Charles E. Binder, Esq., is a retired United States Magistrate Judge who served on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He earned his B.A. degree in History and the Lee Honors College from Western Michigan University in 1971 and went on to earn his J.D. degree from the Duke University School of Law in 1974. He began his career as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Wendell A. Miles.

Judge Binder practiced law for private firms in Grand Rapids and Bay City from 1976 to 1984, before he was appointed a United States Magistrate Judge on part-time status in February of 1984. He began full-time service in October of that same year, and served until his retirement in April, 2014.

Judge Binder is a member of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association and the Bay County and Federal Bar Associations. He served in the Michigan Air National Guard from 1982 to 1994, and the U.S. Air Force Reserve from 1994 to 2004. From 1998 to 2010 he was a visiting faculty member in the Department of Law at the United States Air Force Academy and in 2007 was awarded the “Guardian of Justice” award in recognition of his work in upholding civil rights.

Judge Binder has served in a number of capacities on the WMU Alumni Association Board of Directors from 2007 to 2013. He serves as chair of the department’s Advisory Council and was instrumental in initiating the Sherwood Cordier Endowment. The latter reached its goal in one year, in large part due to Charles’s efforts and generosity. He is the proud father of two daughters, both of whom have received degrees from WMU. His daughter Katherine attended WMU’s Lee Honor’s College and graduated with an MA from the Department of Psychology in 2012. She is presently pursuing her Ph.D. in behavioral psychology at WMU, while his daughter Carolyn received a BA in Communications and is employed in the Kalamazoo area.

In his retirement, Charles remains an avid pilot and member of Valley Aero Club. In addition to his other interests, he is helping the club rejuvenate the James Clements Airport in Bay City, MI. He also flies needy medical patients for Wings of Mercy, East Michigan. Wings of Mercy helps people improve their chances of getting well by facilitating free flights to some of the best medical destinations east of the Rocky Mountains. Judge Binder also serves this organization as secretary.
Dear Friends,

It is December and time for (along with other things), another department newsletter. Historians, as is to be expected, like to live in the past—or at least think about it a good deal—and the newsletter offers me that opportunity. Unlike the distant past that I usually study, life in the department involves far fewer wars and much less social upheaval. Indeed, as the newsletter indicates, it has been a year filled with accomplishments for students, faculty, alumni, and emeriti. Reviewing that most recent and pleasant past, and bringing it to your attention, is one of the good things about serving as department chair. I hope you find the review of the year enjoyable to read.

Let me conclude by thanking those who were able to join us for the second annual Alumni Reception, encouraging others of you to plan to join us next fall during Homecoming week for the event, and by thanking all of you who have given generously to support the department and its students. Thanking you, whether in person, by mail, or by newsletter, is another good part of this job. (The best part, in case you are wondering, is the ability to distribute the needed support and deserved recognition for which your gifts provide!)

Wishing all of you a good holiday season and healthy and peaceful 2015,

José António (Joe) Brandão
Professor and Chair

Dr. Yoshida Directs WMU Soga Japan Center

Western Michigan University has selected Dr. Takashi Yoshida to direct its Soga Japan Center in the Haenicke Institute for Global Education. Yoshida, whose appointment was effective September 2, is a founding member of the center and a WMU associate professor of history. He teaches a range of courses in Japanese history at both the undergraduate and graduate level and focuses his research on war and memory as well as modern and early modern East Asia and Japan. The Soga Japan Center is an interdisciplinary unit designed to promote knowledge of Japan in the WMU community, the city of Kalamazoo, and southwestern Michigan.


Yoshida is a recipient of the Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace Awards Senior Fellowship from the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Abe Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council, and the Carnegie Council Fellowship from the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs. He also has received several research-related honors, including a research grant from the Toyota Foundation, a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad training grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and the Emerging Scholar Award as well as the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Achievement Award in Teaching, both from WMU.

