University honors Dalai Lama biographer

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to science and humankind at large, WMU has granted an honorary doctor of laws degree to the official biographer of the Dalai Lama.

Tibet native Ngawangthondup Narkyid received the degree recently during a special alumni event in Poway, Calif., hosted by WMU alumnus Fred Lawrence and his wife, Regina. WMU President John M. Dunn was on hand to confer the degree, which had been approved in late 2008.

Narkyid, who earned a master’s degree in linguistics from WMU in 1971, is a former Tibetan monk. As an acolyte of the Dalai Lama, he was sent to WMU to study linguistics from 1976 to 1986. He went on to become a devoted, well-traveled cultural emissary for the Tibetan government-in-exile, as well as a linguist, author, inventor, philosopher, scholar and advocate for world peace. Now in his early 80s, Narkyid has most recently been a consultant on Tibetan language and literature for the Dalai Lama.

WMUK conducts fund drive, expands programming

WMU officially began its annual United Way campaign the last week of September with an intimate kickoff rally, during which WMU President John M. Dunn, campaign chair Bob Beam and other committee members finalized details for the monthlong campus drive.

This year’s campaign will run through Saturday, Oct. 31. The University has established a goal of $240,000, which will contribute to the Greater Kalamazoo United Way’s $9.11 million overall target. WMU faculty, staff and retirees have already given more than $60,000 in gifts and pledges.

“WMU is one of Greater Kalamazoo United Way’s top five contributing organizations,” Dunn says. “But, need is high, and it continues to grow. If each of us could give an additional $1 or $2 every week—five bucks here, 10 there—we could really extend our reach.”

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New this year, many faculty, staff and students will be eligible to win prizes. A grand-prize drawing will take place at this year’s victory celebration, set for 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12, in the President’s Dining Room at the Bernhard Center.

The story posted at www.wmich.edu/news contains details about prizes and eligibility. Contact wmuk-united-way@wmich.edu for questions about making a pledge or donation, or to schedule a departmental United Way meeting.

Volunteers kick off 2009 campus United Way campaign

As with all other Bronco Transit routes, the Downtown Express service is free to those with a Bronco ID Card. Go to www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2009/09/071.shtml for arrival and departure times.

Leaders of WMU’s 2009 United Way campaign gather at this year’s kickoff rally. (Photo by Tammy M. Boneburg)
Graduate students sought to set new award criteria

Department chairs and program directors have the opportunity to recruit master's students to help set scoring criteria for a new cash award on campus and qualify these students for prizes up to $1,000.

The University Assessment Steering Com-

mittee is asking for teams of master's students from a broad array of majors to develop scoring criteria for a new award that supports the efforts of graduate students engaged in research-related assessment.

Each master's program should nominate one student to participate in the Rubric Award Team Competition by Wednesday, Oct. 21. Students chosen to work on the criteria will be put on interdisciplinary teams of two to three members. During a mandatory orientation from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the President's Dining Room in the Bernhard Center. Dinner will be provided free of charge.

For details or to make a nomination, contact Amy Curtis at amy.curtis@wmich.edu or 387-8447.
Human Resources slates training series for faculty, staff members

Human Resources has announced the return of its “Getting Back to the Basics” training series for the new academic year. Starting this month and continuing through April 2010, HR staff and other WMU faculty and staff will provide training opportunities for supervisors of staff compensation system employees. This year’s series will feature some new topics and more guest speakers. New topics include managing conflict, equity, discipline, legal risks and making good managers great.

The first session, “Basic Training,” is set for Tuesday, Oct. 27, and designed for new supervisors, managers or directors; those new to the University or new to the supervisor role; and other supervisors who want to review University policies and procedures. The Employee Handbook will be discussed in detail and references also will be made from the Policies and Procedures Manual. Participants will have the chance to clarify interpretations, ask questions and get answers directly from HR staff. This session serves as basic training for sessions that will follow and is highly recommended.

Moving forward with feedback given by employees who participated this past summer, sessions will now last two hours. A special four-hour workshop also is scheduled for November. All sessions are free and will be held at the Fetzer Center. Refreshments will be provided.

While all employees are welcome to register, sessions held during the academic year will be geared towards supervisors of staff compensation system employees. The first session concentrates on new supervisors, but the other six will be beneficial for experienced supervisors as well. HR recognizes the need for supervisor training and believes this series will be helpful.

Pre-registration is required for all sessions. Visit www.wmich.edu/hr/training/basics for more details or to register. Limited space is available. Direct questions to Nichelle Moses at nichelle.moses@wmich.edu or 387-3650.

WMU/CMU blood challenge set

This year’s WMU/CMU American Red Cross Blood Challenge is set for a two-week period, Oct. 12-23. The 2009 goal is to collect 1,000 pints of blood.

Individual blood drives will be held at various sites around campus during the competition period, and donors will be eligible to win prizes. The first drive is Monday, Oct. 12, from 11 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. in the Bernhard Center.

Go to www.givelife.org for a complete list of blood drives at WMU and to schedule an appointment to give blood at one of the 10 drives being held. When making appointments, be sure to enter WMU when asked.

