COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Alumni Achievement Awards

OCTOBER 7, 2016
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2016

Dear Friends and Alumni,

The Western Michigan University College of Arts and Sciences is home to twenty-six outstanding departments and programs. Since 1956, more than 80,000 students have graduated with a degree from our college.

Western Michigan University prides itself on being learner-centered, discovery-driven and globally-engaged. Today we honor 19 alumni achievement winners, selected by faculty in the departments from which they received their degrees, who exemplify these pillars.

Deeply learner-centered, our alumni achievement winners include science teachers, university department chairs, a senior vice president for public radio, a media executive with expertise in nonfiction and documentary content and the director of undergraduate academic advising at WMU.

Our honorees are discovery-driven, searching for better treatments for diseases like schizophrenia, improved laboratory methods for pharmaceutical manufacture, a better understanding of the impact of environmental pollutants on bald eagle ecology and developing new methods for high performance mainframe computing.

Our winners make us proud because of their engagement in community work, from the local to the global scale. Our awardees have served as the executive director of Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes food pantry, captain of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety, a labor and employment attorney, a senior investment strategist for Wells Fargo, manager of global strategy at Abbott Laboratories, senior manager of a global consulting firm focused on clean fuel technology and a cryptological technician for the U.S. Navy.

On behalf of the Western Michigan University, College of Arts and Sciences, thank you for your remarkable contributions to society, and congratulations to all of our 2016 College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement honorees!

Sincerely,

Dr. Carla M. Koretsky, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Biological Sciences

Dr. William Bowerman ’85
Professor and Chair, Department of Environmental Science and Technology, University of Maryland

William W. Bowerman is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Environmental Science and Technology at the University of Maryland. He was on the Faculty of Clemson University from 1999-2011, served as the Faculty Senate President, and is a Professor Emeritus of Ecology and Environmental Toxicology.

He received a B.A. in biology from Western Michigan University, a M.A. in biology from Northern Michigan University, and a Ph.D. in fisheries and wildlife-environmental toxicology from Michigan State University. He has been studying bald eagle ecology and the effects of environmental pollutants in the Great Lakes region since 1984. He started environmental monitoring programs using sea eagles in the U.S. and Canada (bald eagles), Sweden (white-tailed sea eagle), Russia (Steller’s sea eagle), and in Uganda and South Africa (African fish-eagle).

He served as the United States Co-Chair of the International Joint Commission’s Great Lakes Science Advisory Board from 2011-2014. He has published over 80 peer-reviewed papers, and has received grants totaling over $6 million which funded 7 Ph.D. graduates, 28 M.S. graduates, 5 post-docs, 2 Fulbrights, and 1 U.N. Scholar. He currently supervises 1 M.S. and 3 Ph.D. students.

His awards include the Distinguished Alumni Award, and Outstanding Young Alumni Award, Northern Michigan University; the Regional Forester’s Honor Award, Eastern Region, U.S. Forest Service; the Bald Eagle Person of the Year Award and Bald Eagle Research Award, The Eagle Foundation; and selection to the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.
Department of Economics

David B. Stevens, ’83
Senior Investment Strategist, Wells Fargo Bank

David Stevens was born in Ann Arbor and grew up in Lansing. He attended Lansing Community College for two years before transferring to Western Michigan University. He graduated from WMU in 1983 with a B.S. in Economics. David currently works for Wells Fargo as a Senior Investment Strategist, managing portfolios for individuals and charitable organizations.

David started his career in Southern Florida, working for three different banking institutions. He met his (now) wife, Hilary, on the job there. They have three boys, who are now in their early adult years, either attending or just out of college. David moved to Minnesota in 1999, working for a time with American Express before moving on to Wells Fargo.

