“As one of our team members recently shared with me, ‘I have realized that everything I do here has touched some student’s life – hopefully for the better. Not one of them knows my name or where I sit but helping them to BE students at WMU is the one driving force of my time here.’ We serve the same purpose of positively impacting our faculty and staff colleagues.” - Jan Van Der Kley

**Did you know?**

**OBF Onboarding Webpage is Active.**

VP Van Der Kley assembled a committee to evaluate the different onboarding practices of areas throughout WMU and at other universities. She gave the committee the creative freedom to craft an onboarding design. Two months later, 11 team members presented a newly designed all-inclusive onboarding webpage with a welcome section including a video created with employee and VP talent and produced by WMUx employee David Evans. The page includes a toolkit with elements created for both the supervisor and employee, an interactive template, and an extensive A-Z guide. It is a starting point to help you steady the ropes while you navigate your journey at WMU. The team also presented plans for a new-employee tour of the main campus that will be completed within the first month of employment through a partnership with the admissions group and student employees beginning in the fall. The team worked to develop such an impressive design that leadership is presenting it at a Michigan Human Resources conference (MI-CUPA) at the end of July. Visit the Links of Interest to develop your own opinion.

**The Student Center Opens This Month.**

The fences are down, the doors will soon unlock and our feet will begin to stalk the floors of the 162,000-square-foot building. Excitement has been built, articles have been written, pictures taken, and tours given. Curiosity is mounting. What will you do first: Visit the offices of the VP of Student Affairs or the Office of Student Engagement? Check out the commuter resource room or the Student Organization Center (SOC)? Handle a FedEx return, or grab some cash from PNC and head to one of the dining or retail spaces? Check out MiPi Pizza, Fuego Verde, reFresh Market, or the new WMU Bookstore space? There is a student media room, a game room, and eight separate lounges. You can go to the WMU photo mosaic and rave about our students. There are also meeting rooms, conference rooms, reflection/prayer rooms, a lactation room, study rooms, even a 5,000-square-foot ballroom, and of course restrooms. So many rooms to explore! The Student Center opens with limited hours on July 31. Monday through Friday 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. gradually expanding to fall-semester hours.
Performance Management Reminder

Staff Compensation System employees and supervisors, currently we are in the Performance objective and competency setting phase for 2023-24. If you have not already done so, supervisors and employees should work through this process together to establish objectives and competencies on the Performance Management Annual Review Form. Download the Performance Management Annual Review Form along with the Performance Management Instructions and Definitions Form on the HR Forms webpage wmich.edu/hr/forms/performance. If you have questions or need assistance, contact your HR Business Partner via wmich.edu/hr/representatives.

And Did you know?

WMU Has to Have a Permit for Rain Water.

WMU participates with 11 entities to make up the Kalamazoo Storm Water Working Group (KSWG). KSWG educates the public on the effects of hard and impervious surfaces on groundwater. It works to protect the Kalamazoo River and connecting waters from harmful discharges. A watershed is a specific area of land that drains into a single-surface water body. Kalamazoo and the surrounding area have been designated as the Kalamazoo River watershed. All of the creeks, storm sewers, and over-land flow eventually drain into the lowest point, which is the Kalamazoo River. How we interact with the water around us determines the water’s health and each individual can do something to protect the water. WMU has a state permit that is up for a five-year renewal in 2023. Our staff works diligently to ensure all requirements are met. See our Links of Interest for more.

K-9 Handling Is a Round-the-Clock Job.

As one of two K-9 officers with the WMU Department of Public Safety, Officer Brax was chosen by Officer Michael Lininger six-years ago, and the pair began their journey with a three-month K-9 training academy. To maintain certification by the National Association of Professional Canine Handlers, officers Brax and Lininger complete a bi-annual certification and a minimum of 16 hours of ongoing monthly training. Brax is trained in explosives detection, handler protection, tracking and article searches, and is frequently used to search venues prior to events. Most important is his community policing efforts. Officer Brax opens avenues of communication in ways that other officers may not. He attracts a crowd and gives Officer Lininger the ability to offer information and build meaningful relationships with the community. For more visit the Links of Interest.
MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES!

