Dr. Sylvia Hoffert ‘68 receives Alumni Achievement Award

The department was pleased and honored to recognize Dr. Sylvia Hoffert as the recipient of the 2017 Alumni Achievement Award. Sylvia received her M.A. in History in 1968, and then was an instructor in the History Department from 1969 to 1976. After leaving Kalamazoo and receiving her Ph.D. at Indiana University-Bloomington in 1984, she went on to a nearly thirty-year career in academy. Sylvia is one of only a very few academics to retire as a full professor from two universities.

Before coming to WMU for graduate school, Sylvia taught high school history in New York. After she finished her M.A. in 1968, and while she taught for the department, Sylvia led an effort to bring area high school history teachers to campus every year on a Saturday for a one-day workshop. By the time she left WMU, the annual workshop attracted dozens of teachers.

From 1984 to 1988, Sylvia was chair of the Department of History at the St. Louis Country Day School in St. Louis, Missouri, as well as a visiting lecturer in the Department of History and Women’s Studies Program at Washington University. Dr. Hoffert then accepted a position in the Department of History at Southwest Missouri State University, and advanced from assistant to associate professor. In 1995, she joined the Department of History at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill as a full professor and became a distinguished professor in 2004. Dr. Hoffert left her position at Chapel Hill to become a full professor in the Department of History at Texas A&M University in 2005. She retired in 2011.

Over the course of her academic career, Sylvia became one of the nation’s most accomplished teachers and researchers on the history of women in 19th century United States. She got her start on this path at WMU. When Sylvia became an instructor in the History Department, Ernest Breisach asked her to develop a course on the history of women in the United States. At that time, there were very few courses taught on this topic in the country, and there was also very little in the way of secondary literature. Starting from scratch, Sylvia’s courses eventually attracted many students at WMU, and she went on to teach large sections on this topic at every university where she taught. She was hired at Texas A & M to help them develop a top-notch Women’s Studies program.

Dr. Hoffert is the author of four monographs and a textbook, all dealing with the topic of women in American history. Her most recent book is Alva Vanderbilt Belmont: Unlikely Champion of Women’s Rights, published by Indiana University Press in 2011. One reviewer commended Dr. Hoffert as a “skillful biographer,” and noted that “her nuanced account will be essential reading for historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive era, the suffrage movement, and the history of philanthropy.” Sylvia is currently working on a series of articles about Elizabeth Keckly, a slave who bought her freedom and became Mary Todd Lincoln’s seamstress and companion in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Hoffert and her husband, Dick, make their home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
Dear Friends,

Season’s greetings and welcome again to our annual newsletter. Although I now have more than one year of service as chair under my belt, I can say that I’m still learning something new just about every day. Our department continues to make strides on many fronts to improve our undergraduate and graduate programs, and better serve the diverse needs of Western Michigan University students.

Among our many successes and achievements over the past year, I want to highlight the internship fund that we started last year with your financial help. We made our first award from the fund to Suzanne Grimmer, a senior public history major, who spent much of this past summer at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Because the internship was unpaid, she could not have pursued this opportunity without the department’s financial assistance. You will read more about Suzanne’s internship experience on page 6.

We encourage you to continue to contribute to this internship fund. A recent article in the New York Times noted that “[i]nternships have become a necessary credential in a highly competitive job market—about half of interns are offered a job by a company where they have interned.” We also encourage you to contact us if you have an interest in supervising an intern at your place of employment. In the same issue of the New York Times, another article pointed out that “jobs requiring both the so-called soft skills and thinking skills [taught in the liberal arts] have seen the largest growth in employment and pay in the last three decades.”

We are also sad to note the passing of one of our long-time colleagues, Ross Gregory, who died on February 10. You will find his memorial on Page 4.

On behalf of the History Department, I wish you a happy and healthy holiday season and new year of 2018.

Dr. John O. Norman retired on December 31, 2016. He earned a BA in History and English from the University of North Texas, a MA in History from the University of North Texas, and a PhD in Russian History from Indiana University.

