Clinton signs bill that will bring $1 million to campus river researchers

A bill signed by President Clinton Oct. 19 will bring $1 million in federal funds to Southwest Michigan to boost efforts to clean up the Kalamazoo River.

The funding, set aside earlier this year and first announced by U.S. Rep. Fred Upton Aug. 2, was part of the VA/HUD Appropriations Bill. The $1 million will be used by the University's new Environmental Institute to conduct a variety of studies, establish a mapping information clearinghouse, and provide scientific information on issues affecting the Kalamazoo River watershed.

"The Kalamazoo River is a leading source of PCBs entering Lake Michigan," said Upton after the bill was signed. "It's a fact that can't be ignored and so far, too many words have been spoken and not enough action taken.

"This new funding for river cleanup will mark the first year of what I hope will become an ambitious multiyear project that will bring WMU expertise and the community's commitment together to finally move clean-up efforts forward with sound science guiding the way," he said.

President Elon S. Floyd praised the congressional efforts that led to the funding and said the river project dovetails perfectly with the University's research and public service missions.

"I think of nothing more vital to the region's quality of life and economic health than a restoration of this important natural resource," said Floyd after hearing the news from Washington. "This funding will help us marshal the resources and talents of our finest environmental researchers in the effort to achieve that critical goal.

"With Rep. Upton's leadership, we received bipartisan support for this effort," Floyd continued, "and I am extremely grateful to our congressional delegation for their work in making this funding possible."

The Environmental Institute was established earlier this year by combining the University's Center for Environmental Research and its Environmental Studies Program. The institute focuses on research in such areas as environmental chemistry, geography, geosciences, logical sciences and statistics.

"Environmental issues surrounding the Kalamazoo River watershed have been a major focus of the institute since its inception in April. The fate and transport of pollutants such as PCBs (polychlorinated diphens) in the river are a particular area of investigation for institute scientists and that work will be funded by the new award."

"Now that the funding is finalized, our first step will be to gath the major stakeholders on the river project and prioritize the research issues," says Charles Ide, director of the Environmental Institute. "From preliminary discussions with those stakeholders, we already know one of the initial areas of focus will be conducting a health risk assessment that will be done at the molecular level."

Southwest Michigan to boost efforts to clean up the Kalamazoo River.

Nearly 850 runners and walkers turned out Oct. 23 for the first Homecoming Campus Classic 5K race and 1K kids' race and fun walk. Above, Michigan Avenue in front of the Bernhard Center was flooded with runners at the start of the 5K. Setting the pace was Mike Newkirk of Kalamazoo, front row center, who was the eventual overall male winner with a time of 14:50. Kim Lorenz of Kalamazoo, top right, was the top female runner with a time of 17:42. Both Newkirk and Lorenz are WMU students. Alumni, faculty, staff, students and community members participated in the event, with some contestants traveling from Texas, Missouri and Wisconsin to take part. (Photos by Neil Rankin)

Sky Broncos make it seven in a row at regional NIFA competition

WMU's Sky Broncos precision flight team captured its seventh consecutive regional title over the weekend and has qualified for competition in next spring's national championship event.

The 15-member Sky Broncos team took first place in the National Intercollegiate Flying Association's Region III competition that concluded Oct. 23 at Ohio State University. The Sky Broncos edged out the host team by 13 points for the first-place slot, winning top honors in both ground and flight events. Ohio University placed third in the region.

The win means the WMU team is now qualified to compete at NIFA's May 16-20 national championship event which will be held in Grenada, Miss., with Delta State University acting as host team. The Sky Broncos team has finished in the top three in national competition for the past eight consecutive years. The team captured the national championship in 1991.

"The level of competition at regionals was high this year and it was one of the more exciting competitions we've ever entered at that level," says Sky Broncos head coach Ryan Seiler. "Our students performed very well and the team turned in a very balanced performance."

Leading the Sky Broncos in the competition were team co-captains Jay Orwin, a senior from Careton, Mich., and Jesse A. Coleing, a senior from Hudsonville, Mich. Orwin took top pilot honors for the regional event, while Coleing came in third.

Did you know?

- The Greater Kalamazoo United Way is run by a board of 40 local volunteers, and more than 100 volunteers make funding decisions as members of United Way's allocations committee.

- Individuals may designate an agency to which they wish their contribution to go. These designations are separate from general campaign funds allocated.

- Administrative and fund-raising costs for the Greater Kalamazoo United Way constitute 10.6 percent of the organization's total budget, well within nationally accepted standards.