David has been actively involved as a volunteer for the CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) Institute since earning his Charter in 1991. He has served as an examination grader for 23 years, including 19 years as grading team captain. In 2010, David was awarded the Donald L. Tuttle Award for Excellence in CFA Examination grading. David also has been active on the CFA Disciplinary Review Committee, a globally diverse group that serves to maintain the high standards of the CFA Charter. David’s leadership skills and reorganization work led to being awarded the Daniel J. Forrestal III Leadership Award for Professional Ethics and Standards of Investment Practice in 2014. The newly created David B. Stevens Endowment Fund is an outgrowth of this award, much to the delight and gratitude of our Department.

Department of English

Randi S. N. Yoder ’73
Senior Vice President of Development, Minnesota Public Radio, American Public Media Group

Randi Yoder is the senior vice president and chief development officer for Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media, and oversees all major and planned individual and institutional giving. She earned a B.A. in English from Western Michigan University and a M.B.A. in international marketing and management from the American Graduate School of International Management.

Prior to joining MPR | APM in March 2011, Yoder was senior vice president of Donor Relations for the Greater Twin Cities United Way. Yoder is an associate with Hanson, Henley Yoder and Lamb and also served as president of Yoder Henley Development Resources, vice president of Institutional Advancement at St. Catherine University, and associate dean for External Affairs at the University of Minnesota’s Carlson School of Management.

In recognition of her work, Yoder received the 2011 Outstanding Professional Fundraiser award from the Minnesota Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the 1995 Woman of Distinction award, sponsored by Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine and Twin Cities Business Journal.

Yoder has served on a variety of boards, most recently the boards of the EARTH University Foundation and EARTH University Trust and speaks on development-related topics within the industry.
Randy Curtis Hice, ’76
Manager of Global Strategy, Abbott Laboratories

Randy C. Hice is considered one of the world’s leading experts in complex laboratory automation. In 1989, while at Digital Equipment Corporation, he pioneered laboratory workflow analysis for the purpose of determining software implementation designs for Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS). In 1996, he served as CEO of Laboratory Expertise Center, Inc., a business consultancy specializing in multi-site software harmonization. In 2009, he joined Abbott Laboratories where he serves as Manager of Global Strategy for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors.

Randy is the most published author in the world on the topic of laboratory automation, and has served as a monthly columnist for Scientific Computing magazine since 1996.

While studying chemistry at WMU, faculty members strongly encouraged his use of computers to develop programs for sophisticated calculations. It was this combination of laboratory skills and computer science that created the foundation for Randy’s work and propelled him to the top of his field.

While at WMU, Randy was tri-captain of the Bronco’s men’s swimming team. Continuing as a master swimmer after graduation, he won 9 State Championships in Michigan, and 1 in Colorado. He was runner-up in the National Paddleball Championships and was the Southeastern United States Squash Champion and runner-up in the U.S. Open Squash Championships.

As an author he has published the psychological thriller, Agbero, and his second novel, Xibalba is due out soon.

Randy lives in the Denver area with his wife Erin and two sons, Sean and Colin. He is an active snowboarder, mountain biker, competitive swimmer and squash player.

Liza Keckler, ’98
Content Creator, ChefSteps

Liza Keckler is a media executive with expertise in digital, cable, nonfiction, documentary and lifestyle content creation.

After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Broadcast and Video Production from the School of Communication at Western Michigan University, Ms. Keckler began her career at KIRO Television, producing documentaries. In 2000 she joined Screaming Flea Productions in Seattle, Washington. Screaming Flea Productions is the largest provider of non-fiction content in the Northwest. Ms. Keckler served as VP of Development at Screaming Flea.

Lisa’s credits include work as producer/writer/director/creator on various shows for Food Network, HGTV, Discovery Home Channel, A&E, National Geographic, BIO, Fuse & others. Her program credits include Hoarders on A&E, The Legend of Mick Dodge on National Geographic Channel and Project Afterlife on Destination America. Ms. Keckler also has served as an Executive Producer at Travel Channel supervising a diverse slate of production and development.

