Academic Convocation on TV

Those who aren’t able to attend the 2007 Academic Convocation at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall may still be a part of the event by listening to the radio or watching TV.

The convocation will feature President John M. Dunn’s first State of the University address and a series of awards presentations. Dunn’s address will be broadcast on WMUK-FM, the University’s public radio station, at 8 p.m. Oct. 25.

The entire convocation will be broadcast on EdiCABLE’s Channel 28 at the following times: 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 26; 3 p.m. Monday, Oct. 29; 10 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 30; and 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 31. It also will be played on public access TV at: 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 26, on Channel 21; at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 28, on Channel 20; at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 30, on Channel 22; and at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1, on Channel 95.

Time to renew parking permits

WMU parking permits will expire Oct. 31. Most faculty, staff and retirees may register online for new permits through GoWMU, WMU’s intranet portal. The vehicle registration link is located in the My Self Service channel. Those who register online before Saturday, Oct. 20, will receive their new parking permits in the mail at home. After this date, permits must be picked up at the Parking Services Building.

Part-time faculty, temporary employees and new employees must bring their Bronco ID, driver’s license, vehicle registration and departmental appointment letter to the Parking Services Building to obtain parking permits. Anyone who is eligible to register online but does not wish to do so may register in person.

Velcare package items sought

A campuswide committee is seeking contributions to stock care packages that WMU will be sending in November to its deployed faculty, staff, students and alumni. The volunteer committee is asking that items be donated by Friday, Nov. 9.

Offices, groups and individuals are encouraged to assume responsibility for collecting a particular item or items so enough supplies can be locked in to ship 35 care packages four times this academic year. Two of the care packages will be going to female personnel.

Those wishing to donate items should e-mail a list of these items to www.wmich.edu/advocacy. Once collected, the items should be dropped off to Brenda Hamlyn in the Registrar’s Office. Suggested items to donate and other program details are included in the story posted online at www.wmich.edu/news. For more information, call Eric in the Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs at 387-0740.

Six lauded for achievements in teaching, scholarship

WMU will honor six of its best teachers and young scholars Thursday, Oct. 25, during the annual Academic Convocation.

Receiving the Distinguished Teaching Award will be Richard Gershon, communication; Trent Kynaston, music; and Jennifer Palthe, management. Receiving the Emerging Scholar Award will be Stephen Covell, comparative religion; Igor Fedotov, music; and David Huffman, chemistry.

Gershon is the co-founder of the telecommunications and information management program. He previously has been honored for teaching excellence, including being selected twice for national teaching honors.

His dedication to each person in his classes, termed the “Gershon Experience” by one student, was a consistent theme in his nominations.

“He has a long and consistent record of teaching excellence and award-winning contributions to curriculum development,” one faculty colleague wrote. “That record has had an impact locally, as well as nationally....”

Kynaston is the founder of the jazz studies program and performs as a member of the Western Jazz Quartet. He is a recognized classical and jazz artist who has performed worldwide and received Down Beat magazine’s annual Achievement Award for Jazz Education.

His instruction and encouragement has helped propel former students in their own roles as performers and educators. One former student described that influence as “profound and lasting,” and praised Kynaston as “a dedicated and caring studio teacher who challenged his private students to achieve high artistic goals. And he did so without expecting anyone to fit into a preconceived mold.”

Palthe is an expert in managing change in transnational corporations, cross-cultural diversity management and global human resource management. Previously a senior change management consultant, she has consulting experience on three continents in several areas.

McGurn named Distinguished Faculty Scholar

The 2007 Distinguished Faculty Scholar award will be presented to Arthur McGurn, physics, during WMU’s annual academic convocation Thursday, Oct. 25 (stories on the convocation and related awards are being posted at www.wmich.edu/news as they become available.)

The faculty scholar award is the highest honor the University bestows on faculty members. It recognizes those whose work is widely recognized beyond the institution and constitutes a significant body of achievement, most of which has been accomplished while at WMU.

