1963: MLK at WMU

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Our Noisy Planet
Can animals cope with humanity’s clamor?
Art major Nick Erard created this piece, “Melting Earth III©,” for the recent juried exhibition “Spare Change: The Art of Climate” in WMU’s Richmond Center for Visual Arts. “These images and quotes are intended to alarm the viewer and, most of all, get them to think about the consequences of global climate change,” Erard says.

9% of the Earth’s permanent ice cover is gone each decade.
Dear Friends,

As always, in this winter edition of the Western Michigan University Magazine, you will encounter evidence of the University’s vital role in fostering great minds, generating big ideas and applying knowledge to the betterment of society.

Some of our students have taken on climate change using their artistic talents, and others are creating companies from the ground up.

Learn about the University’s strong commitment to those who have served our country in uniform and about a professor’s nascent research into views on bilingualism in an era of globalization.

Here at one of the nation’s top institutions of higher learning, we don’t shrink from examining weighty issues because we are charged with equipping our students for the world that they will, in turn, shape for generations to come.

It is also in this spirit that we commemorate a special day in Western Michigan University’s history.

On Dec. 18, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke on campus as a visiting lecturer, months after his famed “I Have a Dream” speech and during a period when racial segregation and other forms of racism excluded many from the American Dream.

One of history’s great champions for civil rights brought a message of social justice to an audience of 2,000 students, faculty members and others at our Read Fieldhouse.

I concur with the words of my predecessor, President James Miller, who described King as a scholar that evening and remarked that he had “done with his knowledge what all educated people should do. Namely, he has put it to use for public advantage.”

We continue to experience those advantages today.

Best regards,

John M. Dunn
President

WMU wins $1.4 million grant to establish transportation research center

WMU is set to become home to a Transportation Research Center for Livable Communities, thanks to a $1.4 million U.S. Department of Transportation grant received by a multidisciplinary team of researchers led by Dr. Jun-Seok Oh, associate professor of civil and construction engineering.

The center’s three research objectives are to improve public transit systems and alternative transportation modes, to provide better and safer pedestrian and bicycle networks, and to enhance transportation accessibility for children, people with disabilities, older adults and lower-income populations.

WMU is the lead institution in a five-university collaboration that also includes Wayne State University, Tennessee State University, Utah State University and the University of Texas, Arlington.

The research will involve tapping WMU faculty experts in the areas of engineering, geography, psychology, and blindness and low-vision studies.

The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded $63 million in grants for 33 University Transportation Centers nationwide.

Student enrollment up in key categories

This academic year’s enrollment figures showed a 5.1 percent increase in the number of new WMU freshmen and strong surges in the number of international students, and in graduate students seeking doctoral degrees.

Despite steep decreases in the number of Michigan high school graduates over the past five years, this year’s applicant pool at WMU was the largest in a decade.

“Our enrollment increases are strongly reflected in programs for which Western Michigan University has a growing national and international reputation,” says WMU President John M. Dunn.
Alumni association board approves $1 million for new alumni center

The WMU Alumni Association Board of Directors has approved a measure to add $1 million in association funds to help turn the core of East Hall into a new alumni center.

“As a board, we’re committed to making sure the WMU Alumni Center is a world-class facility that provides a home for all alumni when they’re on campus, honors our University’s heritage and triggers a ‘wow’ reaction from everyone who visits it,” says Mark Jackson, president of the alumni association board.

Each of the 22 members of the association board also has made a personal financial commitment to the renovation effort.

The renovation of the core of East Hall into an alumni center was announced in December 2012 by the University.

Earlier this year, the board unanimously approved a measure offering its support for WMU’s decision to focus all of its East Campus redevelopment efforts on renovating the original building that was the birthplace of the University.

WMU has borrowed $15 million to transform the 34,000-square-foot core of the building, but has said any amount spent above that figure must come from other sources, such as private donors. The core renovation, for which the alumni association funds will be used, is scheduled for completion in mid-2015.

Jim Thomas, WMU vice president for development and alumni relations, says the commitment by the alumni association’s board reflects the sentiments his staff has been hearing from alumni nationwide.

“The University community, in general, and alumni, in particular, feel a real sense of dedication to East Hall and are delighted we’ve found a way to return this historic site to everyday use,” Thomas says.

“The alumni association’s board has helped ensure the renovation effort is completed in a way that helps us use East Hall to tell the WMU story.”

Details of the project and information about making a donation to the effort are available online at mywmu.com/alumnicenter.

Enrollment highlights:

- **International student** enrollment grew by 7.2 percent to 1,688 students from 105 nations. That is the highest number of international students in a decade and includes an influx of new students from such nations as Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Saudi Arabia.

- Minority student enrollment now stands at 19.5 percent of WMU’s total student body. Since fall 2007, when minority students made up 11 percent of the student body, the total number of minority students has increased by nearly 2,000.

- A 2 percent overall increase in minority student enrollment was led by a 5.7 percent increase in the number of Hispanic students and a 1.8 percent increase in the number of African-American students.

Quick Reads

**3,000+ aspiring doctors**

The Western Michigan University School of Medicine has attracted more than 3,000 applications. WMed is set to enroll its first class of 50 students in the fall of 2014. The application period closed in November. Meanwhile, the medical school’s 350,000-square-foot building is taking shape in downtown Kalamazoo and expected to be complete in June. med.wmich.edu

HEARD ON CAMPUS DEC. 18, 1963

“The logical consequence of study and thought is action. Otherwise, this whole business of education is a sham.”

—The late WMU President James Miller during remarks introducing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Read Fieldhouse.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

WMU: ONE OF THE “BEST NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES”

23 YEARS IN A ROW

Continued on page 4
Western Michigan University has received the 2013 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity—HEED—award from INSIGHT Into Diversity, the nation's oldest and largest publication that focuses on diversity in higher education. The award recognizes U.S. colleges and universities “that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.” WMU was featured along with 55 other recipients in the magazine’s November 2013 issue. In Michigan, only three public universities were honored. The others are Michigan Technological University and Saginaw Valley State University.

“We’re delighted that the University has received this award,” says Dr. Martha Warfield, WMU vice president for diversity and inclusion.

“The HEED award recognizes the accomplishments we have made thus far to establish an institutional culture that supports diversity and multiculturalism by fostering an environment where diversity in all of its forms is investigated, explained, practiced, celebrated, affirmed and vigorously pursued.”

According to INSIGHT Into Diversity, WMU was selected for the national honor based on its exemplary diversity and inclusion initiatives and its ability to “embrace a broad definition of diversity on campus” that includes gender, race and ethnicity as well as people with disabilities, veterans and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

Warfield notes that WMU has had a Diversity and Multicultural Action Plan in place since 2006 and has just conducted a campus climate survey.

The data gathered from that survey will inform Universitywide planning to expand ongoing efforts to build and maintain a framework that enables equitable treatment of all members of the University community and beyond.

This is the second major award WMU has received this fall for its focus on diversity. In late September, Warfield traveled to Washington, D.C., to accept a Minority Access Award from Minority Access Inc., at that organization’s annual conference. The nonprofit organization assists colleges and universities, the federal government and agencies of other governments, and corporations of all kinds in implementing programs and providing services to recruit, enhance and retain underserved and underrepresented populations.

**Upjohn Center takes top international honor for map product**

Outperforming such organizations as the U.S. Geological Survey, a cutting-edge mapping center at WMU has been honored for developing 2013’s most outstanding map product or service in North and South America.

The W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of Geographical Change received the award in September from the International Map Industry Association during its annual conference in Cambridge, Mass.

The association selected the center as the winner of its gold award for Best Digital Map Product of the year as well as its Americas Award for the year’s overall most outstanding map product or service.

In earning the overall award, the Upjohn Center bested public and private organizations, including the National Geographic Society.

In addition, the center’s map product was runner-up for the three-region International Map Industry Association’s 2013 global award.

The Upjohn Center was recognized for its Authoritative U.S. Topos map initiative, which includes a topographic maps series and a hybrid sub-series called GeoChange maps.

The hyper-accurately geo-referenced maps in the two series can be used with GPS-enabled mobile devices and software based on Apple’s iOS and Google’s Android.

Each map is self-contained in the tablet or smartphone, so no wireless connection is required. This means the maps can be used in wilderness areas and on large water bodies out of range of cell towers.

“Our maps seem simple, but are very sophisticated,” says Dr. David Dickason, WMU professor emeritus of geography and the Upjohn Center’s founder and first director.

“They are incredibly accurate, easy to use and quick. Information added to a map can be emailed back to base or transferred by Wi-Fi, and an be used immediately with Google Earth.”

For more information, visit wmich.edu/ucgc.
“This photograph of a landfill is comprised of many small pieces, similar to the way climate change can be caused by many everyday occurrences,” Lauren Giuliani says of her winning piece, “Accumulation of Trash.”

