WMU lab uses satellites to solve problems involving critical land and water resources
Dear Friends,

Every day, I witness the tremendous difference Western Michigan University’s quality programs, outstanding faculty and caring staff make in the lives of our students. It is truly heartening to lead a value-added institution of higher learning.

Students come to us to learn, to grow and to succeed.

We respond by helping them shape and achieve their academic goals today to secure their successful personal and professional futures, and to change our world.

Inside this spring edition of the WMU Magazine are stories of individuals who exemplify the value this University imparts—from the freshman and former migrant worker whose long-stalled dream to pursue higher education was realized this academic year to an alumnus living out aspirations that were honed on campus in the 1990s.

On the pages that follow, learn about WMU’s role in altering the direction of LZ Granderson’s life for the better when he was a student. The 1996 alumnus is today an ESPN and CNN journalist, working at the highest levels of his field.

His experience illustrates our mission so well.

And while we are educating students, WMU is improving the world in other important ways as well. The magazine’s cover story is an apt example of those efforts.

Scientists in the University’s Earth Sciences Remote Sensing Lab use data logged by satellites high above the planet to help address environmental problems on the ground in countries across the globe and within our states. The lab is known in the field and its researchers apply their expertise widely. Read about their fascinating and consequential work.

As you consider these and the other stories in this issue, I believe you will be as gratified as I am about WMU’s successes and be reminded of the excellence the University community achieves in every aspect of our mission.

Best regards,

John M. Dunn
President
Features

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WMU again listed among nation’s ‘Best for Vets’ colleges

The University, for the third time, has been designated one of the nation’s best institutions for military veterans pursuing higher education.

Military Times EDGE magazine has placed WMU on its 2013 “Best for Vets” list of colleges and universities.

With a ranking of No. 49 among the 650 schools rated, WMU is the only four-year school in Michigan on the publication’s list of the top colleges in the United States.

This is WMU’s third such ranking by the monthly publication, which is a supplement to the widely distributed Military Times publications—Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times.

Each year, the magazine invites the nation’s colleges and universities to report on their programs, policies and resources for veterans. The top schools, called “Best for Vets,” are then ranked.

The University also learned that it is once again on the list of “military friendly” schools compiled by the publication Military Advanced Education. And during the fall, G.I. Jobs magazine included WMU among its top 15 percent of colleges for vets.

“We are proud of these designations,” says WMU President John M. Dunn. “Our faculty and staff have worked very hard to make our University a veteran-friendly campus.”

The latest designations come on the heels of new services for vets on the WMU campus. U.S. Rep. Fred Upton announced vets would be able to tap an array of new services to help them succeed, thanks to a decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to locate a VetSuccess on Campus program in southwest Michigan.

WMU partnered with Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Kellogg Community College to secure the first such VA program in Michigan.

Board of Trustees welcomes two new governor-appointed members

An Ann Arbor entrepreneur and a Detroit-area businessman and alumnus have been appointed to the WMU Board of Trustees by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder.

The new trustees will serve eight-year terms that begin this year. Each of them replaces a board member whose terms expired at the end of 2012.

New board member Michelle Crumm, CEO and owner of Ann Arbor-based Present Value, replaces Larry Tolbert of Kalamazoo.

She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from Purdue University and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Michigan.

And Ronald “Ron” Hall of Detroit, head of Detroit-area automotive firms Bridgewater Interiors and New Center Stamping and a 1965 WMU alumnus, replaces Dennis Archer of Detroit.

Hall earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from WMU and a Master of Business Administration degree from Wayne State University.

The pair will join six other trustees as part of the eight-person governing body for the University.

“We’re delighted that our new trustees have such extensive business and community engagement credentials,” WMU President John M. Dunn says of the appointments.

“We look forward to their counsel and leadership in the coming years as they bring their experience to bear in moving our University forward.”

Crumm leads Present Value, a firm that provides advice to entrepreneurs on strategies and mission statements as well as business planning and finance.

Hall, in addition to his leadership roles as president and CEO of Bridgewater and chairman and CEO of New Center Stamping, is the president and CEO of Renaissance Capital Alliance, an equipment leasing company, and CEO of Departure Travel Management.
New Bronco head football coach hired from staff of National Football League team

P.J. Fleck, who served as wide receivers coach for NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers this past season, has been named the Bronco's head football coach.

“It's great to be back in the MAC,” Fleck said at a press conference when his appointment was formally announced in December. “I am truly honored and humbled to be the 15th head coach of the Western Michigan University football program.”

WMU Athletic Director Kathy Beauregard said Fleck was the clear choice to be at the helm.

“It was very important our new coach met the needs of our returning football student-athletes, and after meeting with them, it was clear P.J.'s pedigree as a player and coach at the highest levels of football made for what we feel will be a championship combination at WMU,” Beauregard said.

Fleck was a standout wide receiver for Northern Illinois University from 1999 to 2003, signing with San Francisco 49ers as a free agent in 2004. He spent most of that season on the practice squad and was placed on the injured reserve roster in 2005.

The next year, he began his coaching career by serving as a graduate assistant at Ohio State University. He returned to NIU in 2007 as wide receivers coach and took on the added duties of recruiting coordinator there in 2009.

Fleck spent the next two seasons as the wide receivers coach at Rutgers University under Greg Schiano, then followed Schiano to Tampa Bay as the Buccaneers’ receivers coach.

Center will focus on foster youth

The Center for Fostering Success—a new unit that will focus on improving the college access, academic success, graduation rates and career advancement of foster youth and former foster youth—will be established at WMU.

WMU Athletic Director Kathy Beauregard said Fleck was the clear choice to be at the helm.

WMU extends presence in metro Detroit

A collaboration agreement between WMU and Wayne County Community College District will expand the University's presence in southeast Michigan.

In February, WMU President John M. Dunn and WCCCD Chancellor Curtis L. Ivery signed an agreement that will allow WMU to offer advanced classes at WCCCD's University Center in Harper Woods as early as May.

The initial WMU offerings will be courses that lead to a bachelor's degree in university studies as part of a “two-plus-two” arrangement.

The program will see WCCCD students complete their associate degree and then transfer seamlessly to WMU for the final two years of study. The WMU courses will be a combination of online and face-to-face courses.

The agreement also provides WMU with a space to offer classes at WCCCD's Northwest campus in Detroit, as well as a space for advising students enrolled in other WMU online offerings.

The agreement must be approved by the State; the Higher Learning Commission, which is the accrediting body for both schools; and by WMU's faculty. Online courses would then begin in May, and face-to-face instruction would start in September.

Unrau
Thousands of satellites are arrayed around our planet. Though it may not be top of mind for most of us, we rely on these remote devices daily for television signals, phone calls or to learn whether to expect rain or sunshine.

But these earth-orbiting instruments are involved in other important work as they constantly record images of the planet’s surface and log a huge amount of other terrestrial and atmospheric data.

Researchers in WMU’s Earth Sciences Remote Sensing Lab, based in Wood Hall, tap into this satellite-garnered imagery to analyze and help address environmental problems involving critical water and land resources around the world.
“The applications of remote-sensing data are so diverse,” says Dr. Mohamed Sultan, the director and founder of WMU’s remote-sensing lab as well as chairman of the Department of Geosciences. “We have so many ongoing projects here,” he says.

Landslide detection, analysis of potentially harmful algae blooms in large bodies of water and assessment of water resources in arid lands are some of them.

And as the imagery and data satellites provide become more sophisticated, WMU researchers are also looking for new ways to use remote sensing.

One of the lab’s proposed projects, set in Turkey, involves examining archived, pre-earthquake images of terrain in areas that have experienced large temblors.

Sultan says pre-earthquake land deformation and other features common to these areas may provide scientists with a tool that helps predict quakes.

“Internationally renowned

Since Sultan established the lab in 2004, it has attracted funding from NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NATO, the National Science Foundation and other agencies. It also has become internationally known.

One of the lab’s top areas of expertise is in hydrology of regions where water resources are limited. Thus, the facility has many research endeavors in arid and semi-arid parts of the world.