McGurn joined the faculty in 1986 and conducts research in theoretical condensed matter physics. He has earned numerous honors during his career. In 2006 alone, he was elected a Fellow of the American Physical Society, awarded Chartered Physicist Status by the Institute of Physics and invited to be a member of the Electromagnetics Academy.

He was cited as a prolific researcher in a variety of areas who has continually broken new ground while building successful collaborations with fellow scientists around the world.

In nominating him, his colleagues noted that McGurn has done significant and often pioneering work in several areas, including disordered magnetic systems; light scattering, particularly from random surfaces; the quantum Monte Carlo computational (probability) tool; and most recently, photonics, which deals with photons and is a key area of investigation because of its potential applications for computer and communication technologies.

Nearly every person nominating McGurn commented on his strong grasp of mathematical techniques, exceptional computational skills and collegial way of approaching research.
Around Campus

Faculty artwork now on display

Paintings, sculptures and other faculty works of art are on display at the annual Art Faculty Show, running through Fri., Nov. 9, in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. A free opening reception is being held today from 5 to 7 p.m. in the center.

E-teaching workshop slated

In response to student demand for more online courses, Extended University Programs will conduct a workshop for chairs, directors, department heads and faculty members wanting to learn more about how to create online classes. The workshop is being provided over two Tuesdays. Those interested may sign up for the session taking place either on Oct. 23 and Nov. 6 from 10 a.m. to noon or on Oct. 30 and Nov. 13 from 3 to 5 p.m. For details or to register, e-mail katherine.mills@wmich.edu or call 387-4218.

Deadline nearing for 2007 Applications are being accepted until Nov. 9 for the Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations’ Research and Creative Activities Award, which goes to faculty members as well as graduate and undergraduate students.

Those participating in the 2007 competition must write a research paper or do a project, which goes to faculty members as well as the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations’ National Endowment for the Humanities building energy efficiency.

Haunted Hall scores up fun

The annual student-organized Haunted Hall will be staged from 8 to 10 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25, and 8 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday, Oct. 26-27, in Eldridge-Fox. The Kids Corner will be open from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday. It is geared toward children ages 12 and under and will feature games, prizes, story reading and free candy.

‘Jihad in Islam’ is lecture topic

The ninth Muslim Student Night program and dinner will include a talk on “Jihad in Islam” beginning at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 26, in the Bernhard Center Ballroom. The free event will also feature a dinner of multicultural cuisine, an exhibition of art from around the world and musical performances by the English a cappella group Shaam. Reservations are required. Visit www.rsowmich.edu/msa to register.

Walker Institute awards

Who submit the top projects in the three entrant categories will receive monetary awards—$500 for faculty members, $400 for graduate students and $300 for undergraduate students. The top six also will present their papers at a research forum slated for Wednesday, April 9. Award applications and guidelines are online at www.wmich.edu/szar and available for pickup in the Walker Institute office, 1104 Welborn.

WMU gets grant to improve HHS building energy efficiency

WMU has been awarded a $15,000 federal grant to help the College of Health and Human Services Buildings meet national energy efficiency standards and put it among one of the highest performing buildings in Michigan. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings, or LEED-EB, award from the U.S. Department of Energy will go toward evaluating current energy efficient systems in the three-year-old building and installing new systems to improve airflow. The work supported by the grant will be conducted during the next 12 months. Carl Newton, WMU energy reduction manager, is working on the project with Lord-Ackers Sargent Architecture in Ann Arbor.

Emeritus historian to be honored

Ernst Breisach, emeritus in history, will be honored Saturday, Oct. 27, during an “Exploring History/Writing History” symposium beginning at 1 p.m. in the Little Theatre and a dinner and reception beginning at 4:30 p.m. in Walwood. Breisach is one of the symposium’s two guest speakers. He will talk on “Reflections on Life, Time and History.”