Yoshida earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a bachelor’s degree in law from Aoyama Gakuin University, a master’s degree in international affairs from the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, and a doctoral degree in history from Columbia University.
2014-15 History Lecture Series Theme: “History: End of Empire?”

Burnham-Macmillan Speaker Series

Jonathan Lyon (University of Chicago)
“The Last Imperial Coronations in Rome: The End of the Holy Roman Empire?”
Thursday November 20, 2014

Paul Mapp (William and Mary)
“An Empire among Empires and a Revolution among Revolutions: The American Revolution as an International Event”
Monday, February 23, 2015

Philippa Levine (University of Texas)
“A Place at the Table: Women and Decolonization, A Story As Yet Untold”
Monday, 6 April 2015

The H. Nicholas Hamner Lecture

Ian Morris (Stanford University)
“War, Peace, and Empire: A Paradoxical History? Has War Made Humanity Safer and Richer than Peace?”
Thursday, October 23, 2014

Co-sponsored by the Department of World Languages and Literature

The Department of History at Western Michigan University annually invites an esteemed senior scholar to give a public lecture named for, and generously endowed by, Professor Emeritus H. Nicholas Hamner. The event is an opportunity to make visible the discipline of history within the campus and the larger community by having a distinguished scholar address a theme of broad interest.

Undergraduate News

Public History major Brittany Aris participated in an eight-week summer internship at Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens. Stan Hywet, the magnificent, sixty-five room Tudor Revival manor house in Akron, Ohio, was built between 1912 and 1915 by F.A. Seiberling, co-founder of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. Like Commodore Vanderbilt’s Biltmore Estate and John D. Rockefeller’s Kykuit Estate, Stan Hywet is a physical reminder of the wealth generated by America’s early industrial magnates. The main house and its adjoining gardens were converted into a public museum in the late 1950s and the building and grounds continue today as one of Ohio’s most well-known historic landmarks. During her internship, Brittany worked with textile specialists, learned methods of conservation, shadowed tour guides, and learned about the home’s historic roots and wider significance. “This was the chance of a lifetime,” she added, “to explore and enjoy the architecture and luxury that will never be seen again in modern America.” After graduation, Brittany will specialize in the preservation and restoration of period textiles.
Robert “Bob” H. Duke published *LBJ and Grassroots Federalism: Congressman Bob Poage, Race, and Change in Texas* with Texas A & M Press in 2014. Consisting of three case studies on the rising career of LBJ, the book focuses on Johnson’s formative experiences as a New Dealer directing the National Youth Administration in Texas; his key role as a Senate majority leader in breaking the deadlock to secure funds for the Lake Waco dam project; and the cumulative effect of his Great Society policies on urban renewal and educational reform among the Mexican American community in Waco.

In each of these initiatives, Bob Poage—though far more politically conservative than Johnson—served as a conduit between LBJ and citizen-activists in Poage’s congressional district, affirming the significance of grassroots engagement even during an era usually associated with increasing government centralization. Bob Duke’s book reveals the local ramifications of federal government policies.

Julie Leininger Pycior, Professor of History at Manhattan College, commends how “*LBJ and Grassroots Federalism*’s important findings shed light on a lively topic today: the complex and often surprising nature of federal initiatives as played out on the local level, notably in a region supposedly championing limited government. In the process, Robert Harold Duke also provides fascinating new insights into that twentieth century political giant, Lyndon Baines Johnson.”

Bob recently retired as an Assistant Professor of History at Eastern Michigan University. Over the course of his career, he had also served as a social studies teacher, principal, and superintendent of Gull Lake schools.
Dr. Palmitessa Publishes New Essay Collection

Professor James Palmitessa is editor of a new essay collection titled Between Lipany and White Mountain: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bohemian History in Modern Czech Scholarship, published by Brill. This book, which is a part of Brill’s Studies in Central European History series, presents a collection of twelve seminal essays by Czech historians on the history of the Czech lands from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries.