“We have decades of experience in this area. We are getting students from all over the world, paid by their governments, to get the training we offer,” Sultan says. “They go back and they are our tentacles. There is a continuation of collaboration with these scientists.”

WMU researchers, for instance, helped develop the first hydrological models for the Tigris-Euphrates watershed, a vast river system with threads in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.

Using satellite imagery and on-the-ground data, the scientists investigated the impact dams erected in upstream countries had on water quality and volume in downstream nations.

“(Man) has been putting satellites into space for more than 50 years. So we can go back into archival data and get information at the space and time interval of our choice,” Sultan says.

The hydrological models not only examined the past, they provided planners with a way to forecast how future construction might impact the watershed.

“You can say, ‘If we add another dam here, what is that going to do to the...”

Continued on page 6
amount of water flowing downstream? So people can project future scenarios based on these models.

“In these arid areas, how they use their water and the availability of water is a major concern,” Sultan says.

“We’re very proud that, at end of the day, our results have a scientific value and have an application of importance.”

— Dr. Mohamed Sultan

Application of importance
Graduate student Cameron Manche said that this kind of global engagement in environmental issues is part of what lured him to WMU’s geosciences program after earning a bachelor’s degree in environmental sciences and resource planning from the University of Michigan-Flint.

“After receiving acceptance offers from schools such as University of Michigan and Indiana State University, I felt that Western Michigan University surpassed them not only because of my own personal interest, but research interests as well,” Manche says.

He says that working as a research assistant in the remote sensing lab not only provides him with an opportunity to have a hand in great research, “but also gives me a chance to collaborate with a diverse assortment of scientists from around the world, providing me with the opportunity to understand many other global issues.”

Manche is a key player in one of the lab’s latest projects, mapping algal blooms in the Kuwait Bay in order to develop methods that distinguish toxic from non-toxic blooms and ultimately predict their onset.

Funded by a nearly $170,000 grant from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the project is an example of how the lab uses a variety of data gathered by satellites to investigate, diagnose and provide a forecasting tool to address a problem.

Kuwait, on the Persian Gulf between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, relies heavily on its bay as a source of water and seafood.

Dr. Saif Uddin, a researcher with the Kuwait Institute and co-principal investigator on the project, says the algal blooms are primarily affecting the fishing industry.

“But in case of the gulf, they are a menace to desalination activity... Higher algal bloom concentrations clog the pre-filters in desalination plants,” Uddin says.

This research team is led by Sultan and Dr. Ahmad al-Dousari, another scientist with the Kuwait Institute. Sultan has collaborated with al-Dousari many times in the past, including on the Tigris-Euphrates watershed study and Great Lake algae studies.

For the Kuwait project, WMU’s remote sensing lab is working to compile and examine archival image data recorded by satellites including surface water temperature, chlorophyll concentration in the algae, water depth and other variables.

“Right now we are almost done with developing the procedure to extract the chlorophyll images for the bay for the past 10 years or so,” Sultan says.

The researchers are gathering this body of information to determine the factors that seem to trigger an algal bloom.

“This project will be quite successful if, at the end of the day, we have a prediction tool... A lot of stakeholders are interested in this because all of Kuwait is on this bay,” Sultan says.

“We’re very proud that, at end of the day, our results have a scientific value and have an application of importance. That’s why we’re successful in getting a lot of funding from various entities that support this kind of research,” he says.

To learn more about WMU’s Earth Sciences Remote Sensing Lab, visit www.esrs.wmich.edu.
WMU’s birthplace to become alumni center

WMU’s birthplace, East Hall, will be renovated for use as an alumni center and will once again become a central part of campus life, the University announced earlier this academic year.

University officials developed this plan after it became clear that the proposed private development of East Campus was at an official standstill.

“More than a dozen years ago, we had all of our East Campus buildings assessed,” says WMU President John M. Dunn.

“We were told then, we needed to ‘save something, or lose it all.’ We’ve decided we can wait no longer, and it is of paramount importance to our campus and community to save the core of East Hall.”

WMU will borrow $15 million to fund the redevelopment of the core of the East Hall building. The renovation will turn that core into an alumni event center and gathering space that can be a focal point for alumni efforts and information about University history.

The reconstructed WMU Trolley that once carried students up Prospect Hill will be permanently displayed nearby, and the entire area would be convenient for alumni tailgaters.

The three buildings that surround East Hall—West and North halls and the Speech and Hearing Center—will be razed. The space those structures occupy will then be open for green space and parking for the alumni center.

“This has been an extremely difficult decision for all involved,” Dunn says.

“The principals on the WMU staff who have been working through this are alums who spent their collegiate years in those buildings, and they work every day to both honor WMU’s heritage and meet the daily demands of a great University. Their conclusion is that we can and should revitalize East Hall and make that beautiful location part of the WMU experience for every student and alum.”

More than a year ago, WMU announced that after seeking proposals nationwide, it had selected private developer KDC to resurrect the rapidly decaying buildings of the East Campus historic site at no cost to the University.

The developer’s plan was to use state brownfield redevelopment and historic preservation tax credits—which were not available to nonprofit WMU—to renovate East Campus buildings into a boutique hotel, commercial office space and both moderate and premium apartments.

But the anticipated Michigan tax credits were eliminated and replaced with a loan program for community development that would allow only a $10 million repayable investment for what was anticipated to be a $60 million effort.

Without those credits, the renovations would be too costly to allow developers to recoup the costs of renovation.

Prior to inking the development agreement with KDC, the University conducted a feasibility study to determine if there was sufficient private donor interest in East Campus preservation efforts to move ahead on its own with preservation work. That study revealed very little private interest.

While plans for renovating East Hall are not yet complete, the concept is to focus on the building core—about 34,000 square feet of the original building that was completed in 1905 and includes the columned portico facing the community, the lighted cupola and the University’s original administrative and instructional spaces.

Consideration also will be given to keeping up the wing that once housed the training school for future renovation.

The only ongoing use of the buildings is for the Archives and Regional History Collections, now housed in one of the East Hall wings. That unit will move later this year to its new home in the Zhang Legacy Collections Center now being constructed.

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In addition, the University plans to identify and salvage important architectural elements from the buildings that will be razed.
Campus Quick Reads

Athletic & Scholarly

Top five team GPAs
Gymnastics: 3.76
Women’s soccer: 3.66
Cross country: 3.59
Women’s golf: 3.56
Men’s tennis: 3.53

WMU student athletes recorded the highest combined grade point average on record for the University during the fall semester. Athletic teams averaged a 3.19 GPA during the fall semester, with nine teams posting 3.25 or better.

84.2: Percentage of athletes who have a 3.0 GPA or better
144: Number of athletes who earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher
38: Number of athletes who earned a perfect 4.0

ON THE MEDIA

Appearing on campus
Brooke Gladstone, media critic and co-host of NPR’s On the Media, will address “How Media Influences our Perceptions” when she speaks at 7 p.m., April 2 in Knauss Hall, room 2452. The award-winning journalist also is the author of the highly praised graphic novel, “The Influencing Machine: Brooke Gladstone On the Media.” The Library Journal says the 2012 comic book “should be required reading for nearly everybody over age ten, media students, and plain ole citizens, especially.” A reception and book signing follow her talk.

Quotable:

Erin Kaplan @erinkaplan_ received my #WMU undergraduate diploma. so crisp & beautiful. #gobroncos

Humanitarian award

Mark Delorey, director of student financial aid and scholarships, has received the 2012 Distinguished Service and Leadership Award from the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. Delorey was honored for his work on behalf of homeless students and those who have aged out of foster care. Delorey was one of the principals in developing WMU’s Seita Scholars program for former foster care youth. And since 2010, he has collaborated with homeless advocates to provide access to opportunities in higher education to youths who’ve struggled with homelessness.
What happened after graduation?

Each year WMU conducts a survey of graduates. More than 3,200, about 61 percent of those queried, responded to the latest survey. These alumni earned degrees between August 2011 and June 2012.

86 percent: Employed full or part-time, continuing education, self-employed or in a post-graduate internship/fellowship.