The guest speaker presentations are free and open to the public. For details and costs regarding the full symposium, dinner and reception, call 387-4174.

Breisach joined the history faculty in 1957 and spent 39 years with the University. He served as chair of the history department from 1967 to 1989 and was named a Distinguished Faculty Scholar in 1984.

Math educator earns state award

Christian Hirsch has received the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics’ 2007 Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Mathematics Education. The award was presented in conjunction with the MCTM annual conference. It is the highest recognition the council can bestow upon one of its members for significant contributions to mathematics education in the state.

Hirsch is the James H. Powell Professor of Mathematics and was named a Distinguished Faculty Scholar in 1988. A mathematics faculty member since 1973, he has been principal investigator for the Core-Plus Mathematics Project for the past 15 years. The National Science Foundation funds the project as well as supports the Center for the Study of Mathematics Curriculum, which Hirsch co-directs.

Premier publication gains editor

William Olsen, English, has been named editor of WMU’s New Issues Poetry & Prose, a premier national press for emerging writers. An open house welcoming Olsen was held in September. He had served as an advisory editor since the press was launched in 1996 by longtime WMU English professor Herbert Scott. Under Olsen’s direction, the press will continue to discover and publish the freshest and most crucial voices in contemporary poetry and prose as well as publish indispensable, established poets and prose writers.

Olsen has received a Creative Writing Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He has produced four collections of poetry, including “The Hand of God and A Few Bright Flowers,” which was reissued in 2003 as part of the Carnegie Mellon Classic Contemporary Series.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced every Monday on the Human Resources Web site at www.wmich.edu/hr/careers-at-wmu.htm and the applicant Information Service phone line at 387-3669. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included on each posting.
WMU schedules fall flu, meningitis vaccination clinics

Students, faculty, staff, retirees and emeriti at WMU may be vaccinated against influenza and meningitis at four on-campus outreach clinics this fall as well as at the Sindecuse Health Center during walk-in hours.

Many faculty, staff, retirees and emeriti, along with their age-12-and-older dependents, will get flu shots at those locations without paying any out-of-pocket costs.

To be eligible for that benefit, current and former workers must show a valid WMU ID and be covered in a PPO Group #31473 of WMU’s Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan insurance program.

For students and those not in that group insurance program, flu shots cost $24 and meningitis shots cost $101. Meningitis vaccinations administered by the Sindecuse Health Center are a BCBSM-covered benefit for faculty and staff and their dependents.

The outreach clinics have been scheduled for: today from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in 3131 Sindecuse Health Center (special accommodations will be available for retirees and emeriti); Tuesday, Oct. 23, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 157-159 Bernhard Center; Wednesday, Nov. 7, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the WMU Health and Wellness Fair in the tennis courts area of the Student Recreation Center; and Tuesday, Nov. 20, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the College of Health and Human Services Building.

Flu and meningitis shots also will be administered in the Sindecuse Health Center to students, faculty, staff, retirees and emeriti Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and 1 to 4:15 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and 1 to 4:15 p.m.

For more information, call the Sindecuse Health Center at 387-3291.

Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 40, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during October.

For 40 Years—Darwin E. Moon, physical plant-maintenance services.

For 30 Years—William D. Cochran, physical plant-utilities; Patricia A. Keck, university budgets; James A. Knight, Dining Services-Valley #2; Lori A. Krum, physics; and Judy A. O’Donnell, Registrar’s Office.

For 25 Years—Robin L. McPherson, physical plant-building, custodial and support services.

For 20 Years—Kimberlee S. Hemingway, intercollegiate athletics; Joseph H. Hulsebus, information technology; Robin A. Miller, Dining Services-Davis; Mark A. Mundo, Dining Services-Bernhard Center; Matthew J. Tomczak, information technology; and Selena D. Walker, physical plant-building.

For 15 Years—Tony J. Kuziemka, Housekeeping Services; and Penny L. O’Dell, Human Resources.