After spending one year as a visiting instructor of History at the University of Oklahoma in 1988-1989, John spent the remainder of his career at Western Michigan University. He joined WMU’s Department of History in Fall 1989 and was promoted to associate professor in 1994. During his more than two decades in the department, John taught Russian and Soviet history courses as well as courses dealing with cultural history and the arts. He taught the graduate level course on historical methods and theory for over a decade. John was also instrumental in helping the History Department establish its PhD program.

A specialist in late Tsarist fine arts, portions of John’s dissertation on Pavel Tretiakov and merchant art patronage were published in a collection of essays titled Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia by Princeton University Press in 1991. John also edited a volume of essays on Russian and Soviet artistic culture published by St. Martin’s Press in 1994. John frequently shared his expertise on Russian and Soviet fine arts by speaking to various community groups. He was a founding member of the Kalamazoo-Pushkin Partnership, which helped in the collection of medicines and other necessities for the elderly in the difficult days of hyperinflation, as well as serving as a liaison and interpreter between the city and committee and the Pushkin city government and the Catherine Palace administration and curatorial staff on several trips to Russia. Among the many undergraduate and graduate students he worked with over the years, one of the most successful is Dr. Kevin Kain, a senior lecturer at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Kevin has published widely on Russian history.

Dr. Norman looks forward to completing his biography of Tsar Alexander III and the cultural history of his reign (1881-1894). He continues to enjoy collecting and cataloging his collection of Russian art and artifacts as well as his extensive library of recorded sound and talking machines.
Dr. Janet Coryell is retiring on December 31, 2017, after twenty-six and a half years in the Department of History at Western Michigan University. She taught for five years at Auburn University and the University of Dayton before coming to WMU. She earned her BA at State University of New York at Cortland, MA at the University of Delaware, and PhD at the College of William & Mary.

In addition to her teaching, which included involvement in designing the Department of History’s PhD program as well as developing early online general education courses, Dr. Coryell wrote one monograph, co-edited two prize-winning collections of letters, served as managing editor for two co-edited works on Southern women’s history, and wrote one textbook in U.S. women’s history for McGraw-Hill with her late colleague Dr. Nora Faires. She wrote several articles, and held office in eight different historical organizations, including the presidency of the Southern Association for Women Historians. Most recently, Dr. Coryell also researched, wrote, co-produced, and narrated a documentary film on the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. She will continue to work on fourteen additional short documentaries related to this project plus two other books in retirement.

Janet is married to James Smither, PhD, professor of history at Grand Valley State University. She and James have one son, David Smither, now a history major at GVSU. Among other hobbies and pursuits, she continues to sing with the Chancel Choir at Mayflower Congregational Church in Grand Rapids.

Dr. Anise Strong was the recipient of the Western Michigan University College of Arts and Sciences Women’s Caucus Gender Scholar Award for 2017. The annual award is made to a faculty member who demonstrates excellence in gender-related research and scholarly activities. The award includes $1,000. Recipients are asked to present her or his work during the spring semester to the WMU community. Dr. Strong was honored at a College of Arts and Sciences’ ceremony in April 2017. In addition to this award, Dr. Strong received tenure and promotion to associate professor in 2017. Congratulations, Dr. Strong.

The Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award is the highest annual award Western Michigan University bestows on faculty members. It pays tribute to individuals whose work constitutes a significant body of achievement that is widely recognized within the national and international academic communities.

Dr. Xiong, professor of history, has done more than perhaps any other scholar to elevate the status of medieval Chinese history in the international community. He has written seven books in English and another five in Chinese, edited 10 journal volumes, contributed 26 articles and chapters, and reviewed 60 books. He launched the highly regarded journal *Early Medieval China* and he was chosen to review the Metropolitan Museum’s block buster exhibition, “China: Dawn of a Golden Age.” His *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China*, reissued in a paperback edition under the title, *A to Z of Medieval China*, is a remarkable encyclopedia for scholars and students. His new work includes a historical novel, *Heavenly Khan*, published in 2014.