Among the top earners*:

- **Accountancy** (bachelor’s and master’s) $47,500
- **Aeronautical Engineering** (bachelor’s) $57,500
- **Applied Economics** (master’s) $72,500
- **Geosciences** (master’s) $85,000
- **Master’s of Business Administration** $62,500
- **Nursing** (bachelor’s) $47,500
- **Occupational Therapy** (master’s) $57,500
- **Physician Assistant** (master’s) $77,500
- **Paper Engineering** (master’s) $67,500
- **Psychology** (master’s) $57,500

*median salary

**Source:** WMU Career and Student Employment Services, 2011-2012 Post-Graduation Activity, Ewa Urban, associate director for assessment and technology; Jasen Ratajczak, data collection assistant. www.wmich.edu/career
Some cringe walking through one of Khalid el-Hakim's nationally touring exhibitions.

The WMU graduate student has seen others weep or become irritated by the racist artifacts among the memorabilia he's collected for more than 20 years and displays as the Black History 101 Mobile Museum.

Assembled, items such as black-faced trinkets, Ku Klux Klan artifacts or a slave bill of sale often evoke visceral reactions.

"Some people are so hurt by it they tell me, 'You should burn that stuff,'" el-Hakim says. But not every item in the more than 5,000-piece collection that has toured libraries, K-12 schools, colleges and universities is offensive as it marks historical moments, movements and individuals in black culture.

And all of it has one central goal: educating.

A longtime teacher in Detroit, el-Hakim is at WMU pursuing a graduate degree in socio-cultural studies in education to "build a stronger academic framework" around the museum by creating a curriculum for K-12 students based on the collection.

Continued on page 12
Some cringe, others weep...
Continued from page 11

“My interaction with professors, teachers currently working in the field and students has given me excellent resources to tap into for ideas, mentorship and guidance through the process,” el-Hakim says.

He feels the museum unveils historical accounts of people and events that are often only marginally addressed in textbooks or popular surveys of U.S. history.

“Through original and rare artifacts, I tell untold stories about the black experience in America... You’ll see harshness and brutality, but you’ll also be reminded of those who stood up to racism,” el-Hakim says.

El-Hakim was first encouraged to begin collecting racist memorabilia in 1991 as a student of Dr. David Pilgrim’s at Ferris State University. Pilgrim is the founder of the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris.

“It struck a chord with me,” says el-Hakim who eventually began looking for artifacts wherever he traveled, scouring yard sales, estate sell offs and antique shops all over Michigan and beyond.

By 1995, he had amassed 500 pieces of not only racist memorabilia, but all kinds of collectibles tied to black culture.

“I was just collecting for myself. It was a private collection,” he says.

What changed that was his experience as one of the black men from around the country who assembled together for the Million Man March on the National Mall in Washington D.C. in 1995. Moved by the event’s call to personal responsibility and social activism, he returned to Detroit and began doing small public displays.

And as el-Hakim later began teaching, he shared some of the material in his classroom.

The enlightenment he experienced as an undergraduate, el-Hakim says, “I saw that in the faces of my students.”

The artifacts helped lift history off the page. For instance, he says that “having a segregation sign in their hands made stories of segregation in the South very, very real.

“When it comes to using primary source material and artifacts, they are excellent points of reference to drive home a point that may otherwise be abstract to a lot of students,” el-Hakim says.

The overall collection is displayed in a variety of subsets: one might focus on racist memorabilia, another on hip hop culture or civil rights or Malcolm X or inventors and scientists.

“Once people walk through the exhibit, they see the value of it,” he says.
El-Hakim in print


Black History 101 tour dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/27</td>
<td>Missouri Western State University St. Joseph, Mo</td>
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The museum recently toured 10 states. Stops included the University of Michigan, Kalamazoo College, Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, Grinnell College in Iowa.

“My classroom is everywhere now,” el-Hakim says. “I’ve outgrown my four walls.”

El-Hakim sits atop his Hip Hop Mobile Museum, a trailer containing memorabilia from the genre of music and cultural movement.
Retired prof’s zany book pokes fun at the “therapeutic industrial complex”

Retired WMU social work professor Dr. Kenneth E. Reid authored many serious academic papers and two books related to the therapeutic profession during his decades-long career.

Over those years, he also collected humorous stories, puns and jokes about what he calls the “psychotherapeutic industrial complex.”

With his latest book, “How Many Therapists Does it Take?,” Reid brings to readers a much lighter view on his longtime line of work.

In Print
WMU authors, including faculty members, emeriti and alumni, produce many works of nonfiction and fiction each year.

Terrorism, Ticking Time-Bombs and Torture: A Philosophical Analysis
By Fritz Allhoff (University of Chicago Press, 2012)

There’s agreement among many philosophers that torture is wrong under any circumstances, but a WMU philosophy professor questions that basic premise in this newly published book. “Terrorism, Ticking Time Bombs and Torture: A Philosophical Analysis” demonstrates the weakness of the case against torture under any circumstances. While allowing that torture constitutes a moral wrong, Fritz Allhoff argues that, in exceptional cases, it represents the lesser of two evils.

Allhoff is an associate professor of philosophy at WMU.

Flying Carpets
By Hedy Habra (March Street Press, 2012)

Love, loss, alternate worlds, the yearning for origin and the need to reinvent oneself through art permeate the pages in this collection of 21 short stories. Together, they recreate glimpses of a bygone era when Hedy Habra lived in Egypt and Lebanon. The stories cover lost, partially forgotten and even imaginary spaces, progressing from the concrete to the universal with a touch of magic realism.

Throughout the book, storytelling and fortunetelling evoke a mythical past that is lost and yet accessible.

Habra is a part-time instructor who has been teaching Spanish at WMU since 1987.

Agent Orange: History, Science and the Politics of Uncertainty
By Edwin A. Martini (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012)

Taking on what one former U.S. ambassador called “the last ghost of the Vietnam War,” this book examines the far-reaching impact of Agent Orange, the most infamous of the dioxin-contaminated herbicides used by American forces in Southeast Asia. Edwin A. Martini’s aim is not simply to reconstruct the history of the “chemical war,” but to investigate the ongoing controversy over the short- and long-term effects of weaponized defoliants on the environment of Vietnam, on the civilian population, and on the troops who fought on both sides.

Martini is an associate dean in WMU’s College of Arts and Sciences and an associate professor of history.
Subtitled “The Wit and Wisdom of Psychotherapy,” it’s almost 180 pages of quips, witticisms and jokes of all kinds.

“For me they typically lighten the atmosphere, tickle the funny bone, help emphasize a point and ridicule the self-important,” Reid writes in a foreword to readers.

In this preamble, Reid explains why he decided to compile these psychotherapy jokes into a volume and also addresses whether this brand of humor should be off limits.

“In spite of my affection for therapist jokes, certain humor, over the years, admittedly made me squirm,” Reid writes.

“These were the rampant politically incorrect jokes that portrayed clients as excessively silly or ridiculous in their struggles with mind-challenging situations. Did this humor, I wondered, minimize the seriousness of emotional problems or contribute to the embarrassing stigma of mental health—the stigma that psychotherapists, such as myself, seek to ease.”

But Reid writes that the main characters in this humor, “bear little resemblance to actual individuals. Rather, these therapist jokes are about parodies, stereotypes and caricatures of what we imagine therapists, patients, hospitals and psychotherapy to be... To laugh at ourselves and world around us is truly a gift. It is in this spirit that this volume was compiled.”

Reid is a WMU professor emeritus of social work. He retired in 2004 after 37 years at the University.
Long-running WMU Sculpture Tour adds beauty, intrigue to campus

The beauty and sophistication of the University’s campus is not limited to buildings and landscaping.

Outdoor art pieces adorn campus as part of the WMU Sculpture Tour. Almost continuously since the 1992-93 academic year, the tour has showcased the work of more than 100 U.S. artists as well as artists from outside the country.

Their eye-catching metal, wood, stone or mixed media sculptures have ornamented and added intrigue to the grounds for more than two decades.

