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**Project will result in broader autism services**

Those suffering from autism and their families are getting some much needed help thanks to a $500,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Community Health to two psychology department faculty members.

The grant has been awarded to Chair Stephanie M. Peterson and B. Wayne Fuqua, who are implementing the grant project as co-investigators. It will fund a sweeping array of initiatives that will use high-tech methods to help train mental health practitioners, parents and others dealing with autism spectrum disorder, ultimately leading to wider certification of other professionals trained in treating autism.

“The need is really huge,” Peterson says. “We’re taking a bite out of the elephant.”

The grant project comes after the state reviewed existing autism services and passed legislation requiring insurance companies to cover treatment. Peterson and Fuqua looked closely at the gaps that were identified by the state and wove their grant proposal around those needs.

“We think what we’re doing is very compatible with the overall state mission of improving services for those with autism spectrum disorder and their families,” Fuqua says. “Services have been pretty spotty until now. This is an important part of a larger state plan to ramp up services in the state of Michigan. We’re pleased to be a part of it.”

Projects that will be funded under the grant include:

- A tele-consultation initiative in which WMU will work with service providers and possibly teachers to increase their behavioral assessment and intervention skills when working with the autistic population. Five sites will be equipped with camera systems to give providers the necessary tools to effectively carry out both assessment and treatment.
- A podcasting project in which autism experts from across the country would explore important issues in behavior analysis related to autism assessment and treatment. Podcasts geared toward parents and family are also a possibility.
- Continuing the Michigan Autism Conference, bringing autism experts from across the country to Kalamazoo. The first such conference was held in October.

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**Design meetings set for dining center initiative**

The campus community can take part in the site development process for the new Valley Dining Center by participating in public meeting sessions at 4 or 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, in 159 Bernhard Center.

The sessions will focus on building placement, construction site details, building placement options and pedestrian areas into the build process. They will present an overview of the grant project as co-investigators. It will fund a sweeping array of initiatives that will use high-tech methods to help train mental health practitioners, parents and others dealing with autism spectrum disorder, ultimately leading to wider certification of other professionals trained in treating autism.

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The Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender Student Services is seeking new participants through March 10, for its OUT at WMU—Faces of Pride poster campaign. The poster features individuals from the campus community who self-identify as part of the LBGT and ally community.

The poster will be distributed around campus during the office’s Day of Silence, Week of Action observance in mid-April. Allies are encouraged to participate in the campaign to show their role in and support of the campus LBGT and ally community. More information is available at wmic.edu/diversityandinclusion/bgt.

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**Peterson poster campaign. The poster features individuals from the campus LBGT and ally community.**

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Aviation museum president to make presentation

The president and chief executive officer of the Kalamazoo Air Zoo will be on campus to share his insights on building customer satisfaction and brand recognition for the museum. Troy Thrash will speak at 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 28, in 2150 Schneider Hall as part of the 2013-14 Keystone Community Bank Breakfast Speaker Series.

The event is free and begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Reservations are required and can be made at wmnich.edu/business/keystone-rsvp or (269) 387-6059.

In addition to heading the Air Zoo, Thrash volunteers for the First Robotics regional and international championships as an emcee and has worked to advance other industry groups, such as the federal Interagency Task Force on Aerospace Workforce Revitalization and the Aerospace States Association.

Correction

The location for tomorrow’s Fridays with Friends event was incorrect in the Feb. 6 issue of the Western News. That event will be in the Gilmore Theatre Complex atrium, as will the March 21 mixer.

Exchange


Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/jobs. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

Worker motivation to be discussed

David M. Kreps, the Adams Disting- uished Professor of Management in the Stanford University Graduate School of Business, will speak at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, in 2028 Brown Hall. His pres- entation, “The Economics and Psychol- ogy of Worker Motivation,” is part of the Sichel Lecture Series.

Youths invited to explore two careers

Accelerated Weekend Experience courses for academically talented youths to explore video game creation and veterinary science will be offered from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 1-2. Multi-Media Games (with Scratch software) is for grades five through seven while Veterinary Science is for grades seven through nine. Visit ctd.northwestern.edu/sept/program/aewe for cost and details or call (269) 387-3230.

Cloud company exec to give talk

Melissa Gray, senior director of sustain- ability for Rackspace, will present “What We All Want from Work” at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 13, in 2000 Schneider Hall as part of the Haworth College of Business Distinguished Speaker Series. Rackspace has been featured on Fortune’s list of 100 Best Companies to Work For. Register at wmich.edu/business/dss-rsvp, camunda.reeves@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5069.

