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International Festival draws thousands

Western Michigan University's 2008 International Festival attracted nearly 3,000 people to the Bernhard Center March 25 to sample culinary delights and cultural displays representing more than 15 countries.

Hailed as WMU's annual global open house, the festival provides an opportunity for international students enrolled at WMU, with the help of domestic students, to showcase their homeland food and culture for the University community and the community-at-large. Fifteen international student organizations supported by 200 volunteers hosted the event, which included ethnic music, dancing and a fashion show featuring traditional clothing from many countries.

The festival is the largest of many activities planned each year that bring international and domestic students together for fun and culturally enriching activities, said Kimberly Ritter, coordinator of international student activities, who worked closely on the festival with Jordan Hochstetler, International Festival programming chair and the sponsoring organizations.

Photo: Some of the native clothing modeled during the fashion show
"Students often say to me that their most memorable experience at Western Michigan University is their participation in the International Festival," Ritter said. "In preparation for this event, international student organizations come together with numerous student volunteers for a planning period of five months. The result is a process of sharing, learning, and growing together through hard work, dedication, and appreciation. International Festival was recently named by the student body as one of WMU’s "100 Points of Pride"—a true testament to the impact it has on all students at Western Michigan University."

First place for Outstanding Table Display was awarded to the Saudi Students' Association, which participated in the festival for the first time. "We worked hard to do this—we wanted to show our culture to the Kalamazoo and University communities," said Hashim Al-Sharif, a sophomore at Western and a member the Saudi Student Association.

Wilson “Bill” Woods, associate dean of the Haenicke Institute for Global Education, served as one of the six judges who evaluated the display tables just before the festival opened doors to the public. He said WMU has been hosting an international festival since the early 1960s.

*Photo: First place for Outstanding Table Display was awarded to the Saudi Students' Association*

“With the possible exception of intercollegiate athletics, no event brings town and gown together like the International Festival,” said Woods, a 20-plus year veteran of international education at WMU. "This unique form of celebration helps draw the international community, WMU students, and area families closer together as foods are sampled, cultural displays admired, and conversations exchanged. The turnout and positive reactions to the International Festival testified to the hard work and enthusiasm of WMU's international students. We were particularly pleased to see many children in attendance."

The festival is organized by the International Programs Council and the Campus Activities Board. Sponsors include the Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Education's International Students and Services Affairs office, Student Activities and Leadership Programs, Division of Student Affairs, University Cultural Events committee, Graduate Student Advisory Committee, and the Western
43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies in May

Thousands of scholars and aficionados of the Middle Ages will gather May 8 to May 11 at Western Michigan University for the 43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies sponsored by WMU’s internationally renowned Medieval Institute.

By far the world’s largest annual gathering of medievalists, the congress attracted more than 3,200 people in 2007. It is by far the world’s largest annual gathering of medievalists, the congress attracted more than 3,200 people in 2007. It began as a biennial regional conference on medieval studies launched by the Medieval Institute in 1962, which became an annual event in 1970.

The growth of the conference both in prestige and size in the late 1970s and the 1980s can be traced to the efforts of Otto Gründler, director of the Medieval Institute from 1976 until his retirement in 1994. During Gründler’s directorship, international participation in the conference increased, and the event took on the name “International Congress on Medieval Studies.”

Institute Director James Murray said the 2008 congress features more than 600 sessions of scholarly papers, panel discussions, roundtables, workshops, and performances.

“Madeline Caviness delivering a congress plenary lecture in WMU’s Bernhard Center

“It’s mouthwatering,” Murray said. “Each year’s congress program attests to the abundance of subjects, people, and imaginative approaches to all aspects of the Middle Ages. The academic
program is the heart of the congress, but there are also some 90 business meetings and receptions, and the exhibit hall boasts nearly 70 exhibitors, including publishers, used book dealers, and purveyors of medieval sundries.”