A committee determines which sculptures will be invited to campus. Most of these works remain at WMU for two to three years at a time, while others are created especially for the University.

Students sometimes have had a hand in the latter of these, working alongside recognized artists to produce sculpture.

This past year, five sculptures were added to the tour, including a piece that is the collaborative work of a visiting artist from Chicago and several WMU art majors.

Artist Nicole Beck created a site-specific sculpture with students over several days. Students helped Beck form the structure and also contributed to the artistry of the piece.

Titled “reCYCLE-reUSE-reVIVE!,” it’s a colorful addition to the sculpture garden outside the Richmond Center for Visual Arts.

This environmentally focused art piece about environmental consciousness is made largely of boards that in a former life cordoned off a campus construction project. It also is covered with tiles fashioned by students in a variety of ways to represent the theme.

Molly Cipielewski, a sophomore majoring in art and in English, was one of several students who sculpted a tile for “reCYCLE-reUSE-reVIVE!”
“This is a great opportunity for me,” Cipielewski says. “Beck is kind of doing all of the things I want to do as an artist,” including using recycled elements in her work.

Beck’s sculpture depicts the letters “r” and “e”—the “re” of the work’s title.

“It’s also a symbol for continuum, which is a metaphor for recycling,” says Beck, who is accustomed to teaming up with students on art projects in Chicago.

Beck is no stranger to WMU’s sculpture tour. One of her sculptures appeared in the tour about 10 years ago.

“Your sculpture tour program is an excellent one and well worth the effort for all involved. I really believe in collaborative works of this nature and have truly appreciated the entire experience,” she says. ■
Perry Truitt, BS ’95, MBA ’02, has been named “corporate black belt, Lean Sigma,” for the Continuous Improvement Program Office, for Perrigo Co. in Allegan, MI.

Kenneth C. Austin, BS ’97, has joined the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation’s investment office in Troy, MI, as an investment manager.

Dane Sexton, BS ’98, is co-owner of a new brew pub, Our Brewing Company, in Holland, MI.

Rebecca M. Turner, BS ’98, has been named a top lawyer for 2013 by DBusiness magazine. She practices franchise law for Maddin, Hauser, Wartell, Roth & Holler PC in Southfield, MI.

Penelope J. Wood, BS ’98, MA ’01, is a certified public accountant, has founded Green Dot Accounting LLC, a public accounting firm in Kalamazoo.

Meggan McMurtie, BS ’01, MA ’08, was named the 2012 Michigan Charter School Teacher of the Year by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies. She is a first-grade teacher at Forest Academy in Comstock Township, MI.

Richland, MI

Matt Thompson, BS ’01, is the co-owner of Cardinal Deli in Saginaw, MI.

Ryan T. Cook, BS ’02, MSA ’04, has joined Brink, Key & Chilcote PC as a tax manager. The certified public accounting firm is based in Portage, MI.

Jason Thompson, BS ’02, is the co-owner of Cardinal Deli in Saginaw, MI.

2003 - 2012

Tara (Bennett) McMillin, BS ’05, has been hired by Perrigo Co. in Allegan, MI, as a pharmacovigilance specialist for the quality assurance team.

Conny Raaymakers, MA ’06, has been appointed by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Developmental Disabilities. Raaymakers is a behavioral psychologist in the Grand Rapids-based private practice and a positive behavior support consultant for Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Kevin Tenant, BS ’08, has joined Huntington Bank’s West Michigan Business Banking Treasury Management sales team.

Misty Miller, MSM ’09, a physician assistant, has joined the new hospitalist team at Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo.

Greg Jennings, BA ’10, pro football player and founder of the Greg Jennings Foundation, has recently provided funding to six nonprofit organizations in Kalamazoo and three in Wisconsin to benefit high-quality after-school programs. The foundation is a Kalamazoo-based private family foundation “organized to make impactful grants within the Michigan and Wisconsin communities that focus on youth education.”

Tyler Bailey, BA ’11, is a co-founder of HiredStarts.com, a Web-based social network designed to connect its members with Michigan companies that are hiring.

Jeremy Bainbridge, BS ’11, has been appointed by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Board of Respiratory Care. He is a manager of cardiopulmonary services for Spectrum Health United/Kentse Hospitals.

Bonnie Wallace, MSM ’12, a physician assistant, has joined Bronson Cardiothoracic Surgery in Kalamazoo.

1962 - 2002

Frederick T. Petroskey, BA ’62, recently exhibited his paintings at Gallery 22, in Suttons Bay, MI.

Bob Tucker, BBA ’64, MBA ’67, has been certified as a South Carolina Circuit Court mediator. He also is a mediator certified by the Florida Supreme Court. The civil trial lawyer also has been selected for inclusion in the 2013 edition of “The Best Lawyers in America.”

Jim Bultman, MA ’66, EdD ’71, president of Hope College, received a West Michigan Dutch-American Leadership Award during its Heritage Day celebration in November.

Donald L. Scott, MA ’69, recently received the American Choral Directors Maynard Klein Award for distinguished service to choral music in Michigan. He is retired from teaching at Grand Rapids Christian High School.

Wade W. Nitz, BBA ’70, MBA ’92, has retired as chief financial officer of Perinchief Healthcare System in Hastings, MI.

Pennock Healthcare System in Hastings, MI.

Matthew M. (Matt) Norcross, BS ’81, MBA ’87, is a partner in the Grand Rapids office of Warner Norcross & Judd LLP, as senior counsel.

Lyla M. Spelbring, BS ’47, Nov. 18, 2012, in Asheville, NC

Paul E. Turner, BS ’68, Oct. 18, 2012, in Queensbury, NY

Bonnie Wallace, BS ’65, Oct. 13, 2012, in Waterford, CT

David A. Howell, BBA ’56, Sept. 28, 2012, in Southport, CT

John Monte, BS ’56, Oct. 2, 2012, in Shelby Township, MI

Patricia M. (Kelby) Montgomery, BS ’56, Nov. 25, 2012, in Dearborn, MI

Edna E. (Gurr) Claborn, BBA ’57, MA ’58, Sept. 21, 2012, in Hillsdale, MI

Frank A. Goodrich, BBA ’57, Nov. 11, 2012, in Jackson, MI


Thomas F. Pfeifle, BBA ’57, Oct. 9, 2012, in Wilmington, DE

Barbara A. (Lyke) Toupin, BBA ’57, MA ’59, Nov. 6, 2012, in Corning, NY

Doris M. Erickson, BS ’58, Oct. 26, 2012, in Kalamazoo


Valda O. (Kerns) Goodrich, BS ’59, Oct. 10, 2012, in Jackson, MI


Thomas J. Patterson, BS ’59, MA ’62, Dec. 10, 2012

Marion W. Rutherford, BBA ’59, Dec. 12, 2012, in Galesburg, MI

Neil D. Wilkin, BA ’59, Nov. 27, 2012, in Washington, DC

James H. Beck, BBA ’60, July 16, 2012, in Ann Arbor, MI

John E. Heglund, BS ’60, Nov. 2, 2012, in Irons, MI

Duane S. Kuiper, BS ’60, Oct. 17, 2012, in Otsego, MI

James L. Conrad, BS ’61, Dec. 4, 2012, in Houston, TX

Ann M. (VandenBerg) Decker, BA ’61, Nov. 17, 2012, in Houston, TX

Shelley J. (Bauer) Brown, BS ’62, MA ’74, Nov. 4, 2012, in Labele, FL

Harold P. Chase, BS ’62, Oct. 21, 2012, in Battle Creek, MI

Alfred H. Kaste, BS ’62, Sept. 21, 2012, in Liburn, GA

George F. Downer, MA ’63, Oct. 25, 2012, in Fullerton, CA

David A. Peterson, MA ’64, Oct. 4, 2012, in Los Angeles, CA

Diane L. Williamson, BS ’64, June 29, 2012, in Green Valley, AZ

James F. Beznoska, BS ’65, Oct. 6, 2012, in Constock Township, MI

Linda S. (Greve) Hambouz, BA ’65, MA ’68, Oct. 18, 2012, in South Bend, IN

Michael D. Schrock, BS ’65, Oct. 18, 2012, in Queensbury, NY

Nicholas F. Boys, BA ’66, MA ’67, Sept. 21, 2012, in Sagentville, ME

Sue A. (Dancer) Brevedield, BS ’66, Oct. 31, 2012, in Jenison, MI

Margaret (Loney) Herman, BS ’66, Oct. 25, 2012, in Pontiac, MI

Judy E. (Kempe) Durren, BA ’67, Dec. 13, 2012, in Detroit, MI
WMU professor opines about gun-control debate

Mass shootings and other highly publicized incidents involving gun violence have brought the long-standing debate on gun control to the fore again in American politics.

