2017

College of Arts and Sciences Magazine: 2017

College of Arts and Sciences

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cas_news

Part of the Higher Education Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
College of Arts and Sciences, "College of Arts and Sciences Magazine: 2017" (2017). College of Arts and Sciences news. 55.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cas_news/55

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts and Sciences at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Arts and Sciences news by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.
Political Ambition

Also Inside –

Breaking Down Autism’s Barriers
Lighting Up Cancer
Embracing the Inkstone
Greetings From the Dean to our Alumni and Friends

Dear Friends and Alumni,

We are delighted to bring you this first issue of Arts and Sciences Magazine, a new annual publication from the Western Michigan University College of Arts and Sciences. Every day, the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who comprise our shared community are accomplishing remarkable things. As I think you will discern as you read the stories inside, it is truly an exciting time in the college and at WMU.

We welcome WMU’s ninth president, Dr. Edward Montgomery, who took the helm Aug. 1. Dr. Montgomery is a distinguished scholar, and we are particularly pleased to welcome him to the College of Arts and Sciences, where he holds the rank of professor in the Department of Economics.

This issue also features many individuals who exemplify the mission articulated in our new college strategic plan: to fuel and sustain a passion for learning and discovery in the humanities, social sciences and sciences to help students, staff and faculty succeed in life and contribute to the betterment of our communities, from local to global. Among them:

• Our Department of Political Science and Capital Internship Program, led for four decades by Dr. David Houghton, has provided nearly 1,000 students with bipartisan opportunities to work closely with state representatives, senators, lobbyists, judges and other government officials, and to help craft policies that impact our communities.

• Faculty and students in our Department of Psychology apply their scholarly expertise to bring transformative change to the lives of children and families at the Kalamazoo Autism Center.

• Biological sciences alumnus Dr. Jim Olson, B.S. ‘84, brings exceptional creativity to his development of Tumor Paint, a fluorescent tag derived from scorpion venom that provides pediatric oncologists a remarkable new tool to excise brain cancer.

• And finally, Dr. Jeffrey Angles, professor of Japanese and recent winner of the prestigious Yomiuri Prize for Literature, is a renowned translator and poet, whose work provides a window into the beauty of another culture.

You’ll also find stories and updates about academic programs, such as the recently reinstated African American and African Studies major and minor, faculty accolades, including two prestigious National Science Foundation CAREER award winners, and much more. It is truly an honor and a pleasure for me to learn more each day about the exceptional work of our talented and dedicated community. I hope you enjoy this inaugural issue of Arts and Sciences Magazine. Please stay in touch.

Best Regards,

Carla Koretsky, Ph.D.
Dean

The College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan 2017

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Mission

Our mission is to ignite and sustain a passion for learning and discovery in the humanities, social sciences and sciences, to help students, staff and faculty succeed in life and contribute to the betterment of our communities, from local to global.

Our Vision

Our vision is to achieve excellence in all aspects of learning and discovery across the humanities, social sciences and sciences while fostering a climate of intellectual freedom, diversity and inclusion.

OUR CORE VALUES

Collaboration  We promote an atmosphere in which staff, faculty, students and community collaborate in their discovery, learning and engagement.

Creativity  We cherish intellectual vitality and innovation, driven by curiosity and critical thinking.

Equity  We are committed to an inclusive and equitable community comprised of diverse faculty, staff and students.

Integrity  We seek to operate in an environment that features accountability, transparency and respect.

Intellectual Freedom  In a spirit of civility, we value intellectual freedom and the open exchange of ideas in our inquiry, discovery and learning.

Financial Sustainability  We work to be financially accountable and viable through sustainable operations, programs and outcomes.

Student Success  We center students’ needs in our academic planning, policies and programs to enable learners to meet their educational goals.
Features

Arts and Sciences News 2
WMU's New President
Arts and Sciences Fulbright Scholars
Sports Media Students Work With ESPN

Political Ambition 8
Interns Strike Gold at Michigan State Capitol and Beyond

Breaking Down Autism's Barriers 12
The Kalamazoo Autism Center, One Year Later

Lighting Up Cancer 14
Dr. Jim Olson, B.S. '84, Advances Cancer Treatment Through Scorpion Venom

Embracing the Inkstone 18
Dr. Jeffrey Angles Wins Japan's Most Prestigious Prize for Literature

Peer Coaching 21
Bringing Students One Step Closer to Graduation

Surprise Scholarship 22
Unexpected Award Benefits Nearly 100 Students

Transforming the Schmaltz Museum 23
Geology and Mineral Museum to Undergo Renovation

Alumni Achievement Awards 24
Congratulations to the 2016 Honorees

Connect With Us!
A presidential welcome and farewell

The College of Arts and Sciences extends a warm welcome to WMU’s ninth president, Dr. Edward B. Montgomery, and bids a fond farewell to Dr. John M. Dunn, who retired at the end of July.

Montgomery, a Georgetown University dean and noted labor economist who served two U.S. presidents, took the helm as president Aug. 1. His selection followed a national search to find a successor to Dunn, who served for 10 years as WMU president. In addition, Montgomery joins the College of Arts and Sciences faculty as professor of economics.

“Twas drawn to the opportunity to lead an up-and-coming, student-centric, comprehensive university with deep ties to the local and regional economy and community,” Montgomery said after the board of trustees voted unanimously to elect him April 12. “Its strengths in the traditional arts and sciences, coupled with strong programs in such areas as aviation, engineering, business, medicine and others make it an institution with enormous potential,” he said.

“Job number one for me is getting to know the faculty, staff, students and alumni communities. Working together, I know we can build on the strong foundation laid by President Dunn and make WMU the institution of choice for students from the state and region.”

Dunn announced Aug. 1, 2016 that he would retire in the summer of 2017, closing out a transformational 10-year era that touched every part of the University. The launch of the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, an affiliation that created the WMU Cooley Law School, a focus on sustainability, and the establishment of programs for veterans and former foster care youth that became national models are among the initiatives most often cited in describing the Dunn presidency.

In addition, nearly $500 million in construction projects, fundraising success, growth in international representation and diversity on campus, and a dramatic increase in WMU’s honors student population changed the campus environment.

“This has been an incredible time in the lives of Linda and John Dunn, and we will always be thankful for the opportunity to be part of Western Michigan University, the Kalamazoo community and the region,” Dunn wrote of his presidency. “I hope it is clear to all that my respect and affection for this University will be sustained forever, and that I fully intend to be a supportive and helpful Bronco for the remainder of my life.”

At the request of the WMU Board of Trustees, Dunn has agreed to serve for a year as president emeritus following his retirement. In that capacity, he will undertake assignments as requested by trustees and Montgomery.
Collegiate Pathways program launched

WMU Extended University Programs and the Department of World Languages and Literatures have entered into an agreement with Forest Hills Public Schools to launch the first-of-its-kind “Collegiate Pathways” program.

The dual enrollment program, launched at Forest Hills Northern High School this fall, allows students to earn the University’s full Chinese language minor while still enrolled in high school.

