The relevance of the liberal arts

STEM careers (Science-Technology-Engineering & Math) benefit from early engagement

Geography matters!

- Support staff important for College success
- Two making a difference: Poli Sci alum is judge who helps vets, Biology grad honored for his teaching
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Our undergraduate and graduate scholarships provide educational opportunities to our current students and help us to attract excellent new students. Choose to use your power to promote academic excellence and opportunity through your contribution to one or more of the following:

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Student Internship Scholarships in the College of Arts and Sciences support real-life, hands-on experience and provide excellent opportunities for current and post-graduation employment.

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Focused on recruiting top students, the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Scholarships are continuing, merit-based scholarships for academically gifted undergraduate applicants and students in the College of Arts and Sciences.

STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS

Study Abroad Scholarships in the College of Arts and Sciences provide students with the critical international experience required for engaged and successful citizens of the 21st century.

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First Generation College Student Scholarships support academically qualified students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, whose parents have had no college or university experience.

NONTRADITIONAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Nontraditional Student Scholarships support adult learners, 25 or older, with multiple demands, including family, children, and employment.

The College of Arts and Sciences is committed to creating a learning community rich in faculty-student collaboration on research and scholarly endeavors, promoting in our students an appreciation of diversity; providing guided experiences through internships, community-based learning, and practical experiences; and instilling intellectual agility and the habits of mind and spirit necessary for living a fulfilled life in a rapidly changing world.

African American Studies • Biological Sciences • Chemistry
English and Journalism • Foreign Languages and Literatures
Geography • Geology • History
Mathematics • Nursing
Philosophy and Religious Studies • Physics • Political Science
Psychology • Sociology and Anthropology
Western Research Survey Center • Women’s Studies
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“Focus will inform college stakeholders about College of Arts and Sciences activities and encourage their involvement in the life of the college.”

Western Illinois University
College of Arts and Sciences

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Western’s CAS is made up of 16 departments whose disciplines span the areas of the social sciences, the humanities, mathematics and the natural sciences: African American Studies, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, English and Journalism, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Geography, Geology, History, Mathematics, School of Nursing, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, and Women’s Studies.

Cover photo by Visual Production Center

Photos by Chelsea Crawford

President, Farheen Hakeem spoke at Western’s Mock Presidential Election

Green Party national co-chair Farheen Hakeem spoke at Western’s Mock Presidential Election

Judge Charles Romani, 1969 WIU grad

Produced by authority of the State of Illinois
From the Dean

Associate Professor Althea Alton of Western Illinois University’s Department of Biological Sciences has been director of the College of Arts and Sciences’ Liberal Arts and Sciences bachelor’s and master’s degree programs since 2009.

She came to Western in 1987 as a visiting assistant professor in the biology department, and she was named to WIU’s full-time faculty a year later. Alton served as the assistant director for the Western’s Honors Program (now the Centennial Honors College) from 1995-1997 and its acting director during the summer of 1997. Alton previously held posts at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Indiana University; the National Science Technology Authority of the Philippines; and the University of the Philippines, Los Baños.

Dr. Alton earned her Ph.D. in biology with a concentration in developmental genetics at Cornell University Graduate School of Medical Sciences in 1981, after which she was awarded a National Institutes of Health postdoctoral fellowship at Sloan Kettering Cancer Research Institute (1981-1983) and another postdoctoral fellowship with the Indiana Corporation for Science and Technology (1985-1987) at Indiana University.

You are a great advocate of the Liberal Arts and Sciences. What are the benefits of the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences (BLAS) and Masters of Liberal Arts and Sciences (MLAS) degrees like we offer at Western Illinois University?

William H. Goetzmann, who wrote Beyond the Revolution: A History of American Thought From Paine to Pragmatism, believes America at its best embodies “cosmotopian ideals” – the United States is a global civilization where all human ideas and experiences mingle.

In his New York Times review of Goetzmann’s book, Jedediah Purdy – a law professor at Duke University and a scholar of ideas about freedom, social order and the human relationship with the natural world, and how these ideas arise and change – posits that it has never been clearer that the country’s best self is a global inheritance, its worst a parochial self-certainty.

At the heart of liberal education is the belief that developing the skills and knowledge for a life-time of learning, empowers individuals, and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with a broad knowledge of the wider world, so crucial in our global society, as well as opportunities for in-depth study in specific areas of interest.

One of the essential learning outcomes articulated in both our Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences (BLAS) and Masters of Liberal Arts and Sciences (MLAS) core classes is the need for integrative learning. Our students are asked to build connections across the curriculum and co-curriculum. Our assessment of student learning specifically looks for demonstrated ability to transition from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new and complex situations within academia and in our pluralistic society.

At a time when many institutions of higher learning are being criticized for academic programs and curricula that teach to a narrowly focused discipline, or a specific job, the BLAS and MLAS programs at WIU provide both a broad liberal education base, and an opportunity to focus on areas tailored to our students’ academic needs and interests. The BLAS and MLAS degree programs prepare and encourage our students to explore the broad questions faced by humanity as well as the specific means by which to address these questions.

Please share a success story concerning a BLAS and MLAS student

One is Delores Ann Robinson, a BLAS graduate last year.

Dee joined the BLAS program at WIU-QC in the Fall of 2008, the first year the major was offered. She selected the Multidisciplinary Emphasis with the People-In-Context option and a minor in Sociology. Dee was on the Dean’s list every semester of her undergraduate program at WIU. She received an undergraduate research award from the College of Arts and Sciences in Spring 2010 and used these professional development funds to present a paper at the Midwest Sociological Society Annual meeting.

She chose to do an internship with the River Bend Food Bank, and presented results of her work at the WIU Undergraduate Research Day in April 2010.

After receiving her BLAS degree, Dee enrolled in the MLAS program and she is currently preparing to start her exit option. She hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in Sociology in the near future.

As an undergraduate, Dee served as an officer in the WIU-QC Liberal Arts and Sciences Student Organiza-

Continued on page 27
By Bryce Dexter

More than $175,000 has been raised for various scholarships in the College of Arts and Sciences since last year, according to College Dean Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, who wrapped up the College’s fifth annual scholarship dinner October 29 by thanking the 112 people attending for their generosity.

The event, in the Union Lamoine Room, also recognized students who earned scholarships and announced the recipient of the CAS Distinguished Alumni award.

Students were selected for their scholarly accomplishments and as the inaugural recipients of several scholarships:

Matthew Sunderman is the 2011 Fall Scholar for the Department of Psychology. Matt shared his gratitude to WIU and the department for allowing him to be who he wanted to be. He shared his love of research and that his favorite place was in the lab. Matt is a very active student and, as his presenter Dr. Steven Dworkin, chair of the Department of Psychology, indicated, “He is everywhere on this campus”

Dr. Nicholas Pano, retired Associate Dean of the College and Professor Emeritus of the Department of History, presented the inaugural scholarship recipient of “The Nicholas and Joan Pano Scholarship” to Kristen Johnson. Johnson is majoring in History and History-Teacher Certification. President of CAS Student Council (in her second term), she also is Vice President of the Associated Students of History (ASH). Johnson’s active within ASH (the department’s student organization), which has involved planning and publicizing activities for History students as well as helping to staff the History table at Student Activities and Majors’ Fairs. Johnson has also been active in student recruitment, acting as a Student Ambassador for our Discover Western meetings with prospective History majors and their parents.

The “Jack W. and Dorothy Bates Jessee” inaugural scholarship was presented to Kelsey Lang McGuire, the inaugural recipient of the Jack W. and Dorothy Bates Jessee Scholarship, shaking hands with WIU President Jack Thomas (right), as WIU Board member Bill Griffin looks on.

Continued on page 11
Mock Presidential Election

Students surprise again

By Bill Knight

It was 364 days before the 2012 election when thousands of WIU students took part in the university’s second ambitious Mock Presidential Election and, after five nights of debating and politicking, elected Barack Obama and vice presidential candidate Hillary Clinton over the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan.

Besides the interesting votes for running mates, students acting as party delegates from every state between Oct. 25 and Nov. 7 spoke out and took positions on candidates and platform planks that were sometimes predictable and sometimes surprising – as surprising as the appearance of real-life candidates Jill Stein of the Green Party and Randall Terry, the anti-abortion activist running as a Democrat, and the respectable support for gay Republican Fred Karger.

“The Mock Presidential Election process involves WIU students from various courses taking part in different political parties and acting as delegates from different states,” said Brian Gearron, a freshman Journalism major picked to be a Democratic delegate from Alabama, and “eventually voting on which candidates they want.”

Professor Rick Hardy, interim director of WIU’s Centennial Honors College, once more led the Mock Presidential Election, as he did in 2007.

“I’ve been doing this for years,” said Hardy, who’s conducted similar sophisticated exercises at Iowa and Missouri, “and it’s interesting seeing the students really get in to it by the time the election is over.”

Helping create the enthusiasm were actual elected officials, too. Those speaking on behalf of candidates or just encouraging civic engagement were Illinois State Treasurer Dan Rutherford, State Reps. Mike Boland (D-Moline) and Norine Hammond (R-Macomb), and U.S. Rep. Aaron Schock (R-Peoria).