The essays originally appeared in Czech publications as articles and book chapters and are translated here for the first time in English. The essays address a broad range of topics, including politics, religion, demography, everyday life, crime, and rural and urban society. In addition to editing the collection, Professor Palmitessa provided the introduction, notes, and bibliography for the book.

Gordon Andrews, Ph.D. ’11 Publishes Book

One of the Department of History Ph.D. recipients, Gordon Andrews, published his first book, Undoing Plessy: Charles Hamilton Houston, Race, Labor and the Law, 1895-1950 with Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Undoing Plessy explores the manner in which African Americans countered racialized impediments, attacking their legal underpinnings during the first half of the twentieth century. Specifically, Undoing Plessy explores the professional life of Charles Hamilton Houston, and the way it informs our understanding of change in the pre-Brown era. Houston dedicated his life to the emancipation of oppressed people, and was inspired early-on to choose the law as a tool to become, in his own words, a “social engineer.” Further, Houston's life provides a unique lens through which one may more accurately view the threads of race, labor, and the law as they are woven throughout American society. Dr. Andrews has been a member of Grand Valley State University’s History Department since 2009. Before joining GVSU’s History Department, he taught history and social studies for many years at Portage Central High School.

Dr. Yoshida Publishes New Book

In From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace: War and Peace Museums in Japan, China, and South Korea, Professor Takashi Yoshida examines the significance of war and peace museums from the late 19th century to the present and traces the historical development of a pacifist public commentary in postwar Japan that centered on Japan’s war crimes and responsibility during the so-called Fifteen Year War (1931-1945). Prior to the defeat, a culture of war gripped the Japanese empire. Every segment of Japanese popular culture during the war bore witness to the flood of patriotism. Whereas only a relative handful of leftist Japanese saw Japan as a predatory state during the war, however, this awareness achieved broad acceptance among Japanese people with its defeat in 1945. In this book, Professor Yoshida attempts to demonstrate that the acceptance of Japanese wartime aggression and atrocities as historical facts remains evident to this day in the culture of peace museums in Japan.

From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace is a study of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University, and is published by Merwin Asia.

Dr. Xiong Publishes Historical Novel

Professor Victor Xiong, a prolific author of medieval Chinese history, recently published a historical novel, Heavenly Khan, focusing on the life of Emperor Li Shimin, also known as Tang Taizong. Many consider Emperor Tang Taizong the greatest ruler in Chinese history. About thirty years younger than Muhammad, he grew up in a world of devastating upheaval that tore China apart. While still a teenager, he was thrust into the role of military commander in his father’s rebel army, where he proved himself to be a great military genius. Then as emperor, he was known for his careful consideration of his court advisors’ suggestions and for his toleration and support for Buddhism, Daoism, and even Christianity. Because of his genius in domestic and foreign affairs, the states of Central and North Asia honored him with the title of “Heavenly Khan.” His reign laid the groundwork for a brilliant empire that endured for centuries.

Heavenly Khan was published by Airiti Press.
Faculty Recognition

The department’s unparalleled record of success in University-wide award continues in 2014.

Elder Receives WMU’s Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award

Dr. E. Rozanne Elder was one of two recipients of one of WMU’s highest faculty honors. She is a professor of history and director of what is now the Center for Cistercian and Monastic Studies in WMU’s Medieval Institute. She has organized the center’s annual Cistercian Studies Conference since 1973 and also served as editorial director of Cistercian Publications until 2008. Since 2008, she has continued to organize the annual Cistercian Studies Conference as a component of the University’s world renowned International Congress on Medieval Studies held on campus each May. Elder’s research focuses on the history of medieval intellectual traditions and the history of Christianity with a specialization in monasticism. In addition to editing more than 200 Cistercian Publications volumes, she has written scores of scholarly articles and book chapters as well as presented lectures and workshops at prestigious institutions at home and abroad.