Brett Berquist, executive director of international programs in the Haenicke Institute for Global Education, said WMU’s Medieval Congress and the Medieval Institute foster many international connections for WMU students and faculty. Researcher Carole Hutchison published an important work on the Grandmontine order and presented a paper at the congress in the 1980s. As a result of this connection, for more than a decade, Western sent students to participate in an archaeological dig at Rauzet, near Angouleme, France. Students from the Medieval Studies program learned excavation and documentation techniques and lived in a summer community of people from all walks of life interested in this period of history. A former graduate student in the Medieval Studies program, Dr. E. Rozanne Elder, is now the director of WMU’s Institute of Cistercian Studies and Cistercian Publications, another important center of study for this period.

“When I joined WMU in 2003 and began to visit some of our programs overseas, I was consistently surprised to see how far-reaching our reputation is because of this congress,” Berquist said. “In several countries, faculty sought me out during a relatively brief visit to their campus to share their fond memories of the Medieval Congress. During my first visit to Keio University in Tokyo, I was received by Andrew Armour, Cambridge Ph.D. and director of the international center. He had presented a paper in Kalamazoo many years earlier comparing the medieval concept of chivalry in Europe to samurai culture in Japan. Otto Gründler played a role in many international programs at Western as did former director Paul Szarmach. We look forward to working with James Murray in the future.”
The congress traditionally attracts participants from the United States, Canada, and Europe, as well as the Pacific Rim. Less well represented are the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. The Medieval Institute makes a concerted effort to draw scholars from underrepresented regions of the world to the congress through a program of competitive travel awards for those presenting papers. In 2008, scholars from Russia and Bulgaria will be supported through this program.

Additionally, scholars from Columbia, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, and Venezuela will present papers this year. The congress also has a rich history of hosting sessions on Iberian studies, both historical and literary. The strength of that academic program will be complemented by a traveling art exhibition, to be mounted in Waldo Library, featuring modern prints and photography inspired by the famous pilgrimage routes to Santiago.

![](image)

*Medieval architecture in Rauzet, near Angouleme, France*

Learned societies, associations, and institutions that are affiliated with the Medieval Institute organize about 70 percent of the congress sessions. Although the organizations sponsoring sessions are largely based in North America, several centers for medieval studies at universities in the United Kingdom and continental Europe regularly sponsor sessions. The Medieval and Early Modern English Studies Association of Korea (MEMESAK) has been sponsoring sessions at the congress since 2002, and in recent years Dublin’s Discovery Programme has been a constant presence.

Congress registration is free for WMU faculty, staff, and students and for Kalamazoo County residents, so long as they register online by April 15. (A $50 late fee is assessed after April 15.) Information about the congress, including a link to online registration, is available at [www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress).

Contact: Medieval Institute; e-mail: [medieval-institute@wmich.edu](mailto:medieval-institute@wmich.edu); 269-387-8745.
Three languages not enough for double-major freshman

When WMU freshman Martin Bragalone learned he'd have the opportunity to meet Chinese students in a United Nations summer program last year he prepped for the trip by studying Chinese.

A student of Spanish and Japanese stretching back to his middle school days, Bragalone, a 19-year-old graduate of Chelsea High School, always welcomes the chance to meet people from distant corners of the globe and learn to converse in a new language. It’s a passion prompted by the Japanese exchange students that his family welcomed to his home from middle school through high school and a home stay in Japan he experienced the summer after 7th grade.

“The people taking us on the trip taught us as much Japanese as they could before we went,” said Bragalone, who is majoring in global and international studies and Spanish and minoring in Japanese. “I learned a great deal in a short time. I spoke with the mayor of Shimizu in his chambers in his language and he immediately asked me to sign an official document and to have my photo taken with him. I saw the impression you can make with people by knowing their language. Knowing the history and culture is impressive, but communicating with people in their own language is the biggest cultural bridge.”
His study of Spanish began in seventh grade and continues. He polished his speaking skills outside his Chelsea classrooms in nearby Ann Arbor, doing what any language teacher will tell you is the best way to improve—immerse yourself in a situation where you will be surrounded by native speakers.