West Hills Athletic Club

Andres Ballines
While attending WMU, Andres began working at West Hills as a part-time personal trainer. More than 15 years later he is the supervisor of fitness staff and operations. Andres knew at a young age that health and fitness were his calling. Amazing Mexican food added to the waistline daily and there was no priority dedicated to physical activity. Attending WMU was the perfect fit for Andres in helping to prepare him for his career. He supports exercise and nutrition and, having first-hand knowledge of how fitness affects the body, gives him better insight to guide others to those benefits. Outside of work, Andres enjoys traveling with his wife, spending time with the dogs, and playing tennis.

Deanna Mergen
Deanna’s been part of WMU for 34 years. She began in food service and worked through most buildings on campus before finding her home at West Hills in 2004. The close relationships she has developed with coworkers and members have created a positive atmosphere and a fun and friendly environment. One of her true loves is meeting and caring for student employees earning her the “WHAC Mom” title. Deanna’s role motivates her to focus on her own health and well-being by working out, and she has recently picked up pickleball and golf with a group of coworkers. When her work day ends, she enjoys beekeeping, baking, gardening, and arranging special events, to name a few activities.

Heather Davidson
Originally from Midland Mi., Heather moved to Kalamazoo to attend WMU. She graduated with her bachelor’s in 1991 and joined the West Hills team in 2001. Heather has taught group fitness classes and worked in the membership department. For the past eight years she has been the membership sales director. Heather loves to help members who are just beginning their fitness journey. Her job duties let her combine her talent and passion for fitness and allow her to share that on a daily basis with amazing people. When Heather isn’t working she stays active playing pickleball and golf. She also enjoys traveling with her family, water activities, and reading.

Jody McBain
Jody became a WMU employee when the university purchased West Hills Athletic Club in 1999. She will celebrate 25 years in December. She began at West Hills in 1996 after completing her bachelor’s from Ferris State University and certification as a professional tennis coach through the U.S. Professional Tennis Association. Coach Jody teaches the game to folks from pre-school to adult and enjoys the variety it brings to her day. She loves wearing sports attire to work, the ability to be active, and teach games for a living. Jody teaches pickleball and tennis and in her free time, she enjoys the outdoors with her husband, gardening, and traveling.

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.
Bronco Card Design so Popular It Has Reached South Carolina Emeritus.

Get your Bronco Card updated and join retired Professor and Director Emeritus Steve Rhodes, who saw the design and likes it so much he reached out to Public Safety and requested a new ID. He was so impressed he wanted to commend them on completing his request. Parking Services is ready to get your card. Upload your photo or head on over and take a new one. Oct. 31 will be here before you know it.

Just a Thought

In July we celebrate independence -- freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others. A toddler using a cup without a lid for the first time, a teenager getting a driver's license, a young adult moving into a first apartment. Going away to college fosters independence in a transitional environment with a level of safety. As employees of a university, we are the safety net. We have an opportunity to support students on a daily basis, and just doing our job may give us the opportunity to be an influential part of a student's life. As we prepare for our students to return consider how you can support independence in your position.

Upcoming Events

July 21 - Historic Walk: Village of Schoolcraft
July 27 - Historic Walk: Oakwood Park
July 28 - Bernhard closes permanently
July 31 - New Student Center Opens
Aug. 24-29 - Fall Welcome
Aug. 30 - Classes begin

Links of Interest

https://wmich.edu/x/directory/evans
https://chapters.cupahr.org/mi/events/conferences/2023-annual-conference/
https://wmich.edu/businessandfinance/onboarding
https://wmich.edu/ehs/services/environmental/water-resources
https://protectyourwater.net/kswg
https://wmudps.wmich.edu/broncocard.php
https://www.instagram.com/k9braxwmupd/?hl=en
https://napch.com/
https://www.facebook.com/WMUPublicSafety

If you are interested in submitting information for the next Business and Finance Updates, please contact Karmella Todd at Karmella.Todd@wmich.edu.