Bans on assault rifles and large-capacity magazines have been proposed to curb gun-related violence, but neither would do much to stem shootings overall, opines Dr. Charles Crawford, a WMU sociology professor who has studied gun control issues and whose three degrees are in criminology.

“I know people are obviously very emotional and want to do something, and it’s easy to blame an object—that if we just didn’t have this object, that could not have happened,” Crawford says.

“But we know from research that if we start to remove certain weapons, people do have a lethal substitute. The sad part about it is people can simply choose the next more lethal option.”

That might mean using a hunting rifle instead of an assault rifle or building a bomb, Crawford says. And there are so many assault rifles and extended clips out there now, someone could just buy them used.

“The vast majority of gun crimes don’t involve assault weapons,” Crawford adds. “If we take a look at mass shootings, taking very specific, extreme cases, most did not involve assault weapons. Some did, but you’re still talking about handguns for the most part.”

The best way to curb shootings at schools or other public places is through “hardening the target,” Crawford says.

Improved surveillance through outdoor video cameras and the like would go a long way toward reducing the threat and would be less expensive than hiring armed guards or training teachers and principals to carry guns, Crawford says.

“When you take a look at the mass murders that were stopped, where people were planning it or about to do it and they were prevented, what it came down to is those people all told others what they were going to do,” Crawford says. “It was a friend or another kid who told someone and that’s what stopped it. And it was almost always girls.”

Harold J. Frearson, BS ’67, Nov. 24, 2012, in Grand Haven, MI
Gary W. Gomoll, BBA ’67, Oct. 19, 2012, in Detroit, MI
James H. Hodges, BS ’67, Nov. 19, 2012, in Battle Creek, MI
Howard R. Nahikian, BBA ’67, Oct. 18, 2012, in Coloma, MI
Jeffrey B. Welking, BS ’67, Nov. 28, 2012, in Whispering Pines, NC
Wayne A. Brigman, BBA ’68, Oct. 17, 2012, in Portage, MI
Glen A. Ozinga, MA ’68, Jan. 21, 2012, in Grand Rapids, MI
Michael D. Concannon, BS ’69, Nov. 3, 2012, in Three Rivers, MI
Helen D. Daniels, MLS ’69, Nov. 1, 2012, in Columbus, OH
Joann (Womble) Dehring, BA ’69, MA ’84, Dec. 7, 2012, in Ocala, FL
Eugene B. Moore, BA ’69, MSW ’72, Dec. 14, 2012, in Paw Paw, MI
Noreen J. (Wojan) Moore, BA ’69, Dec. 10, 2012, in Pellston, MI
Alice (Tanner) Foote, MA ’70, Sept. 24, 2012, in Urbana, IL
Barbara (Knowles) Winfrey, BS ’70, MA ’74, March 26, 2012, in Evergreen, CO
Marion L. Bennett, MLS ’71, Nov. 7, 2012, in Marshall, MI
Stuart E. Bentz, MA ’71, Nov. 28, 2012, in Kalamazoo
Rita M. Frankiewicz, BA ’71, Oct. 10, 2012, in Port Charlotte, FL
Marjorie Richardson, BA ’71, Oct. 5, 2012, in Walkerville, MI
Burrell Berry, BBA ’72, MBA ’73, Nov. 19, 2012, in Grand Rapids, MI
Ernest J. Knapp, BS ’72, Sept. 28, 2012, in Three Rivers, MI
WMU alumnus is one of Michigan’s top legislative officials

Like many fathers, Michigan House Speaker Jase Bolger armed his son with advice before the young man went off to college for the first time this past fall.

Nick Bolger told his dad he planned to study business and political science at Miami University in Ohio.

The elder Bolger responded, “Don’t worry about specifics yet. Use college to explore. Try different things. See what you want to do. There are no expectations.”

Those words of fatherly counsel are ones Bolger admittedly only partially followed when he was a student at WMU—and to good result.

An aspiring entrepreneur, Bolger was attracted to the University for its size and because he wanted to study business.

He pursued a business degree as planned, but doing some exploring of his own, also took classes in political science.

“I enjoyed those so much that I took enough electives in political science to get a double major,” Bolger says. “I wanted to start my own business and as I took more political science classes, I thought I wanted to get involved in politics one day.”

He did both in the years following his 1994 graduation from WMU.

After spending a few years in local office, Bolger rose to become one of the state’s top elected officials as House speaker in Michigan’s sometimes rough-and-tumble political arena.

The 42-year-old is also president of a small Kalamazoo-area firm he founded in 1996 with a few others. Summit Credit Services Inc., which has grown from employing three people to a staff of 20, updates data records for corporations.

As this business developed, it was concern for his children, Nick and Megan, that turned Bolger’s attention to state office. He already had two terms as a commissioner on the Calhoun County board under his belt.

OBITUARIES

Charles E. Roy, BS ’72, MA ’78, Oct. 17, 2012, in Clearwater, FL
Gerald C. Proctor, MA ’73, Oct. 22, 2012, in Norton Shores, MI
James K. Schlosser, BBA ’73, Sept. 30, 2012, in Manistee, MI
Susan B. Warner, BS ’73, Oct. 15, 2012, in Lansing, MI
Robert J. Dalrymple, BBA ’74, Nov. 22, 2012, in Springfield, IL
Susan Ford Pritchard, BA ’74, MA ’82, Oct. 10, 2012, in Pittsburgh, PA
Herbert D. Ridings, BSM ’75, MA ’82, Oct. 5, 2012, in Lexington, KY
Pamela S. Berryman, MA ’76, EdD ’02, Sept. 19, 2012, in Kalamazoo
Stephen T. Herman, BS ’76, Sept. 17, 2012, in Kalamazoo
Helen M. (Hill) Mann, BA ’76, MLS ’81, MA ’86, Nov. 23, 2012, in Paw Paw, MI
Bessie J. Saylor, BS ’76, Dec. 12, 2012, in Gobles, MI
Scott Frew, BBA ’77, Oct. 8, 2012, in Kalamazoo
Robert D. Gray, MA ’77, Nov. 27, 2012, in Albion, MI
Vince A. DeLange, BBA ’78, Oct. 3, 2012, in Mattawan, MI
John K. Holdsworth, MA ’78, Sept. 29, 2012, in Melbourne, Australia
Paula L. (Schmatz) Lyons, BS ’78, MA ’06, Oct. 22, 2012, in Traverse City, MI
Raymond C. Parrish, BBA ’78, Oct. 25, 2012, in Peru, IN
Kathy A. Wicht, BS ’78, Sept. 19, 2012, in Fountain Hills, AZ
Patricia M. Nadelin, BS ’79, Nov. 16, 2012, in Paw Paw, MI
Robert J. Bixby, MSW ’80, Oct. 26, 2012, in Greensboro, NC
Robert J. Bixby
PM15

In his office in Michigan's Capitol building, House Speaker Jase Bolger discusses his work in the state Legislature.
“I looked at how many kids were leaving the state of Michigan, especially how many college graduates were leaving Michigan, because they didn’t have opportunities here,” Bolger says.

And he wanted a hands-on role in helping to orchestrate the state’s turnaround.

Bolger first won voter support for a state House seat in 2008 to serve the 63rd District, which includes parts of Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties.

He won re-election to the House in 2010 and again this past fall. Both times, his peers elected him to lead the chamber as speaker.