In recent months, Ms. Keckler has embarked on a new media venture with ChefSteps, a leader in digital food content and kitchen innovation.
Institute of the Environment and Sustainability

Stacy Noblet, ’03
Senior Manager, ICF International

Stacy Noblet graduated from WMU and the Lee Honors College in 2003 with majors in environmental studies and geography. She was a member of the Bronco Marching Band and Sigma Alpha Iota.

After graduation, Noblet joined ICF International, a global consulting firm based in the Washington, D.C. metro area, where she is now a senior manager and team lead. Noblet’s area of expertise is the use of clean fuels, technologies, and strategies to reduce petroleum consumption and emissions in the transportation sector. She works closely with government and commercial clients, managing projects and advising efforts at the local, state, and national levels. Noblet’s contributions help drivers locate electric vehicle charging stations, increase the use of alternative fuel and fuel-efficient vehicles in national parks, and educate policymakers about the types of incentives and regulations that shape clean fuel markets across the country. In 2010, Noblet received a Special Recognition Award from the U.S. Department of Energy for her outstanding support of Clean Cities, a national program focused on local actions to cut petroleum use. In addition to her project work, Noblet is a mentor to her team and other junior staff, fostering their professional development at ICF.

In 2012, Noblet earned a master’s degree in environmental sciences and policy from Johns Hopkins University. Noblet and her husband, a fellow Bronco, have two daughters, ages 3 years and 5 months.

Department of Geography

Dr. Jeroen Wagendorp ’84
Faculty member in the Geography and Sustainable Planning Department, Grand Valley State University

Jeroen Wagendorp is an applied geographer, with an appreciation for Urban and Regional Planning (AICP certified) and geo-spatial systems management and implementation (GISP Certified). He was instrumental in developing GIS in Eaton and Barry Counties (1989-98) and started the GIS Department in Allegan County (1998-04) as its first Director.

In 2005, he was the first person to hold a terminal degree in geography and AICP and GIS certifications concurrently. His main focus for the last 28 years has been on comprehensive public sector GIS implementation within the State of Michigan. He was the co-founder of the Michigan Communities (formerly Counties) Association of Mapping Professionals (MiCAMP) and served as its president for the first 11 years (2001-11). He also co-chaired several State of Michigan GIS service related boards and committees. In 2011, he received the State of Michigan GIS Service Award: “Dr. Wagendorp is helping us to transform government through partnership across traditional government boundaries,” said State of Michigan Chief Information Officer David Behen. “He has brought tireless energy and passion to his work, embracing the mission to encourage cost-effective and efficient community government.”

As Chair of the Geography and Sustainable Planning Department at Grand Valley State University (2004-2014) he attempted to transfer his experiences of the past two and a half decades into the curricular environs of higher education.

Dr. Wagendorp is currently back as a faculty member at GVSU and enjoys taking students to Europe each summer and teaching his video interactive online courses.
Department of Geosciences

Dane Alexander ’73, ’83
Instructor, Western Michigan University, Department of Geosciences

Dane Alexander was selected for the Alumni Achievement Award by the Department of Geosciences because of his outstanding work as a dedicated teacher and educational leader. Dane graduated from WMU with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in earth science and political science in 1973 and 1983.

He was involved in education as a high school geology teacher in the Mattawan Consolidated Schools for 30 years before retiring. As a high school teacher, Dane understood the importance of relating to his students and making the subject relevant to the students’ lives. He often spent his weekends taking students on field trips to local rock quarries or other areas of geological significance throughout Michigan.

At WMU, Alexander has led more than a hundred students and alumni on field trips to the U.S. Southwest and is especially well known for his epic Grand Canyon rafting trips down the Colorado River, which he led from 1993 to 2006. He still continues to teach the very popular course “Geology of the National Parks” at WMU as a part-time instructor and is an outspoken supporter of both the National Park system and earth science education. His youthful enthusiasm, personal photographs and humorous stories about his experiences visiting the U.S. National Parks consistently make it one of the most popular and rapidly-filled courses taught at WMU. Dane’s charisma and passion for teaching earth science and geology has inspired a myriad of students to pursue degrees and careers in earth science and geology, as well as in education. Dane is an avid car enthusiast and never misses attending the Indy 500 race. He and his lovely wife Chris reside in Mattawan, Michigan, and are currently enjoying “semi-retirement” traveling and spending time with their two sons.