Fellow scholars admire Victor’s work, including one nominator who sees him as master of structural and narrative history, weighing contradictory evidence, extracting the relevant information from sprawling and often obscure texts, and classifying information succinctly and helpfully. His languages include English, Chinese and Japanese; and he is "a wizard in new-media based pedagogy." Another scholar quips: "How many of us can single-handedly write an encyclopedia of medieval China? Or encyclopedia of anything?" He admires Victor’s scholarly range: "Xiong takes up the entirety of middle-period history, ranging from city planning, institutions, intellectual, social, economic, and cultural histories. Reading Xiong is always a humbling experience."

Congratulations to Dr. Xiong on this prestigious award.
Dr. Ross Gregory, professor of History, died on February 10, 2017. He was 83.

Born on February 11, 1933, in Montgomery, Indiana, a rural area south of Indianapolis, Ross was one of six sons. After serving in the U.S. Army in Europe from 1954 to 1956, Dr. Gregory benefited from the G.I. Bill and earned his BA in 1959, his MA in 1961, and his PhD in 1964 from Indiana University in Bloomington. His dissertation was on “The Ambassadorship of Walter Page.” At IU, he worked with Robert H. Ferrell, one of the country’s preeminent American diplomatic historians. Dr. Gregory’s dissertation was published in 1970 by the University Press of Kentucky and titled *Walter Hines Page: Ambassador to the Court of St. James’s*. The book, focusing on the U.S. ambassador to Great Britain from 1913 to 1918, won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians, one of the OAH’s most prestigious book prizes.


In addition to other university, college, and departmental service, Ross was one of the original members of the Department of History’s Burnham Macmillan History Endowment, which started in 1974, and was chair of the endowment committee from 1996 to 2004. Ross was also quite active as a mentor to many of the department’s graduate students. He chaired four doctoral dissertations, including the first student to receive a PhD in History from WMU, Charles T. Johnson. Dr. Johnson is now professor of History at Valdosta State University in Georgia.

Dr. Gregory is survived by his wife, Shirley; three children: Theresa, Graham, and Darren; and one granddaughter.

The Advisory Council met twice in 2017. In April, the council’s discussion focused on the new internship program, the development of a new 9-credit graduate certificate program, the department’s student scholarships, and an update on the History Day contest held in March. In October, the council’s discussion included an update on the status of our undergraduate and graduate programs, a report on Suzanne Grimmer’s experience as the department’s first internship scholarship recipient, an update about the passage of the department’s new 9-credit graduate certificate, and an introduction of Dr. Sylvia Hoffert to the advisory council members. Following the October meeting, the council adjourned for the alumni and emeriti reception in the Fetzer Center before the annual H. Nicholas Hamner Lecture. This year’s lecture was given by Nicolette Hahn Niman on the topic of “The Animals We Eat, from Prehistory to Modernity.” Nicolette is the daughter of Dr. Robert Hahn, a faculty member in WMU’s Department of History from 1961 to 1993.

**Advisory Council Members:** Charles Binder ’71, Bob Duke ’74, Mike Evans ’78, Ryan Gallogly ’03, David Gernant ’65, Donna Keller ’90, Gary Kent-Bracken ’72, Jack Klarr ’75, Rita Linnenkugel ’70, Brian McKee ’65, Bill Parsons ’67, Tom Vance ’78, Brittany Williams ’12, Ruth Writer ’68, Bill Warren and Dorilee Crown.
Dr. Kachun Publishes New Book

Professor Mitch Kachun’s new book illuminates the importance of Crispus Attucks in American history and memory. First Martyr of Liberty: Crispus Attucks in American Memory (Oxford University Press, 2017) explores how Crispus Attucks’ death in the 1770 Boston Massacre led to his achieving mythic significance in African Americans’ struggle to incorporate their experiences and heroes into the mainstream of the American historical narrative. While the other victims of the Boston Massacre have been largely ignored, Attucks is widely celebrated as the first to die in the cause of freedom during the era of the American Revolution. He became a symbolic embodiment of black patriotism and citizenship.

