April 2017, Global News

Haenicke Institute

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KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Two special guests will be part of the celebration Saturday, April 29, when Western Michigan University grants more than 2,600 degrees during graduation exercises in Miller Auditorium.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder will make remarks during WMU’s 9 a.m. commencement ceremony, the first of the day’s four scheduled ceremonies. Snyder, who has served as the state’s governor since 2011, has made it a practice to speak during graduation exercises at a small number of Michigan colleges and universities each year.

In addition, Dr. Antonio R. Flores, president and chief executive officer of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from WMU during the final ceremony of the day at 7:30 p.m. Flores is a WMU alumnus with extensive ties to Michigan.
WMU President John M. Dunn will preside over the four April 29 ceremonies. Each one will last about two hours and be geared toward students who are graduating from a particular set of degree-granting academic units. In all, the University will confer 2,628 degrees: 2,028 at the bachelor's level, 566 at the master's level and 34 at the doctoral level.

**Schedule**

- The **9 a.m.** ceremony is for the College of Aviation and Haworth College of Business.

- The **12:30 p.m.** ceremony is for the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and College of Health and Human Services.

- The **4 p.m.** ceremony is for the College of Education and Human Development, the College of Fine Arts, and Extended University Programs.

- The **7:30 p.m.** ceremony is for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Each of these spring commencement ceremonies will include music by the Western Brass Ensemble, conducted by Dr. Stephen M. Wolfinbarger. The national anthem and alma mater will be sung by WMU's chapter of the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia professional music fraternity, conducted by Ethan Fegan. The graduates will be welcomed as new alumni of the University by Jennifer Lentner, president of the WMU Alumni Association.

**Tickets**

Tickets are required for guests to attend commencement, and each participating student is eligible to reserve up to four guest tickets. All seats are general admission. Guests who need accessible seating or other accessibility services should call (269) 387-2320 to make arrangements.

If there are extra tickets, students who are participating in one of the ceremonies may request up to two more tickets on a first-come, first-served basis from the Miller Auditorium Ticket Office beginning at **8 a.m. Friday, April 28**. After all ticketed guests have been seated in Miller, any remaining open seats will be offered to those without tickets. Guests without tickets may view the commencement ceremonies live on a large screen in 2028 Brown Hall, which is near Miller.
Live coverage, photos

All of the spring ceremonies will be broadcast live on Channel 5 of EduCABLE, the University's cable television system, and throughout the Kalamazoo area on Public Media Network Channel 191, a local public access channel on the Charter Communications commercial cable television system.

A live webcast of the ceremonies also will be available online the day of graduation. A maximum of 1,000 connections will be accepted. Not all browsers are compatible with the commencement stream.

A professional photographer will take pictures of each graduating student. Color proofs will be sent to the students, but purchase of prints is optional.

Parking, other information

Free parking will be available in parking lots adjacent to Miller Auditorium. Commencement guests should plan to arrive at least 30 minutes before each ceremony. The address to use if locating Miller by GPS or obtaining online driving directions is: 2200 Auditorium Dr., Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008.

The University only conducts formal graduation exercises after the fall and spring semesters and the summer I session, although WMU students also may graduate after the summer II session. A final list of spring 2017 graduates is expected to be distributed to hometown newspapers in June.

For more information, including directions to WMU and how to obtain tickets or view the live webcast, visit wmich.edu/commencement. Direct questions to the Registrar's Office at (269) 387-4300.

Screening, performance set for world premiere of 'Spirit Moves'

contact: Mark Schwerin
April 14, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A four-year collaborative project involving dance, theatre, and film and video students will take center stage during a multimedia screening and performance Wednesday, April 19, at Western Michigan University.
Rootead dancers

The audience will be treated to a screening of the first installment of the web-based documentary series, "The Spirit Moves with Us: Afrikan Dance in the Diaspora." The premiere, which will begin at 6:30 p.m. in 1025 Brown Hall, also will feature live dance performances by Heather Mitchell, Kama Mitchell and the Rootead Youth Dance Company, and Afrobeat dance performances by Brooklyn Washington and Oluchi Ebere. Events are sponsored by WMU’s College of Arts and Sciences and School of Communication.