Some of WMU’s creative students shared their artistic vision of climate change in the juried art exhibition, “Spare I Change: The Art of Climate,” that was displayed in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts in October.

Photo and intermedia student Lauren Giuliani won the exhibition for her mixed media photograph, “Accumulation of Trash.”

Giuliani was awarded her prize by Bill McKibben, a global-warming activist who spoke at WMU about the “climate fight” on the opening night of the exhibition.

“This juried exhibition was inspired by the work of leading climate researchers and the great number of WMU students who are as passionate about protecting the earth as the professors who also academically address it.”

—Bill Davis, associate professor of photography and intermedia

“Cassie Stagner models her creation, “Écouture,” a garbage bag dress. She says that repurposing the plastic bags is a way to make clothing without harming the planet.

“The students, staff, administration and faculty can all be part of a solution to climate change and I was so excited to see our inspiration converted into such powerful artwork. This is just the beginning of what I hope will become a much more common annual opportunity for everyone at WMU.”

Artists RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE
When the ‘Dream’

‘We must all learn to live together as brothers or we will perish together as fools.’

—King’s message to WMU in 1963
Many in the nation paused this year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the August 1963 march on Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s celebrated “I Have a Dream” speech.

The University joins the observance of this galvanizing event in history while also marking the 50th anniversary of King’s appearance at WMU where, months after his famed address, he took the stage in Read Fieldhouse to echo similar sentiments.

The civil rights icon spoke powerfully at WMU for the cause of “racial justice” as he saw it, for putting an end to the “ugly sore of racial segregation” and for advancing civil rights to those denied them.

“That King lectured at WMU speaks to one of the University’s roles in society, to present scholars and leaders who address the critical issues of the day for our students and for the greater community,” says Dr. Martha Warfield, WMU’s vice president for diversity and inclusion, an office that organized a December event commemorating King’s WMU speech.

‘Still relevant’

Fifty years have elapsed, but many of King’s remarks at WMU on Dec. 18, 1963, have not lost their currency.

“The calls to action in this speech about social justice are still relevant. The world continues to grapple with many of these issues,” Warfield says.

King told his WMU audience, for instance, that “...more than ever before... men and women are challenged to develop a world perspective.”

“Through our scientific genius, we have made of this world a neighborhood. Now through our ethical and moral commitment, we must make of it a brotherhood... This is the great challenge of the hour. This is true of individuals. It is true of nations.”

Teachable moment

King was at WMU as the first speaker in a “Conscience of America” lecture series, organized in part by the honors college and the student council.

Some 2,000 students, faculty members, administrators and area residents braved a snowstorm to hear King lecture on “Social Justice and the Emerging New Age.” Others listened via live broadcast on the University’s public radio station, WMUK.

Introducing King as a “distinguished theologian,” “a gentleman of thought” and “a leader for nonviolent action,” then-WMU President James W. Miller took the opportunity to entreat students to, as King had, use their education to influence their world in some way.

“The logical consequence of study and thought is action,” Miller said. “If you don’t remember anything else, remember that. Otherwise, this whole business of education is a sham.”

Historical context is important here, says Thomas Coyne, WMU vice president emeritus for student services, who was present at the fieldhouse when King spoke.

It was a dark period in the nation.

Jim Crowism and racial violence were in full swing in the South. In June of 1963, Medgar Evers, an NAACP field officer and activist in Mississippi, was fatally shot. Three months later, in September, an Alabama church bombing killed four young girls.

In November, about three weeks before King visited WMU, U.S. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

And earlier that semester, controversial figure Ross Barnett, segregationist Mississippi governor, spoke at WMU to the consternation of many on and off campus, including then-Michigan Gov. George Romney.

President Miller held that while Barnett’s views were “contrary to the principles of equality practiced” on campus, allowing him to speak followed the principle of freedom of speech.

In effect, though not part of the same lecture series, King’s appearance served as a counterpoint to Barnett’s earlier presence on campus.

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For his part, King told his audience that considering the dark times, “it is always a rich and rewarding experience for me when I can take a brief break from the day-to-day and hour-to-hour struggle in the South to discuss the issues involved in this struggle with college and university students.”

**In his own words**

On that wintry night in Kalamazoo, listeners at WMU would hear King make an appeal for fairness and equality for African Americans.

“We are challenged to get rid of the notion, once and for all, that there are superior and inferior races,” King said. “And this notion still lingers around in various quarters in spite of the fact that certain intellectual disciplines, like the anthropological sciences, have said there isn’t any truth to this.”

In contrast to the fervency of his address in D.C., King’s WMU speech offered a methodical, 48-minute treatise on the philosophy of nonviolence, race-related legal decisions through the years and the imperative of passing civil rights legislation without delay.

“You got the flavor of his ability as an orator,” Coyne says. “It was not a particularly stirring speech, but it gave a sense of his breadth and how he could reach out and tap into the audience.”

King spoke resolutely that racial segregation must and would end.

“There can be no gainsaying of the fact that the system of segregation is on its deathbed today,” he said. “The only thing uncertain about it is how costly the segregationists will make the funeral.”

He decried tactics to delay civil rights legislation that, as it turned out, would pass the following year and he spent time explaining how nonviolence was an effective and moral tool for the movement.

If an opponent, “sets out to beat you, you develop the quiet courage of accepting blows without retaliating. … If he puts you in jail, you go in that jail and transform it from a dungeon of shame to a haven of freedom and human dignity,” King said.

Nonviolent resistance, he said, “disarms the opponent and he just doesn’t know how to deal with it. I’ve seen this so many times in our struggle in the South.”

King’s concluding remarks may have been among the most poignant and prophetic words he uttered, even about his own life and death.

Someone, during a question-and-answer period following the lecture, asked how Kennedy’s assassination would affect the movement for integration.

“This is the final thing that I’d like to say,” King responded, “it points that sometimes a man does more in his death than he could have ever done in life. Sometimes we must in history take an evil situation and wring the good out of it. It may well be that President Kennedy will be able to do more for civil rights in death than he could have ever done in life.”

King’s legacy lives on at WMU through programming first established after his 1968 death, that initially provided educational support and scholarships, and continues today as an array of services supporting students’ academic advancement.
Q&A
Following King’s speech at WMU, he responded to audience questions read by then-WMU President James Miller. Portions of that Q-and-A session are excerpted below.

King’s full lecture, the entire question-and-answer session and other materials have been posted online by WMU Archives and Regional History Collections staff at www.wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u34/2013/MLK.pdf.

Q  Dr. King, your earnest attempts to help the Negro people have earned the respect of many, many Americans. But faced with the rising tide of Negro indignation and anger, how long do you believe they will follow your peaceful-submission, turn-the-other-cheek philosophy?

A  …I think that when one comes to see the true meaning of nonviolence, and to see that this is a strong method and not a do-nothing method. It doesn't mean that you sit down and just passively accept evil. You really stand up against it, but you come to see that you have a more powerful weapon when you stand up against it through nonviolent methods.

You stand up against it without using methods of violence. So by boycotts, if necessary, by picketing, if necessary, by sit-ins, if necessary, by mass pilgrimages, if necessary. All of these things are methods of nonviolent direct action in which individuals are able to do something and yet, they are doing it nonviolently.

I believe firmly that the Negro has come to see the power of this approach, even though he has had a legitimate summer of discontent in 1963…

Q  Do you believe that de facto segregation in our large city schools should be changed by transporting children into schools which could be some distance from their homes? Might not the tremendous cost be better applied to remove the causes of de facto segregation?

A  I lean toward the view that it is a very tragic thing for young people and children, to grow up with association (and) with communication only with people of their race. Prejudices develop from the very beginning because of this. Narrow provincial views emerge because of this.

I think the only way to break this kind of provincialism is to bring people together on a level of genuine intergroup and interpersonal living. I do not think we can afford to wait until all of the problems of residential segregation are solved before we grapple with the problem of segregation in educational institutions.

Therefore, I lean toward the idea that segregation must be removed from schools all over this country, even if it means transporting students from one district to another. For I do not think that residential segregation must be used as an excuse for the perpetuation of segregation in educational institutions…

Q  Do you think it is the older generation of the South that is standing up so ardently against integration as opposed to the younger generation, who actually may be pro-integration but are so strongly influenced by the older folks they can do nothing?

A  I think there is a great deal of truth in this. I think that many of the young white people of the south are much more open-minded on this issue and would solve this problem if many of the elders would move aside. Many of these people have been so conditioned to the old order and to these prejudices that they will probably never change and they try to instill them in their children.

I think there is hope in the situation because there are young people—I would say a growing group of young people—willing to see the moral issues involved in this struggle and who are willing to take a stand…

On visiting WMU…
“It is always a rich and rewarding experience for me when I can take a brief break from the day-to-day and hour-to-hour demands of our struggle in the South to discuss the issues involved in this struggle with college and university students. So again, I say I am very delighted to be here.”