While this is the first program being offered through WMU’s new Collegiate Pathways initiative, the University is in discussions with other districts to provide dual enrollment programs for additional foreign languages and other academic programs, says Dr. Dawn Gaymer, associate provost for Extended University Programs.

The inaugural Collegiate Pathways program is being delivered on-site at Forest Hills Northern High School.

Michigan Geographic Bee returns to WMU

For the 10th straight year, just over 100 young geography buffs from across the state descended on WMU’s campus for the Michigan State Geographic Bee, testing their knowledge of the world while vying for a trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the National Geographic Bee championship.

Dr. Lisa DeChano-Cook, WMU associate professor of geography, served as coordinator of the Michigan bee, which took place March 31 at the Fetzer Center. Peter Deegan-Krause, from Ferndale Middle School, took first place and advanced to the national competition, which was held May 14-17 at the National Geographic Society Headquarters.

Arts and Sciences produces four Fulbright Scholars

WMU was recently hailed as a top producer of Fulbright Scholars, according to the U.S. Department of State’s annual ranking. With six WMU Fulbright Scholars – four of whom are Arts and Sciences faculty – awarded grants for 2016-17, the University is tied in 10th place as a top producer among the nation’s research universities. Arts and Sciences Fulbright Scholars and their areas of focus include:

- Dr. James Butterfield, professor of political science, Vietnam in its global context;
- Dr. Jon Davis, professor of mathematics, ethnomathematics and South Africa’s centralized educational system;
- Dr. David Huffman, professor of chemistry, innate immune response, Denmark;
- Dr. James Hueng, professor of economics, economic reforms in China.

Gov. Snyder appoints individuals from WMU to state board

Gov. Rick Snyder has appointed WMU faculty, alumni and a current graduate student to the new Michigan Board of Behavior Analysts.

Dr. Stephanie Peterson, chair and professor in the Department of Psychology, will serve a four-year term on the nine-member panel, which was created to assist the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs with the regulating and licensing of behavior analysts in the state of Michigan.

Also named to the board are current WMU psychology graduate student Ian McElfish and alumna Conny Raaymakers M.A. ’06, each serving a three-year term, and Dr. Luchara Wallace, associate professor of special education, and psychology alumna Dr. Jessa Love M.A. ’07, Ph.D. ’09, each serving a two-year term.

The board is a product of recent legislation signed by Lt. Gov. Brian Calley that creates professional licensing for behavior analysts in Michigan. Senate Bills 1015 and 1016, sponsored by state Sens. Rebekah Warren and Margaret O’Brien, respectively, create an occupational license for behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts in Michigan to ensure reimbursement can properly occur for behavior analytic services. The newly appointed board is responsible for overseeing the profession.

“Licensing of behavior analysts is important to families of individuals with autism because it helps protect consumers,” Peterson says. “The licensing board will set standards for training and conduct required for practice, and will likely investigate cases of suspected misconduct. Since insurance companies expect service providers to be licensed, provider access will also likely increase for families seeking services.”
Sports Media students get real-world experience with ESPN3

Students in WMU’s new Sports Media course are gaining hands-on experience in live broadcasting under the tutelage of instructor Wade Cutler.

Working with Bronco Productions in WMU’s Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, Cutler and the students streamed men’s basketball games during the spring semester on ESPN3, ESPN’s signature broadband sports network and online home for live sports.

The School of Communication began the course in fall 2016, taking advantage of an agreement between ESPN and the Mid-American Conference. The agreement calls for various athletic events to be covered on ESPN’s family of networks for 13 years, with broadcasts over the ESPN3 platform overseen by the MAC’s 12 individual universities.

"The benefit to our students is the experience of working with the latest broadcast equipment and the ability to include ESPN3 work experience on their résumés," Cutler says. "Our students are gaining so much 'real world' experience from this course that I'm confident they'll have no problems getting a job in this industry."

The Sports Media students get to operate cameras, video switchers, audio consoles and other high-tech equipment provided by the School of Communication and Bronco Productions. They learn about story creation and development, preproduction elements, anchoring, live-show production, control room techniques and master control operation, as well as marketing, advertising and how web streaming works with live broadcasts.

---

Cousins and Petcovic tapped for leadership positions

Dr. James P. Cousins and Dr. Heather L. Petcovic were appointed associate deans of the College of Arts and Sciences this year.

Cousins is a faculty member in the Department of History and also serves as interim chair of the Department of Anthropology. His role as associate dean includes overseeing the humanities and social sciences, as well as student and faculty engagement, enrollment management and curriculum development. He has been a WMU faculty member since 2011. Cousins came to WMU from Eastern Kentucky University, where he taught for five years and served concurrently as an academic advisor at the University of Kentucky.

Petcovic holds a joint appointment as an associate professor in geosciences and the Mallinson Institute for Science Education. Her role as associate dean includes responsibility for math and sciences, as well as research, graduate student success, and diversity and inclusion initiatives. A WMU faculty member since 2004, she came to WMU from Oregon State University, where she was coordinator for a program called Science Connections. Also at Oregon State, she had been a geosciences instructor and a National Science Foundation Teaching Fellow in the Portland school system.

The College of Arts and Sciences thanks its former interim dean, Dr. Keith Hearit, and interim associate deans, Drs. Jonathan Bush and Sherine Obare, for providing exceptional leadership during its time of transition. Hearit is serving as a special assistant to the provost, Bush continues to serve the college as professor of English, and Obare was recently named WMU’s interim vice president for research.
Future Leaders of Kalamazoo shine at STAR Awards

A group of 2013 Medallion Scholars, several of whom are Arts and Sciences students and recent graduates, were recognized with a Sharing Time and Resources (STAR) Award for their three-year mentoring project with Milwood Middle School students.

Through Future Leaders of Kalamazoo (FLOK), the scholars have worked to engender a college-going attitude with the sixth graders, in addition to each tutoring the same student over a three-year period. The program has been so successful that the 2016 Medallion Scholars have chosen to start a FLOK program at Linden Grove Middle School in Fall 2017.

The 32nd annual STAR Awards were presented during an April ceremony at the Radisson Plaza Hotel and Suites. The awards celebrate volunteerism by recognizing and awarding individuals and groups who volunteer their time, energy and talents in service to others in the greater Kalamazoo community.

Professor featured in PBS documentary

The towering Himalayas are one of the last places humanity settled, and for a daring team of researchers — including WMU’s Dr. Jacqueline Eng — they are a forbidding landscape where some of the world’s most enigmatic discoveries can be found.

On Jan. 4, a worldwide audience had the opportunity to witness Eng, associate professor of anthropology, and her colleagues hunt for clues to how ancient settlers lived in “Secrets of the Sky Tombs.” The documentary, which aired as part of the award-winning “NOVA” series on PBS, includes interviews with Eng and researchers who study human remains, ancient DNA, early textiles and metals, and Tibetan history and culture.

Eng specialized in the skeletal studies of the research. “The human body has the amazing capacity to adapt to all manner of challenges, and the skeletal and dental remains can record the imprints of those stresses and adaptations — from evidence of malnutrition and disease, to signs of trauma and recovery,” she says. “I have enjoyed interacting with the local people and learning about their history, collaborating with scholars from many different fields, and working with an intrepid crew of climbers and filmmakers.”