Increasing cross-cultural knowledge

An interdisciplinary team led by WMU alum Katrina Ezeiyi is producing the documentary web series for several reasons, says Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, a WMU professor of communication in the film, video and media studies program, who acted as senior producer and co-director for the project.

"One of our goals is to increase cross-cultural knowledge about dance movement and practices because there is a lack of educational media about West African dance practices, even though it continues to gain popularity and has migrated to other global regions," Machiorlatti says. "Non-Western cultural practices and artifacts are often appropriated and diluted into pop culture trends seen as fashionable or cool, while the cultural significance and the history surrounding such practices are ignored. For the sincerity and depth of the culture to thrive, efforts must be made to show West African dance in its most authentic and genuine forms, as well as to explore their influences in other regions."

Dance videos provide start
The project's inception dates back four years ago, when David Curwen, WMU professor of dance, contacted Machiorlatti about an advanced choreography course he was teaching, Choreography for the New Millennium. He proposed a collaborative project titled "Dance for the Camera." He also contacted Christopher Biggs, WMU assistant professor of music in the multimedia arts technology program.

Curwen's idea was to have dance students collaborate with video production and music composition students to create artistic and expressive dance videos. The collaboration was a huge success, and students have been collaborating on the dance videos ever since, with final projects culminating in a performance and screening event in WMU's Dalton Center dance studios.

Machiorlatti's advanced video production class also has collaborated with theatre students in the Acting for the Camera course taught by Dwandra Lampkin, associate professor of theatre. During one semester Machiorlatti met with then-student and theatre major Ezeiyi. Ezeiyi, who was born in Nigeria, was nearing graduation and pitched the idea for a documentary and performance media production featuring how West African dance and culture has influenced many other parts of the world.

Knowing how challenging a feature documentary is to produce, Machiorlatti, who often collaborates with students on documentary and performance media productions, recommended a web series instead. That would allow a production team, consisting mainly of students, to work on individual episodes. Research started in 2014 and production started in 2015.

In addition to Machiorlatti and Curwen, web series collaborators include Ezeiyi, the series creator, co-producer and director; Micaalaya Moses, instructor of English; WMU students and alumni Tirrea Billings, Nicholas Blackmeer, Gianna Capadona, Darius Gardener, Katie Grinnell and Brooklyn Washington; and K-College student Oluchi Ebere. One of the first to be interviewed for the web documentary series was Heather Mitchell, director of dance at the Kalamazoo-based Rootead Family Enrichment Center, whose dance troupe will perform.

Ezeiyi and Machiorlatti say it's critical for the practices and rituals surrounding West Afrikan dance to be captured in a popular visual format.

"We want individuals to have access to those cultural practices that have been part of a misrepresented history," Ezeiyi says. "Moreover, people outside those cultural histories can be exposed to Afrocentric dance to foster cross-cultural understanding and appreciation."
WMU, K College grant to bolster Asian language and culture classes

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a $362,000 Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Grant to Western Michigan University and its consortium partner, Kalamazoo College.

The three-year grant will support a community-based education program called the Southwest Michigan Education Initiative on the East Indian Ocean. This program will enhance global, humanities-based education for students and faculty members and address a key language need expressed by West Michigan residents of South Asian and Southeast Asian descent.

"We want this project to be responsive to the needs of our community," explains Dr. Jane E. Blyth, interim associate provost and executive director of WMU’s Haenicke Institute for Global Education, "and at the same time strengthen the global engagement of Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College."

The grant program

Over the three-year life of the grant funding, the WMU and K College partners will design workshops for faculty members at both institutions who are interested in incorporating South Asia- and Southeast Asia-related topics into their courses. These semester-long, intercollegial workshops will focus on methods and strategies to integrate that content into existing courses at both schools.

