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Newsletter

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9-2016

## Connections, 09/2016

College of Health and Human Services

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September 2016

Welcome the CHHS class of 2020

The fall semester began on Sept. 6 and campus was once again bustling with more than 23,000 students. The College of Health and Human Services welcomed its incoming class of 2020. Before the annual matriculation ceremony, the freshmen [paused in the courtyard behind Knauss Hall for a photo](#). Welcome, freshmen!



[CHHS tops \\$6.2 million in external funding for 2015-16](#)

The College of Health and Human Services performed very well during the last academic year with regard to external funding for research, bringing in more than \$6 million in awards. The University as a whole ended the year on a strong note, and 2016-17 is off to a good start.



[WMU OT students move into assisted living home for unprecedented research](#)

Three Western Michigan University graduate students moved into a Grand Rapids retirement and assisted living community for a research project that's unparalleled nationwide.



### [Master of Public Health program welcomes first cohort](#)

The fall semester brought with it the first cohort for the new Master of Public Health program from the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs. The new program is offered in a hybrid format, featuring mostly online coursework, with face-to-face meetings limited to two weekends each semester at WMU's downtown Grand Rapids location.



### [AHEC Comedy Night raises funds and laughs](#)

Something funny happened on the evening of Sept. 22. The Western Regional Area Health Education Center (AHEC) held its very first Comedy Night fundraiser to support the new Health and Human Services Summer Pipeline Program.



### [Center for Fostering Success helps students transition from care to college to career](#)

For students aging out of the foster care system and going to college, the unknowns often outnumber the knowns. Under direction of **Yvonne Unrau** in the School of Social Work, the Center for Fostering Success provides a network of support on campus, in Michigan and across the nation.



### [WMU's Children's Trauma Assessment Center boosting its role in community trauma training](#)

A significant offering from WMU's Children's Trauma Assessment Center is trauma informed training. CTAC now offers training for anyone in the community who wants to learn about the impacts of childhood trauma. Training sessions are offered on campus, and topics vary.



CHHS in Social Media



Visit the WMU [Department of Occupational Therapy](#) at their new [Facebook](#) page.



In other news

Here are some other WMU news articles you might be interested in:

- [State of the University address, revamped convocation set for Sept. 30](#)
- [Revised strategic plan being implemented through 2020](#)
- [Science, humanities intersect in upcoming speaker series](#)

CHHS on Facebook and Instagram

The College of Health and Human Services is on [Facebook](#) AND [Instagram](#)! Please take a moment to "like" and "follow" us to stay informed on what's going on throughout the college.



## CHHS tops \$6.2 million in research funding for 2015-16

The College of Health and Human Services performed very well during the last fiscal year with regard to external funding, bringing more than \$6.2 million in awards to the University.

The college received \$6,263,372 during the 2015-16 fiscal year, which represents 27% of the [University's total for that time period](#), the largest proportion represented by any one college. By comparison, in 2014-15, the college received \$4.8 million in awards.



CHHS faculty prepared and submitted approximately 30 proposals totaling more than \$9 million in funding. That's more proposals and more funding than the college has sought than in any other year in the last five years.

Leading the way for the college was the Center for Disability Services, which garnered four awards totaling \$2.7 million. The School of Social Work received five awards totaling more than \$1.2 million.

Many of our faculty members are active researchers, and their research, scholarly activities and service make a significant contribution to their health and human services disciplines and to their teaching. We are proud of our research and service accomplishments, and we are actively seeking ways to recognize service and expand the research capabilities and scholarly productivity of college faculty.

Many thanks to the faculty, staff and students who work so hard in research and scholarly pursuits to make the College of Health and Human Services a prestigious place to teach, work and learn.

## Master of Public Health program welcomes first cohort

The fall semester brought with it the first cohort for the new [Master of Public Health](#) program from the [School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs](#).

"I was very pleased to see 25 students enrolled in the program for fall," said **Dr. Bob Wertkin**, director of the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs. "We knew there were students interested in programs like this and we found more than we expected for the first cohort."



*WMU-Grand Rapids, downtown location*

The new program is offered in a hybrid format, featuring mostly online coursework, with face-to-face meetings limited to two weekends each semester at WMU's downtown Grand Rapids location. The hybrid format allows students to earn their master's degree without interfering with their work and home schedules.

"Our first face-to-face meetings were last weekend," said **Dr. Vivian Valdmanis**, MPH program coordinator. "Our students were impressed with this beautiful facility and they're excited about the public health material we're providing -- including the latest information about public health policy and issues."

Rather than focusing on one specific aspect of public health, WMU's MPH program is a generalist degree, focusing on five core areas within public health:

- Biostatistics
- Environmental health sciences
- Epidemiology
- Health services administration
- Social and behavioral sciences

The broader scope of the program will prepare graduates for a number of careers in the expanding area of public health.

More information about the Master of Public Health program is available at [wmich.edu/healthprograms](http://wmich.edu/healthprograms).

# AHEC Comedy Night raises funds and laughs

Something funny happened on Sept. 22. The Western Regional Area Health Education Center (AHEC) held its very first **Comedy Night** fundraiser to support the new [Health and Human Services Summer Pipeline Program](#).



There is evidence that laughter, while not necessarily "the best medicine," is immensely important to health care and healing. With that in mind, AHEC put together a program that would please attendees while raising money for this important program.

Comedians Tim Cusak, Joe Anderson, Ben Wilke and Dave Dyer delighted the nearly sold out crowd with an evening of stand-up comedy and improvisation focused on the more humorous aspects of health care.

"I especially want to thank our sponsors: Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial, Mercy Health, Michigan Blood and WMU's Extended University Programs," said **Lisa Brennan**, executive director of the Western Regional AHEC. "Because of them, we were able to put nearly 100% of the proceeds back into the program."



The event was held in the [newly redesigned Woodland Suites](#) conference center at the WMU-Grand Rapids Beltline location.

The Health and Human Services Summer Pipeline Program, announced earlier this year and beginning with summer 2017, will support high school graduates from disadvantaged and underrepresented areas in the AHEC catchment area, housing them for a summer session at WMU's main campus in Kalamazoo, allowing them to begin classes that September having already earned 12 credit hours.

# WMU's Children's Trauma Assessment Center boosting its role in community trauma training

A significant offering from Western Michigan University's Children's Trauma Assessment Center in the Unified Clinics is trauma informed training. Not only do staff train whole organizations nationwide, CTAC is now offering training for anyone in the community who wants to learn about the impacts of childhood trauma. Training sessions are offered on campus, and topics vary.

CTAC, which was founded by **Dr. James Henry** (center director and social work professor), **Connie Black-Pond** (clinical director), **Dr. Ben Atchison** (occupational therapy professor), **Dr. Mark Sloane**, (behavioral pediatrician) and **Dr. Yvette Hyter** (speech and language professor), opened its doors in early 2000. For the past 16 years the center has provided comprehensive neurodevelopmental trauma assessments for more than 3,300 children who have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences.



*Dr. James Henry presents to a full auditorium on Aug. 10.*

During their most recent training, CTAC featured a four-part series with more than 125 attendees. The topics were "Understanding Trauma and Toxic Stress," "Building Resilience and Responding to Trauma-based Behaviors," "Intergenerational Trauma and Parent-Child Attachment" and "Secondary Traumatic Stress and Self Care." Participants came from all over southwest Michigan from school systems, hospitals, intermediate school districts, departments of health and human services, area non-profits, etc.

For more information, or to schedule a training, please visit our [website](#).