Dr. Borish Co-Edits History of American Sport

Professor Linda Borish’s highly regarded textbook, Sports in American History: From Colonization to Globalization, was recently published in a second edition by Human Kinetics. The Midwest Book Review highlighted the first edition as “An ideal curriculum textbook, Sports in American History: From Colonization to Globalization is exceptionally well written, organized, and presented. Very highly recommended for both community and academic library sports history reference collections and supplemental studies reading lists, Sports in American History will be much appreciated by both academia and nonspecialist general readers with an interest in the culture and history of American sports.”

Dr. Xiong publishes second edition of Historical Dictionary of Medieval China

With more than 1500 additional entries, the second edition of the Historical Dictionary of Medieval China (Rowman and Littlefield, 2017) enlarges the content by almost a third. It expands the scope of coverage of historical figures and events and administrative geography, while devoting much attention to such thematic areas as nobility, art, architecture, archaeology, economy, agriculture, money, population, cities, literature, historiography, military, religion, Persia, India, Japan, Korea, Arabs, and Byzantium, among others.

Dr. Berto Publishes Two Books

Dr. Andrea Berto published two books this past year. His first, titled Italian Carolingian Historical and Poetic Texts, provides a glimpse into Carolingian rule in Italy and insight into the various ways that Carolingian rule was remembered. As noted on the book cover: “When Charlemagne conquered the Lombard kingdom in 774, Italy became part of a vast dominion that encompassed most of Western Europe. For the first time since the disintegration of the Roman Empire, this part of the European continent was united again and a renewed sense of unity found expression in various realms of life, from economy to culture.”

Dr. Berto’s other book, I raffinati metodi d’indagine e il mestiere dello storico. L’alto Medioevo italiano all’inizio del terzo Millennio (Sophisticated Research Tools and the Historian’s Craft: Early Medieval Italy at the Beginning of the Third Millennium), examines the influence of political ideas and theories taken from anthropology, sociology, and literary studies. Scholars have recently offered new approaches for the study of early medieval Italy from the sixth through the ninth centuries. In particular, the volume is focused on topics such as ethnicity, identity, memory, use of the past, and gender.
Western Michigan University’s Department of History hosted the southwest Michigan District 6 competition of the National History Day contest on March 4, 2017. This was the third year that the department has hosted the district competition. Once again, our district competition attracted the largest number of competitors of any district in the state of Michigan. A total of 291 students from grades 4-12 competed. This was also a record number of competitors for our district. We estimated that at least 700 students, family members, and teachers took part in the event, which was once again held in the Bernhard Center. Students compete as individuals or in groups of up to 5 students. They develop projects in one of five contest categories: exhibits (poster displays), websites, dramatic performances, documentaries, or papers. Students’ projects also needed to address the annual theme, which in 2017 was “Taking a Stand in History.”
2017 PhD Recipients

David DiTucci
Advisor: Dr. Robert Berkhofer, III

Jack Goodman
Dissertation: “Slavery and Manumission in Fourteenth-Century Palermo”
Advisor: Dr. Larry Simon

Patrick Harris
Dissertation: “Primatus Hispaniae: Identity and Assimilation in Medieval Toledo”
Advisor: Dr. Larry Simon

David Terry
Advisor: Dr. Larry Simon

2017 M.A. Recipients

Patrick Hargis
Area of focus: Public History
Advisor: Dr. David Benac

Lucy Kent-Bracken
Area of focus: American Sport History
Advisor: Dr. Linda Borish

Thomas Maurer
Area of focus: Medieval European History
Advisor: Dr. Larry Simon

2016-17 Graduate Awards

The Department’s Graduate Students continue to set the bar for excellence in teaching and research at WMU.