“I really devoted myself to Spanish in high school and no matter how unpolished my skills were I was going to use it,” Bragalone said. “Living near Ann Arbor gave me a huge gateway to use Spanish constantly, meet people and make new friends. That helped me advance my speaking and listening skills well beyond my classmates.”

When the time came to consider his college choices, Bragalone said his top two priorities were a strong foreign language department and a diverse catalogue of study abroad programs. His list included Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Eastern Michigan University and Western. In a campus visit to WMU, he discovered what he was seeking.

“When I got to Sprau Tower, I was so impressed that two foreign language professors, Peter Blickle and Cynthia Running-Johnson, dropped what they were doing to speak with me about this campus,” he said. “I learned about the many study abroad programs offered, especially for Japan. Then Kevin Knutson in the College of Arts and Sciences sold me on the global and international studies major because it offered the flexibility to study culture, history and language—an interdisciplinary focus. That was quite unique compared to what the other universities are offering.”

Bragalone was also pleased to learn that day that WMU hosts several international student organizations, including the Japan Club, which Dr. Jeffrey Angles, assistant professor of Japanese and associate director or WMU’s Michitoshi Soga Japan Center, told him about in a brief meeting during his campus visit. Coincidentally, the two met officers from the Japan Club as they were exiting Sprau Tower.
“The club president and vice president were right outside the door,” he said. “Dr. Angles introduced us and I got right into the club scene. That day sold me on WMU.”

In January, Bragalone began the GIS core course, INTL 2000 Introduction to Global and International Studies, taught by Dr. Donald McCloud, dean of the Haenicke Institute for Global Education and former executive director of the Malaysian-American Commission on Educational Exchange. He said the course integrates politics, history and economics with cultural, sociological linguistic elements.

“Dr. McCloud has many interesting theories about the power struggles between ethnic and religious groups, questions of national identity, nation state models and integrated national identity,” he said. “The course allows us to consciously and unconsciously bind all these elements together with the goal of focusing our attention on globalization. I am sure I am getting more out of this class than I realize even now.”

WMU International Academic Programs

Russian motherland enriches study abroad work

The road to Kalamazoo for Study Abroad Coordinator Anastasia Kaml began in her birthplace, Kishinev, capital city of Moldova in the former Soviet Republic, and led her to a career well-known to her relatives and ancestors.

At left: Kaml in Moscow, St. Basil Cathedral, Red Square

Kaml holds a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in foreign languages and literature from the Pedagogical Institute, Saratov State University, Russia. Following graduation, she was employed at her alma mater for seven years by the Office of International Relations. She worked her way up the ladder to chief coordinator for international programs, interfacing with faculty, staff and students from various countries, including England, the United States, France, China, Canada and Turkey.
“My family has been involved in education for generations and I was taught how important learning is for personal growth and career,” said Kaml, who joined the Haenicke Institute's study abroad office in September 2006. “Spending my school and college years traveling made me realize how beneficial it is to merge other cultures. It gives us a broad global perspective and shapes our lives in interesting ways. I wanted to be part of this exciting process and open doors for those who are willing to join our international community.”

A large part of Kaml’s responsibilities at Saratov State University was facilitating and coordinating international partnership projects. As part of a “Russian-American Partnership in Education” project, she traveled to the United States in 2001 to work and study at East Carolina University in North Carolina.

“The necessity of a global education is a reality now,” she said. “Studying abroad is so enriching academically and gives people a competitive advantage when seeking employment. More and more companies nowadays are looking to hire people with international educational experience. The key for success is to understand world processes and to learn as much as possible from other cultures. Our study abroad office plays a very important role of educating, guiding and helping students to gain a global perspective.”

Of all the places she’s visited, including Turkey, Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada, Kaml claims Austria and her birthplace as her favorites.

“Austria impressed me with its historical and cultural heritage, she said. “I love the snow-covered mountains of Salzburg and seeing all the gorgeous old castles are the icing on the cake. Moldova is a small but beautiful country with a great spirit, sunny meadows and picturesque vineyards, home to wonderfully hospitable people.