—King
Recognized as one of the nation’s military-friendly schools, WMU is a university of choice for veterans. Since the mid-2000s, in view of the Iraq war and U.S. military operation in Afghanistan, WMU has ramped up support services for returning soldiers. Within the past five academic years, student-veteran enrollment at WMU has increased 55 percent.
From day one, Steven Todd says he felt welcomed, even embraced, by the Western Michigan University community.

This was no small thing for Todd who, then 40 years old and decades into a military career, decided to pursue his first college degree.

A sergeant in the National Guard, he knew college could be—and has been—interrupted by service obligations.

He would need support making the most of his veterans’ benefits.

Todd would need professors to accept his subtle memory loss caused, in part, by the concussion of an improvised explosive device in Iraq.

So, having experienced what he perceived as “the brush off,” at another institution, when WMU admissions immediately took him on a personal campus tour, offered a special subsidy and introduced him to the University’s “advocacy office” serving veterans, it left him a little stunned.

“From the start here at Western, it was, ‘We value having you here. We’re trying to take care of our vets.’” says Todd, who enrolled in 2008 to study secondary education and expects to graduate in 2014.

Vets’ university of choice

WMU has become a school of choice for a rising number of military personnel.

In the 2008-09 academic year—just before the post-9/11 GI Bill was established—there were 381 students at WMU who self-identified as veterans. This past fall, there were 589 known student veterans enrolled, a 55 percent increase.

“We’re one of the highest in the state for four-year public institutions,” says Tracey Quada, director of WMU’s Office of Military and Veterans Affairs.

This is not by chance.

WMU has been recognized repeatedly as one of the nation’s military-friendly schools, including by President Barack Obama’s administration, which lauded the University for being among institutions “leading the way” in promoting higher education for veterans.

And the publications *Military Times EDGE*, *Military Advanced Education* and *G.I. Jobs* have each designated WMU as a “Best for Vets” or military-friendly institution.

Since the mid-2000s, in view of the U.S. war in Iraq and military operation in Afghanistan, WMU has been ramping up support services for returning soldiers and veterans.

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VA and education department put WMU on short list of schools offering exemplary service to vets

Western Michigan University is the only school in Michigan singled out by the Obama Administration as one of the nation’s colleges and universities that are “leading the way” to foster postsecondary educational opportunities and dramatically improve employment outcomes for returning service members.

An announcement Aug. 12 by the U.S. departments of Education and Veterans Affairs identified schools across the nation that have adopted a set of strategies called 8 Keys to Success that are viewed as best practices for serving veterans.

The announcement by the two departments included a list of 250 schools in 25 states that already have adopted the recommended strategies.

While some states boast dozens of such schools, only WMU was singled out in Michigan as an institution that is embracing those strategies designed to lead to success for student veterans.

The keys to success were first outlined by President Barack Obama during an Aug. 10 speech at the Disabled American Veterans National Convention.

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“(WMU) President (John) Dunn, and going back to President (Diether) Haenicke, both said, ‘We’re going to be at the forefront of this because it’s the right thing to do and we want them here,’” Quada says.

Upon returning home, many service members seek postsecondary education as a next chapter in their lives.

Since the post-9/11 GI Bill was established in 2009, nearly 1 million service members, veterans and their family members have received about $30 billion to help pay for schooling, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Unique needs, unique services
The University has developed initiatives to meet their unique needs.

Since 2008, years before other Michigan schools, WMU has offered in-state tuition pricing to active-duty service members, no matter where they may be stationed or have a home.

But the support isn’t only financial.

“One of the biggest things is that WMU actually has an Office of Military and Veterans Affairs, and a lot of what you find going other places is that just trying to get information can be difficult,” says Paul Hebert, a Navy Reserve officer and student staff member in the office.

Hebert earned an aviation flight science degree from WMU in 2007. In the fall of 2012, he returned to pursue a civil engineering degree after leaving active duty.

“Western made it real simple. They said, ‘Welcome back. Let’s get you started,’” says the 28-year-old, now a lieutenant, junior grade, in the Navy Reserve.

“…And I appreciated that there was someone here specifically dedicated to looking out for veterans,” he adds.

The office provides veterans and service members with academic support, benefit support and answers to questions related to the University or Veterans Affairs.

“For many colleges and universities don’t have this,” Quada says. “We have a place where a prospective student veteran or current student veteran can walk in the door and speak with somebody who gets where they’re coming from.”

Along with WMU’s chapter of Student Veterans of America, the office has been a means for creating community among vets, whose military service makes them distinct among other students in some ways.

“You’ve led a whole different lifestyle where you’ve been in charge of people or millions of dollars of equipment, and that type of responsibility. Now you’re a student and it’s a totally different mindset,” Hebert says.

“Our office focuses on helping our veterans make that transition.”

Paul Hebert, a student and Navy Reserve officer, chats with Jonathan Jackson, a sergeant in the Army Reserve and a WMU student as well.

“Western made it real simple. They said, ‘Welcome back. Let’s get you started.’”

—Hebert
To help draft the 8 Keys to Success, the Department of Education convened more than 100 experts to review approaches that could be scaled and replicated to foster veterans’ success on campus and via distance learning.

A wide range of stakeholders participated in the discussions, including nonprofit organizations, foundations, veterans service organizations and, importantly, veterans who had recently completed postsecondary education in a range of disciplines.

Best practices learned from existing programs provided the foundation for the keys to success, specifically best practices from the VA’s highly successful VetSuccess on Campus programs.

WMU and two partner institutions, Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Kellogg Community College, have served as a VetSuccess on Campus site since April 2012, when U.S. Rep. Fred Upton announced a decision by the Department of Veterans Affairs to locate a VetSuccess on Campus program in southwest Michigan—the agency’s first such program in the state.

One of the latest on-campus resources for veterans was launched in the spring of 2012, when WMU became the site for a VetSuccess on Campus program, along with Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Kellogg Community College. Through this program, a Veterans Affairs official is stationed on campus to help student veterans with VA benefits, healthcare benefits, career exploration, job placement and other services.

**Asset on campus**
Quada says the University’s efforts to be military friendly aren’t just about what WMU offers veterans. “They bring leadership. They can handle stressful situations. They can think quickly and problem solve quickly. They bring a global perspective, whether they have been deployed or not. They could have been stationed in Guam. So that enriches our campus and it enriches our student body,” she says.

Todd, now 45 years old, says that he’s often the oldest student in class and sometimes older than his professors. But he says his military service—some 28 years—has been beneficial to him as a student.

“Especially in the history department, a lot of the professors are interested in my past experience. “I’ve had classes that deal with the Cold War. I was serving during the Cold War. Tail end of it, but I was in it. There are times when I address a point that the professor is trying to make before the traditional-age students grasp it,” Todd says.

During his years in the military, including 10 years active duty, Todd served in Desert Storm as a military police officer and most recently in Afghanistan, driving the vehicles that transport tanks to and from battle.

You’ll find that most military personnel are model students, says Jonathan Jackson, a sergeant in the Army Reserve and a WMU junior. “They go to class. They put their phones away and they have their notebook out and they are listening to the instructor,” he says.

Like Hebert, Jackson is at WMU for a second time. But he returned to complete a first bachelor’s degree, with his sights set on a career in medicine. Jackson says that after serving in Baghdad, where he worked as a medical lab technician in a prison hospital for enemy combatants, he returned to campus a much more serious student.

“I would credit the deployment for a big part of my maturation, that and getting promoted (to a sergeant from a specialist). I was responsible for the health and welfare of a handful of other soldiers. Having to deal with all of that helped me grow as a person, both in the military and out of the military,” he says.

“It’s a natural thing for me to want to lead,” Jackson says.

Since returning to the University in 2011, Jackson helped revamp WMU’s Student Veterans of America chapter, serving as president, initially, and now vice president.

He has held a Western Student Association cabinet post, is on the executive board of the American Medical Student Association and has represented WMU in various ways in the greater community.

Jackson considers it an honor to serve his peers as a student worker in the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs, an office that didn’t exist during his first stint at WMU. “It’s tough to do on your own. It’s a team sport,” Jackson says. “I love being able to help other veterans succeed.”

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**THE 8 KEYS TO SUCCESS FOR SCHOOLS SERVING VETERANS**

1. Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans.

2. Ensure consistent and sustained support from campus leadership.

3. Implement an early-alert system to ensure all veterans receive academic, career and financial advice before challenges become overwhelming.

4. Coordinate and centralize campus efforts for all veterans, together with the creation of a designated space (even if limited in size).

5. Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans.

6. Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics and retention and degree-completion statistics.

7. Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and staff on issues and challenges unique to veterans.

8. Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.
Residential neighborhoods provide students with a sense of belonging and connection to WMU. While students enjoy that feeling of belonging, they’ll have access to the complete set of tools intentionally designed to support their overall college careers.

—Dr. Diane Anderson, vice president for student affairs
Campus will become a series of residential neighborhoods over the next two years as University officials implement a long-term strategic plan to blend housing and dining needs with the academic success goals of a new generation of college students.

The plan features both new and renovated residence halls and new and enhanced dining facilities that will encourage students to connect with their fellow students as they enjoy restaurant-style amenities and choices.

“We’ve developed a strategic plan to create communities that enhance social interaction and will appeal to the kind of students we seek to recruit and retain,” says Dr. Diane Anderson, vice president for student affairs.

“We’re creating neighborhoods that are intentionally designed to support student success, respond to student and parent expectations, and allow us to compete well against our competitor institutions.”

The organization of campus neighborhoods is designed to leverage some $30 million in new campus living and dining facilities invested since 2006 as well as more than $84 million in new investments.

The campus will be organized into four neighborhoods that can accommodate more than 6,800 students:

- **West Neighborhood** encompasses the recently built Western View apartment-style residence halls and the new Western View Community Center.

- **Valley Neighborhood** includes six existing residence halls, all with upgraded bathrooms; a major new dining facility; and former dining areas renovated to become community, social, study and academic support areas. Nearby Goldsworth Valley Apartments also are included.

- **Center Neighborhood** will be made up of a residence hall built for fall 2015 occupancy where Bigelow and Hoekje halls, razed this past fall, once stood. It also includes nearby Henry Hall and the Hoekje-Bigelow dining room that is in the Bernhard Center.

- **South Neighborhood** includes a set of existing residence halls for upperclassmen. “The Big Four” is made up of Draper, Siedschlag and Ernest and Smith Burnham Halls. “The Little Three” halls—Davis, French and Zimmerman—are part of the neighborhood as well as Elmwood Apartments and the recently renovated Bistro 3 dining facility.

Major building projects that are part of the plan include a $48-million, 750-bed residence hall that will comprise much of the Center Neighborhood and a $36 million, 65,000-square-foot dining facility for the Valley Neighborhood.

The new residence hall will be targeted at incoming students and will include such features as central but private bath areas maintained by house staff and third-floor social and recreational areas open to all residents.

The Valley Dining facility will feature seven restaurant-style food service areas offering foods ranging from pizza and pasta to rotisserie specialties and dessert creations. The dining hall location will be identified with input from the WMU community. While designed to primarily serve students in the Valley Neighborhood, the new dining facility will be open to all students, faculty, staff and visitors.

“These new facilities are definitely designed to provide a ‘wow factor’ that will help differentiate WMU,” Anderson says.

The residential neighborhood design, she says, will offer distinct advantages to students regardless of the part of campus in which they choose to live. Each residential neighborhood is unique and takes its shape and character from key elements in the surrounding environment—academic buildings; recreation, entertainment and athletic facilities; and off-campus retail access. Each neighborhood is different, but they share a common goal.

“Residential neighborhoods provide students with a sense of belonging and connection to WMU,” Anderson says.

“While students enjoy that feeling of belonging, they’ll have access to the complete set of tools intentionally designed to support their overall college careers.”
The offices of Starting Gate, a new student business accelerator at Western Michigan University, never close.

This hyper-accessible creative space is just one of the many purposeful amenities of Starting Gate, a multifaceted service that puts student entrepreneurs on a fast track to developing, maximizing and launching startup businesses.

“If you spend a lot of time with creative and innovative people, you know they rarely keep 9-to-5 kind of hours,” says Dr. Kay M. Palan, dean of the Haworth College of Business.

“When the idea strikes them, that’s when they work. We’re trying to create an environment that can facilitate that thinking and that work,” she says.

Established earlier this academic year, the program is operated through the Haworth College of Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in collaboration with WMU’s Office of Community Outreach.

Two cohorts of student entrepreneurs have progressed through Starting Gate, which is based in a building in downtown Kalamazoo.

“We treat all the participants in the program as founders of companies, not students,” says Moh’d K. Albattikhi, Starting Gate director of operations.

“We give them access to many resources and we let them choose how to use them. When selecting the participants, we try to do our best to identify individuals who are eager to benefit from the resources we provide,” he says.

Over the course of about three months, Starting Gate student entrepreneurs test their ideas and business models working with faculty and successful entrepreneurs in the community, while also developing a network of business contacts and eventually connecting with potential financial backers on an Investor Day.

Among the emerging enterprises thus far:

- **Fish Ninja**, a fish tank monitoring system that allows owners to keep an eye on their aquatic pets remotely, and even feed them, through an app on a smartphone.

- **Kitty Ninja**, a dynamic toy that’s designed to be as enticing to bored cats as a spooled roll of toilet paper.

- **SpeechMasterPro**, a device that resembles a whistle that is intended to help individuals improve their speech.

- **Xcheapskate**, a mobile app and website that uses geo-location to help diners find the food they’re craving at the most affordable prices at a variety of close-by restaurants.

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Freshman Daniel Floyd holds SpeechMasterPro, a device he invented to improve elocution.
The startup companies accepted into the program are in various stages of maturity.

“Although some are more advanced than others, they are all trying to identify their value proposition, their customer segment, how to reach customers and build relationships with them and learn what channels, revenue streams, and cost structure they should use, and who their partners are,” Albattikhi explains.

Through this process, the entrepreneurs may learn that they must take their original business model into a new direction—or even scuttle it altogether.

“Getting around like-minded people and having your idea picked apart really helps you put it back together or see whether it does or doesn’t have value in its present form,” he says.

Stacy Burdette, whose idea is to create a women’s center called Hacker Gals in Kalamazoo, says Starting Gate kept her dedicated to her project.

Burdette describes this potential future center as a place that fosters healthy lifestyles for women through activities, services and events.

Starting Gate mentors make all the difference

The mentor-student entrepreneur relationship is one of the bedrock resources of Starting Gate and is critical for the success of the startup companies.

Through Starting Gate, students connect with experienced mentors who are dedicated to providing these nascent company founders with the feedback and advice they need.

These mentors are not only present to provide advice, more importantly, they openly challenge the companies to find a product with a viable business model.

They do this by questioning the companies about their assumptions, being a sounding board, putting the companies in contact with influential people and also by being a cheerleader.

“Some might do small changes, while others might change the whole concept of their idea,” he says.

One of the key principles of Starting Gate is that it’s a fast-track approach intended to keep the entrepreneurs on task and making progress.

For instance, student entrepreneurs must achieve three major milestones that will appreciably advance their business or service during their three-month tenure as Starting Gate members.

Every week, each company has one goal they must set and reach toward their milestones. Those goals and the results are revealed during update meetings.

“The other members of the cohort are there to say, ‘That goal is not hard enough,’ if need be. It is all to keep you on schedule to make sure you are working toward your milestones,” says Dr. John Mueller, one of creators of Starting Gate who also is an assistant professor of management and focuses on entrepreneurship.

“You want to have meaningful milestones so you know that when you leave here, that you are going to move forward with your product or service or shut it down. You can move forward through the feedback you get from the community on our Demo Day or you could move forward through Investor Day,” he says.

Mentors come from all walks of life and have varying experiences. Their experiences and contacts help the startup company leaders make decisions better and quicker.

Companies in Starting Gate can have multiple mentors, but each company has one lead mentor that the burgeoning entrepreneurs tap to help them through the program and with their businesses.

—John Mueller, a Starting Gate founder, assistant professor of management

Members of the business community who are interested in serving as mentors should contact Moh’d K. Albattikhi, Starting Gate director of operations, at mohd.albattikhi@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5860.

Management and economics major Matt Rumora found this community of peer entrepreneurs to be a huge help in refining his travel app, Personofy, which helps individuals discover fun things to do in a given community based on their personality traits.

Through his stint with Starting Gate, Rumora modified his concept, which was initially an app that would facilitate “meet ups” for people looking to find activity partners and new friends.

“The key word is pivot,” Rumora says. “Starting Gate got me into a position where I began to see the value in what I was doing.”

Through Starting Gate she organized the kind of events she’d like to see at the center and surveyed area women to determine the viability of the concept.

“Starting Gate has helped me keep on task and stay focused and have people to talk to, whether it’s my peers or the mentors,” Burdette says.

“I’ve had a reason to keep working on my business instead of just pushing it aside and saying, ‘I’m busy,’ even though I really want to do it.”

To learn more about Starting Gate and alumni companies of the program, visit wmich.edu/startinggate.
Daniel Floyd’s SpeechMasterPro is the classic necessity-is-the-mother-of-invention creation. The Western Michigan University freshman was born with a disorder that makes it difficult for him to enunciate certain words and sounds. Floyd says his invention is intended to help those with speech impediments, and anyone else seeking to improve their articulation and elocution.

