Most U.S. Women’s Goalball Team members have WMU ties

The U.S. Women’s Goalball Team, members of which have just been nominated to compete in the Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece, has a strong connection to WMU. Five of six players nominated to the team have WMU ties. In addition, both of the team’s two alternates attended WMU sports camps.

Players with connections to WMU are: Jennifer Armbruster, Nicole Buck, Jessica Lorenz, Asya Miller and Robin Theroyoung.
Music students, Tom Knific pick up numerous honors

The vocal jazz ensemble Gold Company has received a Blue Chip award from the Jazz Education Journal for its latest compact disc “25,” released in 2003 and named in honor of its 25th anniversary.

Meanwhile, seven students and groups have received awards in Down Beat magazine’s annual Student Awards Competition and Thomas Knific, jazz studies chairperson, was given an Achievement Award for Jazz Education.

The awards are part of a special section in the June issue of Down Beat. They represent the second greatest number of student awards for any institution in North America for 2004 and mark the 12th straight year WMU has won awards in the competition, keeping the University among the top three award-winning schools for the past decade.

In an added twist, Knific’s 11th-grade son’s group, Nexus, which he coaches in the family’s living room, is the first area noncollegiate group to win an award.

Pilot program starts June 14

A group of Kalamazoo middle school students will experience research firsthand this June through a pilot program designed to encourage academically talented students underrepresented in higher education to obtain a post-secondary degree.

The first year of the Research Scholars Program will kick off with 25 Hillside Middle School students attending a two-week summer research institute on campus starting June 14. They will take part in a variety of other activities throughout the 2004-05 academic year.

During the institute, students in the pilot group will participate in hands-on research projects, college preparation seminars and life-skills workshops. In future years, WMU plans to expand the program to include additional area middle school students.

The Research Scholars Program is a new component of the University’s existing Martin Luther King Jr./César Chávez/Rosa Parks College Day Program. The college day initiative targets sixth through 12th graders and is administered by the Division of Multicultural Affairs.

Evaluation Center program completing ninth and final year

More than a dozen researchers, educators, analysts and others from around the country are coming to WMU for the Evaluation Center’s annual Project MTS Summer Institute. The June 7 through 25 event is unique to the Evaluation Center and aims to improve evaluation efforts in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education.

The $1.3 million program, funded three times by the National Science Foundation, is in its ninth and final year. “It’s given us huge national exposure and it’s helped science education develop evaluation capacity,” says Evaluation Center Director Arlen Gullickson. “The institute also has generated a substantial amount of interest at other institutions looking to do similar things.”

Participants from diverse professional backgrounds focus on evaluation standards, design and models before beginning work on an team project. Many are drawn to the institute because of its affiliation with the Evaluation Center, which is known internationally as a leader in the field, and the opportunity to work with standout evaluators and visiting scholars.

Two chemistry faculty honored

Two members of the chemistry department faculty were honored for their outstanding service to the Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society during the section’s annual spring awards banquet May 24.

David Reinhold was honored for his dedication and service to the Educational Committee and as coordinator of the area competitive high school exam that leads to annual scholarships for the winners.

Susan Stapleton was honored as a founding member of the Women’s Chemistry Committee, which instituted and coordinates the local Chemistry Day for Girl Scouts as well as other programs to promote women in science.

Stapleton also has been the society’s career program coordinator and has provided career services to its members.

Staff member writes new book

Wendy Williamson, study abroad, has written a new book called “Study Abroad 101” that helps clear up common questions about studying overseas. It is aimed at new study abroad advisors as well as current and prospective college students.

The work, published by Agapy Publishing, sells for $12.95 and is available through local bookstores, including the WMU Bookstore, and online through Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

Staff groups award scholarships

The Professional Support Staff Organization has awarded its Education Assistance Scholarship for the Summer I Session to Lori Kison, Waldo Library.

The Administrative Professional Association has awarded its $500 scholarship for 2004 to Ryan Asmus, a senior from Kalamazoo majoring in electrical engineering. Asmus is the son of Wendy Asmus, an academic advisor in the College of Education.
Tristan Brown is WMU’s fourth Udall Scholar in five years

Tristan Brown of Franklin, Mich., a senior majoring in environmental studies who also is creating a Student Planned Major, is WMU’s fourth recipient of a prestigious scholarship for environmental studies from the Morris K. Udall Foundation. Brown is one of 80 Udall Scholars from around the nation who will receive $5,000 for the 2004-05 academic year.

Four WMU students have now won one of the highly competitive awards in the past five years. He joins three fellow members of the Lee Honors College who picked up Udall Scholarships in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Brown, who recently became the University’s first Lloyd Meeds Policy Fellow, has worked as both an assistant and an NSF-funded intern in WMU’s Microbial Aqueous Geochemistry, Biogeochemistry and Thermodynamics Laboratory. He has accumulated an impressive undergraduate research record and earned numerous prominent academic and research honors.

Obituaries

Roy A. Beck, emeritus in communication, died May 1 in Kalamazoo. He was 76.

Beck retired in 1992 after more than 24 years at WMU. During his tenure, he taught classes in broadcast journalism, radio programming, semantics and interpersonal communication. He came to WMU in 1967 as business manager for the University Theatre.

Previously, he had served a seven-year stint as head of the speech and drama department at Illinois State University’s campus high school. He also worked as an announcer at radio stations in Illinois and Kalamazoo.