Student journalists take over Encore Magazine

If given an entire magazine to write, what would today’s college students focus on? That question was answered in May’s issue of Encore Magazine, a regional lifestyle publication serving Kalamazoo and Southwest Michigan.

A team of WMU journalism students, taught by Professor Sue Ellen Christian, had the opportunity to take over the issue for their senior capstone experience. The aspiring writers — Carolyn Diana, Samantha Marzke, Samantha May, Jay Penny and Greyson Steele — conceptualized, reported, researched and wrote the feature articles in the magazine, and in many cases, took photos to accompany the stories.

The result is an issue that keeps with Encore’s mission of showcasing greater Kalamazoo, but has a decidedly WMU bent. Among the articles are an in-depth feature on technology’s role in college life, a story about a program that addresses student hunger and economic need, a profile of an inventive cellist, and another about an enterprising student’s venture in custom-dyed socks, and a montage on how dorm décor has evolved over the decades.

“Not only do these young writers give us great stories about people and initiatives at their own university, but this issue spotlights their talents and the outstanding journalism training they are receiving through WMU’s School of Communication,” says Encore editor Marie Lee.

SPECIAL ISSUE: Student Takeover
WMU Journalists Take Charge
African American and African Studies reinstated

The college is pleased to reinstate an updated program this fall that emphasizes the historical and contemporary cultures and experiences of African Americans, Africans and people from the African diaspora.

The highly anticipated African American and African Studies major and minor allow students the opportunity to engage in critical study of the black diasporic cultural traditions, history, race and ethnic relations in Africa, the Caribbean basin and North America. Studies focus on the essential, organic role black people and their cultures have played in shaping societies.

"We are delighted to open enrollment for these two deeply relevant and very important programs," says Dean Carla Koretsky. "The AAAS major and minor provide our students with a greater understanding of the history, cultures and current issues pertaining to peoples of African ancestry. Students will gain essential preparation for civic leadership, professional roles in the public and private sectors, graduate school and other opportunities for employment and service." ♦

STEAM collaboration turns chemistry into art

Can chemical data from drinks like coffee, tea and beer be transformed into art? Students from the University’s chemistry, music composition and visual arts programs proved that it can during a collaborative Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) project this spring.

Using science combined with ambient music and stunning sculptures, the students created a series of pieces that were displayed during April’s Art Hop in downtown Kalamazoo.

One such project manifested in a musical interpretation of mango pineapple black tea molecules from Chocolatia in Portage. Part performance art, the piece included hand percussion and other unique instruments like meditation bowls and a conch shell. The creators gathered around an illuminated glass globe filled with tea during the performance.

Chemistry student Paige Poindexter was one of the contributing artists. "It was interesting for me to explain the chemistry, which I see as very black and white, to others who turned it into art and sound," she says. "It was really cool to see another side of how people look at chemistry." ♦

Student documentary brings life to the biology lab

What’s it like to be part of a scientific research team as an undergraduate student? Pretty exciting, according to senior Harrison Bach, who recently filmed a documentary about his experience in Dr. Cindy Linn’s neurophysiology lab.

Bach, a Lee Honors College student double majoring in biomedical sciences and film, video and media studies, created “Bringing Life to a Biology Lab“ for his honors thesis. Under Linn, professor of biological sciences, he and his student colleagues researched techniques to reverse blindness in adult mammals.

“As part of the lab, I felt a huge appreciation for this community of scientists,” Bach says. “It was a place of very contemporary thinking and discussion, and always pushed for the expansion of learning while having a fun core group of people.”

Bach says the film focuses on the excitement of the research as well as the deep relationships he and the other scientists formed as part of that team. “Since I had never been part of such an interesting experience, I thought it was something the world should know about,” he says. “I made the film in hopes of showing the community the lab, the work we were doing, and what really goes on in biological research.”

Bach has submitted the documentary for consideration in several upcoming film festivals. A condensed version can be viewed at vimeo.com/219892688. ♦
Marine Bolliet, a biomedical sciences major with minors in chemistry, Spanish and medical humanities, is one of the first students to matriculate to the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine through the WMedStart early decision program. Applicants are accepted during their junior year of undergraduate education based on their experiences and academic performance.

Three Arts and Sciences students received prestigious Gilman Scholarships to study abroad during the 2017 summer sessions. Justin Black is majoring in public relations and minoring in journalism and chose to study in South Korea. Devin Moyer is majoring in recreation management and minoring in Spanish and chose to study in Ecuador. Marcos Santiago is double majoring in biochemistry and biomedical sciences and chose to study in England. These three scholars are among nearly 1,000 American undergraduate students to receive the Gilman Scholarship.

Jacob Morton and Marwa Saad, biomedical sciences majors, wrote a peer-reviewed manuscript describing a new surgical procedure for removing the eyes of planarian flatworms and studying the organ’s regenerative potential. The students, who were mentored by Dr. Wendy Beane, were also featured in a professional video that teaches the procedure through demonstration. Both the article and video were published by the Journal of Visualized Experiments.

Teresa Turner, a student in the film, video and media studies program, won a competitive Carl E. Lee Scholarship from the Michigan Association of Broadcasters Foundation.

Why I Chose a Degree in the Liberal Arts

2017 journalism graduate Carolyn Diana offers her perspective on an Arts and Sciences education

Many people believe fields in the liberal arts are dying. The same people told those of us studying journalism that our field would soon be extinct and to pick a major that was more “practical.” But, that’s the difference between liberal arts majors and every other major; we have a passion to communicate, to create, to inspire and to bring truth to others, no matter what obstacles stand in our way.

My experience in the College of Arts and Sciences at WMU was a unique one. It gave me confidence and opportunity with my writing – especially as part of the Student Media Group, Western Herald and Young Broadcasters Association – to paint a picture of how different journalism can be from other disciplines. A liberal arts education has so many facets, but at the core is communication. Without it, I would not be able to navigate job interviews as well as I have been and I know it’s a skill that will lead me to a beautiful career in the future.

Students who graduate from the College of Arts and Sciences separate themselves from the rest of their peers. We are the world’s storytellers, writers, problem solvers and so much more. I am proud to have a liberal arts education because it has taught me more than I could learn in the classroom. Journalists and communicators are more important now than ever, and I am grateful to have learned that throughout an amazing four years at WMU.

Carolyn Diana
From left: 2017 intern Joe Harro, Dr. David Houghton, alumnus Dan Witt and 2017 intern Jessica Brockopp at the Political Science Honors Recognition Luncheon in April.
Dr. David Houghton has a list he’s been keeping for four decades. It’s filled with nearly 1,000 names – many of them belonging to prominent figures in government, law and business.

Though they specialize in areas as diverse as policy making, intelligence and social service, these individuals have at least one thing in common. They are all WMU alumni or current students who have participated in the Department of Political Science’s renowned internship program.

“I’ve got 988 names,” says Houghton, who implemented the program and has served as its sole director over the years. “I never would have dreamed these numbers would reach that high. We started in 1978 with just a couple of interns in Kalamazoo Township.”