Bolger says he stepped into this arena to help solve the state’s fiscal troubles, whether decisions make him popular or not. And some of them haven’t, particularly with regard to public education and public employee unions.

But Bolger says, “For too long people in elected office just sought to get popular making promises today that they knew couldn’t be kept for the long-term.

“Whether that was government employee compensation structures or government benefits, they knew that they were building a system that was not sustainable,” he says.

Creating a better environment for job growth and improving Michigan’s economic outlook have been chief preoccupations for state leaders.

During his first term as speaker, Bolger says, “We made difficult but necessary decisions, pressed the reset button. The goal was to face reality to responsibly balance the budget without gimmicks and then move forward from there.”

Among other moves, K-12 school system funding was curtailed and the Legislature passed a package of bills reforming teacher tenure.

Those, Bolger concedes, have been “some of the most contentious or difficult decisions.” But none of those legislative actions, he says, were intended “to put any negative focus on teaching.”

“The budgetary decisions we’ve made have been about facing reality and realigning state government. The focus on tenure is about making school more effective,” he says.

And at the tail end of the last session, so-called “right-to-work” legislation threw the Legislature into controversy again. This law prohibits unions from collecting mandatory dues from employees as part of a union’s contract. Bolger supported the legislation, calling it a workers’ rights issue.

After being elected speaker again in January, Bolger acknowledged the controversies and successes of the previous session, but implored his colleagues to keep looking ahead.

“Thanks in part to our efforts, but mainly thanks to the grit and determination of the hard working men and women in Michigan, our state is finally turning the corner toward prosperity,” he said.

“More and more Michiganders now agree Michigan’s brightest days are ahead of us...We must continue to make Michigan a better place to provide a job, so that our workers can grow their careers right here.”

Other WMU alumni serving in the Michigan Legislature

Sen. Virgil Smith, District 4
Rep. Anthony Forlini, District 24
Rep. Thomas Hooker, District 77
Rep. Matt Lori, District 59
Rep. Sean McCann, District 60
Rep. Michael McCready, District 40
Rep. Amanda Price, District 89
Rep. Al Pscholka, District 79

Faculty

Joe R. Chapel, associate professor emeritus of teaching, learning and leadership, Dec. 1, 2012, in Rockford, MI.
Paul E. Czuchna, assistant professor emeritus of speech pathology and audiology, Oct. 12, 2012, in Boise, ID.
Don W. Nantz, professor emeritus of mechanical engineering, Dec. 18, 2012, in Grand Rapids, MI.

Richard B. Valley, professor emeritus of paper and printing science and engineering, Nov. 12, 2012, in Portage, MI.
William “Bill” R. Welke, professor emeritus of accountancy, Nov. 16, 2012, in Shawnee, KS.
After some setbacks, 21-year-old Yadira Miron Aguilar was beginning to question her chances of making it to college and beyond her hardscrabble livelihood harvesting crops as a farm worker in rural Florida and Michigan. She had graduated from high school at 17, thinking she was college bound, but could not gather the financing to make it affordable after two scholarships fell through.

Miron Aguilar later completed culinary arts training in a vocational program, but could not progress, as advanced schooling was too costly. So, this past fall, she was in a little shock attending her first class at WMU as a college freshman. “I thought it was a dream,” she says. “My life has completely changed.”

German Diaz-Valdez also thought he’d have to defer college aspirations when his father, his family’s primary breadwinner, suffered a nearly fatal head injury at work last year. Watching his dad, a former farm worker who had successfully transitioned to the construction trade, fight for his life, Diaz-Valdez thought to himself, “I’m going to have to give up my college dreams and start working.” Intent on his family’s crisis, “I thought all this college stuff wouldn’t be possible,” he says. He was wrong.

In spite of circumstances that seemingly put higher education out of reach, Miron Aguilar and Diaz-Valdez did make it to college this academic year, thanks to the new WMU-College Assistance Migrant Program.
The Office of Migrant Education in the U.S. Department of Education has awarded the University a $2 million CAMP grant to support first-year undergraduate students who are agricultural workers or the children of such workers.

The Division of Multicultural Affairs received almost $408,000 for the 2012-13 school year and expects the Office of Migrant Education to renew the grant for another four years for a total of $2,075,735.

There are 14 students in the inaugural class of WMU-CAMP. But after this academic year, the University will enroll about 40 new students annually.

The program provides academic guidance, counseling, social and supportive services to assist students during their first year as well as assist in the transition into a college setting. WMU-CAMP also provides some financial assistance to offset their unmet needs.

“It’s really getting them acclimated into the University and informing students how to access other available resources on campus,” says Diana Hernández, director of the Division of Multicultural Affairs and principal investigator for the grant.

A 2010 Michigan Civil Rights Commission report characterized the children of farm workers “as the most educationally disadvantaged children in the United States.”

WMU-CAMP is one measure to address the disparity.

“It’s a program that we know is important, especially because the University is located in the heart of the agricultural industry here in southwest Michigan,” Hernández says.

“We are one of the top 10 areas for agricultural workers in the United States. There are a lot of people who travel to Michigan for agricultural work,” she adds.

But it’s the transient nature of the livelihood that contributes to the low educational levels in migrant communities.

That 2010 state report asserts children of migrant and seasonal agricultural workers “face many obstacles that prevent them from reaching educational success, from the migratory lifestyle itself, which leads to discontinuity in the educational process, to poor health conditions and the great weight of poverty.”

“It’s an invisible community,” Miron Aguilar says, in which families struggle with making ends meet in isolation in migrant camps outside the mainstream.

Still, she says the experience growing up in such close-knit communities, and then working as an agricultural worker herself, built in her character, maturity and a drive to achieve.

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“My goal has been to finish college and move up in life and not just for me, but for my parents. I don’t want to see them in 10 years still working in the fields.”

She’s at WMU as part of a path to a better living, but also sees higher education as a way of positioning herself to help others living at the margins and envisions a career in a helping profession.

“It motivates me every day to continue to work hard in school because I’ve been through a lot,” Miron Aguilar says, adding “I’m really proud of who I am and where I came from.”

‘Nothing I can’t achieve’
Diaz-Valdez, a biomedical sciences and Spanish major who wants to study medicine, also regards his education as having implications beyond himself.

“I want to be a role model for my siblings, and not just them, but for my community,” he says.

With a semester and a half now completed, Diaz-Valdez says he’s not the same person he was before starting college just months ago.

A shy guy in high school, at WMU he’s been involved with student groups and activism, which included a trip to the state’s capital and speaking at a Kalamazoo area high school during Hispanic Heritage month.

“I’ve never been that involved, but college has changed me a lot,” he says.

Still, the freshman admits feeling distressed at times thinking about his family an hour away from Kalamazoo in Kent City, Mich., where his father is rehabilitating.

What keeps him grounded is remembering that his parents want him in college.

“I know it’s going to be a long ride and a lot of studying. But it’s nothing that I can’t achieve,” Diaz-Valdez says.

Harvesting Dreams

Every season they follow the harvest
No matter the distance, they go the farthest
Trying to reach their hopes and dreams
It’s never as easy as it seems
From coast to coast they reach for stars
But the only souvenirs they carry are their scars
From California to the Midwest
Working to give their families the best
Good education and a nice new home
Never forgetting where they came from
A land of beauty and culture they left behind
Hoping success is what they would find
Hoping, one day, all the hard work will be redeemed
Then they will realize they’ve been Harvesting Dreams

Written and illustrated by: Yadira Miron Aguilar
Virtual science labs created at WMU unlock student learning on campus and beyond

A team of engineering professors has won a $195,000 National Science Foundation grant to create new and improve upon existing “virtual” labs that have been tested with some materials science classes in WMU’s College of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

The labs are computer simulations, sometimes with video footage, that replicate the tools and materials of a physical laboratory.

The developers’ first virtual lab was piloted in connection with a sophomore-level materials science course in 2009, funded by a $77,000 Hewlett-Packard innovative teaching grant. Hewlett-Packard granted $150,000 a few years later to create more labs.

The recent infusion of NSF funding will allow the project to expand.