Nominators lauded Elder for ensuring that the Cistercian center is known and respected around the globe and for enhancing WMU’s international reputation in the fields of Cistercian and monastic studies, along with related fields such as archaeology, theology, ecclesiastical and intellectual history, and comparative religious studies. Nearly all stressed that she has had a profound impact on four important fronts: editing and publishing, research, collaboration, and mentorship. One WMU colleague nominating her wrote that just mentioning Kalamazoo brings instant recognition among scholars, in large part because of the annual Cistercian Studies Conference and the vast number of seminal texts, monographs and collected essays that Elder organized, edited, and cultivated as the editor of Cistercian Publications.

“She has marshaled her considerable energy, enthusiasm, organizational skills and academic talents to developing new ideas, encouraging the growth of the discipline and elevating the quality of its scholarship,” the colleague wrote. "By naming her a Distinguished Faculty Scholar, WMU would acknowledge the leadership and recognition she has already attained around the world.” Elder was praised especially for bringing texts to publication while at the same time participating in teaching and research, contributing to the ongoing development of the Medieval Institute’s academic program, building an impressive body of her own scholarly work, and supporting the careers of countless others.

In addition, many nominators described Elder as uniquely responsible for greatly enriching the materials available to researchers, teachers, religious communities and general readers, even as radical changes have taken place in academic publishing. They also praised the unique collaboration and intellectual interchange she has generated between secular scholarly communities and religious communities. "I want to emphasize that Rozanne Elder can be looked upon as the keystone holding together monastic and especially Cistercian studies not only in North America, but also in the world at large," an emeritus professor from Roskilde University in Denmark wrote. "She has been a central link in establishing at Western what is unique in academic life in North America: an academic milieu which profits from the presence of people living the life that is being studied, the monks and nuns who year after year come to Kalamazoo for the Cistercian Studies Conference, and who make their knowledge and experience available to lay scholars.”

Several nominators noted that they first met Elder as graduate students. They wrote that she inspired them to pursue a career in Cistercian or medieval studies and has mentored them ever since. As one former graduate student put it, “She has encouraged hundreds of scholars young and old, lay and monastic, from all continents, contributing directly to the building of their careers.” In summing up Elder’s extraordinary four decades at WMU, one history department colleague noted that the University is known the world over as an exemplary locus of research and scholarship on the Middle Ages.

“Erudite scholars on the WMU faculty have contributed to this reputation,” he added. “While many have come and gone, Roxanne Elder has devoted an entire career to excellent scholarship and to fostering the work of American and international colleagues and students.”

Dr. Elder will retire from the Department of history in 2015. On behalf of the department, we thank her sincerely for her many years of devoted service.
Eric Denby Wins Two Awards in 2014

Eric Denby, a M.A. candidate in the Department of History, was awarded the 2014 Make a Difference Award. This award is a campus-wide peer-to-peer program that recognizes WMU staff members for their outstanding accomplishments and daily investment of energy and creativity. The Graduate Student Advisory Committee has adopted this award model and tailored it to fit its current goals to recognize graduate students who are making a difference in various capacities in other graduate students’ lives at WMU.

Several criteria are considered in choosing award winners, including the following: projecting a positive attitude; promoting a positive image of the department, college and university; providing outstanding voluntary services to graduate and undergraduate students; finding innovative solutions to problems; volunteering to serve on department, college and university committees; engaging in service over and above normal student responsibilities. In order to be eligible student must maintain current enrollment in a graduate program at WMU with at least one semester of graduate study already completed as well as satisfactory progress toward degree completion; and projection of a positive attitude about Western Michigan University, the department, and graduate student education and concerns.

In addition, Eric was also the 2014 recipient of the A. Robert Kleiner Memorial Scholarship sponsored by the WMU Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (WMU-AAUP). This award recognizes successful students who have a strong commitment to community service, including labor union activities. Eric is the 2014-2015 president of the Teaching Assistants Union of the American Federation of Teachers (TAU-AFT), Local 1729, that represents the WMU graduate teaching assistants.