Anastassia resides in Mattawan, a bit west of Kalamazoo, with her husband, Craig Kaml, associate dean of WMU’s EXTended University Programs, and a son. As often as possible, her Russian grandmother, “Granny,” comes for extended visits and sends Kaml to work with mouth-watering Russian dishes to share with her co-workers. In her spare time, she enjoys downhill skiing, golf, reading and riding her motorcycle.

“Most of all I like spending time with my family, traveling, cooking Russian and Moldavian food, or playing board games,” she said.
Kaml and her family’s dog, Mashenka

Kaml primarily advises students planning study abroad trips to Russia, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, Australia and New Zealand. She can be reached in the study abroad office at (269) 387-5890, or e-mail: study-abroad@wmich.edu

WMU and Haenicke Institute representatives land in Middle East and India

Kristina Evans, international student admissions counselor, and Robert Dlouhy, a master faculty specialist in the institute’s Career English Center for International Students canvas the Middle East.

WMU delegation visits "Incredible India " to promote transnational education: Catherine Fuller, TNE director, Dr. Ajay Samant, associate dean and professor of finance in WMU’s Haworth College of Business and Dr. Ajay Gupta, professor of computer science conducted three site visits and met with various government and university officials.

International Education Week 2012

Geography quiz bowls, international cuisines and cultural performances, and a traditional Thanksgiving dinner are scheduled for Western Michigan University’s celebration of International Education Week, Monday through Saturday, Nov. 14-19.

The week is a joint initiative of the U.S. departments of State and Education that promotes programs that prepare Americans for a global environment, as well as attracting future leaders from abroad to study, learn and exchange experiences in the United States.
A wide variety of entertaining and educational events hosted by WMU registered student organizations and campus offices have been scheduled for the local observance. The events will take place on WMU's main campus throughout the week, and most are free and open to the public.

“International Education: Inspiring Students Locally to Succeed Globally” is the theme for this year's International Education Week, which is being organized by WMU's Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Education.

The theme reflects sentiments about International Education Week expressed by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan when he said: “It celebrates the benefits of understanding the world around us so we can better communicate and collaborate with others from different cultures. It is an ideal opportunity to inspire students to broaden their horizons through global learning, foreign languages and international exchange.”

WMU International Education Week 2012 events

All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted

**Monday, November 14**

**CELCIS Language Exchange**

2 to 4 p.m.

Bernhard Center Room 208

How quickly can you learn a foreign language? Test your skills with international students. Make new friends and have fun!

**China Quiz Bowl**

6 to 8 p.m.

Bernhard Center Room 213

Team up with native Chinese speakers to test your knowledge about Chinese culture, geography, and language. Meet new people, make new friends, and win prizes! Space is limited; register online at www.wmich.edu/confucius

**Tuesday, November 15**

**Study Abroad Info Table**

1 to 3 p.m.

Bernhard Center food court

Study abroad specialists and former study abroad students will host an informational table on the lower level near the food court.
Kenyan Night
7 to 9 p.m.
Venue: Contact Denis at intl-specialprojects@wmich.edu for more info

Enjoy Kenyan cuisine, music and dance performances as WMU student from Kenya share their culture.

**Wednesday November 16**
**Tai Chi Hour**
4 to 5 p.m.
Bernhard Center 213

Experience the ancient slow-motion Chinese martial art of Tai Chi. Learn about balance, strength, and personal harmony. Space is limited; register online at www.wmich.edu/confucius

**Geography Bowl**
3 to 5 p.m.
Bernhard Center Room 208

Match your world geography wits against others in a trivia bowl presented by WMU’s Geography Department.

**Thursday, November 17**
**Study Abroad Info Table**
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bernhard Center food court

Study abroad specialists and former study abroad students will host an informational table on the lower level near the food court.