"The more faculty who incorporate this content into their pre-existing courses, the greater the impact we expect to see," says Blyth, who serves as the grant program’s co-principal investigator.

WMU will offer courses in Vietnamese and Hindi/Urdu languages through the Department of World Languages and Literatures under the guidance of its department chair, Dr. Molly Lynde-Recchia. In addition, the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Fine Arts will expand offerings in content-related courses about South and Southeast Asia. New classes on the Bollywood film industry, Vietnamese performance traditions, and new media among diasporic Southeast and South Asian populations are expected to draw student interest. The consortium also will
develop more study abroad programs, internships with local cultural organizations and other opportunities for WMU and K College students to interact with people from the two targeted regions.

The Southwest Michigan Education Initiative on the East Indian Ocean draws on the expertise and experience of faculty at both institutions. **Dr. Alexander M. Cannon**, WMU assistant professor of music history and ethnomusicology and a scholar of Vietnamese traditional music, is the grant program's other co-principal investigator. He will facilitate workshops and activities related to Southeast Asia. **Dr. Nathan L.M. Tabor**, WMU assistant professor of history and a scholar of South Asia, is the program's manager. **Dr. Carol Anderson**, K College professor of religion, will coordinate with Tabor on the workshops and activities related to South Asia.

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**The local Asia connection**

A substantial number of people who reside in West Michigan trace their heritage to South Asian nations such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan and to Southeast Asian nations such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The 2010 U.S. Census reports that southwest Michigan is home to more than 3,500 people of **South Asian ancestry**. The Southeast Asian population in southwest and West Michigan includes nearly 6,000 people of **Vietnamese descent** alone, most of them residing around Grand Rapids.

"Many of our young people can't communicate with their elders due to language barriers," says **Phillip Nguyen**, president of the Vietnamese-American Community of Grand Rapids, which is a community partner on the grant project. "The Vietnamese classes offer our community's young people a chance to learn their parents' language while receiving college credit for it."
Cannon notes that the language classes and other grant program activities should generate greater interest in South and Southeast Asia locally.

"The initiative is unique," he adds. "It brings together expertise, especially in Vietnam and South Asia, and proposes that the historical connections between our area of Michigan and the East Indian Ocean region remain strong."

U.C.-Davis prof to focus on economic impact of immigration in Sichel talk

contact: Mark Schwerin
April 6, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A scholar from the University of California at Davis will focus on the dollars and cents of immigration when he speaks in April at Western Michigan University as part of the Werner Sichel Lecture Series.

Dr. Giovanni Peri, professor and chair in the U.C.-Davis Department of Economics, will speak at noon Wednesday, April 19, in 2028 Brown Hall. His talk is titled "The Great Economic Potential of Immigration to the U.S." and is free and open to the public. A light lunch reception will be available after the lecture.

Giovanni Peri

In addition to being chair and a professor, Peri is director of the interdisciplinary Migration Cluster at U.C.-Davis. He is also a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and editor of Regional Science and Urban Economics.

Peri serves on the editorial board of the Journal of the European Economic Association and on several other journals. His work has been published in numerous academic journals, including the American Economic Review, the Review of Economic Studies, The Review of Economics and Statistics and the Economic Journal. He has received grants to fund his research from the MacArthur Foundation, the Volkswagen Foundation, the World Bank, the National Science Foundation and several other institutions.

Peri's research has been featured in the Economist, the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, as well as other
newspapers. His research focuses on the economic determinants and effects of human migrations.

**About the series**

The theme for this year's Sichel Lecture Series is "Immigration Policy Today." The series is organized by the WMU Department of Economics and named in honor of Werner Sichel, a longtime WMU economics professor and former department chair, who retired in 2004. The lectures are open to the public and formatted with the general public in mind.

The series is cosponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Peri's presentation also is cosponsored by the Timothy Light Center for Chinese Studies.

This year's series is being organized by Dr. Susan Pozo, WMU professor of economics.