A longtime political science faculty member, Houghton has always been an advocate of experiential learning. Early in his teaching career at Western, he saw the value of giving students the opportunity to experience the inner workings of a government office firsthand. After arranging those first few internships in Kalamazoo, his network of professional contacts seeking interns began to grow.

“I read the paper all the time,” Houghton says. “Any time there was a new city manager or township director, or a new judge elected, I would call them cold” to see if they would be willing to take an intern from Western. “Then people started calling me, saying they wanted interns,” Houghton explains. “So it worked out nicely. There’s a huge variety of places to work, depending on a student’s career interests.”

Houghton has since helped students find placement in local government offices and organizations, as well as in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

The Capital Internship Program, as the Lansing cohort is known, accounts for 413 of those 988 internships and is co-sponsored by the Lee Honors College. Twice a week, students assigned to state representatives, senators, lobbyists and various officials travel to Lansing, where they attend session meetings, help research and draft legislation, and work directly with constituents.

The experience, Houghton says, prepares them for their future careers more than anything can. “They get to see how an office works, but the big thing is self-confidence,” he says. “A lot of students start off and they’re intimidated like crazy – everyone’s wearing a suit, everyone knows exactly where they’re going. By the time the internship is finished, the students feel like they can walk in and interview for a job and they have a lot more accomplished.”

Kelsey Roy
Kendall Conway
Derek Segars
Jonathan Nelson
Jessica Brockopp
Kelly Coffee-Tavi
Dayna Demo
Kayla Hobson
SHADOWING STATE LEADERS

Jessica Brockopp, a 2017 graduate, felt like she got “the experience of a lifetime” when she interned with Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood during her last semester at Western.

The political science major enjoyed the fast-paced, constantly changing environment and the opportunities it provided her. “The internship really shed light on the things I’d like to do in my career,” Brockopp says. “The legislative process is hard to put into words. You have to kind of live it to understand it.”

A large part of Brockopp’s responsibilities included applying knowledge from her WMU policy courses to research. During her internship, she contributed to a recycling initiative that she expects will become drafted legislation in the near future.

“We evaluated where Michigan stands and how well we’ve implemented policy with the governor’s recycling council,” she says. “We also looked at other states that have successful policies to see if their implementations are feasible for Michigan.”

A GROWING NETWORK

Brockopp, who plans to run for office one day, says building her network of professional contacts has also been an invaluable part of the internship experience. And according to Houghton, “Communication is what it’s all about.”

In fact, as any former intern knows, participants of the program stay connected long after their years as students. Many of them return to campus to share their success stories, provide career advice or even hire an intern of their own. “About a quarter of all the internships set up are with former interns,” Houghton says. “Nothing beats working with a former intern.”

Brockopp and her classmates had the opportunity to learn from one of Houghton’s most memorable mentees this past spring. Dan Witt B.B.A.’83, M.B.A.’84, president of International Tax and Investment Center in Washington, D.C., imparted several words of advice to the students during a visit to campus in April.

“A lot of internships can lead to first full-time employment positions,” Witt says. “As good as you may be for any job, you may have three or four people you’re competing with. So it’s important to think about ways to differentiate yourself from your competitors.”

As a student, Witt interned for State Representative Howard Wolpe and as business manager of the Western Herald. He says the real-world experience, combined with a liberal arts background and strong work ethic, is what often sets Western students apart from their contemporaries.

“With internships, a lot of it is coming in with a curious mind, taking what you’ve learned in textbooks and understanding how it works in real life,” Witt says. “You’re seeing and contributing to the bigger picture, and that is greatly appreciated and valued by managers.”

SURPASSING 1,000

As Houghton’s list nears 1,000 interns, he has one significant hope. To see the program continue long into the future. “Lee Honors College is very supportive of the program and so is Political Science,” he says. “When I am no longer doing this, I hope to relinquish all of my contacts so someone doesn’t have to start cold.”

When that day comes, Houghton says he can rest easy knowing his network of interns will continue to support the program and one another.

“The biggest reward has been getting to know the students,” Houghton says. “Around Christmas time we get a lot of mail and email, and my wife has gotten to know some of them. Dan Witt is like a member of the family. It’s neat to see how many interns got a career out of it.”

David G. Houghton Internship Endowment

Since 1978, Dr. David Houghton has helped nearly 1,000 student interns earn practical career experience in state and local government. His new dream is to place more WMU students in internships throughout Washington, D.C.

The David G. Houghton Internship Endowment has been established to support the current internship program and expand its scope.

With the help and support of friends and alumni, new opportunities will be available for students to experience the legislative process and make important professional connections in our nation’s capital.

“The endowment helps cover the added cost students incur by spending a semester in D.C.,” Houghton says. “Providing this scholarship means more students will have the opportunity to intern with our national government.”

To support the David G. Houghton Internship Endowment, please use the enclosed envelope or visit mywmu.com/houghtonfund.
Jessica Brockopp, a 2017 graduate, had “the experience of a lifetime” when she interned with Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood.
Families trying to get help for their children with autism need look no farther than Western Michigan University’s Kalamazoo Autism Center (KAC). Nearly a decade in the making, and now located in a spacious office at 4200 S. Westnedge Ave., the center uses evidence-based therapy to help children ages 2 to 21 function better in the community.

Eleanor Corbin, 5, of Portage, came to the center after her mother researched local services and found the KAC.

“When Ella was first diagnosed, she was too young to receive most services, including those from the local school systems,” her father, Jim Corbin, says. “Anyone will tell you early intervention is key so we wanted to get her in somewhere as soon as possible. The Kalamazoo Autism Center accepted her with no reservations.”

He calls the staff “amazing” and says they have been so helpful and communicative regarding all aspects of his daughter’s time there. “Since attending the autism center, my daughter has learned to communicate better than she ever had before,” Corbin says. “She’s even talking a little which we weren’t sure would ever happen. They have potty trained her and gotten her used to other foods besides the very few that she would eat before attending.

“Sending Ella there was the best decision we could have made.”

A MUTUALLY REWARDING EXPERIENCE
Founded by WMU psychology professor Dr. Richard Malott in 2008 as a practicum for graduate and undergraduate students, the KAC continues to provide valuable experience to students, either via paid positions or for course credit.

Clinical supervisor Michael Tomak, a graduate student in the behavior analysis training system, says the center gives students experience in their field outside of the school setting, and “gets them excited about behavior analysis.”

“The treatments and different therapies we use have a real effect on our clients and their skills,” he says.

A special moment for him came when a child with whom he worked on taking medication returned the following week after swallowing a pill on his own. Upon achieving this accomplishment, “the first thing he said was ‘Michael would be so proud,’” Tomak says.

Dr. Kelly Kohler, former clinical director, calls the work a rewarding and fun experience for the staff. “They bond so well with the kids and each other. We’re all a family here.”

STEP-BY-STEP THERAPY
Center personnel use Applied Behavior Analysis, manipulating the environment in a way so children are most able to learn.