“Each one of you can have an enormous impact on the outcome of next year’s real election,” Schock told students during his Nov. 7 address to thousands of students gathered to campaign and vote in Western Hall.

“The largest unrepresented demographic in America is young people. Do yourself a favor, get involved and stay engaged.”

Also campaigning on two nights of the five-night MPE was Farheen Hakeem, a Minnesota activist and national co-chair of the Green Party of the United States, and Stein, a Boston physician running for the Green Party’s nomination for the White House, who kicked off a five-day Midwest campaign swing in Macomb.

The unorthodox bid by Terry, the founder of Operation Rescue, brought out protestors from Western’s Feminist Action Alliance, who confronted the longtime Republican-turned-anti-abortion Democrat outside the proceedings in the Union Grand Ballroom. A civil debate there became somewhat raucous when Terry spoke to delegates, as demonstrators chanted, “Hey, hey, ho, ho. Randall Terry’s got to go.”

Whether protests or arguing party platforms, Junior Broadcasting major Pierce Roberson said most of the activities were new to him.

“I never knew what to expect of the WIU Mock Presidential Election in the months and weeks leading up to Tuesday,” Roberson said on opening night as he acted as a Democratic delegate from Florida. “I’ve never voted before and couldn’t tell you what a primary is from a caucus. Politics is not my strong suit [but] after spending the day as a delegate, my interest in politics is high.”

Getting high in other ways was on some students’ minds, as the decriminalization or even legalization of pot was debated. Karger’s Republican campaign was the only one that supported the legalization of marijuana.

“The typical political landscape of a college campus is fairly liberal, and that’s what I was expecting to see out of the debates,” said Paul Strater, a senior who co-anchored WIUTV-3 coverage of the MPE proceedings. “I got exactly that when there was quite a bit of discussion on the Republican session about legalization of marijuana. The platform was modified to indicate support of this, which is the opposite of what would happen, at least for now, in the national GOP convention. But when the Democrats’ session debated the issues of abortion rights through the sixth month of pregnancy, which would seem to be a foregone conclusion, it cemented the fact that this group of students wasn’t going to be predictable, and had found a voice of its own within the political world.

“The surprises wouldn’t end there. Randall Terry – a political enigma himself in the longtime abortion foe’s running as a Democrat – garnered a significant amount of support in the primary elections. Karger, the first openly gay Republican presidential candidate, also captured a lot of votes in the Republican primary.”

In the final tally of the MPE’s GOP primary, Romney won 792 votes, with Ron Paul second with 372 and Karger third with 197. Rick Perry, Michelle Bachmann, Herman Cain and others all received fewer than 70 votes.

Later, in the nomination stage, Romney won the Republican nod with 1,475 votes, and students on Romney’s MPE campaign staff selected Ryan, the Congressman from
Wisconsin, as his running mate. Paul
again came in second, with 484 votes,
and Karger again third, with 101.
Newt Gingrich and other GOP can-
didates failed to get more than 60 votes.

Meanwhile, Democrats over-
whelmingly nominated Obama, with
2,579 votes, although Terry received
368 votes, Ralph Nader 189 votes,
and former South Carolina Senate
candidate Alvin Greene 22 votes. In a
somewhat surprising move, students
on Obama’s MPE campaign staff
picked former rival and current Sec-
retary of State Clinton as his running
mate.

Elsewhere, in three separate
third-party activities, the Tea Party
didn’t nominate a candidate but
endorsed the GOP platform; the Libe-
tarian Party couldn’t find a candidate
and made no endorsements; and Stein
beat back a challenge from Jello
Biafra, the musician who formerly
played with the band the Dead Ken-
nedys, to prevail with the Greens.

In the final night, Obama once
more won Western’s mock election –
as he did in 2007, then running with
VP nominee John Edwards, with a
more than 2-to-1 margin of victory
over Romney in the Electoral Col-
lege, 270 to 124, with Stein earning
109 votes.

“Whether the winner of the WIU
Mock Presidential Elections goes on
to capture the White House a year
from now is almost immaterial to the
election that I witnessed,” Strater
said. “Each new election cycle brings
to elect new voters whose
ballots are worth exactly what every-
one else’s [are].

“Covering these events gave
me a needed boost in confidence in
our political system,” he continued.
“Yes, there are problems, and, yes,
there are people who vote who are so
ignorant of the issues that one could
easily argue that their participation
is counterproductive. [But] the view
from a television anchor desk tells me
that this group of university students
won’t be counted among them.”

‘Professor of the Day’
From studying in Waggoner for a B.S.
to studying anthrax for the Army

By T.J. Fowler
The College of Arts and Sciences
continues to bring Western alumni
back to campus to serve as examples
of the bridge between undergraduate
work and career work with its Profes-
sor of the Day program.
The program invites alumni who
have achieved success within their
fields to speak with students on post-
collegiate life.

“They come back and they share
their experiences with the students,”
says Bryce Dexter, Director of De-
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Sciences. “They tell them about their
time here at Western and how that led
them to where they are now, and a lot
of them talk about what their current
work is about.”
The university implemented
the program in March, at the
suggestion of Political Science
Professor Rick
Hardy.

“I think
other universities
have tried it, and
Rick was really
successful with
it down in Mis-
souri,” Dexter
says.

Western first
hosted Dr. Kurt
Jefferson, an international educator
and political science professor at Mis-
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“He talked to the class, and then
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“It shows students that you may
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Student Publications at WIU

They wrote what?

By Lisa Kernek and Rich Moreno

Just a few years after the first classes were taught at WIU (then known as the Western Illinois State Normal School in 1902, students decided to flex their literary and journalistic muscles by creating The Clionian, a monthly, student-written school newspaper, that began publishing in February 1905.

“With this issue our paper makes its bow before the public,” noted editor Margaret Simmons in the inaugural issue of The Clionian. “It has been the aim of those who have labored with it, to make of it a paper that will enter into the interest of the school . . . that will give to the other schools and to the public in general, an idea of the work that is being carried on by us.”

In the decades since, Western students have created a wide variety of outlets for their literary and journalistic creativity ranging from a yearbook (Sequel, published from 1905-2006) to the Western Catalyst, a conservative alternative newspaper published during the height of the Vietnam War protests in the late 1960s.

These days, there are four primary vehicles for student writers, including:

- The Western Courier, the award-winning student newspaper that is the direct descendent of The Clionian. The Courier is published three-times per week and distributed at nearly 100 locations throughout the campus and in Macomb.

Bill Welt, a history graduate student who is the current Courier Editor in Chief, estimates that the Courier has a staff of about 50 students, who write, edit, photograph and lay out all of the stories that appear in the paper, which also has an active web site (www.westerncourier.com). He said the paper is an ideal place for any student interested in journalism to gain valuable, hands-on experience.

“The Courier offers you a chance to build your portfolio,” Welt said. “It’s a small operation so you really learn how the process (of putting out a newspaper) works.

“It’s hard to believe there are journalism students who don’t work for the Courier,” he added.

Drew Thomason, the Courier’s news editor in 2007-2008 and now a reporter for Illinois Statehouse News in Springfield, Ill., echoed that sentiment: “I know that if it wasn’t for the experience I got at the Courier, I would not be anywhere near where I am now.”

A number of former Courier editors and writers have gone on to successful careers in journalism, including: Dennis Hetzel, Courier editor in Spring 1972, now Executive Director of the Ohio Newspaper Association; Mark Konkol, Courier news editor in 1995-96, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 2011; Pamela Huey, Courier reporter in the early 1970s, a former aide to the late U.S. Sen. Paul Simon and now a copy editor at the Minneapolis Star-Tribune; the late Richard Nunn, Courier editor in 1949-50, a long-time magazine editor who authored more than 50 books for Better Homes and Gardens and Popular Mechanics; and the Rev. C. T. Vivian, a Courier sportswriter who went on to be a Civil Rights leader and author of the nonfiction book Black Power and the American Myth.

- Western Illinois Magazine, a student-produced, general-interest publication that boasts it is “The only magazine in the world that gives a damn about Western Illinois,” which was started in 2009. To date, there have been four issues of the magazine, which has averaged 32 pages and is produced once each semester.

Recent articles have included a feature on the abandoned – and some say, haunted – Illinois Asylum for the Incurable Insane (the Bartonville State Hospital), a profile on the controversial Dr. George Harker (dubbed “Dr. Leisure”), the only tenured professor ever fired at Western, and an article on the historic Baxter Winery in Nauvoo.

Alyse Thompson, a junior journalism major from St. Charles,
Ill. who served as editor of the second issue of the magazine, said she was attracted to the magazine because it offered something a little different from writing for the Western Courier.

“I would say the magazine is a big help in allowing journalism students to write longer form journalism stories,” Thompson said. “The Courier has shorter stories but the magazine allows you to experience writing longer features and also you get to take photos.”

• *Elements* is an annual literary magazine that has been published since 1959. The 1959 issue, in the Malpass Library Archives, was introduced by its editors as Western’s first literary magazine.

