

# BUSINESS & FINANCE NOTES



NOVEMBER 2023

ISSUE: 6

**ATTENTION! Business and Finance Employees! We want to know your interests. Have a topic you want to know more about? Tell Karmella. If you are asking the question, someone else probably has as well. Call, text, or email.**

## Did you know?



### The level of involvement OBF has in commencement

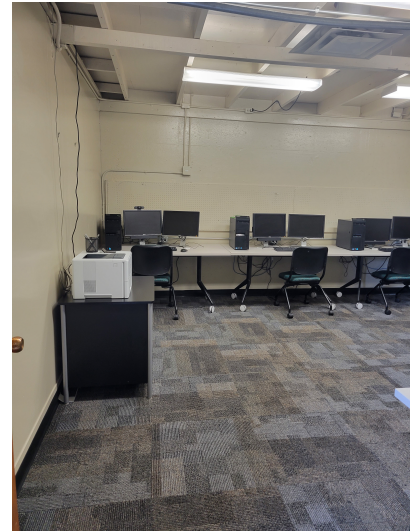
December 16, 2023, Commencement is the celebration of graduation. The ceremony recognizes the completion of degree requirements, which, at WMU, is a top priority. Faculty, the President's office, student affairs, students, and parents are people you would expect to see preparing and celebrating, but would you believe OBF employees play a massive role in this event? Weeks before the event, a committee convenes with members from the President's office, Public Safety, Miller Auditorium, Facilities Management, Board of Trustees, the Registrar, and more to discuss coordination, schedule, concerns, and new ideas. This collaboration begins preparation for the event. Custodians, electricians, plumbers, project specialists, maintenance, landscapers, and other facilities (AFSCME) staff check, repair, and clean everything from floorboards to chandeliers and sidewalks to outside lighting. Several walk-throughs of buildings and campus open areas are performed to look for facility concerns. Public Safety schedules security, traffic control, and EMS and ensures Parking Services preparations are done for all parking needs. Miller staff coordinates audio, video, lighting, and stage setup. Recently, hanging the country flags representing all current international students has been added back into the day's ceremonies. AFSCME staff are on-site during the event to handle immediate concerns that may arise. Spaces are cleaned continuously so each graduate has a fresh space for gathering and photos. Miller staff greet guests and attend to immediate needs. All hands are on deck. At WMU, every detail is thought of and given attention. Right down to the spray of the fountains in the plaza.



# And did you know?

## Custodial Services has top-notch training and learning center

From a repurposed area to a space of pride. This ideal custodial training and learning center in the physical plant saves time and is a safer location to welcome outside vendors to show the latest products of the custodial world. The spacious room houses a large photo organizational chart of the area I think of as the Wall of Fame. They test and train on equipment such as the touch-free Ozone cleaning methods used in the restrooms. This electrified water disinfects without harsh chemicals, although a deep clean with safe chemicals is done once per week. The Kalvac sprays high-pressure water, breaking up dirt and bacteria, then vacuums away the dirty water without wiping it all over the surfaces. The smaller room houses computers used for online training. Employees are also welcome to use this space to check Go WMU, WMU email, and other work-related technology needs. See [Links of Interest](#) for more.



## Community Policing event for students living off campus

Students living off campus in the Arcadia and Knollwood neighborhoods meet with the Western Michigan University Department of Public Safety (WMU DPS) in community policing efforts. Officer Grant Allers has been assigned to this off-campus student neighborhood to serve as a liaison between those students, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS), and WMU DPS. He hosted a "Safer by the Slice" community event for the residents on Nov 14, from, 4 to 6 p.m. The event provides an opportunity for the WMU students living off campus to meet with WMU DPS and KDPS officers over pizza, discuss recent crime trends in their area, share concerns, talk about crime-prevention strategies, and share collaborative efforts and safety tips. Follow [WMU DPS](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [TikTok](#) for more upcoming events.







## Cross-departmental collaboration gets the job done (A short-short story)



A property, purchased April 24, 1944, potentially on a handshake deal by two gentlemen in top hats. A twenty-first century Vice President, General Counsel of a well-known University, and “the Admin”. The ability to sell ale at an upcoming sporting event hung in the balance. The Great and Powerful SOM (State of Michigan) required documentation of ownership of the land beneath Casa De Fieldhouse of Read. Would our heroes find a resolution in time?

General Counsel called in the cavalry, using resources from government relations and the county register of deeds. A mastermind meeting was called and an intense discussion ensued. The Vice President of Business and Finance declared it was “time to bring in the Admin.”

The Admin was armed with her diligent and determined research skills. She searched everything related to Casa De Fieldhouse of Read and followed every shoestring potato chip connected. She enlisted anyone who would listen from archives and history curators to the director of academic labor relations, the associate vice president of business and finance, maintenance services, and athletics. She had pieced together a circumstantial case. Typing her report and determined to put on a big shining red bow she did one final search. There it was. Victory! The document, the icing on the cake, signed by none other than the Great and Powerful SOM.

This story is based on actual events. Certain aspects of the story have been changed for dramatic or comedic purposes. For clarification, please contact any of the heroes.



***Notice - There will be no December open office hours with Vice President Van Der Kley. Open office hours will return in January.***



## When to call the Office of Business and Finance IT.

WMU has several areas of Information Technology. Our division has an information technology department that is specifically for designated areas within OBF. The following departments - Accounting Services, Auxiliary Enterprises, Budget, Business and Finance, Human Resources, Investments and Endowments, Logistical Services, and Public Safety can all use OBFIT for technology needs. Are you ready to procure a new piece of technology or work on an IT-related contract? OBFIT can assist with the technology review process. Issues with CMS or planning to revamp your website? OBFIT is willing to guide you through this process. Contact them with everyday issues also. Visit [Links of Interest](#) for more.

# MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES!

## Logistical Services - Purchasing



**Nichole Sparks**

Nichole returned to the Western Michigan University campus in June of 2023 as a purchasing agent. She had spent over seven years as a K-12 school counselor after earning degrees at Western. Her previous time on campus was during her undergraduate and graduate years. WMU holds a special place in her heart. She met her best friend here making many memories together. As an undergraduate, she pursued a minor in business. The accounting and finance classes unlocked a desire to pursue a career in the field and with the social changes in our community the opportunity presented itself. Nichole spends most of her time with her daughter and Chocolate Labrador, often taking trips north to the family cabin to enjoy the outdoors, kayaking, and friends.

Since 2010, Nicholas has been a WMU employee. His previous role was as a procurement specialist for dining services for nine years. There he managed activities such as the bidding process, vendor management, and logistics. Now as a purchasing manager, Nicholas feeds his interest in procurement and supply chain with the challenges of negotiating campus-wide contracts, learning about diverse projects like building construction, scientific equipment, and procurement of overseas items that are part of his daily role. Nicholas is also a proud alumnus, with a bachelor's from WMU. His spare time is spent with his wife watching their three daughters play soccer and basketball and enjoying each other. But, there is always time for fishing.



**Nicholas Culter**



**Teri Dunithan**

Inducted into the 25-year club in 2012, Teri has been with Western for 36 years. She was first located at Ellsworth Hall as a secretary I. Her current position as purchasing assistant has been reevaluated with a title change four times during her tenure. This role provides Teri with continued opportunities to grow and challenge her skills to adapt to the various systems. She enjoys her interaction with the various roles of the purchasing operation to make the process run smoothly. Before Western, Teri worked in retail and spent 10 years at a plumbing and heating business. Teri has a son and two grandchildren. She enjoys time at the beach, crafts, and watching and attending sporting events.

Patrick is approaching three years as the Director of Logistical Services. Before WMU he held many different supply-chain roles in manufacturing leading diverse and global teams. Patrick has brought a great deal of experience to Logistical Services and WMU. In his role, he often has the opportunity to collaborate with many campus colleagues to effect change and establish solid relationships across campus. Patrick is a great mentor, and he and his team strive each day to make a difference for the students, faculty, and staff by providing support that exceeds their expectations. When Patrick isn't working, he enjoys cooking, home improvement projects, sports, and being outdoors.



**Patrick Kozdran**

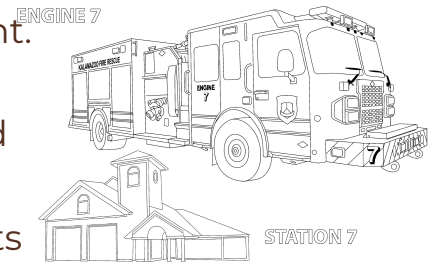
If you are interested in participating in this segment, please reach out to Karmella Todd. Otherwise, don't be surprised if she knocks on your door asking for participation.





# WMU Design Center Partnered with KDPS to Benefit Kalamazoo Area Kids

Earlier this year, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) contacted the Design Center at the Gwen Frostic School of Art to create a custom coloring book on fire safety. This book will be distributed to K-2nd grade students when KDPS holds presentations in schools across Kalamazoo County. They were using a generic one but wanted a version that was specific to the items and places the kids see around them. Design Center students met with officers and fire marshals to plan the content. The student designers researched images and resources provided by KDPS, designed an illustration style, and organized it interestingly and logically. Frequently used emergency numbers and neighborhood locations were also added. Projects of this nature give students real-world job experience with actual clients during the academic process.



## Just a Thought

I have passed my first anniversary with the university, and feel as if I am settling into my role. I am proud to be a Bronco. Especially, when someone is shocked at my short tenure. Many folks know who I am and I recognize a lot of faces, but names are harder. I enjoy helping others. My position gives me the opportunity to engage with coworkers, students, and the community. My daily goal is to help at least one person smile. I do cheat and keep Tootsie Rolls on my desk and decorate for every season. I tell you this to remind you that winter months are coming. Take mental note of the things that make you smile so that on tough days you can easily reference them. Share your smile, you never know who needs it more than you, and if that someone is you, there is always a smile and a Tootsie Roll at my desk. -Karmella

## Upcoming Events

Nov. 18 - Turkey Trot  
Nov. 21 - New Employee Tour 10 a.m.  
Nov. 30 - Dec. 2 - WMU Theatre Presents Next Stop, Broadway  
Dec. 16 - Commencement  
Dec. 20 - New Employee Tour 2 p.m.  
Blue Cross Virtual Well Being Webinars  
Nov. 29 - Letting Go  
Dec. 7 - Planning for Physically and Mentally Healthy Winter

## Links of Interest

[wmich.edu/commencement](http://wmich.edu/commencement)  
[wmich.edu/facilities/custodial](http://wmich.edu/facilities/custodial)  
[wmudps.wmich.edu/](http://wmudps.wmich.edu/)  
Instagram Facebook tiktok  
[wmich.edu/businessandfinanceit](http://wmich.edu/businessandfinanceit)  
[wmich.edu/logisticalservices/purchasing](http://wmich.edu/logisticalservices/purchasing)  
[wmich.edu/art](http://wmich.edu/art)  
HelpNet Employee Assistance Program  
[wmich.edu/hr/resources/eap](http://wmich.edu/hr/resources/eap)

If you are interested in submitting information for the next Business and Finance Notes, please contact Karmella Todd at [Karmella.Todd@wmich.edu](mailto:Karmella.Todd@wmich.edu).