“The SpeechMasterPro is not a cure for speech impediments, by any means. It’s a device to assist you with your speech,” says the business marketing major.

Now a freshman at WMU, Floyd developed this speech aid while he was a high school student in Chicago. After seeing the movie, Floyd, then 15 years old, scoured his parents’ refrigerator for a radish, but settled for a wine cork. He began practicing speaking while biting the wine cork and noticed an improvement in elocution. He says he was training the muscles of his mouth and jaw to help him articulate words more clearly.

Great Strides
Speech therapy has been a part of Floyd’s life since childhood and with it, he has made great strides. Striving to speak clearly has been a constant for Floyd.

“It was just difficult for me to be understood in general, so when I was in middle school and in high school, it was really tough because of bullying.

“When I was younger, dealing with my speech impediment and looking for something to improve, I was always surprised that there was nothing out there that I could buy to help me improve, even in the smallest way,” Floyd says.

An “aha” moment came while he was at home watching “The Great Debaters,” a movie starring Denzel Washington.

“Denzel had five debaters practicing for debate and they were practicing with a radish in their mouths. The radish forced the debaters to over enunciate their words and sounds so once they took the radish out of their mouths, because of muscle memory, they would pronounce words as if the radish was still there,” Floyd explains.

What kept me motivated was having a speech impediment and the hardships of being bullied...and wanting to help other people to get past their speech impediment.
—Daniel Floyd, student entrepreneur

After seeing the movie, Floyd, then 15 years old, scoured his parents’ refrigerator for a radish, but settled for a wine cork.

He began practicing speaking while biting the wine cork and noticed an improvement in elocution. He says he was training the muscles of his mouth and jaw to help him articulate words more clearly.

That led to the notion that perhaps a speech aid like that, if not already on the market, could be marketable.

He began collecting wine corks from area restaurants, reshaped them to rest more naturally between the front teeth, thereby creating the first SpeechMasterPro prototype. He invited neighbors, friends and others to test the device, which is shaped somewhat like a whistle.

“I got good feedback,” he says.

After conducting a patent search, which came back clear, and getting his parents involved with his ideas, Floyd applied for patents and now has two pending, a utility patent and design patent.

A Chicago design firm, PDT, helped him come up with a version of the SpeechMasterPro that could be produced en masse and Floyd and his father, Dwight, found a manufacturer, Accurate Products, that agreed to fabricate several Food and Drug Administration-approved silicone prototypes.

In an article in the Chicago Sun-Times’ business magazine, Chicago Grid, Accurate Products President Graham Slatherie expressed how impressed he was with Floyd, noting the then-high school student already had a “business plan, explained what the device was used for, had drawings and showed what he had done.”

“He was a very put-together young man.”

Floyd has since sold several dozen of the speech aids, which can be purchased on speechmasterpro.com, the website he launched in April.

Now as one of the Starting Gate entrepreneurs, he’s hoping to boost marketing of the device and find investors to scale up this fledgling enterprise.

“Starting Gate has been an awesome experience for me as a freshman,” Floyd says. “I have met a great mentor and exciting students with fresh ideas that help motivate me to take SpeechMasterPro to the next level.”

As one of the latest inductees in WMU’s new student business accelerator, Starting Gate, he hopes to now take the product and his entrepreneurial skills to the next level.

WMU freshman Daniel Floyd demonstrates SpeechMasterPro.
Lee Honors College
Dean’s and students’ research featured in environmental journal

Research conducted by honors college Dean Carla Koretsky and her students was featured in Environmental Monitor, a journal that covers the environmental monitoring industry.

Koretsky, who also is a professor of geosciences, led her students in a study of the effects of road salt on Kalamazoo’s Woods Lake. The researchers found concentrations of road salt runoff that neared or surpassed toxicity thresholds for salt in water, upsetting the oxygen balance in the small inland lake.

“The whole thing is interesting to me, especially because I haven’t seen a whole lot of literature on it, so it makes me wonder how widespread this issue is,” Koretsky told Environmental Monitor.

“Is this first lake that we looked at an outlier because of its size and lack of connection to groundwater? Or is this really systemic and there are hundreds of little lakes like this and nobody’s actually really looked?”

Read about their research on the journal’s website, fondriest.com.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Solar race team finished in top five in Formula Sun Grand Prix

Sunseeker, the University’s solar race car, finished in fifth place in the Formula Sun Grand Prix 2013 after withering Texas heat forced its batteries to overheat.

The WMU team was in first place for several hours on the final day of the race when battery temperature was too high to continue without cooling.

The surface temperature of the track was reported to be a blistering 139 degrees.

Oregon State University finished with 193 laps, followed by Illinois State University at 192 and Iowa State at 191. WMU was narrowly edged out by Principia College, which recorded 184 laps to WMU’s 183. In all, 12 collegiate teams from across the United States and Canada competed at the race held June 24-29 in Austin, Texas.

“The team is still proud of what we managed to do, and we all know that had we been able to keep running, we probably would have taken first,” said Joshua Allen, Sunseeker project manager. “Lessons have been learned, friends were made, and I think we have definitely set ourselves to be a team to compete with in the future.”

College of Aviation
Student receives top award for maintenance tech skills

A senior studying aviation maintenance technology at WMU was recognized for his aviation maintenance technology skills, winning top honors at the national 2013 SkillsUSA Championship.

Andrew Kincaid, of Battle Creek, Mich., was one of six participants from around the nation recognized for this skill set—and one of only two in this category who took home top Gold honors—during a week-long event in Kansas City, Mo.

This is the first year a WMU student entered the competition.

Kincaid joined more than 5,900 other career and technical education students who vied in 98 different trade, technical and leadership fields at the competition.

Working against the clock and each other, participants proved their expertise in job skills for occupations such as electronics, technical drafting, precision machining, medical assisting and culinary arts.

There also were competitions in leadership skills, such as extemporaneous speaking and conducting meetings by parliamentary procedures. Aviation maintenance technology contestants performed 12 tasks that represented the types of maintenance they will handle in the aircraft industry.
Graduate College

Accelerated route to a graduate degree

The Graduate College is raising awareness about accelerated programs that can earn students a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in as little as five years. Several WMU departments offer this opportunity that allows students to shorten their time to a master’s degree while reducing graduate tuition costs.

In these accelerated programs, undergraduate students who have reached senior status in a major that offers the option can earn up to 12 credits toward a master’s degree and pay undergraduate tuition for those graduate classes.

Areas that offer these accelerated degrees:
- accountancy
- civil engineering
- computer engineering
- computer science
- communication
- electrical engineering
- industrial engineering
- mechanical engineering
- music
- orientation and mobility
- occupational therapy
- statistics
- vision rehabilitation therapy
- paper and printing science

Graduate College officials say that interest in developing additional accelerated programs is rising within academic departments.

For more information, contact the college at (269) 387-8212.

Haworth College of Business

Student scholar honored

Ashley Moyle, an integrated supply management student, has received an Association for Operations Management Scholar award.

APICS is the leading professional association for supply chain and operations management.

As an APICS scholar, Moyle will attend conferences, learn valuable information pertaining to supply chain and operations management as well as network with supply chain professionals worldwide.

She also will receive a professional APICS mentor, who will share real-world experiences and knowledge, and will have opportunities to meet and network with industry experts.

College of Arts and Sciences

Physics profs help secure $602,000 NSF grant

Physics professor Manuel Bautista is leading an innovative astrophysics project being funded by a $602,000 National Science Foundation grant.

The project will contribute to understanding various galactic and extragalactic objects.

“From Stars to Active Galactic Nuclei: Photionization, Photoexcitation, Opacities, and Spectra of Low Ionization Fe-peak Species,” aims to develop reliable quantitative modeling of opacities and spectra of iron-like species.

This effort is important for modern astrophysics because numerous fundamental research areas depend on such modeling.

Bautista developed the NSF grant proposal with Dr. Thomas Gorczyca, another WMU physics professor, and researchers from NASA, the University of Mons in Belgium, the Lund Observatory in Sweden, the Max Planck Institute in Germany and the Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research.

The team, which includes WMU students, has three years to conduct the research and present the findings.

College of Fine Arts

Chorale clinches second place in national competition

The WMU Chorale captured second place in the college and university choral division of the 2013 American Prize competition.

The WMU Chorale was announced as runner-up in the national contest after judges spent the summer reviewing recorded performances submitted by applicants from across the country.

The Iowa State Singers placed first, while third place went to the Pacific Lutheran University Choir.

Judges praised the WMU Chorale, WMU’s flagship choral ensemble, in large part for its technical expertise. They made comments such as: “a very solid series of live performances that shows a fine sense of good vocal production, excellent attention to vowel unification and good musical shape.”