Michigan History Day (National History Day in Michigan) is a competition sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan for students in grades 4 through 12 that offers an exciting means for students to learn history. Students, working as groups or as individuals, prepare exhibits, documentaries, websites, dramatic performances, or historical papers that explore a broad theme set each year by the National History Day contest.

Western Michigan University will host the southwest Michigan District #6 competition of the National History Day Contest on March 7, 2015 in the Bernhard Center. The 2015 theme is Leadership and Legacy in History. Information for teachers, parents, and students is available from either of the district co-coordinators, Dr. Bill Warren or Dr. James Cousins, as well as on the WMU Department of History website. Registration forms are due February 10 for all entries. Historical papers must be submitted in hard copy by February 10, 2015 to provide sufficient time for the judges to read them. Registration forms, contest rules, and other information will be available on the department website.

Michigan District #6 includes Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren counties. Qualifying entries at the district level may compete at the state finals in late April. Qualifiers at that level are eligible to enter the National History Day contest in early June at the University of Maryland.
From Bill Yukich ’66

I graduated from WMU in 1966. I recently read your newsletter, Footnotes, and one article caught my eye. It was about the History Department back in my era. The letter was from James Karagon (’67). James mentioned all the History professors back then, most of whom I also had. The most interesting story, though, was about Dr. David Thompkins. I had Dr. Thompkins during the same era and all James said about him was true. I would also like to add that after graduating in 1966, I began teaching. In 1970, I decided to go for my Masters in History at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. To my surprise, one of my professors turned out to be Dr. David Thompkins. At the end of my first class, I went down to visit with Dr Thompkins. We had a nice long talk about our time at WMU. Dr. Thompkins gave me a “B” at WMU, but I must have improved my study habits because I got an “A” at Northeastern Illinois. I just thought this information about Dr. Thompkins might be of interest to some of his former students.
From Jerry Cooper ’65

At first I was not sure how to tell you why I support the Department of History. I thought I had taken History as a minor but with some thinking, realized that was not the case. I dug out my diploma and found therein a provisional certificate to teach at the secondary school level. I was qualified to teach English, my first major, and Social Studies, my second major.

To earn certification for the latter area, I took courses in economics, political science, geography, and of course, history. I enjoyed the history courses the most, and particularly remember Alan Brown as my favorite. In the long run, Alan had much to do with me going on to graduate school for a PhD in history. Unfortunately, I can only recall one other history professor, Ernst Briesach, but I know that the history courses were the ones that interested and challenged me the most. In any event, history became my favorite subject by far as compared to the English courses and the courses required for the Social Studies major.

I have a special feeling for Western Michigan in a more general way. My home town was Cassopolis, a small place in the southwest corner of the state, touching the Indiana state line. This was a typically small rural town, with a decent economy based on agriculture but the school system was, to be kind, not very good. My senior class had 47 people in it and of those, as I recall, only one male went to college, with a scholarship to play football. Three women from my class went to nursing college, one of whom ultimately earned a PhD in nursing and became a Professor and administrator at the University of Michigan.

For me, it was the kind of place in the 1950s that one wanted to get away from ASAP! Upon graduation, age 17, I enlisted in the U.S. Navy, driven in by the Selective Service System, i.e. the draft. (Most of my male classmates entered the military, either volunteering or being drafted.) I saw a bit of the world, served with different kinds of people, and realized upon discharge that I did not know much about that world and wanted to learn more. When I returned to civil life early in 1961, I decided to go to college. (Some of the officers I served under in the Navy had suggested I go to college.) Back to the high school I went and the guidance counselor there helped me apply for admission to Western Michigan. In those days SATs were unheard of and I was told my high school GPA was enough to earn college admission. I chose Western for two reasons, it was close to Cassopolis and it was affordable! (In 1961, I paid $125 for the first semester’s tuition! That is surely ancient history!) When I entered WMU, I knew little about serious study, how to write an essay, or how to read scholarly works and do research. In every instance in my first two years at WMU, my professors took the time to help me learn those things. By the time I graduated in 1965, my first love was history and I wanted to follow the example of the men and woman (as I recall the professor who taught Russian history was a woman) who taught me.