Each year, WIU students are invited to submit poems, short stories and works of non-fiction for publication in *Elements* in the spring. Faculty Adviser Erika Wurth, a creative writing professor in the Department of English and Journalism, oversees the editorial staff of a dozen or so students who produce the magazine. Wurth said she steps in as “the decider” if students can’t agree on whether to accept something for publication.

Last year’s student editor was Lacey Skorepa, who graduated from WIU in May with a bachelor’s in English. Skorepa is now a graduate student in English at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

“It’s a lot of work,” Skorepa, in an e-mail, said of *Elements*.

“When I got to WIU, I chose not to join the newspaper because, frankly, I had no desire to write news,” she recollected. A transfer student, she had been editor-in-chief of her community-college newspaper, but she said she “found the ‘real’ to be too boring.”

While in her first year at WIU, Skorepa served on the editorial staff of *Elements* for the 2010 issue. The following year, she stepped into the role of editor.

“I was considering getting into the publishing industry and (despite what some people may think) a college publication that is done well, or extraordinarily well, can get you a job.”

As editor, she said she chose to overhaul the magazine, which resulted in a larger format with several color pages of student artwork.

“I wanted artwork, so I had to make time to go over to the art department and give presentations on the magazine,” she wrote. “I have no experience with layout, so I had to find someone who could do the layout design.”

The Department of English and Journalism pays for the magazine to be printed on campus by Document and Publication Services, Wurth said. In recent years, Wurth has organized public readings at the West Central Illinois Arts Center, in downtown Macomb, to coincide with and promote the release of the magazine in the spring.

• *Western Voices* is an anthology of winning essays from the Bruce H. Leland Essay Contest in the Department of English and Journalism.

“*Western Voices* is supposed to represent the best writing coming out of our writing program,” said Amy Patrick Mossman, an associate professor of English who oversaw production of the 2011 issue.

The Leland Essay Contest is open to students in writing courses: English 100, English 180 and English 280. Writing instructors serve as volunteer judges who award first-, second- and third-place prizes.

Students in the English 483G Professional Editing course edit the essays for publication in *Western Voices* each spring. Mossman taught Professional Editing in spring 2011, and her students published the most recent issue of *Western Voices*, its ninth, as a class project. At the beginning of the semester, she had students choose from a list of jobs, from production editor to proofreader.

“After that initial meeting, they really take charge of *Western Voices*,” Mossman said. “It’s really become a complete student publication.”

The students give the essays what Mossman called a “light copy edit” for typos and to check for correct citation style without changing the content or even the grammar.

“If there’s a sentence fragment, it stays a fragment,” she said.

Kernek is an assistant professor of Journalism; Moreno is Director of Student Publications at WIU and an adjunct journalism professor at WIU.
Biologist pens kids’ book about farm life – and more

By Bonnie Barker

“Bedtime stories about animals and people can get tuckered-out tykes to close their eyes in sweet dreams,” said Eric Ribbens.

His first children’s book, Farmer Dirk and the Little Green Duck, is a charming depiction of the animals and the farm family that share a small farm. The book is dedicated: “For my daughter Samara, who met the little green duck first, and everyone who loves yellow rubber boots.”

Ribbens, a Department of Biological Sciences Professor who teaches plant ecology and botany at Western, has previously published poems and essays, but he wanted to see if he could write a book during his sabbatical leave about four years ago.

“It turns out I couldn’t write a book, but what I can do is tell a series of stories,” he said. “My younger daughter, Samara, was in fourth grade then, and she liked me to tell her bedtime stories. So I spun a somewhat fanciful story, and she enjoyed it enough that I decided to try to write it more formally. From there the little green duck evolved.”

The result is a book both children and adults will enjoy. Farmer Dirk and the Little Green Duck is much more than a simple tale of a farm family and their daily lives; it’s also more than a story of a fanciful duck who thinks he’s a cow. Ribbens has a knack for creating real people and charming scenes as he describes the many goings-on of a working farm, but perhaps his greater gift is the touching message he shares through his characters: love and friendship is unending, according to publisher Jabberwocky. The 90-page book includes some 20 stories that will be enjoyed by children and adults alike, and which will be read again and again.

Ribbens approached Macomb artist Kelley Quinn about illustrating the book. She is listed on the Illinois Arts Council Arts-in-Education (AIE) Artists Roster, which is juried by a statewide panel, and offered as a resource for organizations to find professional teaching artists for hands-on learning experiences. Quinn’s worked with students from preschool to college and in communities. Her focus on mosaics, mandalas, labyrinths and murals allows her to interact with people not normally involved in the arts, helping them recognize and incorporate art in their everyday lives.

Quinn, who is also a Spanish instructor at WIU, jumped at the illustration project “because the book was so good. “Eric gave me the book to read to see if I was interested in illustrating it, so I read to the most discerning audience I know, my children, and they absolutely loved it,” Quinn continued. “We discussed how we imagined the characters looked. I then drew pictures that both my children and I thought would capture the essence of each story and then gave them to Eric. We both had a similar vision of what the book is, which made it fun and easy.”

More information about Farmer Dirk and the Little Green Duck is online at www.farmerdirk.com. Not only can the book be purchased from the website, but readers can also submit their own drawings, learn more about the author or ask to be sent a customized story about visiting Farmer Dirk’s farm.

“I’m excited to learn more from my readers,” Ribbens said, who can be contacted at dirkandduck@gmail.com for group talks and information.

Farmer Dirk and the Little Green Duck is published by Jabberwocky Books (www.jabberwocky-books.com). Priced at $13.95, it can also be purchased through Amazon.com and select retailers.

Barker is Assistant Director of WIU’s University Relations and a member of Focus’ editorial board.
Hardy named interim Honors director

Political science professor Rick Hardy in August was named interim director of the Western Illinois University Centennial Honors College, according to Interim Provost Ken Hawkinson.

Hardy will serve a two-year appointment.

Chair of WIU’s Department of Political Science from 2006-2010 Hardy in 2007 was the co-organizer of Western’s first Mock Presidential Election. Hardy has also served for three years on the University Honors Council and served as the pre-law adviser for the Honors College.

Prior to joining Western’s faculty, he was an associate professor of political science at the University of Missouri from 1985-2005, where he also served as assistant director of the Honors College from 1998-2006. He was the founder and director of the Institute for Leadership in Civic Education at Missouri.

“Dr. Hardy’s credentials as a scholar and teacher, and his many years of administrative experience, will be a great asset to the Honors College as it enhances and expands its many programs and opportunities for our high-achieving students,” Hawkinson said.

Hardy received his doctorate from the University of Iowa; his master’s degree from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks; and his bachelor’s degree from WIU.

from “Dinner” page 5

a student of the Centennial Honors College and a member of Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society. McGuire is an English major and plans to teach high school English in her home state of Illinois and to continue her education in a graduate program.

The “Roland P. Burke Scholarship in Political Science” was presented to Maya J. Stainback. She is a first-generation college student in her family and a double major in Political Science and African American Studies. Stainback currently holds a 3.87 Grade Point Average and is making plans to go to Africa this summer with a group of students to do service work. Her ambition is to go to Cambridge University in the United Kingdom and earn her Ph.D., after which she hopes to start her own non-profit ministry to help underprivileged men. There are many programs to help women, Stainback said, but few or none for men who are in similar situations.

Drs. Norman and Carmelita Teeter recognized the 10 students they sponsor throughout the University and were joined by all but one of them for dinner. Sierra Horras and Chelsea Peterson are recipients of their School of Nursing Scholarship; Margarita Boychenko and Ching-I Lin were both recognized as their Graduate students receiving Assistantships in Psychology. Ching-I was not able to attend this event because she is working in her assistantship in San Francisco, Calif. Andrea Todd was also recognized as a Music Education major who has been a recipient of the Teeter family’s generosity for all four years of her education at WIU. The President’s International String Quartet – made up of Jia Rong Gan, Andrea Beltran Landers, Grazzia Sagastume and Joseph Cruz Valdes – entertained the guests at the beginning of the night and were recognized and presented a certificate from the Teeters. In appreciation to the Teeters, each student gave them a handwritten note of thanks for their generosity and assistance.

WIU alumnus Zack Stamp, President of the College of Arts and Sciences’ Advancement Advisory Board, presented the Distinguished Alumni Award to Nancy Paridy, J.D., LL.M. Paridy was a History major and a member of Western’s Centennial Honors College, graduating, in three years, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree with high honors in 1980. Paridy completed her legal training at Kent College of Law in Chicago in 1983 at the age of 22. She earned her LL.M. (Master of Laws degree) in health law from Loyola University Law School. In 1995, Paridy joined the Rehabilitation institute of Chicago, which U.S. News & World Report has listed as the “No. 1 Rehabilitation Hospital in America” annually since 1991. An RIC executive team member, Paridy directs the institute’s litigation, employment law, joint venture relationships and management agreements, tax fraud and abuse, regulatory interpretation and guidance, intellectual property, research, operations, governments, corporate compliance and corporate governance legal services.

In response to her award, Paridy said she wouldn’t be the lawyer and executive that she became without the guidance, love and support of many people who helped transform her. She said she wouldn’t have been able to graduate in three years from WIU or been the youngest person to argue before the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals or be the general counsel of the top-rated rehabilitation research center in the country without the help of so many people. She gave credit to many who were in the room that night for pushing her and guiding her to be the best she could be.