**Take advantage of global engagement opportunities in May**

contact: Korey Force  
April 26, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University and the Kalamazoo community will offer a number of global engagement opportunities during the month of May. Highlights include Chinese culture classes, the annual International Congress on Medieval Studies, and a wide variety of chances to enjoy international cuisine and music.

Opportunities to get globally engaged are published weekly at [wmich.edu/global/events](http://wmich.edu/global/events) by WMU's Haenicke Institute for Global Education.

[Sign up for weekly update](http://wmich.edu/global/events)

**May 2017 Opportunities**

**Thursday, May 4**

- [International Student Orientation](http://wmich.edu/global/events)—all day May 4-5 in the Bernhard Center, hosted by International Admissions and International Student Activities. Help welcome new
international students to campus by offering a friendly smile or a helping hand to any students with questions. Free and open to the public.

**Friday, May 5**

- **2017 Kalamazoo Bach Festival**—May 5-14 at various venues throughout Kalamazoo, hosted by Kalamazoo College, the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, Art Works, and the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo. The festival offers a weeklong celebration of German composer Johann Sebastian Bach's life and legacy. Fees vary; open to the public.

**Monday, May 8**

- **Chinese culture classes begin**—5:30 p.m. at Western Michigan University, hosted by the Confucius Institute at WMU. Learn about Chinese culture in one of seven courses offered this summer including Chinese calligraphy, Taichi, and Chinese language. Registration fee varies with discounts for senior citizens, students and WMU employees; open to the public.

**Tuesday, May 9**

- **"Tibetan Buddhism for Modern Life" workshop**—7 to 8:30 p.m. in Room 19 of the People's Church, 1758 N. 10 St., Kalamazoo, hosted by Jewel Heart. The workshop will focus on how to apply ancient wisdom to daily life. Free and open to the public.

**Thursday, May 11**

- **52nd International Congress on Medieval Studies**—May 11-14 at Western Michigan University, hosted by the Medieval Institute at WMU. The congress features more than 550 sessions of papers, panel discussions, roundtables and performances. Registration fee varies with discounts for students; open to the public.
- **Cultivate Community Through Cooking series**—5 to 7 p.m. at the Arcus Center for Social Justice, 205 Monroe St., Kalamazoo, hosted by the Thrive Refugee Support Center and Refugee Outreach Kalamazoo. Each class will be taught by an individual who has recently resettled in the Kalamazoo community as a refugee. Registration is $15; open to the public.

**Saturday, May 13**

- **42nd Stulburg International String Competition**—9 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the Dalton Center Recital Hall, hosted by the Stulberg International String Competition. Twelve semifinalists from around the world compete for a chance to win cash prizes and performance opportunities. Daytime performances are free. Tickets for evening finals are $20 or $5 with a student ID. All performances are open to the public.

**Tuesday, May 16**
• **"Hate Rising" film screening**—5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Douglass Community Association, 1000 W. Paterson St., Kalamazoo, hosted by Welcoming Michigan, the Hispanic American Council, Bethany Christian Services, the Social Welfare Alliance, and the Douglas Community Association. The film is part of the United We Rise three-part film series fostering solidarity through conversations on immigration, community and race in Kalamazoo. Free and open to the public.

Wednesday, May 17

• **Cultivate Community Through Cooking series**—5 to 7 p.m. at the Arcus Center for Social Justice, 205 Monroe St., Kalamazoo, hosted by the Thrive Refugee Support Center and Refugee Outreach Kalamazoo. Each class will be taught by an individual who has recently resettled in the Kalamazoo community as a refugee. Registration is $15; open to the public.

• **Taste of the World**—6 to 8 p.m. at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake St., Kalamazoo, hosted by Colleagues International. Join Colleagues International for their annual fundraising event that offers cuisine from around the world. Tickets are $35 and $15 for children 12 and under; open to the public.

• **Garba dancing night**—7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Rootead Dance Studio, 1501 Fulford Ave., Kalamazoo, hosted by the Kalamazoo Garba Club. Join the Kalamazoo Garba Club for a pop-up dance night to learn and practice the traditional folk dance from India. Entrance is $3; open to the public.