Sherwood Cordier MA Teaching Effectiveness Award
Ruth Aardsma Benton

Ernst Breisach Award for European History
Matthew Penix

Houdek/Haight Grant to Support Returning Teachers
Michelle DeVries

Graduate College Support for Research and Travel
Ruth Aardsma Benton
Thomas Maurer

Gwen Frostic Doctoral Fellowship
John Byczynski

Department Research and Creative Activity Award at the Master’s Level
Jeremy Killion

Department Support for Research and Travel
Ruth Aardsma Benton
John Byczynski
Thomas Maurer
Matthew Penix

History Newsletter • Fall 2017
Alicia Risk, a first year MA student in public history, is the Frederick S. Upton Fellow for the 2017-18 school year. She loves her work at the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph, Michigan. Since 2001, the Frederick S. Upton Foundation has graciously collaborated with the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center, a local history museum in St. Joseph, Michigan, to sponsor one graduate student studying public history at Western Michigan University. The fellowship has created a mutually beneficial relationship between the department and the museum.

Alicia has enjoyed working at the Heritage Museum, and is learning a lot about the internal functions of local historical museums. Since beginning her internship this fall, she was tasked with curating a small display case based around The Little Italy Historic Park Project, a group of Benton Harbor area citizens whose families emigrated from Italy in the early twentieth century. HMCC’s curator, Tracy Gierada, gave Alicia the artifacts and photos the display required, and Alicia designed, wrote, printed, mounted and installed the labels. She also designed the look of the display and hand-dyed the fabric backdrop in her kitchen. The display case will remain up in the upper level of the Heritage for several months.

Suzanne Grimmer, a senior public history major, received a $2,000 award from the History Department last summer to support her internship at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. This was Suzanne’s second experience with the museum. She applied to intern there again, and then sought financial support from the department for help with living expenses. Because of generous gifts to this fund last year, we were able to provide her with this assistance. We hope that you will continue to help us build up this fund for our undergraduates who secure unpaid internships. Suzanne describes her experiences below.

During my five-week internship at the National World War II Museum, I worked directly with the archives manager in the curatorial department to rehouse and physically relocate book and paper collections, as well as 3-D objects, during the museum’s storage renovation period. This involved in-depth training on archival preservation, description, and processing provided by the curatorial department staff in conjunction with a ten-week online preservation course by the Northeast Document Conservation Center.

Throughout the five weeks, the archives manager and I pulled 150,000 individual documents for digitizing, cataloged over 1,000 field manuals into the EMu collections management system, and inventoried thousands of 3-D objects for their relocation to the new collection storage area. We hosted material acquisition meetings with museum donors, where we analyzed donated materials for their provenance and physical condition to ensure that the donated items not only fit within the scope of the museum’s collection policy, but also to ensure that the museum was the best repository for the items based on their fragility and long-term conservation needs.

Having the opportunity to spend another summer at the National World War II Museum strengthens my desire to continue my studies in public history, specifically museum studies. Being able to get hands-on experience with such a diverse collection of archival and 3-D materials allowed me to apply the skills I learned in my public history courses in a practical museum setting.
During the summer, I worked as an intern with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) at their central office in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. While my official title was Engineering Intern for PennDOT, I spent 90 percent of my time with the Pennsylvania State Historical Preservation Office’s staff working under three different mentors. Tyra Guyton, a chemist turned historic preservationist, was my main mentor. He gave me my first project of updating information on metal truss bridges throughout Pennsylvania. With Tyra, I witnessed a removal and relocation of a metal truss bridge and presented my first Determination of Eligibility (DOE) to the SHPO staff. After finishing the first project, Noel Stratton, the lead Geographic Information System (GIS) specialist, taught me how to map historic sites and allowed me into the file room to update Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS) in relation to the paper files kept by the SHPO. On multiple occasions, I went to work until Kira Heinrich, an archaeologist, who introduced me to the complex field of archaeology through DOE meetings and memorandum of agreement (MOA) writing sessions.

Every Friday, the other interns and I sat down with Joe Baker, our supervisor, for seminars on Historical Preservation laws, MOA writing, and professional development. We worked on real life case studies, spoke with different staff members about collaboration across academic fields, and asked questions about how to secure a job in our fields after graduation. Joe also sent us out into the field with PennDOT Highway Archaeological Survey Team (PHAST), allowing me to participate in four archeological digs where we found a native point and over one hundred flakes.

