popularity, esports has yet to become ingrained at U.S. colleges and universities like football, basketball and other traditional sports have. So

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WMU’s economic impact

having brunch, that’s not just a $46 tab, it’s $46,000 each year in rent, groceries, checking accounts and entertainment. They contribute handsomely to our community as individuals and as citizens.”

Also, though not from the study, WMU students contribute 235,000 hours of engagement with the community each year. the Broncos currently compete in national online leagues.

As time goes on, WMU will bring in spectators to its arena to watch the action as well as open up the venue to the intramural video game teams that are being formed at the University. It also hopes to host invitato

Behind-the-scenes players

Together, the esports arena and club constitute the second of two transformational initiatives President Edward Montgomery agreed last year to help fund as a way of transforming how WMU serves students.

“The purpose of the project is to extend the University’s community-building efforts to encompass students’ recreational hours,” says Scott Puckett, business and technology; and University Recreation, Management; the Office of Information Technology; and George “Eric” Perry, Miller Audi

Getting the esports initiative off the ground has been a team effort in itself, with Puckett serving as project director and Andre Rattray, coordinator of club sports/esports, focusing on building up the club and its individual teams.

Puckett notes that crucial and enthusiastic assistance has come from across the University. Stepping in to help have been Facilities Management; the Office of Information Technology; and University Recreation, especially Rattray and intramural head Mike Berdowski.

Meanwhile, the arena’s crowd-pleasing atmosphere is the handiwork of Robert Reed, business and finance-information technology, and George “Erie” Perry, Miller Auditorium. Reed designed and implemented the audiovisual system as well as the computer integration configuration while Perry designed the lighting and sound systems with help from fellow Miller employee Dave Clemens on the sound.