Global and International Studies

Michael Riedel ’94
Area Director Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agriculture Service

Michael Riedel serves as the Area Director for the Western Hemisphere in the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Washington D.C. His career exemplifies the WMU graduate who successfully parleys academic passions into a rewarding profession, and the Alumni Achievement Award honors his service to the global community.

Riedel graduated Western Michigan University in 1994 with a degree in international and comparative politics in Political Science. The Global and International Studies Program would only be launched ten years later, but in 1994, Michael “cut his real travel teeth” on a three-week WMU study abroad trip to China that solidified his commitment to pursuing an international career. He didn’t want to simply visit countries; he wanted to live in them.

After completing a M.A. in International Affairs from The George Washington University’s Elliott School, Michael joined the USDA as a Foreign Service Officer. His first posting in 2002 was at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India. In late 2006, he arrived in Bagdad for a one-year tour as senior agricultural attaché and, in 2008, was appointed to southern Vietnam and Cambodia. In 2012, Riedel became the Director of the Office of Agricultural Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. In 2015, he returned to Washington, D.C. to serve as Director of the Asia Division in FAS’ Office of Country and Regional Affairs.

When Riedel gets a new posting, he usually receives months of intensive language training. In addition to his facilities with language, Riedel is passionate about developing and coordinating U.S. strategies to advance global food security, including those focused on agricultural biotechnology. He is not only dedicated to his career but also has given generously to WMU by speaking with WMU students on campus visits and meeting with WMU administrators overseas. Riedel is an outstanding example of the globally engaged WMU alumni who make an impact on the world daily.
Anne Wend Lipsey graduated from Western Michigan University in 1974 with a bachelor’s degree in History and certification in secondary education. She then earned a master’s degree in Urban Planning from the University of Michigan. Before embarking on her career with Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes, Ms. Lipsey served with Ministry with Community, the Center for City Housing, and the Eastside Neighborhood Association. From 1984 to 1991, Anne was assistant director of Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes. She then served as Director of Allocations at Greater Kalamazoo United Way—now United Way of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region—and as a program officer for the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. From 1986 to 1990, she was a trustee on the Kalamazoo Public Schools’ Board of Education. Anne became executive director of Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes in 2003 and served in that leadership role until she retired in 2014.

Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes was organized in 1982 in response to several downtown churches’ efforts to address widespread concerns about community hunger. Today, Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes operates as a food bank with a $1.7 million budget and offers multiple services such as a grocery pantry program, mobile food initiative, weekend food pack program that serves local children with breakfast and lunch, commodity supplemental food, and meal support program. The organization distributes food to 71 locations, offers direct service at 24 pantry sites, and manages 450 volunteers. Much of this growth occurred during Ms. Lipsey’s tenure. Before retiring, Anne led a $2 million capital campaign to build a new facility that began operations in January 2012.

During her long service career, Ms. Lipsey also was involved with several other community organizations, including Options for Community Living, the Anti-Racism Alliance, and the Kalamazoo Deacons’ Conference. In 2010, Anne was president of the Michigan Food Bank Council. In honor of her extensive contributions, the KalamazooYWCA awarded her with the 2014 YWCA Lifetime Woman of Achievement Award.

Dr. Rosario Cañizales Rodriguez graduated with a science degree, Rosario Cañizales Rodriguez taught science in Caracas, Venezuela later coming to WMU for a Science Education MA program that she completed in 1982. After a short return to teaching, Rosario entered the WMU Science Education doctoral program under the supervision of Dr. George G. Mallinson.