With discrete trial training, they take one step at a time; as students successfully complete each step, they receive rewards. When they can successfully complete the step repeatedly, they move on. Staff collect data constantly to ensure they are using the most effective method of training for each child.

With younger clients, the focus is on life skills like potty training, dressing, brushing teeth and learning to learn.

For older clients, a laundry room, a kitchen and a mock living room facilitate training in life skills such as cleaning their clothes, making lunch, setting a table and doing dishes, as well as social skills such as sharing, taking turns and hanging out with friends.
A HOPE TO CONTINUE SERVICES AT ANY AGE

The center is trying to find ways to help clients of all ages. As more services tend to be available for children under the age of 6; “older kids are where we’re getting the most inquiries — social skills, help in school,” Kohler says.

Jake Ohm, 11, of Portage, has attended the center since 2008 when it was still located on Cork Street and he was one of just three clients.

“The services have always been fantastic,” his mother, Missy Fritz, says.

Currently, Jake is practicing wearing a mouth guard in preparation for getting braces. Ultimately, he’ll have to do it for 45 minutes, but at the moment, he’s up to 13. He’s learning about folding clothes and how to count money, and he earns money as he does well — he can use it to buy special rewards such as a snack or time on an iPad.

Fritz says that as a parent, having the center work with her son on skills he doesn’t learn at school is a huge help. “When I get home we can just be a family,” she says. “It helps a parent just be a parent and not a caregiver.”

For more information on the Kalamazoo Autism Center, visit wmich.edu/autism/wmukac. To support KAC, please use the enclosed envelope. Or, make your gift online by visiting mywmu.com/GiveToACE and entering your gift amount next to “Kalamazoo Autism Center Fund.”

A specially prepared room with a one-way mirror allows for interaction with clients who have severe problem behaviors while team members observe.

The room also aids in parent training, as parents can watch the therapist work with their child while a staff member explains how to implement strategies at home. “The more involved parents are, the more success we see across the board,” Kohler says.

Funding tends to be the biggest barrier for families receiving the intensive services — the center is looking for donors to help provide scholarships — but “things are moving in the right direction” with the passage of insurance reform that allows some insurances to cover the treatment, Kohler says.

However, there tend to be age caps on insurance funding, and “autism doesn’t stop when people reach a certain age.”

“He’s seeking us out to play with us,” says Carrie McFerrin of son, Sully, 3. “He used to go off on his own.”

Graduate student Gabrielle Van Oosterhout and Ella Corbin, 5.
lighting up cancer
The Israeli deathstalker is one of the most dangerous scorpions in the world. One sting, and its venom can send a healthy human into a frenzy of life-threatening reactions. But as Dr. Jim Olson knows, these deadly creatures can also save lives.

Olson, a 1984 WMU alumnus, is a brain cancer physician and researcher at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. His team discovered that a tiny molecule in the scorpion’s venom, chlorotoxin, has an extraordinary characteristic. When reengineered without the poison and injected into a patient’s body, it can attach to cancer cells. Tag that tiny molecule with fluorescent dye, and you have what Olson calls Tumor Paint, a substance that makes the cancer – literally – light up, making it much easier for neurosurgeons to distinguish cancer from normal tissue.

“We were inspired by a 16-year-old girl who had a brain tumor,” Olson says. “After 12 hours of surgery, a thumb-sized piece was left behind. We decided that day to find a way to make the cancer light up so that surgeons could see it while they’re operating.”

The goal, Olson says, is to help surgeons remove as much cancer as possible while safely leaving normal brain tissue intact. When the cancer is not visible, obtaining clear margins during surgery is much more difficult to achieve. “Sometimes it’s really hard for surgeons to tell what is cancer and what is normal. In the brain, you can’t take out a big chunk of normal just to make sure you got the cancer cells.” Tumor Paint, he says, clearly distinguishes the difference between brain cancer and normal brain in all of his lab’s experiments to-date.

Lighting up cancer is a concept Olson dreamed of years ago during his time in the medical science training program at the University of Michigan, where he earned a Ph.D. and M.D.

“When I defended my thesis at U of M, a faculty member asked what I would do next if I could continue my research,” Olson says. “I said I would like to send fluorescent light into the brain so surgeons could see cancer while they’re operating. His response was something like, ‘Okay, Buck Rogers. What do you really want to do?’ And that stayed with me. I like when people are kind of skeptical and I think there’s a way to move forward. Thirty years later, here we are trying to see that vision through in patients, and we’re getting closer to the trials that will help the FDA decide whether or not to approve this drug.”

Tumor Paint, which has also been effective in lighting up other forms of cancer including breast and skin cancers, could be FDA-approved as soon as 2019. “In a matter of years, surgeons will look back and say ‘I can’t believe we used to remove tumors by using our eyes and our fingers and our thumbs,’” Olson says.
THE PATH TO PEDIATRIC CANCER RESEARCH

Having grown up in Escanaba, Olson knew he wanted to become a doctor since the age of 4. He came to WMU to study biomedical science and was also a Lee Honors College scholar. “I thought I wanted to be a family doctor and practice in rural upper Michigan,” he says. “What really changed that was, during my junior year at Western, I did a summer internship at the Mayo Clinic with Dr. Gerald Gleich, an immunologist. I had such a good experience, I decided I wanted research to be integrated into my clinical work for the rest of my life.”

Originally planning to go into adult oncology, Olson decided to dedicate the rest of his research career to brain tumor patients. His decision to switch to pediatric medicine came after he lost a young patient during a medical school rotation.

“It was a 7-year-old girl who had a neurologic problem we couldn’t quite figure out,” Olson says. “The day she died, I was walking home from the medical center and I felt better and lighter than I should, but I couldn’t figure out why. I realized it was because her parents had found me and said that her death was as beautiful as her birth or her baptism. And that I in the process had helped them understand that life can be full and beautiful, whether it’s 7 days long, 7 years long or 70 years long. It made me feel like I had something to offer, even when the medicine didn’t go the way we wanted.”

Olson has now been caring for children with cancer for 23 years. With a lab that employs 44 scientists at Fred Hutchinson, his research shows no signs of stopping. The remarkable molecule in scorpion venom is, in fact, just the beginning of their discoveries.

Through an initiative called Project Violet and with the help of robotics, Olson and his team have developed a new class of anti-cancer compounds derived from nature. Using chemical templates from organisms like violets, grasshoppers and sunflowers, they are studying new ways to attack cancer cells while leaving normal cells untouched. “A significant outcome of my career would be drugs that make more patients survive their cancer, or survive with fewer side effects,” Olson says. “And I love that the patients’ families are integrally involved. They inspire us to do the work.”

Without the families he has come to serve over the years, Olson’s research would likely not be as advanced as it is today. Launched in 2013, Project Violet is a “citizen science” initiative that relies on crowdfunding and community engagement to thrive. It is named for a young patient who, knowing she would lose her battle with brain cancer, told Olson she wanted to donate her brain to science so that others would not have to suffer the same fate.