Paridy was presented with a WIU glass decoration, made by some of the students in the College, plus a Rocky head cover for her golf clubs.

Dexter is Director of Development for the College of Arts and Sciences.
African American Studies
Throughout this academic year, the department is hosting “Liaisons,” a lecture and discussion series celebrating interactions between faculty and students from different backgrounds and disciplines who share an interest in African American Studies. The monthly forums offer an opportunity for the exchange of ideas on topics relevant to the study of African American history, culture and experiences. Speakers from diverse fields and backgrounds include MaCherie Placide (Political Science), Aimee Shouse (Women’s Studies), Barclay Key (History), Algerian Hart (Recreation, Parks & Tourism Administration) and Tina Saddler (Nursing).

Associate Professor Jo-Ann Morgan was awarded a fellowship to undertake research in June at Emory University in Atlanta on her project “Picturing Black Power: Reproducing the Revolution.”


Biological Sciences
Associate Professor Matthew Bonnan won the CAS Award for Research.

Greenhouse Gardener Jeff Hillyer for the third time in the last two years has shepherded the blooming of a Titan Arum, located in the department’s Botany Greenhouse. WIU Titan #3 opened Sept. 13, not as big as the previous two Titan blooms but with a much stronger odor and a darker color inside the spathe. All the WIU titan blooms have been documented on the greenhouse blog: www.wiubotanygreenhouse.blogspot.com.

Professor Kenneth McCravy co-authored articles in American Midland Naturalist and Terrestrial Arthropod Reviews.

Associate Professor Brian Peer co-wrote articles in Biology Letters and Condor. Peer also won a CAS Award for Teaching.

Assistant Professor Andrea Porras-Alfaro has received funding for $91,000 from the National Science Foundation for the project entitled, “Intensive Basin Survey Assistance.”

Professor Jeanette Thomas co-authored a chapter in Effects of Noise on Aquatic Life (Springer Science+Business Media) and two articles in the Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science and in Aquatic Mammals. Also, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service bought $6,000 worth of equipment for Dr. Thomas and two graduate students to conduct river otter research at the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge in Savanna, Ill.

Chemistry
Assistant Professor Tarab Ahmad supervised three student presentations at the 103rd annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science in Charleston, Ill., in April.

Professor Netkal Made Gowda co-authored articles for Synthesis and Reactivity in Inorganic, Metal-Organic, and Nano-Metal Chemistry-and Engineering Journal. Dr. Gowda also mentored seven presentations by groups of students at the 103rd annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science in Charleston, Ill., in April.

Assistant Professor Hongxia Guan co-presented two works at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences national meeting in Anaheim, Calif.

Professor Jack Huang
authored an article for Plant and Cell Physiology in July.

Chair Rose McConnell, Professor Lisa Wen and Professor Thottumkara K. Vinod co-presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science in Charleston, Ill., in April.

Dr. McConnell also individually presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science in Charleston, Ill., in April and, with Dr. Wen, mentored two groups of students who presented there. Further, McConnell, Wen and Dr. Huang mentored another three groups of students who presented at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society in Anaheim, Calif., in March.

Professor Scott McConnell mentored a group of students who presented at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society in Anaheim, Calif., in March, and two groups of students who presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science in Charleston, Ill., in April.


Professor Lisa Wen co-authored an article published in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, and co-presented two works at the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology annual meeting in Washington in April, one with McConnell and others, and the other with Huang and others.

English & Journalism

Instructor Barbara Ashwood-Gegas has been an occasional guest columnist for the River Rock News in Rockford, Ill., and published an essay “The Deception of Big Agribusiness,” in the Chicago Tribune.

Associate Professor Merrill Cole wrote the chapter “The Orient of Critique: Ambivalence about the East in Wilde and Gide” in Indiscretions: At the Intersection Between Queer and Postcolonial Theory (Rodopi), and published two articles in issues of Montevidayo.

Instructor Jim Courter published an essay, “Advertisers discover the value of a dollar ,” in the August issue of Smithsonian magazine.

Associate Professor Roberta Di-Carmine wrote the book Italy Meets Africa: Colonial Discourses in Italian Cinema (Peter Lang).

Associate Professor Bradley Dilger won the Computers & Composition Distinguished Book Award for From A to <A>: Keywords of Markup (University of Minnesota Press), which he co-edited. He also wrote two articles for Computers & Writing and presented at the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing in April.


Assistant Professor Timothy Helwig spent two weeks in New York City in June researching at the New York Public Library (as part of a Summer Stipend Award).

Professor Bill Knight wrote “News media changes: The shift hits the fans,” the cover story for September’s issue of InterBusiness Issues magazine, and news features for Heartland Outdoors magazine in March, April, June and September. He also wrote entries on the comic strip “Apple Mary,” the radio personalities Fibber McGee and Molly, the media law case Grosjean v. American Press Co., and the film Mr. Deeds Goes to Town for The Thirties in America (Salem Press); wrote two book reviews for EBSCO’s Magill On Literature, wrote “Is torture really ever justified…?” for the Catholic Post (Peoria, Ill.), presented at a Western Illinois Museum panel discussion “Look! Up in the Sky” in July, and continued his downstate Illinois newspaper column, which runs in eight publications. He also received one of a dozen student-nominated H.O.P.E (Honoring our Professors of Excellence) awards for teaching at WIU.

Associate Professor Dan Malachuk published A Political Companion to Emerson, co-edited with Alan Levine (University Press of Kentucky), co-wrote its introduction and wrote the chapter “Emerson’s Politics, Retranscendentalized.” Dr. Malachuk also gave a presentation at the Wendell Phillips and His Legacy conference at Harvard University in June.

Instructor and Director of Student Publications Richard Moreno published It Happened in Illinois: Remarkable Events That Shaped History (Globe-Pequot), and he did a presentation on it at the Buchanan Arts Center in Monmouth.

Assistant Professor Christopher Morrow received one of a dozen...
Let’s liberate the liberal arts from the myth of irrelevance

*Today’s employers want workers who are thinkers. To meet the demands of the 21st century student and economy, a new model of liberal arts is emerging – one tied to hands-on experience.*

By Elsa Núñez

More than 1.7 million college seniors proudly walked across the stage this spring to get their degrees, the majority of them having majored in the fields of business, computer science, health sciences, and engineering. Surely such a focus on highly specialized career paths is good news for the US economy, as the nation seeks to reaffirm its economic competitiveness. America’s employers aren’t so sure.

In its most recent employer surveys (2007, 2008, and 2010), the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) found that the vast majority of employers say they are less interested in specialized job proficiencies. Instead, they favor analytical thinking, teamwork, and communication skills – the broad intellectual and social competencies available through a liberal arts education.

This is not to say there are no jobs requiring highly specialized technical skills in today’s economy. America’s community colleges are adept at providing excellent technical training for students preparing to be tomorrow’s nurses, computer technicians, and tool and die operators, among other occupations. Even in those instances, these students are better prepared for success when their critical thinking, writing, and presentation skills are well developed.

The point that employers and liberal arts educators are making is that today’s technological world – where knowledge doubles every 18 months and industries are created in less time – requires workers with the transferable skills they need to be ready for as many as 11 different jobs in a lifetime. As David Kearns, the late Xerox chief executive officer once noted, “The only education that prepares us for change is a liberal education. In periods of change, narrow specialization condemns us to inflexibility.”

**Students flock to specialized majors**

If the preferred educational path to ensure adaptability is a liberal arts education, most college students today aren’t buying it. In the mid-1950s, 25 percent of all college students enrolled in the liberal arts, a figure that fell to 8 percent by the early 1970s, and to approximately 3 percent in 2000.

No wonder so many college students are taking specialized majors – 70 to 80 percent of college freshmen list the following as their reasons for attending college: earning more money, finding a job, and preparing for a career. This preoccupation with the short term, unfortunately, is based on an old labor-market model that presumes job specialization is the key to success. This model doesn’t work in a modern economy where adapt-
ability is the key.

Since the time of Aristotle and the ancient Greeks, a liberal arts education has been perceived as the domain of intellectuals, a time for reflection and the development of the mind. More than 2,000 years later, America’s Founding Fathers were still reading Greek and Roman classics in the original Greek and Latin languages. Even today, it appears that the aging myth that a liberal arts education is abstract and not appropriate to prepare students for careers is still the prevailing view.

However, when you consider today’s modern, technology-driven workplace, a liberal arts education begins to make more sense. Every employee in a successful business must be able to think creatively and act quickly, sometimes alone, but more often in concert with other equally competent people.

Why liberal arts education makes sense

Technology skills, the talent to gather and analyze data, the capacity to consider alternative options in solving problems, and the ability to communicate one’s viewpoint orally and in writing must be found across all layers of an organization.

Ethics, social responsibility, and a broader perspective on today’s modern global society are also important, not only in the workplace but to ensure that citizens act responsibly on the world stage. All these competencies can be found in a liberal arts education.

