Medical school initiative gets high praise

A private medical school initiative that leverages the resources of WMU and Kalamazoo's two major hospitals has been singled out by Business Review West Michigan as the educational arena's Deal of the Year for 2010.

The annual awards program, now in its fifth year, was designed by the business publication to honor the year's most significant business transactions in West Michigan. The publication's staff members and local business leaders look at every major industry and "call out the transactions that had or will have the greatest economic impact on West Michigan."

This year, Deals of the Year were selected from among 30 finalists in eight categories. Earlier this fall, WMU's medical school initiative and its Sangren construction project were named finalists in the education and construction categories, respectively. The winning organizations in all eight categories were announced Oct. 22.

Other education finalists included: Kalamazoo College for its creation of the Arens Center for Social Justice Leadership, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for investing $16.7 million in Woodrow Wilson teaching fellowships to train Michigan science and math teachers, and Grand Valley State University for its new Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Founding dean candidates to make presentations

Three candidates for the newly founded dean of the WMU School of Medicine are coming to Kalamazoo to meet with local stakeholders and make public presentations. The medical school initiative is a partnership involving WMU, Borgess Health and Bronson Healthcare.

Each event will begin with a half-hour informal "meet and greet" with the candidates and conclude with a reception. Attendees will have an opportunity to pose questions during the candidates’ presentations.

Schedules to make presentations are:
• Robert A. Forse, professor and associate chair for surgical education at the Creighton University School of Medicine. Forse will speak at 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, in Bronson’s Gilmore Auditorium.
• Rubens J. Pamies, vice chancellor for academic affairs, dean for graduate studies and professor of internal medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Pamies will speak at 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, in Borgess’ Lawrence Education Center.
• Hal B. Jenson, professor of pediatrics and regional dean for the Western Campus of the Tufts University School of Medicine. Jenson will speak at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, in Bronson’s Gilmore Auditorium.

International Education Week kicks off Nov. 15

WMU will highlight numerous countries and cultures during its 2010 observance of International Education Week, set for Monday through Saturday, Nov. 15-20.

International Education Week is a joint initiative of the U.S. departments of State and Education. The week promotes programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and also attract future leaders from abroad to study, learn and exchange experiences in the United States.

Numerous entertaining and educational events have been scheduled on campus throughout the week, and most are free and open to the public. In addition, international students from WMU will be visiting area K-12 schools during the week, introducing the region’s youth to a broad assortment of foreign cultures.

"Striving for a Sustainable Future" is the theme for this year's International Education Week, which is being organized by WMU's Haenicke Institute for Global Education.

The theme reflects sentiments expressed by President Barack Obama when he said: “All of us share this world for but a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort—a sustained effort—to find common ground, to focus on the future we seek for our children and to respect the dignity of all human beings.”

Keep checking www.wmich.edu/news for a complete list of events.
Around Campus

Gold Company concert tonight

Gold Company, WMU’s internationally recognized vocal jazz ensemble, will hold its 33rd annual “Sneak Preview” concert at 9:15 p.m. tonight in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. The performance will include new music from upcoming shows, including the ensemble’s Dec. 5 holiday concert. Tickets are $10 and $5 for students and may be purchased at the door.

Talk to address inequality in China

Terry Sicolar from the University of Western Ontario will speak on “Inequality in China: Challenges to a Harmonious Society” from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, in 2028 Brown. Sicolar’s presentation is part of the economics department’s Sichel Lecture Series. The theme of this year’s series is “Dragon vs. Eagle: The Chinese Economy and U.S.-China Economic Relations.”

Civic ecology is Frostic lecture topic

Marianne Krasny from Cornell University will present a public lecture titled “Civic Ecology: Transforming Urban Places from the Ground Up” Thursday, Nov. 11. A reception will follow the talk, which will be presented at 6:30 p.m. in the Fetzer Center’s Patney Auditorium.

African burial ground to be discussed

Visiting anthropologist Warren Perry from Central Connecticut State University will discuss “The Archaeology of New York’s African Burial Ground” at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11, in 1115 Moore. He will talk about the 17th- and 18th-century burial ground in lower Manhattan that construction workers discovered in 1991.

Veterans invited to special lunch

Veterans in the campus community and WMU Army ROTC students are invited to share a complimentary lunch on Veteran’s Day, Thursday, Nov. 11. The event will be held at 11 a.m. in the AT building on the Oakland Drive Campus. Students also are holding a blood drive in that building the same day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Ethics center celebrates 25th birthday

The Center for the Study of Ethics in Society will celebrate its 25th anniversary starting at 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 15, in the Bernhard Center with a presentation by Ethics Center Director Michael Pritchard followed by a reception and panel discussion. Visit www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2010/10/028.shtml for details.