Thursday, May 18

• **Japanese Cooking Class**—11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Solid Grounds Church, 1702 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, hosted by the WMU Soga Japan Center. Participants will learn how to cook traditional Japanese dishes. Registration is $5 for WMU students and $10 for non-students and includes all the ingredients; email michiko.yoshimoto@wmich.edu to register. Open to the public.

• **"WorldQuest" trivia night**—5:30 p.m. at the Wege Center on the Aquinas College Campus, 1700 Fulton St. E., Grand Rapids, hosted by the World Affairs Council. The trivia competition features questions from all over the globe. Tickets are $60 and includes registration, dinner, and snacks; open to the public.

Sunday, May 21

• **Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development World Day**—3 to 5 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, 315 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, hosted by the Multicultural Center at the First Baptist Church. The world day event will feature opportunities for cross-cultural exchange with food and performances from around the world. Free and open to the public.

Monday, May 22
Cultivate Community Through Cooking series—5 to 7 p.m. at the Arcus Center for Social Justice, 205 Monroe St., Kalamazoo, hosted by the Thrive Refugee Support Center and Refugee Outreach Kalamazoo. Each class will be taught by an individual who has recently resettled in the Kalamazoo community as a refugee. Registration is $15; open to the public.

Thursday, May 25

Japanese Cooking Class—11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Solid Grounds Church, 1702 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, hosted by the WMU Soga Japan Center. Participants will learn how to cook traditional Japanese dishes. Registration is $5 for WMU students and $10 for non-students and includes all the ingredients; email michiko.yoshimoto@wmich.edu to register. Open to the public.

Experience Chinese culture by taking a class this summer

contact: Mackenzie Adams
April 24, 2017 | WMU News

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—The Confucius Institute at Western Michigan University is accepting registrations for nine summer Chinese culture courses that begin the week of Monday, May 8.

The multiweek, low-cost courses are open to members of the public of all ages. A half-price tuition discount is offered to those age 55 and older as well as WMU students, while tuition is free for WMU employees. Some courses charge all participants a fee for materials, and those with low enrollment may be canceled.

The Confucius Institute at WMU is a nonprofit organization designed to bring an authentic Chinese perspective to WMU and the Kalamazoo area. The institute offers culture classes during WMU's fall and spring semesters as well as the University's summer I session.

Summer 2017 offerings

Seven of the classes meet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and all but one meets one day a week for six weeks.

- Chinese ink painting, calligraphy and paper-cutting (no Chinese language knowledge needed)
• Taichi (meets 11 times; no Chinese language knowledge needed)
• Basic Chinese language I and II
• Intermediate Chinese language I and II
• Advanced Chinese language

All classes are held on WMU's main campus in Kalamazoo and taught for personal enrichment rather than academic credit. **Registrations are due by Friday, May 5.**

[View class schedule and register](#)

**Diverse, enjoyable classes**

The Confucius Institute has been offering Chinese culture classes since the institute's inception eight years ago, notes Meng Li, one of the culture class instructors. "We provide an authentic Chinese culture experience to the people of Western, and to the people of Kalamazoo," Li says. "Our classes are great for people who may have limited knowledge of China and would like to know more about the country."

Hedy Habra, a WMU instructor of Spanish, has attended several Confucius Institute classes over the past eight years.

"I greatly enjoyed these classes and had wonderful instructors," Habra says. "The variety of class offerings at the Confucius Institute is geared toward all sorts of people, whether they're interested in Chinese culture or in visiting China but can't attend formal courses."

She adds that the institute has been successful in teaching Chinese language and culture to her and other members of the campus and Kalamazoo communities.

"The Confucius Institute instruction has deepened my understanding and appreciation for Chinese culture," Habra says. "Chinese ink brush painting and taichi have become a regular part of my life, and I strive to improve my skills. I also plan to continue the language courses, and I am grateful to all the great instructors I have had so far."