Funding his team’s cancer research through philanthropic support, however, came long before Project Violet. In the late ‘90s, a group of families asked Olson what kept him from accomplishing his highest goals. He said that a great idea would too often go unpursued because granting institutions, which only awarded a fraction of proposals anyway, took a year or longer to distribute funding. “Those families said, ‘You take care of the science, we’ll take care of the rest,’” Olson says. “They have raised over $20 million and we haven’t slowed down since.”

Olson says the collaboration between his team and patients’ families is the key to their progress. “I always tell people, the kids with brain tumors are my CEOs. We don’t report to shareholders, we don’t report to anyone other than those kids,” he says. “We go in every day and try to make as much progress as we can, and we don’t fool ourselves. We don’t unconsciously twist the data to match our hypothesis so we can get the next grant. Instead, we look at it with a cold hard stare and say, ‘is this telling us to keep going or do we need to take a different path?’”

“The kids with brain tumors are my CEOs,” Olson says. “We don’t report to shareholders, we don’t report to anyone other than those kids.”

THE POWER OF ‘CITIZEN SCIENCE’

To learn more about Tumor Paint, Project Violet and Olson’s research, visit projectviolet.org.
Learning From the Experts

What drives the next generation of scientists to make life changing discoveries? At WMU, it begins with an opportunity to collaborate with faculty in a hands-on research experience.

On any given day, students with interests in biomedical sciences are taking a look at some of the world’s most complex problems — cancer, brain trauma, blindness — and offering potential solutions.

“There is some spectacular mentored research happening here at Western,” says Dr. John Spitsbergen, professor and chair of biological sciences. “Even though we’re a high research institution, we’re still small enough that most of our faculty are very involved in the lab. So when students are doing experiments, they’re alongside the expert.”

Those research initiatives have a tremendous impact. Just a few examples include the following faculty-led projects:

- Dr. Christine Byrd-Jacob’s lab is researching neural regeneration and recovery from brain injury and disease.
- Dr. Karim Essani’s lab is engineering specific viruses to fight cancer and increase immune system function.
- Dr. Charles Ide focuses on how the environment influences gene activity in health and disease. His lab looks at determining the molecular and cellular basis of Multiple System Atrophy (atypical Parkinson’s disease).
- Dr. Cindy Linn’s lab is researching mammalian retinal regeneration in response to neuroprotective agents, a study that could aid in preventing blindness caused by glaucoma.
- Dr. Spitsbergen’s lab is examining how the nervous system changes with aging, and whether those changes can be counteracted with exercise.

“We’re pushing students to excel at the next level,” Spitsbergen says. “I’m confident our students will be the next generation of Jim Olsons. They think of important problems and how to attack those problems.”
Although not everyone can read them, the poems that Jeffrey Angles has written in Japanese are filled with soul, and penned with an unwavering devotion to a beautiful language.

It’s one of the many reasons Dr. Angles, professor of Japanese at WMU, received the prestigious Yomiuri Prize for Literature for his first book of Japanese-language poetry, “Watashi no hizukehenkōsen” (“My International Date Line”). He accepted the award — comparable to America’s Pulitzer Prize — during a formal ceremony in Tokyo in February.

In a word, “astounded” was how Angles felt upon learning he had received the honor. “This prize is usually reserved for extremely well-established writers,” he says. “The list of past winners is like a who’s-who in the world of Japanese literature.”

The Yomiuri Prize, now in its 68th year, is given out in six categories: poetry, fiction, playwriting, criticism/biography, essays, and research/translation. All books published in the previous calendar year are considered for the award. Angles’ book was, in the eyes of the judges, the best book of poetry published in Japan in 2016.

“Originality is the sine qua non of this prize,” says Natsuki Ikezawa, a prominent Japanese novelist and one of the judges for the award, of Angles’ book.

THE YOMIURI PRIZE

The Yomiuri Prize began in 1949, and like the Pulitzer Prize, is sponsored by a newspaper—the Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan’s best-selling newspaper, which has a circulation of 9 million. Yomiuri winners receive a cash prize and an inkstone, an item that is used in East Asia when writing with a brush. For that reason, the inkstone has come to symbolize the act of writing.

A LOVE FOR JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Although this is his first book of Japanese-language poetry, Angles is no stranger to Japanese culture or literature. He has been interested in the language since he first traveled to Japan as a 15-year-old, and went on to earn his doctorate in Japanese literature from Ohio State University. He has been a faculty member at WMU since 2004.

Angles says he has loved poetry, and Japanese poetry in particular, for many years, but his interactions with the Japanese poetry world started as a reader, researcher and translator. He has published a dozen academic books on Japanese literature that include translations and anthologies. He first rose to national attention when his 2010 book of translations “Forest of Eyes: Selected Poems of Tada Chimako” won not one, but two, literary awards in the United States.

His decision to try writing his own poetry in Japanese also came in the year 2010, when he participated in a poetry event in Japan, serving as a Japanese-English translator so that four prominent poets from around the world could communicate with each other. Angles wrote his first poem in Japanese at that event, drawing praise from one of the four poets—Shuntarō Tanikawa, who is one of Japan’s most famous poets.

Many of the poems in Angles’ Yomiuri Prize-winning book derived their inspiration from his personal life, his experiences flying back and forth across the Pacific, negotiating the differences between two widely differing languages and cultures, his experiences with his family, and his memories of his childhood in Ohio.

A number of the poems, he says, veer into the surreal and play with language in ways that bend the usual patterns of Japanese in new directions.

Angles says the book was published in December, but it’s sold well enough that it is already going into a second edition. While in Japan for the Yomiuri ceremony, he had the opportunity to visit a large Tokyo bookstore that featured a display with his image and name along with his book. “Someone even recognized me in the book stacks,” he says. “I think it was my beard that did it.”

He’s considering publishing an English-language version of the book.

“Many of the poems play with the sounds and particularities of the Japanese language,” he notes, “but a lot of editors I know have been asking me to translate them. My family is asking too, but I think they’re just worried I might have written something about them.”

Professor brings home Japan’s most prestigious prize for literature

Embracing the Inkstone

Professor brings home Japan’s most prestigious prize for literature

Professor brings home Japan’s most prestigious prize for literature
Three Arts and Sciences faculty members received prestigious and highly competitive research grants from the National Science Foundation.

- **Dr. Laura Van Zoest**, professor of mathematics, received the largest award university-wide, totaling $1,290,740 over four years. The grant will fund her project, “Building on Mathematical Opportunities in Student Thinking (MOSTs): Contributing to a Theory of Productive Use of Student Mathematical Thinking.”

- **Dr. Wendy Scott Beane**, assistant professor of biological sciences, received a Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Award, among the most prestigious awards granted by the NSF given to promising young investigators. The grant, totaling $800,000 over five years, supports her research in investigating the mechanisms by which neural regeneration is regulated in planarians.

- **Dr. Elena Litvinova**, assistant professor of physics, has received a CAREER Award for her project, “From Fundamental Interactions to Emergent Phenomena: Geometrical Aspects of Nuclear Dynamics,” in the amount of $474,998.

---

**Dr. Linda Borish**, associate professor of history, co-wrote a second edition of the book “Sports in American History: From Colonization to Globalization.” The text journeys from the early American past to the present, offering a view of the evolution of American sporting practices.