It was this encouragement and support that led me to chose academics as a career. One example if I may. Unexpectedly, I graduated with honors. The president of WMU held a dinner for the honorees and during the meal he talked to each of us. He asked me what I planned to do. I said I thought I would apply to graduate school at Western and earn a Master’s degree in History. He said, “No. Spread your wings and go somewhere else. You need to try new things,” or words to that effect. That impressed me then as it does now, and I think his suggestion was a wise one.

At the time, I needed a job but did not want to teach high school. One semester of student teaching at the junior high level taught me that I was not the sort of person to deal with children/young adults struggling with adolescence. However, I needed a job and signed on to teach at a Job Corps center recently opened at Fort Custer near Battle Creek. The Job Corps was part of Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty program, aimed at recruiting young urban men who had dropped out of high school. What a mix of people those guys were! (with little or no education, no skills, etc.) I do not know what we should have done to help those fellows but I realized I lacked the empathy to help them.

After six months working for the Job Corps I realized that I wanted to be another Alan Brown, to teach history at the collegiate level. I did not know how to apply for graduate school and so I went back to campus to talk to former professors and a couple of men in the administration I had come to know. In every instance, the professors and administrators encouraged me and assisted me in applying to graduate school. Ultimately, I opted for the University of Wisconsin and to my surprise was accepted. UW was markedly different from WMU, although graduate students had little connection with undergraduate culture. In any event, the study habits I learned at Western, the enthusiasm for learning communicated to me by my professors, and the encouragement to go on were of great value to me.

As it has turned out, I have spent my academic career (I retired in 2002) at a place similar to the WMU I attended back in the early 1960s. The University of Missouri-St. Louis transitioned from a 2 year community college to a branch of the University of Missouri in the late 1960s. I came here in 1971 as a one-year replacement for a faculty member of the History Department who was on a year’s sabbatical. I never knew the person but he/she did not come back and to my pleasure and surprise, I was put on the tenure track. UMSL was, as I said, like WMU when I was there. Our students were largely first generation students in higher education and needed to learn how to learn, and to abandon high school attitudes perpetuated by living with their parents and driving to campus with old high school pals. Because so many of my classmates and me at WMU in the early 1960s were of a similar vein I had an appreciation of guiding the new students in how to learn, how to study, etc.

Well Joe, I hope I have not gone on too long but I wanted you to know that my attending Western Michigan University changed my life and led me to a career I have dearly loved.
The Department’s Graduate Students continue to set the bar for excellence in teaching and research at WMU.

Ph.D. Candidate Randall Janes awarded Smithsonian and Huntington Fellowships

Randall Janes has received fellowships from the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. and the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. As a Smithsonian Institute Resident Scholar and Dibner Fellow in the History of Science and Technology, Mr. Janes will work with core materials from the Heralds of Science and the special collections of each library regarding the development of technology and technical expertise in the expansion of the Ibero-American Sugar Industry.

2013-14 Graduate Awards

MA Teaching Award
Eric Denby

MA Research Award
Adam Matthews

PhD Research Award
Stephen Staggs

PhD Teaching Excellence Award
Jack Goodman

Robert Russell Writing Award
Emilee Johnson

Graduate College Support for Research and Travel
Eric Denby
Peter Dobek

Nora Faires Research & Travel Award
Spencer Hunt
Chelsea Stevens

Ernst Breisach Award for European History
Chelsea Stevens

Research Assistance Excellence Award
Chelsea Stevens

Graduate Students’ Recent Accomplishments and Activities

PhD Recipient 2013-2014
Dr. Stephen Staggs
Dissertation Title: "Gentiles by Nature: Indian-Dutch Relations in New Netherland/New York, 1562-1749"
Advisors: J. A. Brandão and James Palmitessa
Current Position: Part Time Instructor at Calvin College and in Department of History, WMU.