Russell W. Brown, emeritus in music, died May 24 at his home in Harlingen, Texas. He was 88.

Brown was associate professor of trombone at WMU from 1951-86 and was a founding member of the Western Brass Quintet. The Quintet performed across the United States, playing such high-profile venues as Little Carnegie Hall in New York.

Brown earned a bachelor’s degree in 1938 from Oklahoma State University and a master’s degree in 1950 from the University of Notre Dame. He also studied at the University of Illinois, University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

Prior to coming to WMU, Brown served as director of instrumental music at Panhandle A&M College from 1938-41, a U.S. Army bandleader from 1941-45 and music supervisor of the Conn Vocational School in Elkhart, Ind., from 1945-51.

While at WMU, Brown maintained a very active studio and was principal trombonist of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra for some 30 years. After his retirement and in honor of his work, a donor established a $250,000 endowment fund, creating the Russell Brown Brass Quintet Scholarship. The scholarship yields $25,000 a year, providing five brass students with $5,000 scholarships for each of their four years of study at WMU. Memorial donations may be made to the scholarship fund.

Richard E. Embertson, emeritus in marketing, died May 28 in Gig Harbor, Wash. He was 79.

Embertson retired as an assistant professor in 1987 after serving 30 years on the faculty. Before joining the University, he served as an assistant production manager for the Treasure Masters Co. and as floor manager for the Dayton Co.

For five years in the 1950s, he taught at Northfield High School in Northfield, Minn.

After earning a bachelor of arts degree in 1949, Embertson received a bachelor of science and a master’s degree in 1951, all from the University of Minnesota. He completed course work toward a doctoral degree from Michigan State University.

Embertson was past national president of the American Collegiate Retailing Association, past president of the West Michigan Chapter of the American Marketing Association, and past president of the Kalamazoo Sales and Marketing Executives Club.

Tristan Brown of WMU’s fourth Udall Scholar in five years

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On Campus with Daren Webb

Daren Webb, Sindecuse Health Center, knows all about stress and strain. But then, he’s supposed to. As a physical therapist in WMU’s Sports Medicine Clinic, Webb cares for students, faculty and staff, and area residents whose problems range from bone fractures to back pain.

Patient evaluation and treatment, prescribing special applications and assisting with exercise regimens are all in a day’s work for Webb. It is fulfilling and often challenging, he says.

“Probably the most frustrating thing a health care provider deals with is when things don’t heal the way or as fast as you and the patient would like. We set goals, and when we as a team (the patient and the therapist) don’t reach those goals as expected, it is a disappointment,” Webb says. “Thankfully, much of what we do is successful.”

The former high school football player was drawn to WMU 10 years ago from a private practice in rural Indiana, a move that has been worth it, he says. It also has allowed him to branch out professionally by assisting in Sindecuse’s marketing and communication efforts, a role he took on in 2002.

“I love the atmosphere in which I work. The people I work with at Sindecuse and especially in the Sports Medicine Clinic are caring, supportive and fun to work with,” says Webb, who attended Ball State University and earned a physical therapy degree from Chicago Medical School. “We’re a family.”

Webb also stays busy with his own family.

“I have a great wife, Tammy; two boys, Addison, 12, and McIntyre, 11; and a beautiful little girl, Delaney, who is 7. We enjoy being together, going to places like Cedar Point, boating and all kinds of sports.”

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particularly grateful to him for all that he has done to support me during my first year as WMU president,” Bailey also said she will be consulting with academic leaders prior to naming an interim provost who will work with Litynski on the leadership transition that will become effective July 1. In a message to the campus community, she outlined that plan and set mid-June as a target date for naming an interim provost to allow time for a smooth transition.

“Through a consultative process, I am seeking input regarding the desired characteristics, qualities and skills of the interim provost and possible candidates,” Bailey said in her message to the campus. “After consideration of input and continued conversations with possible appointees and campus constituents, I will make an appointment subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.”

Litynski came to WMU in 1999 from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he held various faculty and research positions before serving as head of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. A career military officer, he retired as a brigadier general shortly before coming to Kalamazoo.

Litynski has been active in research and teaching in electrical engineering, optics and physics for more than 25 years, especially in the fields of laser and electro-optic research, and educational pedagogy. His research has been widely published in professional and technical journals, and he holds a patent for his work in developing a method to convert analog signals to digital signals.

In December 2002, when former WMU President Elson S. Floyd assumed the presidency of the University of Missouri System, Litynski was appointed interim president while the national search that brought Bailey from Northern Michigan University was conducted. That same year, he was awarded the Cavalier Cross of Merit by the president of the Republic of Poland, in recognition of his efforts on behalf of Polish-American relations.

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studies. Buck, Lorenz and Theryoung all participated in WMU sports camps, and Theryoung is also a WMU graduate student, who has taken a break from her studies to train for the upcoming games.

Miller is a WMU graduate and also played on a local goalball team, along with Buck and Theryoung.

Team alternates Jaclyn Barnes and Lindsay Sloan both were introduced to goalball through WMU sports camps.

The U.S. Association of Blind Athletes and U.S. Paralympics recently announced the nomination of the six players and two alternates. The team will compete Sept. 17-28 in Athens.

Goalball is a team sport played by blind and visually impaired athletes around the world. All of the women on the U.S. team are legally blind.

The team also distinguished itself in recent months by becoming the first disabled team accepted to live and train in residence at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.