**American Thanksgiving Adventure**
11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Kanley Chapel

Learn the historical background of the Thanksgiving holiday, while enjoying a typical Thanksgiving dinner, including roasted turkey, mashed potatoes, and pie.
Dominican Night
7:30 to 9 p.m.
Venue: Contact Denis at intl-specialprojects@wmich.edu for info

Immerse yourself in the Dominican culture with a photo exhibit presented by the Dominican Student Organization. Of course the vibrant food and music of the DR will be showcased as well.

Friday, November 18
Window to China
2 to 5 p.m.
Bernhard Center Room 212

Have your named painted in Chinese characters, listen to traditional Chinese instruments, wear traditional Chinese clothes, and have your photo taken in front of the Great Wall! Pick up information about WMU Chinese language and cultural classes, plus study abroad opportunities and scholarships.

Japan Festival
4 to 6:30 p.m.
Kanley Chapel-Social Room

Japan’s rich culture, including traditional food and dance, will be showcased by the Japan Club.

Malaysian Night
6 to 9 p.m.
Bernard Center-South Ballroom

Malaysian food, fashions and dance will be featured at this event planned by the Malaysian Student Association.

Saturday, November 19
ISA – Legally Desi 2011
7 to 10 p.m.
Miller Auditorium

Indian dance performances, skits, a multimedia presentation and a fashion show with Indian snacks hosted by the Indian Student Association. Tickets free for WMU students; $7 for non-WMU students.

Questions about the events may be directed to Denis Mursoi, WMU international programming intern, at: intl-specialprojects@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5872.
CELCIS grammarian passionate about skiing, gardening, iPod

CELCIS Master Faculty Specialist Tom Marks and his wife know how to make their kids’ eyes roll at the dinner table—talk about work.

Marks has been teaching in WMU’s Career English Language Center for International Students for 12 years, and his wife, Lisa, is the writing center supervisor at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. He said dinner table conversations are often about teaching and writing, "while the kids roll their eyes."

Teaching English as a second language is something Marks began doing in 1985 as a Literacy Volunteer in Santa Fe, New Mexico, helping Mexican kids learn to speak English. He followed that experience with five years of teaching in Japan, while traveling throughout Asia (Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, India, and Nepal). Back in the states, he worked at Ferris State University teaching in the Intensive English program before landing at WMU.

"My wife has family in Kalamazoo, so this was a good move for us," Marks said. "I am currently teaching only one class—Advanced Reading/Writing—because I also do some administrative work for CELCIS. I have been the Curriculum Coordinator for the past two years, responsible for supervising and training new teachers. This is my last semester as Curriculum Coordinator."

Marks returns to a full-time teaching schedule in Summer I, which entails classes and office hours from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. He grades papers and prepares for class after dinner each night.

"It's a busy day and by far the most rewarding aspect of my job is interacting with international students," he said. "It's very rewarding to connect with students, to teach something and watch the expressions on their faces when they finally understand— it's the best part of teaching. My students have also taught me a lot about their cultures and about how to teach. I feel very lucky to have this kind of experience."

He recently returned from a week-long writing class at the University of Tokyo, where he helped philosophy graduate students and professors revise articles and theses for publication. This class was organized through WMU’s Michitoshi Soga Japan Center.
"The students and professors were pleased with the class and want me to teach it again in December 2008," said Marks, who professes a love for travel. "It was great to return to Tokyo—I hadn’t been there in 20 years!"

Marks’ hobbies are skiing in the winter, gardening in the summer, playing with his iPod year round, and advancing his knowledge of the English language.

"I am interested in developing a deeper understanding of English grammar and the history of the English language," he said. "I am also very interested in writing—I taught the English 105 writing class at WMU for many years. Finally, I love literature, especially British and Japanese."
WMU’s Career English Language Center for International Students was founded in 1975 and is fully accredited. Its seven faculty specialists and master faculty specialists hold advanced training in ESL and/or applied linguistics and enjoy tenure-track faculty status. WMU CELCIS is one of two Michigan-based English as a Second Language (ESL) programs accredited by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) and is a member of the American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP) and University and College Intensive English Programs (UCIEP). CELCIS enrolls more than 100 students per term.

Visit CELCIS online