Two Dissertation Completion Fellowships Awarded to Patrick Harris and Caitlyn Perry-Dial

The History Department is pleased to announce that two of our Ph.D. students, Patrick Harris and Caitlyn Perry-Dial, have received Dissertation Completion Fellowships from Western Michigan University. These awards will allow both Patrick and Caitlyn to work full-time in 2014-2015 on their dissertations.

Patrick’s dissertation is "Communal Coalescence: Christian Coexistence in Twelfth-Century Toledo."

Caitlyn’s dissertation is "Only the River Remains: History and Memory of the Eastland Disaster in the Great Lakes Region, 1915-present."

MA Recipients 2013-2014

Eric Callender
Current position: Medieval History and Literature Teacher, West Minster School at Oak Mountain in Birmingham, AL
Advisor: Robert Berkhofer, III

Justin DeHondt
Current position: Applying for PhD Programs
Advisor: Robert Berkhofer, III

Iris Petty
Current position: Applying for PhD Programs
Advisor: Anise Strong

Rachel Syens
Advisor: Mitch Kachun

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Fall 2014 has been a busy semester for Phi Alpha Theta. PAT has met weekly and made engaging with history in a thoughtful and fun atmosphere its driving goal. During meetings, members brought in board games, television shows and movies, and materials from parks and museums to investigate how history is portrayed to public audiences. The group also met with Lynne Houghton from the Zhang Legacy Collections Center for a historic walking tour of downtown Kalamazoo.

Phi Alpha Theta also devoted a considerable amount of time during the meetings for planning upcoming projects. One of these projects is the production of a new t-shirt design for PAT. The other project is the annual field trip. This Spring PAT will travel to Lansing and visit the Michigan Historical Museum and the All Around Africa World Museum.

Smith Burnham Outstanding Intern

In 2007, Western Michigan University’s Department of History and the Social Studies Department at Portage Central High School signed an agreement to collaborate in the placement of one outstanding intern teacher from WMU’s Department of History each fall and spring semester with one or more of the teachers at PCHS. WMU’s College of Education’s Office of Field Placements works with the Department of History in this placement. All History and Social Studies Education majors must complete a one-semester internship in a middle or high school at the end of their undergraduate program.

The student selected for this placement wins the Smith Burnham Outstanding Intern Award, honoring the Department’s first chairperson, Smith Burnham, who was also an important leader in history and social studies teacher education during the 1920s and 1930s. The History Department awards $300 to the student chosen for the award.

The Fall 2014 recipient of the Smith Burnham Outstanding Intern Award is Amanda Waligora. Amanda will graduate in December 2014 with a major in Social Studies Education and minors in History and English Education. The Spring 2015 recipient is Ben Bellinger. Ben is a native of Charlotte, Michigan, and transferred from Saginaw Valley State University to WMU in 2012. He is majoring in Social Studies Education and minor in History Education. He will receive his degree in April 2015.

Phi Alpha Theta Update
The Department continues to develop funds and endowments that support students at every level of our program.

New Endowment Activated in Honor of Dr. Cordier

Several members of the History Advisory Council honored Dr. Cordier with an announcement at the October 2013 reception of the creation of the Sherwood Cordier Endowment for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching. Dr. Cordier’s students remember him for his passion for teaching and his commitment to student success. To honor their mentor and encourage new doctoral students to follow in Dr. Cordier’s footsteps, they created this fund. The Endowment became active when it reached $10,000 in donations in fall 2014. Grants will be awarded to students in the graduate program of the Department of History in recognition of excellence and innovation in the teaching of History.