Haworth series spotlights Klohs

Birgit Klohs, president and CEO of The Right Place Inc. in Grand Rapids, Mich., will speak on “Positioning West Michigan for the Global Economy” at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 17, in Schneider. To attend, register by Friday, Nov. 12, by contacting Shawna Cassada atshawna.cassada@wmich.edu or (269) 387-6059.

APA holiday gathering scheduled

The Administrative Professional Association will hold its holiday gathering at the Henderson Castle in Kalamazoo starting at 5:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2. The program will include a castle tour, appetizers and a cash bar. The cost is $15 for members and $20 for nonmembers. Reservations and prepayment are required by 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 19. Visit www.wmich.edu/apa for details.

Retirement reception

Greg Roseboom, engineering and maintenance services, will be honored for 27 years of service during a reception from 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11, in the Bernhard Center’s West Ballroom.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources Web site at www.wmich.edu/hr/careers-at-wmu.html. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

Fundraising group to honor law prof

Thomas Edmonds, finance and commercial law, will receive the Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals’ West Michigan chapter. It will be presented at a noon luncheon during the group’s National Philanthropy Day event Nov. 9 at Calvin College in Grand Rapids.

The award recognizes outstanding skills in coordinating and motivating volunteers for fundraising projects benefitting charitable institutions. Edmonds is being honored for his work in helping to raise money to establish Kalamazoo County’s drug court, which is a national model.

A former Kalamazoo County sheriff for two decades, Edmonds serves as an adjunct professor at WMU from 1976 until joining the faculty full time in 2004 after 28 years in law enforcement. He teaches courses in legal environment as well as criminal law and procedure. Visit www.afpwm.org/npd for details about the philanthropy day event.

Musician-composer to hit in Berlin

Tom Knific, music, was featured in concerts and a master class during the 2010 International Double Bass Convention in Berlin. Presentations were made by nearly 100 artists, many of whom are principals in Europe’s leading orchestras.

Knific performed in three concerts, including a recital of all his original compositions, and in an international trio. In his solo recital, Knific performed works as well as “classical” compositions, including the world premier of “The Muzet of Gorenne.” While in Germany, Knific also received a commission from the Viennese ensemble, Bass Instinct, and fielded numerous requests that he perform his compositions around the globe.

Knific has taught double bass and jazz guitar at WMU since 1987 and was appointed director of the jazz studies program in 2000.

Emeritus receives Japanese citation

Michitoshi Soga, emeritus in physics, was awarded a Foreign Minister’s Commendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in an August ceremony at the Japan Consulate in Detroit.

The honor recognizes outstanding achievements in international fields that promote friendly relations between Japan and other countries.

Soga joined the WMU physics faculty in 1965 and retired in 1996. He began officially working with the international affairs office in 1986, building relationships and linkages between the University and Japan.

His legacy of bridge-building was recognized in 2006 with the founding of the Soga Japan Center at WMU. He remains “on call” for the University to serve as a diplomat for Japanese institutions, alumni and students.

Staff organization holding annual poinsettia sale

The Professional Support Staff Organization is again holding its annual poinsettia sale fundraiser. Orders are being accepted through Tuesday, Nov. 23. Post cards are $9 each and are available in seven colors: red, white, pink, burgundy, marble, jingle bells and Monet. Visit www.wmich.edu/psso to download an order form.

Payment must accompany all orders. Checks should be made payable to PSSSO.

Poinsettias will be available for pick up between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday, Dec. 6, in 106 Bernhard Center. Plants not picked up by the 3 p.m. deadline will be donated.

Send completed order forms with payment to: (on campus) Paige Warner, First-Year Experience Programs, Mail Stop 5263 or (off campus) Paige Warner, First-Year Experience Programs, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo MI 49008-5263.

Questions may be directed to Paige.warner@wmich.edu.

Timothy D. Bozeman
2010 open enrollment period is under way for insurance, FSAs

WMU's open enrollment period for health insurance, life insurance and Flexible Spending Accounts began Monday, Nov. 1, and will continue through 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 3.

Open enrollment for health insurance is available for benefits-eligible non-bargaining employees as well as members of and retirees from the American Association of University Professors; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Michigan State Employees Association; and Police Officers Association.

During open enrollment, employees and retirees have the option of adding eligible dependents to their health insurance. Eligible employees, but not retirees, also have a one-time opportunity during this year's open enrollment period to elect additional life insurance coverage without having to obtain medical underwriting approval.

Insurance elections made during the 2010 open enrollment period are effective Jan. 1. Visit www.wmich.edu/hr/open-enrollment to review the detailed information mailed to employees and retirees the week of Oct. 25. Employees who wish to participate in a FSA in 2011 must enroll or re-enroll during this year's open-enrollment period.