The chorale is conducted by Dr. Kim Dunn Adams, WMU director of choral activities and assistant professor of music. The group performs locally and tours the nation each year, as well as embarks on an international tour every four years.

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College of Health and Human Services
Nursing school has new interim director

The Bronson School of Nursing welcomed Dr. Shaké Ketefian, as interim director and professor of nursing. She replaces Dr. Linda Zoeller.

Ketefian completed her undergraduate nursing education at the American University of Beirut and then came to the United States as an International Fellow of the American Association of University Women to pursue graduate education.

She earned master’s and doctoral degrees in medical-surgical nursing and nursing education from Teachers College at Columbia University.

Ketefian began full-time teaching as an assistant professor at New York University in 1972 and became full professor in 1982. Concurrent with her teaching, she also served as director of continuing education and chaired the Department of Advanced Education in Nursing Science.

She is a University of Michigan School of Nursing professor emerita.

She assumed the position of professor, associate dean for graduate studies and director of the doctoral program at U of M in 1984 and also served as acting dean and interim associate dean for academic affairs and professor and director of doctoral and postdoctoral studies at the university.

College of Education and Human Development
Professor appointed to national teaching standards board

Dr. R. Adam Manley, assistant professor of family and consumer sciences in the career and technical education program, has been appointed to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, serving as a member of the committee tasked with revising the Career and Technical Education Standards.

Manley was selected from a pool of 450 exemplary applicants to serve on the 15-person committee appointed by the Certification Council of the National Board.

The technical education standards exemplify the latest thinking in the field as well as reflect the National Board policy statement titled “What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do” and perspectives on key issues as defined in the Standards Development Handbook.

The Career and Technical Education Committee will make final recommendations on the standards to the National Board’s Board of Directors during the fall of 2014.

Colleague by College

The Distinguished Teaching Award is the highest teaching honor given by the University. Featured below are this academic year’s awardees.

Dr. Holly J. Nibert
Associate professor of Spanish

Nibert joined the faculty in 1999. She was lauded by former students and co-workers for her commitment to the department, the Spanish program and the success of her students. She also received praise for being a mentor and role model for teaching assistants as well as a key player in advancing the Spanish program.

Paul R. Solomon
Associate professor of art, Director of the Direct Encounter With the Arts

Solomon joined the faculty in 1995. He was praised for bringing new art experiences and the latest technology into his classroom, promoting an open and supportive environment, and devoting great attention and dedication to each student’s success.

Dr. Sarah E. Summy
Associate professor, chair of the Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies

Former students touted Summy for having an amazing wealth of knowledge in her area of study, continuously expanding that knowledge base, and always being available and approachable. Colleagues described her as someone who challenges them to think outside the box while collaborating with them to improve departmental programs.

100% Job placement for WMU paper engineering graduates

WMU paper engineering graduates continue to be held in high demand by the industry, with base salaries starting at $65,000 to $70,000 annually, plus signing bonuses and relocation packages. Paper engineering seniors normally receive multiple job offers prior to graduation, a trend that dates back years.
The Canary

By Michael Loyd Gray (Bottom Dog Press, 2013)

Novelist Michael Loyd Gray has long admired Amelia Earhart for her bravery and sense of adventure.

She was flying, he notes, “during a time when it was hard to do. The airplane she flew was much more primitive” than aircraft traversing the skies today.

In his latest novel, “The Canary,” the WMU alumnus imagines Earhart’s last days as a castaway on a tiny Pacific Ocean atoll following her ill-fated 1937 flight.

Through Loyd Gray, Earhart tells her story from the island and also reflects on her friendship, as a teen, with the young Ernest Hemingway.

The author says the fictionalized Hemingway connection was a sort of literary accident. He already had begun writing “The Canary” when he realized that Hemingway and Earhart both lived in Chicago when she was finishing high school in 1914-15.

“It occurred to me that they could have met,” he says. To humanize the icons, “the interior story is really about these two famous people, well before they were famous, when they were just people.”

Loyd Gray, who earned a Master of Fine Arts in English from WMU in 1996, is the author of three other books, including his 2012 young adult novel, “King Biscuit.” He says his next novel will depict Elvis Presley in Kalamazoo.

The Military Quotation Book

Edited by James Charlton (St. Martin’s Press, 2013)

James Charlton, a WMU alumnus and author of nearly 40 books, has completed a revised edition of “The Military Quotation Book,” described as a “loaded canon of memorable expressions.”

“This book is about war,” Charlton writes in the introduction. “War in all its manifestations and effects: the rattling sabres, the feverish preparations, the battles on land, in the air, and at sea, and the feelings at home.

“This book is also about patriotism and heroism and sacrifice, the vanquished and the victorious. And I hope, finally, that this is a book of inspiration.”

Charlton completed two other editions of this work, the first in 1990 and the second in 2002. This updated version, released in 2013, contains more than 1,100 quotations and addresses the Gulf War, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and earlier conflicts.

Among the quoted and their quotations:

• Lt. Dan Choi: “’Don’t ask, don’t tell’ is not a joking matter. It is the only law that enforces shame.”

• Bill Clinton: “Just as war is freedom’s cost, disagreement is freedom’s privilege.”

• Gen. Douglas MacArthur: “It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it.”

• John F. Kennedy: “The mere absence of war is not peace.”

• Ronald Reagan: “Here’s my strategy on the Cold War: We win, they lose.”

• Franklin D. Roosevelt: “A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough.”

Momma, Just Shake It!

By Rachel Eagly

At age 25 and just one week after her son was born in 2006, Rachel Eagly suffered a stroke.

The stroke left the 2003 WMU social work alumna with many challenges, including aphasia, a disorder that impairs a person’s ability to form and process language, but does not affect intelligence.

Individuals with aphasia experience difficulty with communication because their ability to access the words necessary for expressing ideas and needs has been damaged. Reading and writing skills may be limited as a result.

As part of therapy that Eagly took part in through the Aphasia Communication Enhancement group at WMU’s Charles Van Riper Language, Speech, and Hearing Clinic, she began writing.

And ultimately, what began as a therapeutic regimen eventually resulted in her illustrated book, “Momma, Just Shake It!”, which offers, for families and children, insight into the impact of stroke and aphasia.

The title refers to her son Aiden’s plea for his mother to simply shake her stroke-paralyzed arm so that it would work properly.

Eagly says Aiden was her source of inspiration for the book and also inspired her to progress through treatment during the long path to recovery.

With the publication of the book, “I’m happy that there is some sort of resource for parents who have had a stroke and aphasia. All I could find before were books about grandparents having a stroke, but not parents,” she says.

National Aphasia Association Executive Director Ellayne Ganzfried became interested in Eagly’s story and shepherded the publication process. The book is available for purchase through the NAA website at aphasia.org/store.
El Sol Elementary students play together after school.

As cultural divides dissolve, a cultural and linguistic anthropologist at Western Michigan University recently launched a study inspired by the fact that some 20 percent of U.S. schoolchildren live in homes in which a language other than English is spoken and that with increasing globalization, bilingualism has been recognized as a critical skill.

Dr. Kristina Wirtz is delving beneath the statistics to research how attitudes about bilingualism may influence the way bilingual children use their dual-language abilities.

“In much of the world, speaking more than one language is the norm. It’s expected,” says Wirtz, an associate professor of anthropology. But in the United States, she says, “bilingualism has sometimes been viewed as a problem to be corrected rather than a strength. Bilingual kids are often under a lot of pressure to speak only English, and they can lose their bilingual skills.”

While anthropology is broadly described as the study of humanity’s culture and biology—past and
present—Wirtz’s focus is on language as a key tool individuals use to navigate their world. She’s interested in how people use language to create, support and maintain their social relationships.

“If culture is the sum of everything learned and shared, how we learn it and soak it up is important,” she says.

“Communication is central to all of this.” El Sol, a bilingual elementary school in the city of Kalamazoo, is providing an apt setting for the professor’s field research.

El Sol was established six years ago as a dual-language elementary school. For half of its school day, all academic subjects are taught only in Spanish and then only in English for the other half.

Roughly 50 percent of the school’s students live in homes where Spanish is the primary language spoken and the remaining students come from English-speaking households, according to Kalamazoo Public Schools.

The idea driving the bilingual school is to use both English and Spanish as resources for learning, including the core academic subjects.

Observing the school day, Wirtz is studying the system of bilingual education from a child’s perspective, how these youngsters—both native English speakers and native Spanish speakers—interact and navigate a rich, bilingual environment.

Students are challenged to understand a second language and also grasp the subject matter at hand, whether the lessons are in math, social studies or science. From what she’s so far observed, Wirtz says that the early days of kindergarten are a struggle for monolingual students. Many were hearing instructions in a language they had no knowledge of, so the 5- and 6-year-old pupils had to develop strategies for understanding.