Hamner’s Gift to the Department

H. Nicholas Hamner was a scholar of Victorian England. He taught numerous courses in English and British history from 1956, when he joined the Department of History, until his retirement in 1991. Nick was a firm believer in the value of being introduced to new ideas and places and he traveled widely for research and to take students to places of historical significance. When he retired, he established an endowment to allow the department to bring to campus leading scholars from around the country and world and, thus, bring different perspectives about the past to faculty and students in the department. He recently added a significant amount to that endowment and created another fund to support undergraduate research and travel. The department gratefully acknowledges his continued generosity and on-going commitment to support the broadening of horizons and opportunities for all associated with the department.

To find out about funds that benefit the Department and its students, visit www.wmich.edu/history/giving or contact Department Chair Dr. Joe Brandão

History Fellowship Awards

The recipients of this year’s History Fellowship Awards are History major Wesley Kling and Public History major Kaitlin McGrath.

Wesley is a graduate of Kalamazoo Central High School and has interests in both early and modern history. His love of history began as a child and was encouraged by his parents. Kaitlin, a graduate of Gabriel Richard High School in Riverview, Michigan, has equally diverse interests but is considering a focus on museum work. Kaitlin’s childhood visits to the Henry Ford, Greenfield Village, and the historic Redford Theater inspired her to pursue a career in public history.

Both Wesley and Kaitlin have outstanding academic records and demonstrated potential for even greater success here at Western. They are focused, driven, and enthusiastic representatives of our program and we look forward to helping them achieve their personal and professional goals. They join last year’s recipient, Kelsey Ennis, in receiving this renewable scholarship from the department.
History Advisory Council Update

Advisory Council Members: Jack Klarr ’75, Rick Cahow ’70, Charles Binder ’71, Mike Evans ’78, David Gernant ’65, Rita Linnenkugel ’70, Gary Kent-Bracken ’72, Bill Parsons ’67, Ruth Writer ’68, Woody Cordier, David Stout ’77, Brian McKee ’65, Bob Duke ’74, Tom Vance ’78, Tamara Barnes ’96, Donna Keller ’90, Joe Brandão, James Cousins, Bill Warren and Dorilee Schieble.

The Advisory Council continues to meet two times per year. Members learn more about the Department and its students while sharing great ideas for bringing Alumni back to campus. The Outreach Committee is focused on assisting with preparations for History Day and the Mentoring Committee continues to discuss ideas for career preparation for undergraduates. The Development Committee assists donors on how to make gifts to support the department and its students.

The Emeriti Reception was the idea of this council and this year’s was another success. Emeriti enjoyed reconnecting with their former students who thought it was an honor to be in the company of their professors again.

Photos from the Emeriti Reception
The Department of History gratefully acknowledges the support of its lifetime donors, living and deceased.

This list includes donors since the November 1, 2013 newsletter up to press time this year in their lifetime giving level. Please join these individuals and show your support.

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- Dr. H. Nicholas Hamner

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In a time when state funding is limited, the support we receive from friends and alumni is vitally important. Such funds are used to take advantage of new or unbudgeted opportunities to enhance the teaching and research of the department, and to assist students in achieving their educational and professional goals.

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Did you know making a bequest is easy?

Visit wmich.edu/history/giving for the link to online giving (one time or monthly automatic gifts)

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Please mail this completed form, along with your gift, to:

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Department of History
1903 W. Michigan Avenue
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The Department of History at WMU has been graduating students for a long time. Below are the numbers of WMU History Alumni by decade. The list includes graduate degrees, undergraduate majors, minors and teaching certificates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915 - 1929</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930 - 1939</td>
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<td>1940 - 1949</td>
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<td>2000 - 2009</td>
<td>1605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 thru spring 2014</td>
<td>554</td>
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</table>

The first History credential was granted in 1915.