Returning home, Rosario served as the education director for the Caracas Children’s Museum until 2001 when she was selected for the “Global Educator Outreach” program that brought educators from different countries to Chicago Public Schools. She remained with CPS and currently teaches at the Hernandez Middle School, Chicago. Rosario has received many recognitions including the “Orden Andrés Bello” award, Venezuela’s highest award for contributions to public education. This very year, La Raza Newspaper of Chicago named Rosario its 2016 Outstanding Hispanic Woman in Education. Rosario has dedicated her life to science education; it is her passion. Every day she looks for new ways to make science relevant for her students and to increase student interest in STEM related careers. She deems it an honor to facilitate her Hispanic students’ learning, hoping many of them will transition to college and choose careers related to STEM fields.

Rosario is admired and highly respected by all. And so it is with considerable pleasure and pride that the faculty of The Mallinson Institute for Science Education names Rosario Cañizales Rodriguez as its 2016 Outstanding Alumni Award recipient.
Department of Mathematics

Dr. Jonathan K. Hodge ’00, ’02
Chair, Department of Mathematics, Grand Valley State University

Dr. Jonathan Hodge is currently Chair of the Mathematics Department at Grand Valley State University where he has served in that capacity since 2013 and as assistant Chair for the previous four years. Dr. Hodge was a 2002 graduate of our department and studied graph theory under the direction of Dr. Allen Schwenk.

His publication record includes numerous peer-reviewed articles and two textbooks, one of which has been translated into Russian. Perhaps most timely for this year’s award is that a number of Dr. Hodge’s publications deal with elections and voting theory, a prominent area of mathematics within graph theory. His expertise in this area has prompted invitations to review books that associate the mathematics of voting methods to issues related to the democratic process. It should be noted that one of Dr. Hodge’s co-authored papers garnered the Mathematical Association of America’s prestigious George Polya Award.

Since graduating, Dr. Hodge has obtained more than a half million dollars in grant award funding either as PI or co-PI from the NSA, NSF, and the Educational Advancement Foundation. Of all of his awards, he notes his leadership in promoting GVSU’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) as most noteworthy as it has expanded his department’s commitment to undergraduate mathematics education on a national scale. As chair of the GVSU Mathematics Department, Dr. Hodge has kept in close contact with and promoted continuous ties with the shared mathematical interests of WMU.

Department of Philosophy

Matt Bahleda ’11
Associate, O’Melveny & Myers, LLP

Matt attended Western Michigan University from the fall of 2007 to the spring of 2011. Although he began his educational career intending to be a high school history teacher, after one course in the Philosophy Department, he was hooked. He also majored in Political Science, where he was introduced to the Mock Trial team. While a student, Matt was honored with membership into the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa honor society, graduated summa cum laude from the Lee Honors College, and was awarded numerous prizes including the Renstrom Prize, the Robins Scholar Award, and a number of others.

After WMU, prompted in part by his studies in professional ethics and his experience on the WMU Mock Trial team, Matt attended the University of Michigan Law School, where the critical thinking skills he honed under the guidance of some of the Philosophy Department’s best, including Kent Baldner, Fritz Allhoff, and Joseph Ellin, served him well. Among other endeavors, Matt was the Executive Comments Editor of the Michigan Business and Entrepreneurial Law Review and co-authored a Note for publication. Since graduating from the University of Michigan Law School with honors in 2014, Matt has uprooted his life and moved to Los Angeles, California, where he practices Labor & Employment law at O’Melveny & Myers LLP. Much of his practice focuses on labor disputes at some of the world’s largest airlines, but he also devotes a significant portion of his time to pro bono efforts for the benefit of the cities of Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach, for whom he frequently serves as a deputy prosecutor.