STEEPING UP TO THE PLATE—Most of this year's 120 WMU United Way campaign volunteers gathered Oct. 12 in the Bernhard Center to launch the 1999 fundraising drive. The drive ends Nov. 17. "That's an 11 percent increase over last year's record, but because of the generosity and commitment of our faculty and staff, we're convinced we can do it," says Andrew A. Rivers, right, executive assistant to the president and WMU campaign coordinator. This year's WMU theme, using a baseball metaphor, is "Steep Up to the Plate, Make a Difference." The community campaign goal is $8.1 million in support of 53 member agencies and a host of participating agencies in Kalamazoo County. With Rivers are, from left, Donald A. Weaver, landscape services, AFSCME; Suzette A. Kohlert, Sindecuse Health Center, PSSO; Kay I. Yeckley, art, APA; and Dawn J. Vanderploeg, auxiliary enterprises and campaign coordinator. (Photo by Neil Rankin)
Self-study under way for North Central re-accreditation effort

Continuous improvement is at the heart of a campuswide self-study project aimed at re-accreditation through the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. A process that occurs every 10 years.

"This is an opportunity to see where the University has been, is now and where it's going," says Kelli D. Peck, re-accreditation coordinator. "We came to WMU to do our work in the fall and are working our way through the self-study report to the North Central Association.

A Web site has been established to facilitate the broadest possible participation. Any way you can be reached at <www.wmich.edu/nca/peck>.

The NCA, located in Chicago, is one of six regional educational accrediting agencies in the United States. It is actually the NCA's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education that accredits colleges and universities.

"The result of our efforts will be the creation of a vision of what WMU wants to be as an institution.," Wright says. "It's all about accountability and being the best University that each of us can help working together, can make it."

Wright stresses that the self-accreditation process is largely directed by NCA evaluators and that NCA representatives, who come from other campuses across the country, see much more as consultants than critics. In January, WMU's advisory board will select areas of emphasis that the NCA intends to explore in its self-study effort.

"An organized filing and index system has been developed for the data collected for the self-study," he adds. "And, for the first time, we're creating an electronic database that can be used for all of the University's future accreditation efforts."

The self-study report is to be presented to the NCA a year from now, on Nov. 1, 2000. Then, on Feb. 18-21, 2001, a team of NCA evaluators will conduct a campus visit and meet with key constituency representatives. A final disposition is expected in spring 2001.

Meanwhile, the NCA has established five criteria by which WMU will be evaluated, and committees have been created to conduct the University's self-evaluation for each of the criteria.

These committees have been meeting on a regular basis since the beginning of the semester, collecting materials and preparing their reports, which are to be submitted to the WMU re-accreditation office in April 2000. This will be followed by a public comment period, from June 9 to Aug. 31.

These draft reports, public comment and other elements then will be integrated into a single report by Grace C. Tiffany, chair of the WMU re-accreditation office.

Wright and other members have been assigned to edit the final self-study report so that it achieves the cohesion of a single voice. Wright says.

Here are the five criteria as provided by the NCA and the name of the chairperson assigned to each address this issue. The criteria are designed to ascertain whether the institution:

- Has a clear and publicly stated purpose and job demands for division administrators, and committees have been created to conduct the University's self-evaluation for each of the criteria.
- Has effectively organized the human, financial and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes. Criterion 2, Betty J. McKain, chair, is focused on the effectiveness of the budget and fiscal management, and on the efficient use of resources. And he has some concerns about data that is shared with other re-searchers and agencies.
- Can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educationaleffectiveness. Criterion 4, Diane K. Swartz, dean of students. Demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships, Criterion 5, Andrew A. Rivers, Office of the President.

Staff members can master '7 Habits'

Do you feel overworked and overwhelmed? Are you struggling to handle job demands and pressures at home? Have you ever got so busy running that you forget where you're going?

The world's largest wetland, the Pantanal in Brazil, will be the subject of a public forum, Nov. 5-6, by a well-known science writer and photojournalist. The Banks will represent his award-winning film "The Pantanal: Brazil's Forgotten Wilderness" at noon in 1710 Wood Multimedia computer, a relative of the "9 Habits" that helps you evaluate where you stand in relation to the 7 Habits.

Benefits of attending the workshop include:

- Increased productivity (accomplishing more in less time)
- Greater ability in key relationships (work, family, social)
- Better balance in your life (less stress)
- Stronger team unity
- A sense of inner peace

To register or for more information, contact the Fetzer Center at 7-3322.

Brazilian wilderness area is subject of film

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Brazillian "Pantanal" film to be screened

The reading, sponsored by the Department of English, is free and open to the public.