**Dr. Lisa DeChano-Cook**, associate professor of geography, was elected to the American Association of Geographers Honors Committee. The AAG has contributed to the advancement of geography for more than 100 years. Its members from across the globe share interests in the theory, methods and practice of geography.

**Dr. Charles Henderson**, professor of physics, was named director of the Mallinson Institute for Science Education. In his new role, Henderson oversees the institute’s mission to advance knowledge through research and improve the teaching and learning of science, in and out of the classroom.

**Dr. James Cousins**, associate dean and history faculty member, wrote “Horace Holley: Transylvania University and the Making of Liberal Education in the Early American Republic.” The book focuses on Holley, as well as the growth and transformation of higher education in the early 19th century.

**Dr. Douglas Johnson**, assistant professor of psychology, was chosen as the inaugural recipient of the Scholarly Impact Award during the annual Association for Behavior Analysis International Convention. Johnson was selected based on two of his Journal of Organizational Behavior Management articles. One article received the most citations for this year while the other was the most cited in 2013.

**Dr. Susan K. Freeman**, chair and associate professor of gender and women’s studies, co-edited a second edition of “Understanding and Teaching U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History.” The book contains updated essays on The Supreme Court, same-sex marriage and transgender history. It is the first book designed for university and high school teachers who want to integrate queer history into the standard curriculum.

**Dr. Michelle A. Kominz**, professor of geosciences, earned the prestigious honor of being named Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Kominz conducts internationally renowned research in the field of geodynamics, with her current activities centering around global sea-level change and tectonics.

**Dr. Matthew Mingus**, professor of public administration, was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to Michigan’s Human Trafficking Commission. The commission is tasked with making recommendations to the legislature to improve laws that address human trafficking violations.

**Dr. Michael Nasseran**, professor of anthropology, was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission. The commission preserves and promotes the legacy of the Underground Railroad’s Freedom Trail in Michigan.


**Dr. Susan Pozo**, professor of economics, was named director of the global and international studies program. In her new role, Pozo leads the program’s more than 50 allied faculty members as they work to promote globalization among the University’s academic disciplines.

**Dr. Joseph Stoltman**, professor of geography, won two prestigious awards recognizing him as one of the best and brightest in geography education. The National Council for Geographic Education awarded him the Distinguished Mentor Award and the Higher Education Distinguished Teaching Award.

**Dr. Anise Strong**, associate professor of history, published her first book, “Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World.” The book offers the first substantial account of elite Roman concubines and courtesans.
A student who is academically underprepared for college faces significant risk of not completing his or her degree. Without intensive learning support, the chances of graduating decline even more. But research shows that when a student takes advantage of academic support services, such as peer mentoring, degree attainment increases tremendously.

Through a program called Peer Academic Success Coaching, WMU is better able to serve those students who are at risk of not completing their degree.

“The program provides two critical benefits,” says Tim Stoepker, a 1976 alumnus who recently made a gift to support a new peer coaching position. “First, it provides an opportunity for the students being coached to receive one-on-one assistance in pursuit of their education without added cost. Second, it provides an opportunity for the peer coaches to apply their education in a hands-on manner while supplementing their income. Most importantly, the program has a proven track record of success in supporting students who otherwise would not likely complete a college education.”

THE COACHING PROCESS

Students enrolled in the Peer Academic Success Coaching program receive:

- Hour-long one-on-one sessions with a coach twice weekly throughout the semester
- A customized plan based on each student’s unique academic needs
- Assistance in areas such as understanding content, easing test anxiety and developing study strategies
- Help with setting short-term, mid-range and long-term goals
- Help in maintaining accountability for making progress

While peer coaching is available to all WMU students, most participants are freshmen, first-semester transfer students or those experiencing academic difficulty. Since its launch in 2014, the program’s outcomes have been extremely positive. Data points to a significant impact on one- and two-year retention for coached students, as indicated in the graph below.

HELP MORE STUDENTS FIND SUCCESS

The Peer Academic Success Coaching program would like to expand the number of students it can serve in the years ahead. The College of Arts and Sciences currently funds 12 coaches who work with 12 students each per year. To meet the needs of all students seeking support, the program hopes to add an additional 12 coaches to its staff.

It takes $4,222 to fund a coaching position and supplies for an entire academic year – but any gift, no matter the size, means more students will get the assistance they need to graduate.

To support Peer Academic Success Coaching at WMU, please submit your gift using the enclosed envelope, or visit bit.ly/2uqCEqG.
Surprise Scholarship Benefits Nearly 100 Students

On a hot day in mid-July, Taylor Coleman got an unexpected call that instantly changed the way she planned to fund her fall semester at Western. The voice on the other end of the line informed her she was one of 98 undergraduate students to receive a $4,000 College of Arts and Sciences Retention Scholarship.

“I cried after I got the call. I thought, ‘This is so awesome,’” the organizational communication major says. “I feel like a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders. Now I can focus on my future and staying on the Dean’s List during my last year at Western.”

Scholarship support is a game changer for thousands of students like Coleman, which is why building that capacity is an ongoing priority for the College of Arts and Sciences. This year, the college deans, together with academic department chairs and directors, made important financial decisions that allowed the college to designate significant funds to undergraduate scholarships.

“I am delighted that we were able to provide nearly 100 deserving students with retention scholarships,” says Dean Carla Koretsky. “It is my hope that this decision will help increase the college’s enrollment and retention rate, but more importantly, that it will help these students complete their degrees and achieve their dreams.”

Arts and Sciences students who received the award were selected based on their grade point average and good academic standing, senior status and financial need. No application process was required, meaning the recipients were pleasantly surprised to learn they would be receiving extra support for their education.

“I was really happy about receiving this scholarship,” says Bryan Bremiller, an applied mathematics major. Bremiller, who plans to pursue master’s and doctoral degrees after graduation, is a teaching assistant and learning assistant for WMU, and also works two jobs to support his education. “I won’t have to take out another loan this semester, which is a huge help,” he says.

We can change lives by supporting scholarships for WMU students. To make a gift, please use the enclosed envelope or visit wmix.edu/arts-sciences/giving for more options.
Transforming the Schmaltz
Geology Museum

Dr. Lloyd J. Schmaltz came to Western Michigan University in 1959 with a singular purpose – to develop the best geology program possible. More than 50 years later, the Department of Geosciences boasts a reputation as a national leader in its field and continues to graduate some of the top earth science researchers, scholars and professionals in the world.

The Lloyd J. Schmaltz Geology and Mineral Museum is a staple of the geosciences experience at WMU. The only learning-centered museum on campus, this beloved facility is home to unique and impressive collections of rocks, minerals and fossils from Michigan and around the world. But after so many years of activity, the museum is in considerable need of updating.

The College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Office has pledged $25,000 and the Department of Geosciences an additional $7,500 to initiate the Schmaltz Museum renovation project. We need your help in reaching our $100,000 goal for phase I. Any gift, no matter the size, will help ensure the museum remains a campus mainstay for years to come.