Since the first day he set foot on WMU’s campus, Matt was determined to make something of himself, and he credits WMU and the Philosophy Department for much of his success thus far. Like many before him, Matt grabbed the reins and will continue to be a shining example of the power of a WMU education.
Department of
Physics

Joan de Vries Kelley '70
Senior Technical Staff Member, IBM

Ms. Joan de Vries Kelley (M.A. 1970) taught science, physics and mathematics for 4 years before beginning a long career working at IBM. As a system programmer, she worked on accounting, performance and recovery components of the operating system. In 1990, she joined the team that created Parallel Sysplex, a cluster of up to 32 IBM mainframes acting together as a single system image to share workloads for high performance and high availability. Computing skills learned in physics research enabled her to design tests, create measurement tools, identify and resolve problems, and publish performance results for this product. She made a number of presentations at technical conferences, both domestically and internationally. For her efforts, she was promoted to Senior Technical Staff Member, the first woman to receive that honor in the performance organization, and with a Corporate Award, the highest level of award given by IBM.

As the mother of a son who recently received his Ph.D. in physics, she was tangentially involved in science fairs, Science Olympiad, Intel Science Talent Search, and a cleanroom creation at Syracuse University. After her last retirement from IBM in 2011, she earned a certificate from the Boston University Genealogical Research Program. She traced a New York African-American family back to their slave ancestors and published her research in the *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*.

Department of
Political Science

Kevin Knutson '01
Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising, Western Michigan University, College of Arts and Sciences

Kevin Knutson, director of undergraduate academic advising in WMU's College of Arts and Sciences, earned his M.A. in Political Science at WMU in 2001. He is a graduate of North Hennepin Community College and Minnesota State University at Moorhead.

Kevin began his WMU career in 1994 as a residence hall director, taking classes part time. He joined the CAS Advising Office in 2000 and has served as director since 2006. The CAS Advising Office serves well over 5000 undergraduate majors and minors in the largest and most complex college at WMU. Under his leadership, the CAS Advising Office has pioneered a number of innovations, from social media to new methods for identifying at-risk students.

Kevin's creativity and compassion have been recognized by those around our campus and across his profession. In 2011, the National Academic Advising Association selected him to receive its Outstanding Advising Award in the Academic Advising Administrator Category. He currently serves on NACADA's Annual Conference Advisory Board.

Closer to home, Kevin received WMU's Make a Difference Award in 2015. The award is the highest honor WMU bestows specifically on non-faculty employees for their service. He previously received the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College Distinguished Service Award in 2009 and was named "Supervisor of the Year" in 1997 while in Residence Halls.

In addition to his advising work, Kevin serves as treasurer of the WMU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest, largest, and most selective honor society for all academic disciplines. He resides in Kalamazoo with his wife, Lisa, and daughters Emma and Anna.
Department of Psychology

Adam Prus ’00, ’02
Professor and Department Head, Department of Psychology, Northern Michigan University

Adam Prus is a Professor in Psychology and Director of the Neuropsychopharmacology Laboratory at Northern Michigan University. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology at WMU and then stayed to earn a Master of Arts in Psychology. At WMU, he worked closely with his research advisor, Dr. Lisa Baker, to conduct studies aimed at understanding the mechanisms of action of drugs used for the treatment of mental disorders - a research area that Adam continues to engage in to this day.

Upon completing his studies at WMU, Adam moved to Richmond, Virginia and earned a Ph.D. in Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2004. Adam then became a post-doctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University, where he received the Rafaelson Young Investigator Award and a research grant from the Stanley Medical Research Institute for his studies on treatments for schizophrenia.

Adam joined the Psychology Department faculty at Northern Michigan University as an Assistant Professor in 2006 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2009. During this time, he received a research grant from the National Institute on Mental Health to evaluate novel strategies for treating schizophrenia. In 2014, Adam published a textbook on Psychopharmacology titled An Introduction to Drugs and the Neuroscience of Behavior, and a 2nd edition will be published in 2017. Adam was promoted to Professor in 2014. He spends his time at NMU teaching courses in psychology and working with students in the laboratory. He also has assisted in designing new programs at NMU, including majors in Neuroscience and Applied Behavior Analysis.