Virtual labs may be used with students for several reasons, including when a “real” lab would be expensive or time consuming to run or poses potential safety hazards because of the material and equipment involved.

Virtual labs also offer an additional way to build a skill that students will eventually perform in a physical lab, says Dr. Pnina Ari-Gur, professor of mechanical and aeronautical engineering and principal investigator on all three grants.

In all cases, these virtual educational spaces extend the learning experience.

“Simulation is an acceptable mode of training for so many fields,” Ari-Gur says.

“This age group has grown up with computer games and applications. To have it resonate with them, it’s not a big surprise,” she says.

Developers polled students about their experiences. One student said, “I now have a better understanding of the materials compared with students who did not have the lab.”

Another student remarked that, “the strength of the lab is the visuals. The ability to actually see the effects of each lab helps learning.”

One of these computer-based labs teaches about the properties and characteristics of metals. Students learn how to properly measure hardness using computer-simulated tools.

In a virtual x-ray diffraction lab, students learn how to determine the crystallographic structure of a variety of materials. An actual x-ray diffraction lab not only requires expensive instruments, but, has safety risks due to the low levels of radiation involved.

In addition to creating more labs like these, WMU developers also hope to make them available to other colleges and K-12 schools in the United States and abroad. Schools currently collaborating with WMU as test sites are Muskegon Community College, Louisiana State University and in Brazil, the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Maranhão.

Muskegon Community College instructor Jeff Johnston has used the hardness-testing lab with his metallurgy and industrial materials students. He noticed they grasped concepts more quickly in the real laboratory after first using the virtual one.

“When I didn’t have this virtual lab, students would go out there and ask question upon question, which is fine. But it told me they didn’t understand what they were doing,” Johnston says, noting that the concepts are first introduced to students through lecture and their textbook.

After using this WMU virtual lab, his students asked more sophisticated questions.

“It’s like I’m dealing with someone who has worked with the equipment for a long time,” he says.

Ari-Gur says the plan is to disseminate these virtual labs as widely as possible, including to schools in developing nations.

Others working with Ari-Gur on this project from the engineering college are Dr. Pavel Ikonomov, Dr. Roman Rabiej and Peter Thannhauser. Dr. Daniel Litynski, WMU vice president for research, and Dr. Renée Schwartz, associate professor of biological sciences, also are team members.
ESPN, CNN journalist LZ Granderson: ‘I loved my time at Western’

An award-winning journalist, Granderson writes a weekly column for CNN online and is a frequent on-air pundit for the news network. He also is a longtime sports journalist, serving as senior writer for ESPN The Magazine and ESPN.com.

LZ Granderson has one of those gripping graduation stories, a sort of double rite of passage in which he becomes a first-time dad and a college grad on the same day.

Studying for finals at the hospital, holding his then-wife’s hand through the overnight hours of a long labor, crossing the Miller Auditorium stage after a few winks of sleep before rushing back to his spouse and newborn son—it’s the stuff of great stories.

But there also is the compelling account of how Granderson made it to college—or nearly didn’t—before he launched a journalism career that today has him reporting for ESPN and regularly appearing on CNN.

In 1990, Granderson says a WMU admissions officer’s visit to his Detroit home “literally saved my life.

“She was the only academic counselor to come to my house. And I was a wreck. I had no plans” for what to do after high school, he says during an interview in Grand Rapids, Mich., where he shares a home with his son, partner and mom. It’s also the setting for many of his live appearances on CNN.

In addition to working full time for ESPN, the 41-year-old is one of CNN.com’s most popular columnists. It was the popularity of his once-occasional pieces for CNN online that prompted its news executives to offer him a job as a regular contributor.

He posts a weekly column and frequently appears on air as a pundit. Politics, fatherhood, guns, the value of date night, the pop diva Pink—you can’t pigeonhole his opinion making.

As a sports reporter and analyst for ESPN, he covers news about the NBA, NFL and other sports. Viewers may have seen his coverage of Wimbledon last summer.

But when that WMU counselor met Granderson years ago, he wasn’t on a path toward such career success.

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Recognizing potential

Growing up, Granderson describes himself as “intellectually curious,” a gifted wordsmith, voracious reader and a nerd about sporting news.

But he admits that a too-cool-for-school attitude meant his grades were in the tank at Detroit college-prep high school Cass Tech. And he dabbled in marijuana and alcohol use.

At home, no one pushed the importance of excelling academically. And at times he got the opposite message.

“My stepfather was abusive and functionally illiterate. There was a lot of resentment that I was naturally gifted, which brought me a lot of pain. I remember literally getting beaten once because I was reading out loud. He told me to read to myself,” Granderson recalls.

While he might not have had someone at home pushing for his academic achievement, a WMU counselor saw potential in him.

“Essentially she was looking at my academic career and then looking at my test scores and saying, ‘These grades don’t match up with these test scores. What’s going on?’ I just told her, ‘I goofed up,’” Granderson remembers.

“She said, ‘If we let you into this school on probation status, do you think you can handle it?’ And, I handled it,” he says.

It was one of several brushes Granderson says he’s had with “angels,” people who recognized a talent and gave him a chance to run with it.

It seems that going off to college was just what he needed

“I loved my time at Western... That’s when I got more comfortable in my own skin,” Granderson says. “It was a time in which I was my most creative.”

He performed in plays, in the dance department and led a garage band. He wrote for the student paper, the Western Herald, and he hosted a show called the “Book Worm” on the University’s student-run radio station, WIDR.

Dr. Von Washington, professor emeritus of theatre, says he remembers a young man who was intelligent and anxious to learn, “which is very, very important for a good actor.”

“He was equally willing to be directed and he was very well directed himself. He came prepared and he was thorough in his work.”

Granderson says that no one at WMU was more important to his development than Washington, who cast him in numerous lead roles and whose mentoring went beyond the stage.
“He knew the industry that I was flirting with. It was a natural bond. He really pushed me as far as my ability as an actor and he pushed me as a man,” Granderson says.

And though he enjoyed acting—and actually took breaks from college for roles in some Hollywood films—the career Granderson ultimately decided to pursue was in news. He earned a degree in interpersonal communication from WMU with a minor in journalism in 1996.

Following graduation, he worked at The Grand Rapids Press for several years and then was recruited by the Atlanta Journal Constitution to cover home design during a period when home-improvement reality TV was taking off in a big way.

“And I didn’t even have a house,” Granderson says. “It was another situation where an editor who hired me said, ‘I just have faith you can figure it out and hit the ground running.’ I totally poured myself into learning as much about home design as fast as I could.”

The job also was a foot in the door at a big newspaper, and he saw in it a chance to move to sports reporting, the beat he really wanted to cover.

In fact, the Journal Constitution later asked Granderson to become the lead writer for a special entertainment section and he pitched the idea that sporting events also were entertainment. So sports features were added to the mix. He wrote about teams, personalities and quirky facts about players.

“ESPN came in and saw what I was doing, loved it, and asked if I could do it for them. It was perfect because I started writing those types of pieces because I was a huge fan of ESPN The Magazine and that was the kind of stuff they were doing,” Granderson says.

His subsequent work with ESPN has carried him onto the biggest stages in professional sports, covering some of its biggest names.

Granderson will allow that he’s had “a very, very charmed journalism life” and that the key was having people who believed in him.

“What’s been most beneficial to my career was being blessed with those angels in my life who allowed me to go out and run. And when I tripped and fell, they didn’t say, ‘See.’ They said, ‘Get up and keep running.’ They said, ‘Go for it,’” he says.

“I’ve been really, really blessed to have that.”

Granderson is a frequent on-air pundit for CNN.
Lee Honors College

Climate change focus of lecture series

A series of free public talks on climate change sponsored by the Lee Honors College continues with its raft of informative speakers through March and April.

The 2013 Lyceum Lecture Series, “Climate Change: Scientific, Socioeconomic and Policy Perspectives” began in January. The multidisciplinary talks are held from noon to 1 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Lee Honors College lounge. Those attending are welcome to bring a brown bag lunch.

Find the list of speakers at www.wmich.edu/honors.