To make your tax-deductible gift, please use the enclosed envelope or visit mywmu.com/givetogoosciences.
Congratulations –

2016 Alumni Achievement Award winners from the College of Arts and Sciences

Western Michigan University takes pride in being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged. The College of Arts and Sciences 2016 Alumni Achievement Award winners were selected by faculty for exemplifying these pillars and for their remarkable contributions to society.

Department of Biological Sciences
Dr. William Bowerman, ’85
Professor and Chair, Department of Environmental Science and Technology, University of Maryland

Bowerman has been studying bald eagle ecology and the effects of environmental pollutants in the Great Lakes region since 1984. He has started environmental monitoring programs using sea eagles in the United States, Canada, Russia, South Africa, Sweden and Uganda.

School of Communication
Liza Keckler, ’98
SVP Development, Irwin Entertainment

Keckler is a veteran media executive with expertise in digital, cable, nonfiction, documentary and lifestyle content creation. In 2017 she was tapped as SVP Development for Irwin Entertainment, a full service multi-platform television production company.

Department of Chemistry
Randy Curtis Hice, ’76
Manager of Global Strategy, Abbott Laboratories

Hice is considered one of the world’s leading experts in complex laboratory automation. In 2009, he joined Abbott Laboratories where he leads global strategy for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors. Hice is the most published author in the world on the topic of laboratory automation.

Department of Economics
David B. Stevens, ’83
Senior Investment Strategist, Wells Fargo Bank

Stevens manages portfolios for individuals and charitable organizations, and has volunteered with the Chartered Financial Analyst Institute since 1993. His leadership skills and reorganization work led to his being awarded the Daniel J. Forrestal III Leadership Award for Professional Ethics and Standards of Investment Practice in 2014.

Department of English
Randi S. N. Yoder, ’73
Senior Vice President of Development, Minnesota Public Radio, American Public Media Group

Yoder is a veteran fundraising professional who oversees all major and institutional giving for MPR-APM. Prior to joining the organization in 2011, she served as senior vice president of donor relations for the Greater Twin Cities United Way.

Institute of the Environment and Sustainability
Stacy Noblet, ’03
Senior Manager, ICF International

Noblet is an expert in the use of clean fuels, technologies and strategies to reduce petroleum consumption and emissions in the transportation sector. She works closely with government and commercial clients for ICF, managing projects and advising efforts at the local, state and national levels.

Department of Geography
Dr. Jereon Wagendorp, ’84
Faculty Member, Geography and Sustainable Planning Department, Grand Valley State University

Wagendorp is an applied geographer with an appreciation for urban and regional planning, and geo-spatial systems management and implementation. His main focus for the past three decades has been on comprehensive public sector GIS implementation within the state of Michigan.
retiring. As a part-time instructor at WMU, he teaches the popular “Geology of the National Parks” course and is an outspoken supporter of both the national park system and earth science education.

The Mallinson Institute for Science Education

Dr. Rosario Cañizales Rodriguez, '89

De Vries Kelley was part of the IBM technical team that created Parallel Sysplex, a cluster of up to 32 IBM mainframes acting together as a single system image to share workloads for high performance and high availability.

Department of Physics

Joan de Vries Kelley, '70

Senior Technical Staff Member, IBM

De Vries Kelley was part of the IBM technical team that created Parallel Sysplex, a cluster of up to 32 IBM mainframes acting together as a single system image to share workloads for high performance and high availability.

“Geology of the National Parks” course and is an outspoken supporter of both the national park system and earth science education.

Department of Geosciences

Dane Alexander, '73, '83

Instructor, Western Michigan University, Department of Geosciences

Alexander served as a high school geology teacher in Mattawan Consolidated Schools for 30 years before retiring. As a part-time instructor at WMU, he teaches the popular “Geology of the National Parks” course and is an outspoken supporter of both the national park system and earth science education.

Department of Mathematics

Dr. Jonathan Hodge, '00, '02

Chair, Department of Mathematics, Grand Valley State University

Hodge, an expert in graph theory, has authored numerous peer-reviewed articles and two textbooks. A number of his publications deal with elections and voting theory, a prominent area of mathematics within graph theory. His leadership in promoting GVSU’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates has expanded his department’s commitment to undergraduate mathematics education on a national scale.

Department of Political Science

Kevin Knutson, '01

Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising, Western Michigan University, College of Arts and Sciences

The College of Arts and Sciences advising office serves more than 3,000 undergraduate majors and minors in the largest and most complex college at WMU. Under Knutson’s leadership, the advising office has pioneered a number of innovations for working with students.

School of Public Affairs and Administration

James P. Mallery, '90, '00

Village Manager, Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

Mallery began his career with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety in 1994 and moved up the ranks to captain. His leadership in community policing allowed him a career move to city management. Innovative leadership and commitment to public service are cornerstones of his current career as Vicksburg village manager.

Global and International Studies

Michael Riedel, '94

Area Director Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agriculture Service

Riedel assists the Foreign Agricultural Service with linking U.S. agriculture to the world to enhance export opportunities for American agricultural products and improve global food security.

Department of History

Anne Wend Lipsey, '74

Executive Director, Retired Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes

Lipsey has demonstrated outstanding service to the Kalamazoo community throughout her career. She has worked to improve the lives of citizens through several local organizations including Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes, Kalamazoo Central High School, Ministry with Community, the Center for City Housing, the Eastside Neighborhood Association and beyond.
To make a gift to the Western Michigan University College of Arts and Sciences,
please print the following form and mail with your contribution to:
Western Michigan University Foundation, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5403.

You may also make a gift by visiting MyWMU.com/artsandsciences.

Name ____________________________________________
Spouse/Other ______________________________________
Home Address ______________________________________
City, State, Zip ______________________________________
Email _____________________________________________
Home Phone/Cell ____________________________________
Employer __________________________________________
Work Address ______________________________________
Position ___________________________________________
Work Email _________________________________________
Work Phone _________________________________________

Please help us stay in touch with you by providing your updated contact information:
☐ Please send me information on opportunities to provide scholarships, activities and programs through annual gifts, endowments, annuities or planned giving.
☐ I am interested in receiving college-related publications.
☐ I am interested in attending College of Arts and Sciences' events including the State of the College Address, the Center for Humanities Lecture Series and the Alumni Achievement Awards.
☐ I am interested in serving as an alumni resource.
☐ Matching gift form enclosed.

☐ My gift is enclosed. (Please make payable to WMU Foundation and specify area below.)

☐ Dean's Discretionary Fund
☐ The College of Arts and Sciences Study Abroad Fund
☐ David G. Houghton Endowment
☐ Peer Academic Success Coaching
☐ Undergraduate Research Scholarship
☐ Kalamazoo Autism Center
☐ Lloyd J. Schmaltz Geology Museum
☐ Other: ____________________________

☐ Please charge my credit card:
☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Discover

Account # ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________
Expiration Date ______ / ______ 3 Digit Code ______

Signature ________________________________

Visit the College of Arts and Sciences website at: wmnich.edu/arts-sciences

THANK YOU for your Support!
The Department of Chemistry celebrated the 10th anniversary of its state-of-the-art facility in April.