"I'm feeling pretty comfortable." De Rose says. "We did the follow-up checking and we can do. But the reality is there are no guarantees. We're dependent on the reliability of the vendors and we're also dependent on what happens on campus, but I think we're going to be okay."
**WMUK’s fund drive soars to successful finish**

Phew! Or Wow! Those two exclamations both describe WMUK’s fall fundraiser.

The University’s National Public Radio station met its goal of $220,000 at 8:33 p.m. Friday, Oct. 22, after posting its two biggest days of fundraising in station history.

Monday’s pledges totaled $30,826, of which about $5,500 came in by mail, for about $25,000 in on-air pledges, says Floyd Pietska, station program director. The previous one-day record for on-air pledges was $24,442, but the new record didn’t last long. It was broken the next day.

A total of $37,033 in pledges came in on Friday, of which $7,000 came by mail, leaving about $35,000 in phone pledges.

“Last year we were surprised by the response and the effort,” said Pietska. “‘This year we’re really overwhelmed. We’re really, really thankful to everyone who participated, both the listeners and the volunteers who took pledges and all the people who called in.”

Activity early Friday during “Morning Edition” was especially brisk, Pietska says. During a frenzied three-hour period from 6 to 9 p.m., the station raised $12,075 from 156 callers.

“Those are all figures I wouldn’t have believed were possible,” Pietska said. “Along with our spring fundraiser, that means we’ve raised $328,000 plus in the past six months.”

WMUK was forced to raise this year’s goal by changes in the cost and pricing structure for NPR programs that increased the station’s costs by 15 percent.

**Zest for life**

The Zest for Life program has recently moved to West Hills Athletic Club, located at 2001 S. 11th St., right off of Stadium Drive. All activities previously held at Oakland Gym, including several aerobic classes, will now take place at West Hills.

The aerobics class schedule has remained the same since the switch to West Hills, but there is a new facility for students to participate in the aerobics program. If you do not wish to meet with SDMG, you must make an on-campus appointment during the posting period and from 100 other countries.

In addition to being an active researcher in the area of environmental chemistry, she served as a faculty mentor and advisor of graduate and undergraduate student researchers.

She was also a member of several chemistry associations, including the American Chemical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She had earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Chatham College in Pittsburgh in 1989. She went on to earn a doctoral degree in chemistry from the College of Environmental Science and Forestry at the State University of New York, Syracuse.

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Ameritech grant will support 'TEAM' effort aimed at boosting number of minority teachers in schools

Ameritech has awarded WMU a grant of $150,000 to address one of the critical issues facing the nation's education system, an acute shortage of minorities in the teaching profession.

The grant will help the College of Education to both recruit and retain more minority students in its programs. The goal is to increase the number of African American, Hispanic and Native American teachers in the nation's schools.

"We expect this unique program to be a national model," President Elson S. Floyd says. "We applaud the commitment that Ameritech has made to remedy what clearly is a crisis in American education.

"This program exemplifies current knowledge regarding some of the best practices in the recruitment and retention of minority students," Floyd notes. "The program draws on and extends the work that our people have proved successful in a wide range of higher education settings.

"Ameritech is proud to play a part in this important effort to address the critical shortage in the face of teacher preparation and certification in West Michigan and across the country," says Robert Cooper, president of Ameritech Michigan. "We have a well-established tradition of support for initiatives that address the critical issues of equity and opportunity.

Both leaders affirmed the need to help the composition of the nation's teacher corps more closely resemble that of students in the nation's schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 33 percent of today's students are minorities while only 9 percent of the teaching force is of minority heritage.

"The TEAM Program is the only multi-focused, comprehensive minority student recruitment and retention program in Michigan, and one of only a few in the nation," Garmon says. "We offer only recruitment or retention but not both, and most are not multi-focus in design. "TEAM's focus is both external and internal and concentrates on both recruitment and retention at both the University and college level," he added. "That's the multi-focus nature of the TEAM program.

"TEAM leaders believe the program gives WMU's College of Education the potential for more than doubling the number of minority students who graduate from its teacher preparation programs within the next five years," Garmon continued. "That would mean certifying 100 or more minority teachers each year."

WMU will recruit prospective students from 20 high schools and eight community colleges in West Michigan, primarily within a 90-mile radius of Kalamazoo. Most of the high schools have a significantly greater proportion of high school students of minority students, totaling 47 percent minority enrollment.

Dr. Lisa M. Hamway, director of corporate contributions for Ameritech in Detroit, made the presentation to President Floyd Oct. 7.

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The grant will enable the College of Education to establish the Ameritech TEAM Program, which offers students "a personal support system as they seek to enter the teaching profession," says project director Arthur Garmon, teaching, learning and leadership.

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