A workforce with such an education will be better equipped to meet the ever-changing conditions of the 21st century. As the AAC&U has noted, “In an economy fueled by innovation, the capabilities developed through a liberal education have become America’s most valuable economic asset.”

It is time to “liberate” the liberal arts from being portrayed as disconnected from the real world. This historical perception is largely inaccurate today, as more and more institutions of higher learning are seeking ways to bring relevance and application to the liberal arts.

A breakthrough model of the liberal arts in the 21st century is emerging, one that is more relevant to the real world than ever before. For one thing, liberal arts institutions are now organizing themselves so that all aspects of a student’s life on campus – academic, social, cultural, extracurricular – are integrated, with residential and student life functions supporting a student’s academic goals and activities. Another realization is that providing students with practical, hands-on experiences is not antithetical to a liberal arts education.

Liberal arts majors & wind turbines

At my own institution, designated as “Connecticut’s public liberal arts university,” we have created such an expectation for our students. They are building wind turbines for schools in Jamaica; researching the sanitation systems of Ghana; interning in Washington, D.C.; exploring the coral reefs of Tahiti; building Habitat homes in West Virginia; and serving as math tutors for middle-school children in our hometown of Willimantic – to name a few “experiential learning” opportunities. Students taking advantage of them not only gain practical knowledge and skills, but also confirm their career choices as they are given a real-world context for their classroom learning.

There are positive signs that this new liberal arts model is gaining a foothold across the country. One sign is data showing renewed interest in traditional liberal arts majors.

W. Robert Connor, former president of the Teagle Foundation, which supports liberal arts education, indicates that the number of majors in the social sciences and the humanities has increased from its historical lows or stayed constant in more recent years.

While hardly a seismic shift, this renewed interest in the liberal arts holds promise. In addition, educational leaders are making a strong public case for liberal arts education. The AAC&U, for instance, is conducting a 10-year promotional campaign for a liberal arts education and its relevance today.

As a member of the Presidents’ Trust, a leadership group within the AAC&U, I hope more citizens realize that the economic and social transformation occurring in the United States requires workers who are able to adapt to change and the complexities of the modern world. The broad academic competencies of a liberal arts education, tempered by preprofessional opportunities for students to apply their learning in real-world settings, can help create a workforce ready for the economic challenges of the 21st century and a citizenry ready to lead America forward.

Elsa Núñez is president of Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic. This originally appeared in the Christian Science Monitor.

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Let’s begin with a simple question: Where is the Earth’s highest point? Here are three possibilities: Mt. Everest in the Himalayas along the border of Nepal and China; K2 in the Karakoram Range along the border of Pakistan and China; Mt. Chimborazo in the Andes Mountains of Ecuador. The answer to most people is simple: Mount Everest.

But is it? At its summit, Everest 29,029 feet above mean sea level, K2 is 28,251 feet, and Chimborazo is 20,565 feet at its summit. If you know anything about the history of measuring elevations on Earth, you know there was a brief time when there was some debate over whether K2 was actually higher than Everest. When Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) measurement came into existence, the debate ended and the peak elevations were fixed to those which I just mentioned. But my question wasn’t, “Where is the highest point above sea level on Earth?” It was, “Where is the highest point on Earth?”

Earth is not a perfect sphere, it is an ellipsoid. Or, to put it another way, Earth bulges in the middle. The distance from Earth’s center to the outer crust is greater at the equator than it is to either pole. Thus, if you measure from Earth’s center, the summit of Chimborazo extends approximately a mile and a half farther into space than the summit of Everest.

Now that you know the superlative nature of both Mt. Everest and Chimborazo, I need to ask the important follow-up question, “So what?” Aside from impressing your friends or doing well in a trivia contest, what does this information do for you?

Certainly, knowing which mountains are highest, that Budapest is the capital of Hungary, or that Amazon is a river in South America, not just an online retailer, are relevant and important. But knowing these things does not make one a geographer any more than knowing the periodic table makes one a chemist, or knowing the correct order of succession of Tudor monarchs makes one an historian.

In geography, it’s good to know that Everest has the highest elevation above mean sea level but it is far more important to know why it is the highest peak and what are the physical and human contexts of the Himalayas and this particular mountain?

For example, Everest is part of a massive mountain range separating the Indian subcontinent from Asia and this range influences weather, climate, politics, economics, agriculture, and culture for thousands of miles. A geographer might ask “What has been the impact of this mountain on the tourism economy of Nepal?” or “How has deforestation in the Himalayas affected flooding in lowland areas?” or “In what ways has mountain climbing negatively affected the region?” For example, in their attempt to conquer the mountain, climbers have littered the slopes and base camps with tons of trash, creating a new set of challenges for the region. Geographers are compelled to ask these and other questions, not to memorize endless lists of place names and obscure facts.

Geographers strive to understand Earth’s surface and the processes that shape it, the links between humans and the natural environment, and the spatial linkages among...
humans and their activities. I’m sure everyone in this room recognizes that humans are affected by Earth processes, that humans affect and alter the Earth, and that we affect each other. The geographer is concerned with the how, why, and where of these reciprocal relationships.

**Geographic Literacy**

Toward the end of the twentieth century, public discourse increasingly focused on the declining skills of American students when comparisons were made to their peers in Europe and Asia. In particular, the lack of basic geographic knowledge received increasing scrutiny. Most of us have encountered examples of this in our lives. You may have encountered the person who thought that Africa is a country or the person who wanted to drive to Hawaii.

Geographic literacy refers to baseline, fundamental geographic knowledge of things like countries, capitals, rivers and mountains. It also includes the ability to think critically about geographic subject matter. In 1988, the National Geographic Society funded a Gallop survey conducted among 18- to 24-year olds in nine countries. The results were disheartening: Americans ranked sixth, with many unable to locate Central America, the Pacific Ocean or the Persian Gulf on an unlabeled world map. At the time, National Geographic president Gilbert Grosvenor remarked “Have you heard of the lost generation? We have found them. They are lost. They haven’t the faintest idea where they are.”

National Geographic funded two more surveys, in 2002 and 2006, the latter of which was focusing entirely on geographic literacy among students within the United States. Again, young adults between the ages of 18 and 24—the age range for most people in this room—were asked about their geographic knowledge and their views of the importance of geographic knowledge in today’s world. Here some highlights from the survey:

- 63 percent of those surveyed could not find Iraq or Saudi Arabia on a map of the Middle East, despite the fact that there was near-constant news coverage of the Iraq War during the time of the survey.
- 88 percent could not find Afghanistan, where another war was being waged, on a map of Asia.
- 75 percent could not find Indonesia on a map, even though the survey took place approximately one year after the Indonesian earthquake and tsunami which killed nearly a quarter-million people.
- Only half of those surveyed could identify New York on a map of the United States and even fewer could identify Ohio.
- 32 percent did not know that it is noon in New York when it is 9 a.m. in Los Angeles.

If one lacks basic geographic literacy, one cannot answer geographic questions, particularly those relevant to civic engagement and responsibility. More worrisome than the inability to answer such questions is that many people don’t realize that we should be asking geographically-based questions in the first place. And perhaps most troubling of all: many people just do not care.

While educators and policy makers alike are rightly concerned with the general lack of fundamental geographic knowledge among our populace, it is important to note that other disciplines are grappling with similar problems. Students enter college lacking fundamental knowledge in history and the sciences. It seems each year that institutions of higher learning establish new records for the number of incoming students needing to take remedial mathematics and remedial writing courses.

**Geography in the 21st century**

If we look at where geography is right now and what the future holds for the discipline, things look very bright. Geography is experiencing a renaissance in the twenty-first century. It has experienced dramatic growth in the past decade because of the convergence of social, natural, political and economic forces. Some have been so bold to refer to the present time as the “Era of the Geographer.”

One factor responsible for the elevation of geography was the reaction to the lack of geographic literacy in our county. The 1988 Gallop survey sparked action among policy makers and educators and the 2002 and 2006 follow-up surveys have kept geography in the public eye. Organizations like the Association of American Geographers, the National Council for Geographic Education, and the National Geographic Society have implemented programs to introduce or expand geographic education in primary and secondary schools. State Geographic Alliances were formed...
to provide resources for teachers—Illinois is one of the few states to have both a Geographic Alliance and a Geographic Society promoting the discipline. There is now a nationally-recognized Geography Awareness Week which occurs in November and National Geographic and Google sponsor a National Geography Bee, akin to the National Spelling Bee, in which winners of state-level bees compete the National Bee, airing on the National Geographic Channel and hosted by Alex Trebek. For many years, no Advanced Placement test was available in geography. The 2000-2001 school year saw the introduction of the AP Human Geography test. In that year 3,272 students took the test. Last year over 68,000 students took the test.

Policy makers have affirmed geography’s importance. At the 1989 Governor’s Education Summit, a little-known governor from Arkansas named Bill Clinton pushed to highlight geography as a “core academic discipline.” In the 1994 Improving America’s School Act and the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act geography was named as a core subject. Of course, being named a “core subject” doesn’t necessarily mean that people immediately jumped on the geography bandwagon. In 2004, only 22 states and the District of Columbia offered stand-alone, elective geography courses at the high school level. If geography was offered in the other states, it was found as part of a social science or history curriculum. In grades 6-8, 15 states offered an independent and required geography courses. When these data were collected, the researchers were looking only for the presence of geography courses somewhere in the state. Having a geography course present in a state did not mean that all districts or all schools had stand-alone geography courses.