The satellite clinic is housed in the WMU Athletic Training (ATC), which serves the University’s academic athletic training program. That location puts the facility close to weights and other equipment in the recreation center that are not available in the clinic room. Those who would benefit from such equipment will be referred to the satellite clinic and encouraged to sign up for a recreation center membership, which is a free but taxable benefit. (Photo by Jeanne Baron)

Satellite sports medicine clinic opens in recreation center

The Sindecuse Health Center held a grand opening Sept. 29 for its satellite Sports Medicine Clinic in the Student Recreation Center. Faculty and staff members may use the facility for physical therapy and athletic training services on an appointment basis by calling 387-3248. Among those helping to stage the event were Ashley Thater, standing, and Maissa Brouse, reclining. The two are Sports Medicine Clinic graduate assistants and certified athletic trainers.

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New employee electronic transactions save time

Beginning Monday, Oct. 12, employees, retirees and student employees will have secure electronic access to much of their personal records and information previously available to them only in paper form.

A new link, “Employee Self Service,” at the top of the My Self Service channel of GoWMU, the University’s secure intranet portal, will take users to several options under personal information, payroll and compensation, and benefits. Users will be able to make such electronic transactions as updating addresses and changing direct payroll deposit information.

Links to “WebCheck,” “My W-2” and “My Benefit Elections” in the My Self Service channel will disappear and will be found in Employee Self Service under payroll and compensation, and under benefits. Past paychecks will be available online, but only through wmi.ch.edu/payroll and only until the end of the year.

With the new secure system, employees, retirees and student employees will be able to make changes in their information at their convenience from anywhere with Internet access and submit the changes online, saving time and eliminating paper transactions.

A step-by-step reference guide for Employee Self Service was mailed to all regular and part-time employees and retirees at their home addresses and should arrive soon. Reference guides will be distributed through departments to all student and graduate assistant employees.

Go to wmi.ch.edu/hr/self-service for more information.

Obituaries

Willie Mae O’Neal, retired assistant professor of University libraries, died Sept. 25. O’Neal came to WMU in 1968 and retired in 2007 after 19 years of service to the University. A memorial celebration was held Oct. 3 in the Galilee Baptist Church and interment followed in Riverside Cemetery.

Russell A. Strong, a former WMU advancement officer, died Oct. 2 in North Carolina. He was 85.

Strong retired from the University after working a total of 20 years during two separate periods. A state editor for the Kalamazoo Gazette, he came to WMU in 1951 as director of news and information.

Strong left the University in 1963 for a position at Michigan State University, then served at Davidson College, Wake Forest University, Wight State University and St. Andrews Presbyterian College.

In 1979, Strong returned to WMU as alumni director. Three years later, he assumed the post of director of research and senior development officer, a position he held until his retirement in 1988.
The Sindecuse Health Center has scheduled its fall vaccination clinics for seasonal flu and meningitis.

Starting today, vaccinations also are being administered in the Sindecuse Health Center each weekday except Thursday from 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. On Thursdays, vaccination times remain the same except morning hours begin at 9 a.m.

Separate vaccinations to protect against the H1N1 flu virus will begin in mid to late October, when Sindecuse expects to receive its first supplies of H1N1 vaccine. Details will be announced online on WMU's homepage and via e-mail and other University communications.

The seasonal flu and meningitis vaccination clinics are open to WMU students, faculty and staff members and their eligible dependents, and retirees and emeriti. The following clinics have been scheduled:

- Thursday, Oct. 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, Oct. 13, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Student Commons on the main level of the College of Health and Human Services Building.
- Thursday, Oct. 15, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the upper level of the Sindecuse Health Center. This clinic will have special accommodations for retirees and emeriti.
- Tuesday, Oct. 20, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 157 Bernhard Center.
- Tuesday, Nov. 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the indoor tennis court area of the Student Recreation Center during the WMU Health and Wellness Expo.

Credit card payments will be accepted only at Sindecuse. Meningitis vaccinations cost $108, although individual insurances might cover all or part of this cost. Flu shot costs vary. WMU employees and their dependents who are not eligible for University benefits will pay $25 for a seasonal flu injection. Depending on individual retiree insurances, the cost of seasonal flu shots may or may not be fully covered.

Special arrangements have been made by the Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance and Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs to fund the full cost of seasonal flu shots administered to benefits-eligible employees and their dependents.

For more vaccinations details, visit www.sindecuse.com or call 387-3287.

**Health care forum slated**

Issues related to health care in Michigan as well as the nation will be discussed during a Health Care Forum from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23, in 2000 Schneider Hall.

WMU’s C. Dennis Simpson, Specialty Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse, will moderate the event. Panel members will be:

Elizabeth Burns, president of the Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies; WMU’s William Ferr, physician assistant; Mark Gaffney, president of the Michigan AFL-CIO; Rep. Robert Jones; Rep. Kate Segal, vice chair of the state House subcommittee on health; and former Rep. Joe Schwartz.