School of Public Affairs and Administration

James P. Mallery ’90, ’00
Village Manager, Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

Jim Mallery graduated from WMU with a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1990 and a Master of Public Administration in 2000. He also is a graduate of the Senior Management Institute of Policing and the Grand Rapids Leadership Academy.

Beginning his career with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety in 1991, Jim moved up the ranks to Captain, serving and leading its criminal investigations, training, service, and operations divisions. Captain Mallery was also the Interim Chief of KDPS from 2007-2008. “Innovative leadership” and “commitment to public service” are the cornerstones of his successful public service career. His tested leadership in community policing allowed him a career move to city management, starting as Assistant Village Manager of Vicksburg, Michigan, beginning in January 2016 and moving to its Village Manager position in July 2016.

Jim is highly passionate about the culture of learning and its role in public service. In addition to leading the training division at KDPS, he has taught at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Ferris State University. A past president of the Kalamazoo Police Supervisor Association, Jim has received multiple awards from KDPS.

He lives in Vicksburg with his wife Stephanie, also a Bronco, and three sons—Drew, Luke, and Cole.

There is no doubt that, as Jim states, he has represented the “Master of Public Administration degree proudly in each of the offices [he has] served.”
Department of World Languages and Literatures

Rebekkah L. Zanotti ’13
Cryptologic Technician Interpretive, U.S. Navy’s Fleet Information Operations Center

Rebekkah L. Zanotti is a Cryptologic Technician Interpretive (CTI) for the U.S. Navy’s Fleet Information Operations Center. She uses her language skills to support the Navy mission and provide support to deployed U.S. Naval forces and allies, and is currently stationed at Fort Meade, Maryland.

Ms. Zanotti graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Department of World Languages and Literatures in 2013 with a major in German. After graduation, she joined the U.S. Navy and studied Russian for a year at the prestigious Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California.

During her time at WMU, Ms. Zanotti participated in the semester-long study abroad program in Bonn, Germany. In her senior year, faculty selected her to receive the Hermann E. Rothfuss award for excellence in German. As befits an engaged thinker, Ms. Zanotti also took courses in a variety of subjects, including religion, Japanese, and leadership. She enjoyed playing in the Bronco Marching Band.

The department is proud to recognize Ms. Zanotti’s achievements through this award. Her mastery of German and the readiness and discipline she applied to the intensive study of Russian have enabled her to play a critical role in Navy support. In this role, the day-to-day impact of Ms. Zanotti’s linguistic expertise, her intellectual discernment, and her critical thinking skills is far-reaching and consequential.

Department of Spanish

Dr. Corey Shouse ’92
Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies, St. John’s University

Corey Shouse is originally from Ypsilanti, Michigan. He completed a double major in Political Science and Spanish at Western Michigan University and also graduated from the Lee Honors College in 1992. After graduation he began a Ph.D. program in Latin American literature at the University of Pittsburgh. Upon completing his master’s degree he took a ‘gap year’ in Bogotá, Colombia, where he worked as a primary school teacher and took classes in Latin American literature at the Universidad Pontificia Javeriana. He then returned to Pittsburgh where he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the postmodern novel in Colombia. He completed his thesis with a Fulbright doctoral research fellowship and a year of studies in Colombia in 1998. His thesis explored feminism, popular culture and lettered discourse as responses to the conditions of modernity and the crisis of the nation-state in Colombia.

Since 1999 Dr. Shouse has been a professor in the Department of Hispanic Studies and the Program for Latino-Latin American Studies at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota. He has dedicated the majority of his academic work to Colombian themes, with publications on the journalism of Gabriel García Márquez, the testimonial literature of Alfredo Molano and Arturo Alape, the neorealist films of Victor Gaviria and the identitarian politics in the work of Afro-Colombian visual artist Liliana Angulo Cortés. Dr. Shouse is presently working on a book manuscript on the culture of cycling in Colombia, studying the enormous importance of this sport during periods of crisis and conflict in that nation’s history.