Geography also is the only core discipline to receive no dedicated federal funding. History, math, science, reading, foreign languages and the arts each have dedicated funding—many of which in excess of $100 million annually—but not geography. This may change soon, however. Earlier this year on March 2, the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act was introduced in Congress. Currently in the first step of the legislative process, the bill calls for funding of $15 million per year for five years. It’s not much, but it certainly is more than zero.

A second force for growth in geography has been the proliferation of geospatial technologies such as remote sensing, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and most importantly, Geographic Information Systems (GIS). All of these technologies aren’t particularly new, but it has been only recently that they have grown from niche use to near ubiquity in government and business. Remote sensing technologies are those that do what the name implies: sense things remotely. Examples include aerial photography and satellite imagery. We see remote sensing used in a wide range of applications from land use surveys, habitat modeling, and weather forecasting. GPS is the space-based global navigation satellite system. There are several satellites in orbit around our planet transmitting time and orbital location information. An earth-based receiver uses this information using signals from at least three satellites to determine the coordinate position of the receiver. We use GPS to determine where things are on Earth, and we can record this locational information for analysis with GIS.

GIS is a powerful set of computer-based tools used to access, analyze, and visualize spatially-referenced information. GIS is designed to store, process, and output huge volumes of data. In fact, GIS is one of the best tools for dealing with geospatial data—not just for the processing and modeling capabilities, but because GIS allows you to display analyses in the form a map—which oftentimes is the only way to be able to understand huge volumes of data. Although it is a slightly flawed way to describe the difference between the two, think of GPS as what we use to gather spatial information and GIS as what we use to analyze and display spatial information. GPS and GIS are linked but they are not interchangeable terms.

Geospatial technologies are not obscure technologies used only by academics. They are critical to most business and government operations. We live in a world where an estimated 80 percent of all data have a spatial component. In 2006, the Department of Labor declared the top three industries for future job growth potential as health care, nanotechnology, and geospatial technology. As things stand right now, businesses which utilize GIS are having a difficult time filling jobs—the geospatial market is growing at a rate of nearly 35 percent annually. The Department of Labor estimates there will be 350,000 new jobs in geospatial technologies by 2018.

Recently, we have seen the emergence of geospatial technologies: the recent the proliferation of web-based mapping applications. A hallmark of geography is the communication of spatial information and analysis though the visual. And much of what...
we communicate visually is in the form of a map. Maps are the most commonly used tool to represent spatial relationships, which is why cartography and map analysis play such a prominent role in the discipline. The visualization of spatial information through web-based media has profoundly affected the way we think about the world. We have near-immediate access to geographic information these days. People can use internet-based applications like Google Maps, Mapquest, and Google Earth to dynamically visualize the world. Corporations, organizations, and governments use these applications to disseminate information and individuals can personalize map viewing.

Because of the widespread use of web-based mapping applications, we are seeing a shift in how people use maps. We no longer view maps as static resources. They are dynamic, interactive, and allow users the ability to explore. Applications like Google Earth also tap into vast web-based resources such as the World Factbook, data banks from organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, and yes, even Wikipedia. In the last few years we have seen this technology available on mobile phones and in automobiles. As a result, we are developing a population who has moved beyond perceiving spatial information an “interesting resource” to an perceiving spatial information as “necessary for functioning in today’s society.” As geospatial technologies and information have spread, geography has been embraced by other disciplines. GIS in particular is increasingly being integrated into the breadth of degree programs offered in colleges and universities. WIU has a minor in GIS and a post-baccalaureate certificate in Environmental GIS and several GIS courses.

So where do we see geography in concert with other disciplines? Pretty much everywhere. Paul Krugman was awarded the 2008 Nobel Prize in Economics in large part for his work in economic geography. Geospatial technologies are essential technologies in the coal, oil and gas industries, in precision agriculture, and in city planning. “Fear maps” and “mental maps” are used both in geography and psychology as ways to help us understand human behavior within the physical environment. Law enforcement uses geography and GIS to map crime clusters. We can map the crimes and other variables, such as time of day, to allow enforcing agencies to direct or redirect resources. Other uses of GIS include the creation of maps, such as you see here, which identify those parts of cities where sex offenders cannot live or loiter.

Recent natural disasters have also pushed geography to the forefront. We have seen devastation from earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes at levels that are staggering, if not borderline incomprehensible. Geography and its integrative analysis of physical and human processes allows us understand the scale and scope of these events and also to enable us to better prepare for future such events. The greatest humanitarian crisis of the past thirty years is occurring right now—the famine occurring in eastern Africa. To date, tens of thousands have died and millions more are at risk of starvation. As geographers are well aware, famine usually is not just the result of drought. It is the combination of drought with other economic, political, and social factors which combine to make a bad situation catastrophic.

Crisis mapping has become an indispensable tool both in planning for and responding to a wide range of emergencies such as flooding, tornados, earthquakes, tsunamis, and famines. The importance of the discipline of geography and the tools of geography increases each year.

Geography: Looking Ahead

In 2010, the National Research Council convened a Committee on Strategic Directions for the Geographical Sciences in the Next Decade. The committee was tasked with formulating a list of high-priority research areas in which geography will figure prominently. Their findings were presented as a series of questions within the research areas, which I pose to you now. To the students in attendance, pay particular attention. These are questions that we all face and we need capable people attempting to answer them. Perhaps we will turn to you for answers.

The first area of inquiry is how to understand and respond to environmental change.

1. How are we changing the physical environment of Earth’s surface?
2. How can we best preserve biological diversity and protect endangered ecosystems?
3. How are climate and other environmental changes affecting the vulnerabilities of human—environmental systems?

The second area of inquiry is how to promote sustainability.

1. How and where will 10 billion people, the estimated world population in 2050, live?
2. How will we sustainably feed everyone in the coming decade and
STEM careers: They result from interest, not advanced-placement classes

By Bill Knight

A recent study in the journal Science Education finds that getting students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at an early age is more effective at steering them toward careers in those fields than pushing high schoolers into Advanced Placement classes, and two WIU department chairs agree.

“It is important for us as educators and policymakers to keep in mind that advanced science coursework is significant only when the students in those courses are truly engaged in learning,” said Robert Tai, associate professor of science education in the University of Virginia’s Curry School of Education and co-author of the analysis of 4,700 students participating in the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 conducted by the U.S. Department of Education.

Various indicators of student interest and self-confidence in science and math in high school are strongly associated with students continuing STEM studies through college – above and beyond enrollment and achievement factors, the study shows. There are also indications that teacher emphasis on further study in STEM has a positive association with continuing in STEM fields. Teacher lecturing and an emphasis on facts and rules were far less effective, and the academic level of high school science and math courses attempted was insignificant in predicting persistence. Previous analyses of these data seemed to indicate that students interested in a STEM career in eighth grade were significantly more likely to complete a STEM degree in college. However, that group made up only 20 percent of the STEM degree-earners from the National Education Longitudinal Study’s 1988 sample. The new study adds to the previous work by looking at the more complete educational histories of these students and investigating the other 80 percent of STEM graduates from the nationally representative sample.

Dr. Mark Boley, chair of Western Illinois University’s Department of Physics, says that rings true with his experience in the classroom.

“Some of the best entering college freshman we have had that are now in some of the most promising careers never took AP classes in high school,” Boley said, “but they possessed a common thread of having had a junior high science teacher, a parent or other relative who encouraged them to get interested in science, or an older friend who was into science who got their interest going. And this ended up causing them to pursue an STEM major when they arrived as a freshman in college. And we have had a large number of our physics majors who began as other majors without ever even having taken any high school physics. But after taking their first college course in physics and/or astronomy [they] decided on physics as a career rather than their original choice.”

The new findings provide a strong message for policymakers who are simply encouraging more students to enroll in more STEM-oriented classes, according to study co-author Adam V. Maltese, assistant professor of science education in the Indiana University School of Education and adjunct faculty in its Department of Geological Sciences, who examined student transcripts and responses from surveys taken in the eighth, 10th and 12th grades about subject interest, course enrollment and achievement, and career plans.

“Achieving better is not necessarily going to lead to more students continuing in science and math,” Maltese said.

Any correlation between STEM careers and high school coursework is outweighed by a student’s established interests, Tai said.

“That association is not stronger than having an interest in science-related career outcomes well before these students take these courses,” he said, adding that the U.S. educational system isn’t framed to take advantage of the role of students’ interest and engagement.

“In terms of the current educational policy, we see a focus on achievement and we see a focus on students producing results on standardized tests,” Tai said. “By that time, the standardized test scores in high school matter very little, but at the same time, the experiences they had in their science classes when they were children may matter a lot.”

How to get – and keep – young students interested in positive experiences is key to effective teaching, according to Dr. Iraj Kalantari, chair of WIU’s Department of Mathematics.