United Way goal at 90 percent; celebration planned

President John M. Dunn plans to hold a celebration from 4 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, in 210 Bernhard Center to mark the end of another successful campus United Way campaign. But additional contributions are still needed.

As of 8 a.m. Nov. 3, a total of $46,000 in gifts and pledges had been received from 1,394 WMU donors. That put the University at more than 90 percent of its 2010 goal of raising $275,000 for the Greater Kalamazoo United Way.

Faculty, staff and retirees who have not already turned in their pledge cards are encouraged to do so now, then join the University community in the Nov. 18 celebration festivities. During the event, Dunn will acknowledge campaign organizers as well as contributors, and light refreshments will be served.

A grand-prize drawing will be held for people increasing their gift by $50 since last year. Prizes include a pair of seats in the President's Box for the last home football game, an overnight stay at the Oaklands with two tickets to the Gold Club's annual concert, and more.

WMU administrator wins dance competition

Jim Thomas, WMU’s new vice president for development and alumni relations, was the grand prize winner at the 2010 Dancing with the WMU/Kazoostars scholarship fundraising event.

Thomas, paired with senior dance major Angela Guerro, won the competition by dancing the swing to “The Candy Man” performed by Christine Aquilera. Despite a military khaki, the two wowed the judges and audience with fast-paced footwork, intricate spins and a lift in which Guerro lifted Thomas.

WMU Board of Trustees Chairman Larry Tolbert and senior dance major Ashley Rop earned third place. The fundraiser was hosted by Partners in Dance and the WMU Department of Dance. Judges for this year’s event were Bobby Hopewell, Kalamazoo mayor; Kathryn Williams, music theatre choreographer; and D. Terry Williams, WMU emeritus theatre professor and chair.

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New WMU center, annual forum focus on information technology in health care

An interdisciplinary partnership has resulted in the creation of a new WMU center that aims to improve health care information technology. The Center for Health Information Technology Advancement, or CHITA, grew out of presentations at last year’s WMU Information Technology Forum. The 2010 IT Forum, set for Friday, Nov. 12, will represent the kickoff for the facility’s grand opening.

CHITA is a joint project by the Bronson School of Nursing and Department of Business Information Systems. Center Director Bernie Han, business information systems, says the facility’s focus is to facilitate better health care by providing solutions to today’s health care information technology needs. “Through joint course projects under a collaborative learning environment, both nursing and computer information systems students will gain a better understanding of health care and use of IT to improve business practices,” Han says. “As a result, they can offer ways to more effectively and efficiently organize and deploy IT for better health care.”

The center will address state and federal priorities aimed at using technology to reform health care delivery. Faculty members will pursue external resources to support research initiatives that will support area hospitals, health care companies and communities.

One of the facility’s first initiatives will be to provide WMU students with real world, hands-on experiences. Associate Center Director Sharie Falan, nursing, says select computer information systems undergraduates are working this fall with nursing graduate students to study the workflow of the health care business at Bronson Methodist Hospital.

The ninth annual WMU IT Forum will center on the theme “Advancing the Landscape for Health Care with IT: Exploring the Landscape for 2011.”

Campus planning seeks input

Members of the University community are invited to an open forum on the Campus Master Plan from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9, in the Fetzer Center.

Those interested in attending are asked to take a 10- to 15-minute “Hot Topics” survey online, then bring their questions and comments to the forum.

Visit www.wmich.edu/masterplan for details.

University participating in series of Russian events

WMU will present a free daylong Russian Studies Conference Friday, Nov. 12, as part of the events leading up to the 2010 Kalamazoo Russian Festival.

The conference will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 1025 and 1028 Brown. The event, which is free and open to the public, is being coordinated by Judith Rypma, English.

It will feature sessions by WMU faculty as well as such invited speakers as best-selling author Robert Alexander and Vyacheslav Moshkalo, counselor cultural attaché with the Russian embassy.

Rypma, a local poet, also is instrumental in another free event leading up to the Kalamazoo Russian Festival. She will present “A Tribute to Russia in Poems and Pictures” at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11, in the Portage District Library, 300 Library Lane, Portage, Mich.

Light refreshments and tea will be available.

The Russian festival itself, which WMU is co-hosting, will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13, in the Fetzer Center.

It will feature a variety of music and dance performances; an art gallery displaying Russian art, coins and currency; the sale of authentic Russian cuisine; tea served Russian style; and a children’s area.

For more information about the Russian Studies Conference, contact Rypma. Visit www.russianfestival.org for details about the Russian festival, which charges an admission fee for those older than age 5.