During my internship, there was never a dull day. Between the field trips, private tours, and personal interviews with staff members, I learned more than I could have ever imagined. Everyone I encountered was knowledgeable in their field and willing to share what they knew with me at any given time. I was the first undergrad to be selected for the position, an achievement that I credited to the coursework and opportunities I had through Western Michigan University, and I was able to truly thrive at PennDOT. It was an experience that changed my life and solidified my desire to one day work as a cultural resource manager.

Sue Land joined the department in mid-November as our second administrative assistant. She earned her BS in 1999 from WMU. She is glad to be a part of the university and give back to the community. She is enthusiastic about putting her technical writing and administrative background to work in support of the department.

Sue and husband Bill live in the Gobles area. She enjoys outdoor activities, water sports, camping, and reading. And, she notes: I am an all-around nice person!
Joshua Koenig has served as the department’s director of undergraduate advising since Fall 2016. He teaches courses in American history, public history and historic preservation, environmental history, and art and architectural history. His research interests focus on public perceptions, preservation, and representation of American history, specifically examining the history of the American West. He also serves as the chairperson for the Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission. The commission works to preserve the architecture, character, and historical significance of structures in the City of Kalamazoo. Currently, he is creating the second season of a PBS documentary titled, *America from the Ground Up*, with his co-authors and co-producers, Dr. Lemont Dobson and Dr. Andrew Devenney. The second season (of a projected six seasons) of *America from the Ground Up* focuses on colonial Spain and the American West. Koenig serves as a producer, content developer, and author. The team received several grants to help fund the project, including $50,000 from the Missouri Humanities Council. The series will be released in late spring.

Phi Alpha Theta is a history honor society for undergraduate and graduate students with a passion for history. We attend lectures, hold movie and game nights, and attend local cultural events. We meet once a week and generally alternate between a fun meeting and a business meeting. We also try to go on at least one trip each semester to a museum or historical site. For the Fall 2017 semester, we are traveling to Greenfield Village for their Holiday Nights winter event.

Alpha-Beta-Delta Chapter
2017 Inductees

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<th>Katherine Bauer</th>
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<td>Theresa Caravello*</td>
<td>Brian Taylor</td>
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<td>Raegan Delmonico*</td>
<td>Samantha VanDyke</td>
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<td>Suzanne Grimmer</td>
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<td>Brianna Jarczynski*</td>
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Phi Alpha Theta members at Bronco Bash

Members of Phi Alpha Theta on the 2017 spring trip to the Detroit Institute of Arts

Members of PAT last spring at the National Council on Public History 2017 Conference in Indianapolis

Phi Alpha Theta members at our Fall 2016 trip to Charlton Park
Conor Howard receives Presidential Scholarship

Conor is from Plainwell, MI and a graduate of Plainwell High School. He earned an Associate of Arts in international studies from Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, Conor majored in History and graduated in April 2017. He is now pursuing a doctoral degree in history at the University of Cincinnati focusing on England and the Atlantic world in the 16th through 18th centuries. He hopes to obtain a tenured position at a university, where he can follow his research interests and serve as an educator who inspires his students to have both an interest in and a passion for history. Conor’s academic interests include the development of English social patterns in the early modern period, especially patterns of gender, patriarchy and identity formation. His Lee Honors College thesis, titled “Idealizing Patriarchy,” examined the ways in which 16th-century English household advice literature characterized masculinity and patriarchy. Conor is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honor society. He was a judge for District 6 Michigan History Day competition at WMU and an has been a volunteer tutor on campus with the Bronco Study Zone, run by Student Success Services in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Congratulations Conor on this prestigious award!
Dr. Linda Borish presented a keynote address titled “American Women Sport Heroes in the 1920s and 1930s” at the First Development of Sports History Study International Summit: Problems and Prospects of Discipline Development in Sports History, from October 31 to November 2, 2017, at the Chengdu Sport Institute in Chengdu, China. Chengdu is the capital city of Sichuan province with a population of 14 million. The conference marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Chengdu Sport Institute. Presenters and attendees came from countries in the West as well as China, Japan, and South Korea. Chinese Communist Party officials also attended.