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WMU earns sixth Tree Campus certification, finds rare tree species

The Arbor Day Foundation announced in January that it has named WMU’s Tree Campus for the sixth consecutive time, in recognition of WMU’s commitment to effective community forestry management.

“Being recertified as a Tree Campus for 2013 recognizes the hard work and dedication of our landscape services staff and so many others across the University,” says Darrell Junkins, a University grounds supervisor in landscape services.

Tree Campus USA is a national program that honors colleges and universities and their leaders for promoting healthy trees as well as engaging their students and employees in the spirit of conservation. WMU and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor were among the nation’s 30 inaugural Tree Campuses and until 2012, were the only state schools to earn the certification.

The University’s deeply rooted emphasis on environmental stewardship is helping to preserve a recently discovered population of dwarf hackberry trees on campus property. Rarely found as far north as Michigan, these dwarf hackberries have been located on campus property. WMU’s dwarf hackberries were located by Todd J. Barkman, biological sciences, and his fall 2011 and 2013 Systematic Botany classes. The classes were exploring campus natural areas when students began spotting the trees in woodlots southeast of the Stadium Drive Apartments. WMU’s trees are unusually large, so students in last fall’s class used DNA sequencing to help confirm the identity of several trees.

So far, 29 dwarf hackberries have been identified near the apartment complex by Stephen Kato, WMU’s manager of natural areas and preserves, and his student assistant Dean Tomel Simionescu. They include possibly the tallest dwarf hackberry known to exist in the country, a 46-foot specimen that snugly surpasses the current national champion by 5 feet. Official measurement for the Michigan Botanical Club Big Tree Program and the National Registry of Champion trees will be completed this spring.

“These trees were associated with the now rare oak savannas that were part of the pre-settlement vegetation of Kalamazoo County. The ones we’ve discovered at WMU have been slowly surrounded by a forest of invasive species and larger trees that will eventually shade them out,” Kato says.

“Volunteers, including faculty, staff and students, are working with our landscape services personnel to conserve these rare trees by removing invasive species, establishing associated native plants and managing the area to encourage dwarf hackberry survival.”

Researchers focusing on northern Michigan for CO2 storage

For nearly a decade, WMU researchers have been studying Michigan geological features to determine the state’s capacity and potential to store large amounts of carbon dioxide in a process called sequestration. They showcased the potential in a Feb. 12-13 workshop for industry professionals by presenting physical and modeling data of subsurface geological formations relevant to CO2 sequestration research organizations and private companies from nine Eastern States. In Michigan, its partners are studying data and samples from subsurface geological formations relevant to CO2 storage, CO2 containment and the potential for enhanced oil recovery.

This regional effort is led by Battelle Memorial Institute, a Columbus, Ohio, research organization. Industry partners include Core Energy, LLC of Traverse City, Mich. William B. Harrison III, emeritus in geosciences and director of the Michigan Geological Repository for Research and Education, says WMU’s research suggests that in addition to the CO2 storage potential, the technology involved in carbon sequestration could recover some 180 to 200 million barrels of “stranded” oil in old fields.

Harrison along with David Barnes and Duane Hampton, geoscientists, also created a carbon sequestration research center called MidCarb in 2009 with more than $600,000 in federal funding.

Award nominations due soon

Nominations are being accepted through Sunday, March 16, for awards recognizing WMU’s lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender communities and their allies.

Nominations are being accepted in the individual category as well as the unit, team and organization category. WMU students, employees, units and organizations are eligible to receive the awards, and anyone on or off campus may make a nomination. For guidelines and a nomination form, visit wmich.edu/diversityandinclusion/ltgbg.

Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 35, 25, 20, 15 and 10 years of service during February.

35 Years—Lunny D. Green, Registrar’s Office, and Sharon L. Nicholson, information technology.

25 Years—Mary J. Carpenter, landscape services.

20 Years—Teresa Ann Coborn, Sundasce Health Center, and Michael A. Matthews, building custodial and support services.

15 Years—Steven R. Cartwright, University Libraries; Elizabeth A. Dalzell, Davis Dining Services; Brian S. Leonard, Sundasce Health Center; Melanie Parish, landscape services; and Rose Marie Roberts, Office of the Vice President for Legal Affairs.

10 Years—Donald W. Gribbin, accounting; and Luann M. Harden, WMU-Southwest.

5 Years—Adam Adrianson, University Libraries; Cindy L. Beebe, building custodial and support services; Kevin J. Birdahl, information technology; Darrell E. Claerys, information technology; Sara A. Decker, Haworth College of Business; Mary L. French, Buehnam Dining Service; Jeremy Michael Gleke, student financial aid and scholarships; Kirstin B. Jones, building custodial and support services; Stacy-Ann M. Linther-Travis, Auxiliary Enterprises; Mark Terrell Robinson, building custodial and support services; and Patrick M. Williams, information technology.