“We have what we call intuition, perhaps a sense for extrapolation,” Kalantari said. “But often we find that the intuition is wrong. Mathematics has plenty of examples of what is the correct way of thinking about things when the intuition is wrong or when the intuition cannot really deliver. One relies on mathematical proofs to confirm the sense of surprise for
meeting truth.

“Children can appreciate and become inspired by either that sense of surprise they experience or by how they can bring it about in others, I think,” he continued.”

Maltese and Tai said the increasing evidence that earlier engagement is important to steering students toward STEM careers makes it clearer that subjects should be presented appealingly.

“We want them to be skilled at math and science, but we also need to think about what we can do in terms of teaching it in ways to get them more interested,” Maltese said. “This provides some numbers and some data to back up the importance of that.”

Whether in middle school or the university level, it can be challenging to inspire students, or at least to avoid “empty” AP or introductory classes – courses that may be interesting in content, but lacking in excitement. So how is that achieved?

“By developing and drawing on students’ curiosity, and by how they can have a disciplined sense of intuition and conjecture,” Kalantari said.

In regular classes or in summer outreach efforts targeting high school students, Boley has seen such successes, he said.

“[Faculty] not only do some exciting demonstrations, but they are adept at relating these demos to the logical mathematical steps that must be used to explain them.” Boley said. “They spend time talking with their classes about how many events that are perceived as ‘ordinary’ in everyday life are actually occurring and can only be explained by the same physics concepts (and accompanying mathematical equations) that were just illustrated in the demonstration they observed.”

Good scientists, mathematicians and engineers who teach can inspire children, he added, “by listening to their questions carefully, never making them feel ‘stupid’ for asking a question, using every question they receive from a child as a ‘teaching moment,’ and modeling the behavior of a scientist in front of them. That is, never being afraid to have an inquiring mind. Even if we think we do already ‘understand’ something, there’s very likely yet more to be researched and learned about most natural phenomena.

Boley said he’s seen that “spark” of inspiration ignited in a youngster in various ways.

“Seeing their first demonstration of the ‘coolness’ of liquid nitrogen, seeing a 1-inch long static electric spark for the first time, watching one steel ball hit a stationary row of steel balls and only one ball exit on the other side of the row – all of these are examples where kids attending our high school visitation program, or our summer science camp, or other similar events ‘lit up’ at realizing how interesting the principles of physics can be to demonstrate and see actually happening all around you.”

Where are they today?

Western Illinois University for years has sponsored a Girls-Plus Math Camp held at WIU’s Horn Field campus south of Macomb Two of its “graduates” are good examples of inspiration leading to STEM careers.

Sarah Crummy Wolek (WIU Girls Plus Math participant, 1991) graduated in 2001 with a B.S. from Monmouth College in Chemistry and in 2005 with an M.S. in Polymer Chemistry & Coatings Technology from DePaul University. She is currently a senior product development chemist with Stepan in Northfield, Ill., specializing in urethane for military and aerospace industries.

Hadley Null (Girls Plus Math participant, 1994) graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies. She is currently living on the Big Island of Hawaii and is employed as a project engineer for a local general contractor. She is an accredited professional in LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).
Behind the scenes, beyond the classroom

By Lisa Kernek

Asked to name people in support positions in their departments, many Arts and Sciences chairs responded with a long list of secretaries, building-service workers and advisers who all help WIU serve students and education. Three such workers, randomly chosen from the long list, are profiled here.

DEBBIE WILEY
Political Science secretary

Debbie Wiley’s grandson is 6 years old—about the same age her own son was when she started working as a secretary in 1978.

Wiley is office manager for the Department of Political Science in Morgan Hall.

“This is kind of my persona—Debbie in Political Science,” she said jokingly in a recent interview.

Pictures of her grandson flash from the screensaver of the computer that has long since replaced the typewriter she started with. The transition to computers is just one of many changes she’s seen in nearly 34 years.

“When I first came here,” Wiley recalled, “all the faculty still smoked. You’d walk down the hall—there’d be all this smoke.”

Wiley became interested in clerical work as a student at Macomb High School, where she took shorthand and typing courses. After graduating in 1969, she worked as a switchboard operator at the now-defunct Lab School in Horrabin Hall and later as a secretary in the elementary education department at WIU.

She took time off between those jobs when her son (and grandson’s father), Ryan, was born in 1972.

She left WIU when her husband’s job relocated the family to Bowen. But after the couple divorced, Wiley and her then-5-year-old son moved back to Macomb, and she started her job as secretary in political science in January 1978. She was 26 years old.

“I typed everything on the typewriter,” she recalled. She typed letters of recommendation, exams and syllabi. “We had this old mimeograph machine that got ink all over everything.”

Never a smoker herself, she recalled how co-workers would sit near her desk in the department office and smoke.

“That is crazy,” Interim Chair Keith Boeckelman said upon hearing Wiley’s reminiscence. Boeckelman joined the department some 20 years after Wiley did. He works in an office adjoining Wiley’s.

“Her knowledge of the university is immense,” Boeckelman said. “She’s been an amazing resource for me.”

Boeckelman relies on Wiley for tasks not listed in her four-page job description; she recently edited an article that he and a colleague wrote.

“She’s like a partner, really,” he said.

Now in his second year as interim chair, Boeckelman said that if he were to stay as chair, the job would be much harder if Wiley were to retire.

Boeckelman is the fourth chair Wiley has worked under. Professor Bill Anderson is the only faculty member still working since Wiley joined the department.

Two awards honoring Wiley hang on the department office wall. In 1986 she was named the College of Arts and Sciences’ Outstanding Civil Service Employee. In 2007 she received the WIU Distinguished Service Award.

Wiley, who turned 60 in October, predicted she would retire soon but has not set a date. And she noted another change in her habits over the years.

“I’m not really a morning person,” she said. “I get up later and later.”

She used to arrive at the office at 7:30 a.m., when she would make coffee and organize her day. These days she’s more likely to arrive at 8 a.m.

“It’ll be nice to be able to sleep in,” she said of retired life.

Her retirement plans?

“More time with my grandson.”

RICHARD CROWL
Waggoner Hall building service worker

Richard Crowl never knows what to expect as a night-shift building service worker. And that’s how he likes it.

“A typical day is not typical,” he said one afternoon before starting his rounds at Waggoner Hall.

One night in May, he recalled, he and his two co-workers discovered a major water leak that “ruined the night for all three of us.”

Crowl is responsible for cleaning the first floor. Bob Lewis cleans the
second floor and half the basement; Joe Fritz cleans the third floor and the other half of the basement.

“He takes a lot of pride in his work,” Lewis said of Crowl.

On a recent weeknight, Lewis and Crowl had arrived early and were seated on couches in a hallway, where they chatted before they went on the clock.

Crowl said he usually starts his 4:30 to midnight shift by checking a restroom for leaks or stopped toilets; if a plumber is needed, he wants to put the call in early. He’ll return later to clean it, but first he works his way down the hall, cleaning whiteboards in classrooms, sweeping floors and emptying trash cans.

He pushes a cart loaded with a vacuum cleaner, spray bottles and new rolls of toilet paper. He keeps extra supplies in three closets at different points along the first floor.

“Some people look at this job as going downhill,” Crowl said. But “somebody’s got to do the job.”

He added, “I have no patience for people who don’t want to work.”

Crowl, who is 62, grew up on a farm near Bushnell, 15 miles northeast of Macomb. From a young age, he milked cows and helped with other chores.

“I learned the value of work,” he said.

During the Vietnam War, Crowl enlisted in the Air Force and served for more than four years. He spent the majority of that time in Germany and did not see combat.

The G.I. Bill paid Crowl’s way through Western Illinois University, where he earned a bachelor’s in business administration. He said he became interested in business because of his childhood work on the farm, where he was paid for his chores. But a career in business held little appeal.

“I’m a very poor person to sit down at a desk for a long time,” he explained.

Instead, he worked for 10 years as a farmhand for a hog and cattle operation in rural McDonough County.

But the job required him to work seven days a week in the fall and spring, and it offered no benefits.

“I wasn’t getting ahead in life,” he said.

He began looking for a job with benefits. He applied at the U.S. Postal Service and at WIU, where he took Civil Service tests to qualify for jobs in building services, grounds-keeping or the heating plant.

He was hired as a night-shift building service worker in Malpass Library in August 1990. He has since worked in Stipes, Simpkins, Knoblach, Brophy and Morgan halls. This is his fourth year based in Waggoner.

After 21 years, he has the seniority to move to the day shift.

But “I don’t have dependents,” he said, adding that he likes to let newer employees with families work the day shift.

For the time being, he plans to continue working nights.

THEO SCHULTZ
Nursing adviser

Theo Schultz keeps a box of tissues in his desk drawer for days when students cry in his office in Currens Hall.

Tears sometimes flow when Schultz, the adviser in the Nursing Department, informs certain underclassmen they lack the grades for acceptance in the two-year nursing program. Only 30 juniors are accepted each year.

“Unfortunately, not everybody makes it,” Schultz said. “It’s very devastating for them.”

Continued on page 27
By Rich Moreno

According to retiring Madison County Circuit Judge Charles Romani Jr., the worst thing about serving in the Vietnam War in 1970-71 wasn’t being in the jungles of Southeast Asia. It was coming home.