For 10 Years—Timothy P. Johnson, physical plant-power plant; Rina J. Lynema, Haenicke Institute; and Sarah A. Rasnake, Extended University Programs.

For 5 Years—Victor J. Ceka, physical plant-maintenance services; Deborah M. Cline, Trendy N. Ress, College of Health and Human Services; Cindy L. McFarlin, Sindecuse Health Center; Eri Nishiyama, University Libraries; and Linda L. Renaud, cashietering.

Human Resources

Open enrollment for health insurance and flexible spending accounts began Oct. 15 and continues until 5 p.m. Oct. 31 for WMU retirees and AAUP, AFSCME, POA and non-bargaining employees.

During open enrollment, faculty, employees and retirees have the option of adding eligible dependents to their health insurance as well as enrolling in flexible spending accounts, which offer an opportunity to use tax-free dollars to pay for dependent care expenses or qualified medical expenses not covered by insurance.

Employees who wish to participate in a flexible spending account in 2008 must enroll or re-enroll during open enrollment. New participants and current participants who wish to continue their flexible spending account plans in 2008 must submit an enrollment form to Human Resources by the deadline.

Information about open enrollment was mailed on Oct. 8 to the home addresses of all eligible members of the WMU community. This information also is available on the HR Web site at www.wmich.edu/hr. Open enrollment health insurance elections are effective Jan. 1. The flexible spending accounts form is part of the BASIC Flex enrollment booklet and is available on the HR Web site or may be picked up in 1300 Seiber Administration Building.
OCTOBER 18, 2007

WESTERN NEWS

www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/news/awards

Bill Breur is the person WMU’s tradespeople go to when they need paint brushes, fuses, fan belts and a host of other items. "At most other places, I'd be the one doing the actual work. At WMU, I get to hand out the tools, keep things organized, know what we need, and be a liason for the staff," he says.

Breur, stockroom clerk for the maintenance stores unit in Logistical Services, has been a WMU staff member for more than three decades. During his career, he’s served stints as a custodian as well as worked for what is now the receiving, freight and delivery area.

For most of that time, though, he’s been affiliated with maintenance stores, which supplies the University’s multitude of painters, electricians, carpenters, heating and cooling specialists, mechanics, custodians and related workers.

He's primarily responsible for keeping track of and issuing maintenance supplies, operating the warehouse forklift, and overseeing the dissemination, refilling and safe storage of oxygen and acetylene tanks for welding and cutting.

Another major duty is checking all building keys in and out—a job that requires extensive tracking and record keeping for security reasons. "I do a lot of paperwork and computer work," he says with a wry smile as he flexes his fingers.

"We’re moving to a bar code system that will automatically track and download some information, but right now, keeping track of things is mostly a guy with a clipboard."

Breur's longevity in the stockroom may have resulted in hand cramps once in a while, but it’s also led to what he likes best about working there. "I’ve learned through the years what individual people need or prefer to use,” he says. “There’s a familiarity, so I know exactly what to get for them. It just makes things go more quickly and efficiently.”

But Breur says no amount of institutional knowledge can solve every problem, particularly when companies change brand names or stop making a product. "I have to keep up with what’s going on so I know what parts are interchangeable or can be safely substituted,” he notes.

Breur, who has three children and four grandchildren, now lives in Gobles, where he moved so he could have some space. He enjoys camping, traveling and family outings, especially when these excursions include his grandchildren.

In nominating him for the Emerging Scholar Award, a colleague from another major U.S. university wrote that “Stephen has already changed the field of Buddhist studies in a significant way by drawing attention to the vitality and importance of contemporary Buddhist practice in Japan...Stephen is one of the most impressive new voices in Japanese religious and Buddhist studies...he is virtually creating a new area of research and focus for the field.”

Fedotov’s impressive output over the past three years, saying, “papers he published during this amazing period have become landmarks in the field. David is well known all over the world as a leader in the field. Everyone wants to collaborate with him.”

On Campus with Bill Breur

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