Graduate College

College names inaugural faculty fellows

Drs. Jon R. Adams and Louann Bierlein Palmer, two veteran professors, have been named the Graduate College’s first faculty fellows. This new initiative is intended to provide an opportunity for faculty members to develop as leaders on campus while making significant contributions to graduate education.

Both Adams and Bierlein Palmer serve on WMU’s Graduate Studies Council and have helped coordinate graduate education in their respective units.

They will be extending their work in graduate education by helping the Graduate College with a number of new initiatives this year.

College of Fine Arts

Two receive college’s teaching award

Two faculty members have been honored with the College of Fine Arts Dean’s Teaching Award, recognizing them as “learner-centered, award-winning faculty artists.”

Nichole Maury, associate professor of art, and Dr. David Montgomery, a master faculty specialist in the School of Music and director of the Bronco Marching Band, were nominated by students and participated in a teaching review process.

Every year about 10 faculty members are nominated for this honor.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Paper and chemical engineering chair wins ‘Educator of the Year’ award

A state organization has recognized the chair of the University’s nationally renowned chemical and paper engineering department as a top educator.

Dr. Said Abubakr has been named the 2013 Michigan Printing Week Association Ben Franklin Educator of the Year.

At a ceremony earlier this year, the association honored recipients in three award categories: individual, company and educator of the year.

A veteran in his field, Abubakr has been with the University for 12 years, leading the chemical and paper engineering department during this entire period. Prior to his WMU appointment, he was research project leader-supervisor and a chemical engineer with the USDA Forest Service’s Forest Products Laboratory.

College of Aviation

Staff, faculty member recognized by FAA Safety Team

A commitment to safety has earned two employees of the College of Aviation recognition from the Federal Aviation Administration’s Safety Team.

In late January, Dr. Gregory Pinnell, an adjunct faculty member, was named the Michigan 2012 FAA Safety Team Representative of the Year at the 2013 Great Lakes International Aviation Conference for his contributions to aviation safety.

Pinnell is a board-certified physician and senior aviation medical examiner. He serves as a senior flight surgeon for the 434th Air Refueling Wing, Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana. Pinnell works with U.S. Department of Defense Human Space Flight Support operation and has been involved with multiple space shuttle missions.

Scott Austin, the college’s director of fleet maintenance, was recognized as the 2013 Regional Aviation Maintenance Technician of the Year by the FAA Safety Team for the Grand Rapids Flight Standards District Office and the Great Lakes Region. He will be one of six in the country to compete for the national award.

Recognition for this award comes to aviation professionals on the local, regional, and national levels for their contributions to aviation, education and flight safety.
College of Education and Human Development
Ph.D in counseling psychology reaccredited
The education college’s Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology has earned seven more years of accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. It is the only APA-accredited doctoral program in counseling psychology in Michigan. Reaccreditation for the maximum seven-year period indicates full compliance with the profession’s accepted standards for the highest level of psychological training. The doctorate in Counseling Psychology has been continuously accredited by the APA since 1993 and now will remain accredited through 2019. It is offered by the Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology.

College of Arts and Sciences
Grad student wins renowned creative writing fellowship
Traci D. Brimhall, a doctoral student in WMU’s creative writing poetry program, is one of 40 people nationwide to be awarded with a 2013 National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship.

As a fellowship recipient, Brimhall was awarded a $25,000 cash prize. “The acknowledgement of my work is great,” she says. “But there are so many other deserving people who didn’t get an award. I’m very grateful.”

More than 1,100 people applied for the fellowship. The fellowships are among 832 grants totaling $23.3 million through the NEA’s Art Works funding program. Non-profit arts organizations in 47 states and in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico received grants along with the 40 creative writing fellowships, totaling $1 million. Brimhall is the only writer in Michigan to receive an individual artist grant; however, many arts organizations in the state received grants.

Haworth College of Business
Student marketing team takes first place in national competition
A team of nine advertising and promotion students clinched the top award in a national marketing competition.

The students won the EdVenture Partners’ Jobs for America’s Graduates Scholastic Achievement Award Challenge in Washington, D.C., continuing a tradition of strong showings in the event over the past several years.

WMU has participated in the EdVenture Partners National Case Study Competitions since 2005, placing in the top 10 nationally each year.

The team included fall graduates Paige Moyer, Aaron Coney, Rachel Dudley, Jon Burns, Joe Taylor, Becca Wilson, Kristin Robarge, Ashleigh Cipta and Jenna Grodecki.

The students participated in the competition as a part of their fall 2012 capstone work for the Integrated Marketing Communications Campaigns course. They were advised by Dr. JoAnn Atkin, associate professor of marketing.

College of Health and Human Services
Online occupational therapy journal publishes inaugural issue

The first issue of the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy was published in the fall.

This WMU Department of Occupational Therapy peer-reviewed quarterly publication is the first open-access online journal in the profession. Its mission is to publish high-quality articles that focus on applied research, practice and education in the occupational therapy field.

The journal was made possible through generous philanthropic support. Part of a $2 million gift from Kalamazoo residents Frederic (Fred) W. Sammons and Dr. Barbara A. Rider to the Department of Occupational Therapy was set aside for innovative projects like the journal.

Articles in the journal will include topics of quantitative and qualitative applied research, practice and technological guidelines, opinions within the profession, topics in education and letters to the editor.
The University began this year with a total of seven campus buildings recognized for meeting the stringent requirements of LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—the national benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings.

Late in December, WMU facilities officials learned that Brown Hall and the Chemistry Building had successfully met LEED standards for existing building–EB–certification, widely considered among the most difficult certifications to earn.
“WMU continues to get national exposure because of our unique focus on LEED for existing buildings,” says Peter J. Strazdas, associate vice president for facilities management.

Earlier in the fall, all four buildings of the Western View, the first phase of a student housing complex, earned LEED new-construction–NC–certification.

“These certifications represent thousands of hours of work aimed at ensuring and documenting lower operating costs and reduced impact on the environment over the life of these buildings,” says WMU President John M. Dunn.

“The U.S. Green Building Council’s designations acknowledge our commitment to energy efficiency and our determination to use the resources entrusted to us in the most effective ways possible.”

The six newly certified buildings join the College of Health and Human Services, which earned a LEED-EB gold designation in 2009. That building and WMU’s focus on the LEED-EB rating has attracted national attention and a spate of articles in professional publications.

In addition, the University has six other buildings now going through the lengthy certification process.

Successful completion of those six initiatives should bring WMU’s number of LEED-certified buildings to 13 by early 2014. The buildings still in the certification process are Sangren Hall, the Lee Honors College, the new Zhang Legacy Collections Center and the two new residential buildings and community center of Western View.

Those six buildings, Strazdas says, are registered with the U.S. Green Building Council and are in various stages of the certification process.

The newly certified Brown Hall, Chemistry Building and Western View buildings share several green design features, including integration into WMU’s award-winning stormwater retention system.

Brown Hall
- computer-controlled irrigation system
- water-efficient fixtures, including dual flush toilets
- energy-efficient classroom lighting with dimmers and occupancy sensors
- compact fluorescent site lighting

Chemistry Building
- underground service tunnel that preserves green space around the building
- energy-efficient site lighting controlled by the building automation system
- bike racks incorporated into site design

Western View I
- access to public transportation and re-use of a previously developed property
- water-efficient fixtures
- optimized energy performance with electrical and HVAC equipment
- construction waste management procedures and use of recycled and local materials
- low-emitting paints and flooring materials
- thermal insulation and use of daylight to lower energy consumption
THE “W” DOWN UNDER—In Australia, WMU students Joseph DiClemente, Jimmy Meilinger, Neil Ludwig, Sean Nicholl and Janell Raisanen took a break from studying to show their Bronco pride during an optional trip to the Great Barrier Reef. The students were part of the short-term study program, “Business Leaders Down Under,” led by Dr. Bret Wagner, associate professor of management. Among other activities, 23 students toured companies in Sydney and Melbourne, took part in group leadership activities and participated in a case competition with students from Macquarie University in Sydney.