Linda discussed how American women sport stars during the “Golden Age of Sport” shaped American culture and society. The audience especially appreciated her use gender analysis. Much of the discussion focused on how valuable American sport history has been in the field of sport history. Dr. Borish also met with former visiting scholar in WMU’s Department of History, “Monty” ChuanSong Huo, who sponsored her invitation to the conference. Dr. Borish was one of three Western keynoters, all of whom were provided with student English translators, fabulous meals, and opportunities to learn about the Chengdu Sport Institute.

In addition to her conference keynote address, Dr. Borish gave an invited talk to the Institute’s Department of Foreign Languages—over 90 English-speaking students and faculty—on “Americanization and Immigrant Sporting Experiences during the Progressive Era of American History.” Linda also met with the Institute’s Dean of International Studies and other faculty. These conversations focused on global engagement prospects and ideas for some collaboration in sport history projects.

Chengdu Sport Institute colleagues arranged for many cultural activities for their Western guests. An exciting excursion took place to the world famous Chengdu Panda Base. Dr. Borish also went to a temple to honor a military leader, visited museums, and walked around the famous square that features a huge statue of Mao Zedong. All in all, she participated in an amazing academic and cultural experience.
Since completing my Master’s degree in history at Western Michigan University in 2015, I’ve had the privilege to teach Western Civilization and U.S. History classes at Glen Oaks Community College at the school’s main campus in Centreville, Michigan, as well as at area high schools for students in a dual-enrollment program or Early Middle College program. I’ve especially enjoyed the high school students, who are especially enthusiastic learners and have proven to be very dedicated students. I’ve learned a lot from the experience thus far. In particular, I've found that it is very important for students to understand the practicality of history as well as the value of critical thinking skills they can develop through studying history. It’s also been fun to incorporate popular culture—mostly music and film—into my classes. It seems to keep students more interested and make history a bit more fun.

Beginning this Spring 2018 semester, I am very excited to be teaching at Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac and Niles, Michigan. I attended SMC as a high school student and earned my Associate of Arts degree there, never dreaming I would one day return as an instructor. I'll be teaching history courses and humanities courses, and am already looking forward to beginning the new semester. I am very grateful for the training, lessons, and advice I've received from professors and fellow graduate students at WMU, which have proven invaluable as I lead a classroom myself and as I continue to develop my teaching style and techniques.

We recently heard from an alum, Lou Garavaglia, who published *To the Wide Missouri: Traveling in America During the First Decades of Westward Expansion* (Yardley, PA: Westholme, 2011). Mr. Garavaglia’s book surveys the various modes of transportation that settlers used to make their way across the huge American expanse, particularly early roadways, canals, stagecoach lines, and railroads. Mr. Garavaglia also provides a brief biography below.

I graduated from WMU in 1963 with a major in history. After service in Vietnam, I became a junior magazine editor in Washington, D.C. Partly as a result of that experience, I eventually co-authored a major two-volume work on American frontier history—*Firearms of the American West, 1803-1894*—which is still in print after thirty years. In the 1980s I went back to school to learn something about manufacturing techniques, began designing mechanical items, and I now hold two U.S. patents, with a third in process. Although I never taught history per se, I do teach a night course at Eastern Florida State College in machining technology, and, of course, always include a fair amount about the history of manufacturing—because it’s important (to me, anyway) that the students understand how one level of technology builds on another.

In the near future, I'm most interested in publishing another work of history, and have been steadily gathering primary source material from the 1790-1840 period, but not yet sure what I'll do with it or where it will lead me.
In Appreciation

The Department of History gratefully acknowledges the support of its donors. This list includes donations since the 2016 newsletter up to press time this year in the donors lifetime giving level. Please join these individuals and show your support.

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