Obituaries

Michael A. Myckowiak, a former regional director of continuing education, died Jan. 23. He was 89. Myckowiak retired in 1984 after 30 years of service.

Richard R. Williams, a former associate professor in the College of Health and Human Services, died Feb. 5. He was 77. Williams founded WMU’s holistic health program in 1982. A memorial service will be held in April.

Joseph T. Work, emeritus in music, died Feb. 7. He was 82. Work retired in 1993 after 30 years of service.
Students to vie for $16,000 scholarships

Some 140 high school seniors will compete in the Multicultural Leader Scholarship competition at WMU from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, in the Bernhard Center.

WMU established the by-invitation-only event in 2012 to broaden diversity and multiculturalism on campus. Only qualifying students from select high schools are invited to compete.

During the competition, they will vie for membership in WMU’s Martin Luther King Jr. Academy as well as one of about 50 Multicultural Leader Scholarships, each totaling $16,000 over four years. Since the event’s inception, some 100 students have received nearly $1.6 million in scholarships.

Students who receive a Multicultural Leader Scholarship automatically become part of WMU’s Martin Luther King Jr. Academy. The academy is a comprehensive program that offers academic, social, and professional development support and services to students from their first year on campus through graduation.

Area high school students competing in Brain Bee

Southwest Michigan high school students will use their brains while learning about the brain during a neuroscience competition Saturday, Feb. 22, in Wood Hall.

The fourth Southwest Michigan Brain Bee is open to the public and begins at 10 a.m. It is a key part of Brain Awareness Week, an educational outreach mission aimed at increasing awareness about neuroscience.

Following the competition, neuroscience labs personnel will conduct tours and demonstrations.

WMU’s event is being organized by psychology and biological sciences faculty members and graduate students. The winners of local brain bees will compete in the National Brain Bee held each March in Baltimore during Brain Awareness Week.

Registration for the Southwest Michigan Brain Bee is at swmichbrainbee.webs.com. The official study material for the Brain Bee is a book titled, “Brain Facts,” which can be downloaded for free at www.sfn.org.

First WMU Grad Talks slated

The Graduate Student Advisory Committee’s new graduate student symposium, WMU Grad Talks, takes place at 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 21, in the Lee Honors College Building lounge.

Inspired by TED Talks, it gives graduate students a chance to present their research in 10-minute public presentations. Visit wmich.edu/gsac/gradstalk.html for details.

Funding technology seminar set

A networking seminar titled “Building University-Industry Research Partnerships to Secure Federal Funding for Your Technology” will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, March 14, in Schneider Hall. Registration is open at misbdc.net/events.aspx.

This interactive program will explore questions for faculty members and small businesses in the context of funding programs for translational research, university spin-out companies and small business product development. It also will cover new programs for technology transfer at NSF, NIH, and other federal agencies, as well as the well-known SBIR and STTR programs that award more than $2 billion annually in research and development funding to small businesses.

Michael Korek from BBC Entrepreneurial Training and Consulting will be the guest facilitator. In addition, representatives from WMU research centers and business development offices will offer consultation and support to attendees. There will be plenty of time for questions, discussion and networking. Light refreshments will be served.

On Campus with Lewis Hamilton

In his own words, Lewis Hamilton jokes that he’s worked at WMU so long, “They’re kind of built the University around me!”

During his 33 years as an employee and prior years as an undergraduate student, he says the people at the University have made him look forward to coming to work every day for more than three decades.

“I’ve worked for Western a long time and have met a lot of nice people,” he says. “I’ve looked forward to coming in and doing my job every day.”

Those jobs have included his start in 1981 in accounts payable as well as positions in accounts receivable from 1984 to 1997. The latter year, Hamilton moved from the Seibert Administration Building to Walwood Hall, where he works as a financial assistant processing cash and in-kind gifts for the Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

A native of Portage, Mich., he earned his bachelor’s degree in advertising from WMU in 1979. Hamilton now lives in Kalamazoo with his wife, Mary. The couple have a grown son, Matthew, who graduated from WMU in 2012 with a bachelor’s degree in computer information systems.

The sudden death of their young daughter from an illness in 1992 drove Lewis to writing poetry to help with his grief. When his poems began piling up, he published a book of his work, “The Gardener and my Garden,” in 1997 with illustrations by his sister, Sharolyn Hamilton.

Writing that book led him to start a blog, lightenload.wordpress.com two years ago, where he continues to share stories of inspiration and observation.

During the past two years, his site has had more than 13,000 views from people in 87 different countries.