Observing how kids worked together has been fascinating to Wirtz.

“I hope to see those moments in the day when I catch the students in ‘linguistic play’ and in moments of reflecting on their language learning,” Wirtz says.

“Is there evidence of the English-speaking students accommodating to Spanish when their Spanish-speaking friends are using it? Are students policing each other’s language use or asserting identities based on their dominant languages?”

Students also may use a form of “code-switching,” so when they don’t know a precise term in English or Spanish, they substitute a term in the language they are most comfortable speaking.

Wirtz also is waiting to see how and whether the students engage in “polylanguages”—using bits and pieces of language they may not even understand, for example, when playing with the sounds of a new language. These flexible practices may undermine assumptions about the “standard” conventions of spoken language.

Understanding how students use their language resources flexibly and even playfully is at the heart of the research questions to which Wirtz hopes to find answers in this bilingual environment.

Consequently, Wirtz is attempting to understand how students’ attitudes toward being bilingual shape how they use their speech repertoires—thus improving society’s understanding of children’s language learning and, ultimately, contributing to improved bilingual education.

Wirtz’s research is funded in part by two separate grants totaling about $52,000, from the Spencer Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. W
Our Noisy Planet: Can animals cope with humanity's clamor?
Behavioral ecologist Dr. Sharon Gill gave a talk this fall during which she presented maps graphically illustrating how noisy the world has become.

The maps display sea traffic routes, flight paths and the vast road networks that crisscross the planet. Beyond the ships, planes and road vehicles, add stationary noisemakers such as factories, construction sites and air-conditioning units thrumming outside buildings.

“If you put all of these things together, over the whole earth, there’s almost no space that’s not affected by noise,” says Gill, an assistant professor of biological sciences.

“It’s stressful for us in noisy environments. Research has shown that children, for example, don’t learn as well when they’re in a noisy environment.”

Why has this captured the interest of a scientist who studies animal behavior? While many studies have examined how noise affects humankind, Gill says there is less known about how noise affects wild animals, including how various organisms adjust to the racket around them.

Gill is studying the affect anthropogenic noise—human-generated noise—has on animals, particularly songbirds whose vocalizations may be distorted or masked in an urban soundscape, potentially undermining their success at attracting mates or establishing territory.

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"When you think of human-caused environmental change, climate change is a really obvious example, but there are other ways humans are altering the environment," she says.

The principal investigator on a $303,000 National Science Foundation grant, Gill is pursuing this research with Dr. Koorosh Naghshineh, a professor of mechanical and aeronautical engineering who runs the noise and vibration lab at WMU's engineering college.

With the help of graduate students Jacob Job and Kyle Myers, researchers have been blasting some songbirds’ favorite hangout spots with clips of recorded traffic noise and then analyzing how the animals react as part of their research.

What the researchers learn may prove to be important for animals’ well-being in an increasingly noisy world.

“Acoustic consequences

“The overarching thing that we want to know is: What do animals do when they are living in noisy places, and noise in this context is important because it can mask signals—the sounds that the animals generate. …

“…How do they balance out noise versus finding the best nesting sites, the right food sources and the prevalence of predators. It’s really complex," says Gill who has studied bird behavior for years.

Scientists elsewhere have demonstrated that the engines of container ships can disrupt communication among whales as the marine animals use sounds—signals—to interact with each other as a part of everyday life.

Higher pitch, shortened song

Spectrograms are visual representations of sound, with time along the x axis and frequency on the y axis. The sound of a male chipping sparrow song is indicated with a character that looks similar to a check mark in the spectrograms above. These songs were recorded from the same male chipping sparrow singing near a roadway in Kalamazoo. The length of his song varied considerably, apparently with the intensity of background noise. The researchers’ formal analysis demonstrated that chipping sparrows sometimes sing shorter songs in noisy conditions. They say the strongest evidence suggests that the sparrows sing higher pitched songs in noise, possibly as a way to minimize the masking effect of the noise.
With this NSF-funded grant, the WMU researchers are focusing on songbirds, particularly chipping sparrows, because of their abundant numbers and pervasiveness in both natural settings and certain urban landscapes.

What they learn from observing these sparrows may have application to other species in habitats affected by noise as well.

“When an animal’s signal is masked by noise, it consequently makes communication less efficient. “The sound may not travel as far and that can have a lot of important implications for those animals because they use signals to defend their territories and to attract mating partners and to alert each other about predators and to maintain contact with each other,” Gill says.

In the midst of noise, do the birds change their song? “One of the things we found out is that their songs become shorter,” Naghshineh says of their preliminary findings.

The researchers also have observed the sparrows singing at higher pitches to rise above the low-frequency sounds around them.

What that means for the effectiveness of their signals is not yet clear.

But those impromptu changes in song could pose a potential problem for the male chipping sparrow as he tries to attract a mate.

Singing at a higher pitch “might not be as sexy to the females,” Gill observes.

But these are birds. Can’t they just wing it to some quieter place?

“We can say, ‘There’s always some place else to go.’ But while we’re increasing noise in our environment, we’re also decreasing forests and we’re fragmenting habitat,” Gill notes.

“The bigger picture is all about the fact that we are living in an increasingly noisy world, and we need to understand how that affects natural populations. It’s just one more thing that might influence species persistence. So it is a really big issue.”
Mark A. Anderson, BS ’39, has opened a new restaurant called The Royal Cafe in Centreville, MI.

Greg Brake, BS ’89, has been inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame for outstanding performance in baseball from 1981-84.


Robert Jazwinski, BS ’86, is the new resource room teacher at Mona Shores High School in Muskegon, MI. He also will work with students in track and cross country.

John Offerdal, BS ’90, has been selected to the Miami Dolphins Honor Roll. He was officially honored during halftime of the game between the Dolphins and the Cincinnati Bengals in October.

Marianne P. Vakalis, EdD ’90, is the new provost at Berkeley College. The college has six locations in New Jersey and three in New York.

Lorin Gallivan, BS ’89, MA ’11, is a new resource room teacher at Woodland Elementary School in Portage, MI.

Andrew Widner, BBA ’93, MBA ’98, recently presented at the WMU Haverton College of Business Entrepreneurship Forum. He is the owner of The Spirit of Kalamazoo, a store that offers merchandise for local colleges.

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Jennifer Chinn, BBA ’95, has joined Crain’s Detroit Business as a digital marketing manager.

William Dygert, BBA ’95, is the new principal of Portage (MI) Central Elementary School.

John D. Pierce, BBA ’95, has opened a law practice in Clearwater, FL. He practices in property law, from litigation to estate planning. Pierce also is an adjunct professor for Thomas M. Cooley Law School’s campus in Tampa Bay, FL.

Lisa Walker, MA ’96, a nurse at Bronson Battle Creek (MI) Hospital, was honored with the DAISY Foundation’s DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. The award recognizes the extraordinary work nurses perform on a daily basis in the United States and beyond. The foundation is based in Glen Ellen, CA.

Walker

John Heikka, BS ’96, is a project manager for the Detroit-based construction company Walbridge, in its new West Michigan office in Kalamazoo.

Joy (Kroemer) Dulen, BA ’97, was inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame for her outstanding performance in softball from 1994-95.

Phil McMullen, BBA ’86, was inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame for his outstanding performance in men’s track and field from 1985-96.

Shay Church, BFA ’00, exhibited his sculpture “Ancestor” at the ArtPrize competition this past fall in Grand Rapids, MI.

Nathan L. Smith, BS ’00, MA ’07, is the new principal of Reeths-Puffer Intermediate School in Muskegon, MI.

Jonathan “Scott” VanBonn, BA ’00, is the new principal at Hopkins (MI) Elementary School.

Matt Lynn, MPA ’01, is the new director of community impact for the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region.

Steve Pillon, BS ’01, has won the men’s open singles title as well as the open doubles crown in the Robinson Tennis Tournament at the Port Huron (MI) Tennis House, where he is the head tennis pro.

Erin Sudrovec, BA ’01, MA ’04, is the associate director of alumni and community engagement for the Oakland University Alumni Association in Rochester, MI.

Jennifer Benson, BS ’02, a physician assistant, has joined Bronson Gastroenterology for Bronson Healthcare in Portage, MI.

Kirk Carlson, BA ’03, is a new theater teacher at Muskegon (MI) High School.

Jeffrey Miller, BS ’03, a family nurse practitioner, has joined Borgess Extended Care, an affiliate of Kalamazoo’s Borgess Health that provides care to people in nursing homes, assisted-living and independent-living facilities.

Taimoor Khan, MS ’04, has been hired to serve as a preconstruction services manager for the general contractor and construction management firm Miller-Davis Co. in Kalamazoo.

Earl “Bill” O’Brien, BS ’05, MA ’08, is the new principal of Ross Park Elementary School in Norton Shores, MI.

Bryan Rellinger, MBA ’05, has been named to the board of directors of Tegrit Group, a national retirement plan consulting, plan administration and technology services company with locations in Ohio and Michigan. Rellinger is a vice president in the professional services and education group for Hewlett Packard’s software business unit.

Sarah G. Smith, MA ’05, is a new kindergarten teacher at Central Elementary School in Muskegon, MI.

Dustin M. Hoffman, BA ’06, PhD ’13, has won Burning River Press’ chapbook contest for fiction, which will result in the publication of his collection of linked stories titled “Secrets of the Wild.”

Kristin Koetsier, BS ’06, has been inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame for her outstanding performance in women’s basketball from 2000-03.

Tim Syrek, MA ’06, is the new head coach of the softball program at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI.

John Almeida, BBA ’07, MBA ’08, is the co-developer of a mobile application called NABR. The app helps residents discover interesting events in their neighborhood.

IN MEMORIAM

Wilma C. Rouse, TC ’36, Aug. 16, 2013, in Allegan, MI.

Howard Chapel, BS ’37, Jan. 28, 2013, in Skillman, NJ.

Mabel L. Tickner, BA ’37, MA ’46, July 31, 2013, in Kalamazoo.

Margaret R. (Conor) Polk, BA ’38, TC ’38, Feb. 28, 2013, in Orchard Lake, MI.

Thelma J. VanManen, BS ’39, Sept. 4, 2013, in Jenison, MI.

Thoms (Wells) Kephart-Goodsell, BS ’40, June 18, 2013, in Dowagiac, MI.

Kenneth W. Prescott, BSc ‘42, Aug. 20, 2013, in Austin, TX.

Gertrude R. Rhoades, BA ’42, July 26, 2013, in Wyoming, MI.

Arthur M. Fish, BA ’43, Sept. 10, 2013, in Traverse City, MI.

D. G. Nyhuis, BS ’43, Aug. 6, 2013, in Germantown, TN.

Hilda M. (Osman) Tetzke, BS ’44, MA ’72, Aug. 17, 2013, in South Haven, MI.

Allen W. Bush, BS ’48, Sept. 9, 2013, in Traverse City, MI.

Duane W. Beck, BA ’49, Aug. 9, 2013, in Cleveland.

Thomas F. Bubin, BA ’49, Aug. 6, 2013, in Portage, MI.

Joan (Johnson) Adams, SC ’48, BA ‘50, Aug. 9, 2012, in Las Vegas, NV.

Natalie H. (Holman) Colier, BS ’56, Jan. 8, 2013, in Auburn, IN.

John D. Dobbie, BA ’50, Aug. 7, 2013, in Portage, MI.

Bruce K. Hamilton, BSc ’50, July 11, 2013, in San Bruno, CA.

Philip Martinez, BS ’50, Aug. 16, 2013, in Kalamazoo.

James L. Betchek, BS ’51, MA ’61, Sept. 22, 2013, in Berrien Springs, MI.
Ever since the first electric light was invented, the American night has become steadily brighter. Darkness needed to see things like the Milky Way is disappearing, says Mark Miller, a WMU physics instructor and astronomer. “This has been true for the last 50 years—longer than that, but really noticeable during that time, and gradual, so that it’s one of those things you may not notice happening unless you think back to the sky you remember as a kid,” Miller says.

Miller says he asks his astronomy students how many of them have ever seen the Milky Way. Only about a quarter typically raise their hands. “In downtown Kalamazoo, you will see only several dozen of the brightest stars,” Miller says. “You will see no trace whatsoever of the Milky Way. You will maybe be able to make out the Big Dipper and a few of the bright stars, maybe four or five stars in Orion. But that’s about it.”

The culprit is old, outdated lighting that wastes money by illuminating the sky, Miller says. The situation could be mitigated by replacing old lighting with more advanced LED street lights that use less energy.

“Lighting design has traditionally been pretty poor, so we are spending about a billion dollars a year, as a country, lighting up the sky, instead of sending the light where it will actually help people walk and drive and so forth,” Miller says. “And so that’s a huge waste.”

Things are actually improving slowly with the replacement of old lighting, Miller says. But it will take time for all the inefficient lighting to be replaced, and there will never be a return to a truly dark sky in developed areas.

“We have all this wonderful consumer-grade telescope equipment, cheaper than ever in real terms,” Miller says, “mass-produced computerized telescopes that, with the push of a button will take you to any object you want. But if you can’t see them when you look through the eyepiece, it’s no use.”

This image of Michigan and other Great Lakes states was taken by the crew of Expedition 30 on board the International Space Station. It’s one still in a sequence of images shot during a pass from northern Mexico to northwest New Brunswick on Jan. 30, 2012.
Alumna’s desire to help ‘make the world a better place’ leads to Afghanistan

Alison Case was still a child when she came to the conclusion that the world is too big, too fascinating and too accessible to limit herself to a small patch of it.

So, she didn’t. She hasn’t.

A voracious curiosity meant Case devoted social studies in school, was a teenage exchange student in Japan, learned a second language and once toured Europe as a bassist—all before high school graduation.

Enter Western Michigan University and Case’s curiosity about nations joined an emerging desire to also make a positive difference in the world she felt compelled to explore.

Today, the 30-year-old from Norton Shores, Mich., works in Kabul, Afghanistan, as a project development officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

She began her latest USAID assignment in October.

“USAID has a large presence in Afghanistan and it’s a part of the world I had never been to and to me it represents a new challenge because we have so many programs,” she says.

While it’s well reported that other aspects of the U.S. government are involved in Afghanistan militarily, there’s ongoing development work in the nation.

Afghanistan is one of the more than 100 countries in which USAID, a U.S. government agency, is present providing economic, humanitarian and other aid.

Case’s job in the South Asian nation involves designing projects primarily in democracy and governance efforts.

This is her second post since joining USAID in 2011; her first international assignment was as a program officer in the southeastern European countries of Serbia and Montenegro.

“The programs we had in Serbia and Montenegro focused on economic growth, democracy and governance…to strengthen democratic institutions and processes.

“For me, my most rewarding project there was developing our five-year strategy for USAID Serbia. It lays out the USAID plan for how it will deliver foreign assistance in Serbia, advancing economic growth and democratic institution development,” she says.

Path to diplomacy

Case had her first meaningful insights into the field of international diplomacy when she was a student at WMU.

“A foreign service officer came to visit the political science department. He spoke with us about what the foreign service is and what the career is like,” Case recalls.

Listening to the presentation, she was fascinated by the idea of working abroad as a diplomat.

“That seed planted, through her studies at WMU, Case continued pursuing her longstanding interest in learning about the world and its people.

He helped make it less of an abstract idea,” she says.

IN MEMORIAM Continued from page 31
An international and comparative politics major and Lee Honors College student, she studied abroad for a year at a Japanese university, tutored adults as an English as a Second Language volunteer in Kalamazoo and her senior year decided to apply for the Peace Corps after meeting a recruiter on campus.

In 2005, within months of graduating from WMU, Case began a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Ukraine.

“I was open to anywhere, so it was a pleasant surprise to be assigned to Ukraine. It was part of the world that I hadn’t imagined myself working in because I didn’t know that much about it,” Case says.

In Horokhiv, Ukraine, she served as a language teacher and also taught social studies at a high school and middle school.

Though she hadn’t studied teaching and couldn’t speak Ukranian initially, the Peace Corps’ intense pre-assignment training quickly brought her up to speed.

“They really have mastered (training) over the years because that was probably the fastest I’ve learned a foreign language,” Case says.

While in her Ukranian community, Case created an English language resource center with books donated from entities in the United States. And she secured a grant to purchase computer and office equipment so that students and teachers could practice their English and use the Internet.

“I wanted to help other countries, knowing that when we help other countries, we ultimately make the world a better place,” she says.

With that end in mind, Case doesn’t seem worried about her new USAID assignment working in a nation, Afghanistan, that’s been beset by conflict and dangerous internal instability for years.

“It will pose some challenges, but in all work environments, we have challenges and we find ways to overcome them… My family is very supportive of my career. They know I am in it because I want to make the world a better place.”

Following her assignment in Afghanistan, Case’s next stop with USAID is expected to be in Kenya. W
The Super Decathlon, an aircraft typically used for high-performance aerobatics, is the newest addition to the College of Aviation's student-training fleet. Aviation students will pilot this aircraft for “upset training,” which involves learning how to regain control of an aircraft during an unexpected event that puts the plane in an unusual attitude. Put more simply, “an airliner can get knocked upside down,” says Steve Jones, executive director of flight operations. “The trick is to figure out what to do next so that the airplane recovers. This training makes for a much more robust, much more proficient pilot.”