“I don’t know if what happened in Vietnam was as bad as what happened afterward,” Romani recently recalled. “That was a war that tore the country apart and wasn’t very popular. Coming back, we weren’t very popular.

“We didn’t get much help from the V.A. (U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs),” he continued. “As far as treatment, it wasn’t there.”

But Romani, who earned a history degree in 1969 from Western Illinois University, never forgot the experience.

While he was able to move beyond that period in his life – he graduated from St. Louis University School of Law in 1974 and embarked on a long and successful career as a prosecutor, State’s Attorney and, since 1983, as a jurist – he saw others who struggled in their post-war lives. That’s why he was intrigued when he learned about the Buffalo (N.Y.) Veterans Treatment Court, which was created in 2008 to provide treatment and rehabilitation to veterans committing non-violent crimes. Participants can avoid jail time by agreeing to treatment and counseling.

In March 2009, Romani worked with the State’s Attorney’s office, the public defender’s office and local veterans groups to create a Madison County Veterans Court in Edwardsville.

“When the first Veterans Court started in Buffalo in 2008, I thought this is great because [many veterans] need the help and treatment,” he said. “It sounded like a great idea.”

In the three years since the creation of the Buffalo Veterans Court, nearly 50 similar courts have been started in 20 states.

Romani said the Veterans Court offers those who have served their country, but have made mistakes once they have returned to civilian life, opportunities to straighten out their lives.

And perhaps the most amazing statistic about Madison County’s Veterans Court is that it has had a 100-percent success rate. Currently, more than 50 veterans are enrolled in the program and more than 100 have been provided assistance.

In some cases, veterans suffer from conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a severe anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event, such as war. This can lead to problems with drugs and alcohol abuse.

Romani said Veterans Courts recognize the challenges faced by many veterans and gears sentencing toward counseling and treatment for mental health-related and substance abuse issues.

“We’ve had quite a few Vietnam vets, one Korean War vet and some from Desert Storm,” he said of the veterans who have appeared in his court. “But the bulk are Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

“We knew that a large percentage of Iraq and Afghanistan vets would be coming home, many with problems and rather than be reactive we wanted to be proactive.”

One aspect of military life that has helped the court be successful is that veterans respect authority.

“Every time I go into the courtroom and say ‘Good Afternoon,’” the answer (from everyone in the courtroom) is always ‘Good afternoon, sir,’” he said. “These people are still used to structure, that’s the thing they get in the military. They still take orders.”

His Vietnam experience was certainly an impetus for creating the Veterans Court, but Romani admitted that serving in that conflict wasn’t his first choice for a post-WIU college career. He said he originally wanted to follow in the footsteps of his mentor, retired WIU Professor Nicholas C. Pano, and become a Circuit Judge Charles Romani Jr.

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Focus
The Real Sequel

Biology alum named Illinois CC Teacher of Year

By Bonnie Barker

Robert “Bob” Remedi has a passion for teaching, and his students, his college, the state and professional organizations all have recognized his zeal and his skills with thanks and awards.

An associate professor of biology at the College of Lake County (Gurnee, Ill.) the Western Illinois University biology graduate (B.S. 1991, M.S. 1993) was named the Illinois Community College Trustees Association’s 2011 Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member. Selected from among 37 community college nominees throughout the state, Remedi is the first College of Lake County (CLC) instructor to receive the prestigious award, which has been presented annually since 1985.

Last Spring, the College of Lake County also awarded Remedi its Outstanding Faculty Award for 2011.

“I can’t imagine doing anything else in life but teach,” Remedi said in written statement submitted by the CLC in support of his nomination for the state honor. “I see teaching as an opportunity to share my talents and experiences in a way that will stimulate interest in the topic and encourage students to want to discover more.”

Remedi said his passion for biology and its many areas of study bloomed at WIU, in large part due to dedicated faculty. A junior-level transfer student, he was directed to biology education adviser Larry O’Flaherty, who was also the department chair, to learn more about the program. And he decided to test it out.

“Dr. O’Flaherty turned out to be a great mentor as he worked with me to navigate through the completion of my bachelor’s degree and helped me in my role as a teaching assistant in graduate school,” said the 2011 awardee.

When Remedi learned he needed a summer-school class to finish his degree program on time, he said he “reluctantly decided to take a field mycology class (study of fungi) at Kibbe Field Station, and this also had a tremendous impact on me. Field mycology opened my eyes to the area of field biology where we would go outside, make observations and collections and then analyze what we found.”

Remedi found mushrooms “fascinating,” and mammals and fish that other students were studying equally exciting, so he decided to pursue a master’s degree in field biology before teaching. That’s where Larry Jahn played an important role in Remedi’s education.

“Dr. Jahn helped me figure out how I could use field biology in my role as a biology teacher. He helped me to both find the right wetland-related field classes and design a thesis project that emphasized both wetlands and education,” Remedi said. “He also encouraged me to approach the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, both as a summer internship site and as the focus of my thesis project on teaching wetland ecology to high school students.”

Continued on page 26

Award-winning biology professor Robert Remedi leads an environmental biology class at Willow Lake on the Grayslake campus of the College of Lake County.
history professor.

“He was a terrific adviser,” Romani said. “I think I took all the history courses he taught. It was still the quarter system at Western and I was struggling during my first quarter there. I credit him with getting me all turned around and getting me to realize that going to college was something that was serious. I really admire him.”

Romani ended up in Vietnam, however, after receiving a low number in the draft lottery and enlisting in the U.S. Army.

Following Vietnam, he decided to return to school to study law. He met his wife, Karen, while both were students at St. Louis University. They have three children, Allyson, now 34, David, 30, and Kerry, 27.

While Romani has spent most of his life in the Madison-Bond counties region – he was born in Litchfield in 1947 and educated in Greenville schools – he has maintained a close connection to Western. A member of the Theta Chi fraternity, he has attended several reunions over the years in Macomb, and, in 1994, was awarded the History Distinguished Alumnus Award by Western’s history department.

In mid-October, Romani announced plans to retire when his judicial term ends next year. He said he and his wife, who is a retired physical therapist, plan to travel.

Not surprisingly, he said that starting the Madison County Veterans Court is the proudest achievement of his nearly 30 years on the bench.

Moreno is Director of Student Publications and an adjunct journalism professor at WIU.

I am very grateful to WIU for helping me choose to go into education and helping to prepare me as a biologist and a biology teacher.’ - Bob Remedi

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From “Real Sequel” page 25

He also teaches in the areas of anatomy and physiology – and has co-authored a lab book in this field – genetics, microbiology and human biology. He is also creating a new lab skills course for students unprepared for college science lab classes.

Remedi began teaching at CLC in 2002, and in 2005 he was among three CLC instructors to receive the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Community College Leadership Program Teaching Excellence Award.

In 2010, the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) presented the Western alumnus with the NABT Two-Year College Biology Teaching Award, making him one of only two community college teachers awarded this honor.

He previously served as a field biologist for the U.S. Army Joliet Training Area as well as a visiting lecturer or instructor at North Central College (Naperville, Ill.), College of DuPage (Glen Ellyn, Ill.), Joliet Junior College (Joliet, Ill.), Moraine Valley Community College (Palos Hills, Ill.) and Black Hawk College (Moline, Ill.).

Remedi is past president of the Illinois Association of Community College Biologists and past chair of the two-year college section of the National Association of Biology Teachers.

Remedi earned his Associate of Science degree (1988) at Moraine Valley Community College, before coming to Western. Following his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at WIU, Remedi secured a graduate certificate in Community College Learning and Teaching from Loyola University (2006), and he completed coursework at the problem-based Learning Design Institute at Aurora University (2008).

Barker is Assistant Director of WIU’s University Relations.
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tion (LASSO) and is currently President of LASSO.

Another is Renee’ Simpson, MLAS 2011. She’s employed at WIU as Assistant to the Director of Human Resources. One of her major responsibilities in that office is to help develop the Trainee and Learner Program for Civil Service employment practices; a program that serves underrepresented groups of people, pursuing employment at WIU. Her work involves providing outreach initiatives, as well as training and development workshops, to help better prepare these individuals to achieve their career goals.

Renee’ joined the MLAS program in the Spring of 2010 after completing two graduate classes at WIU as a non-degree student. Her directed electives are all in the area of sociology with a specific focus on social inequalities. Renee completed all the requirements for the Master of Liberal Arts and Sciences while maintaining her full-time position in Human Resources. Her exit option was an applied project titled “Trio; Upward Bound: A Comprehensive Study of the Program and its Significance in Advancing Educational Achievement for at Risk Students.”

The project begins with an in-depth look at the Trio; Upward Bound Program in general, as well as a summary of its history at WIU. Renee then presents a proposal to bring the Trio; Upward Bound Program to WIU, including an analysis of specific recruitment and retention data for underrepresented groups, and an assessment of the barriers that might impede bringing a successful Trio program to WIU. She concludes the paper with a current literature review on educational achievement gaps for underrepresented groups at post-secondary educational levels.

In addition to her work in Human

from “Support Staff” page 22

least favorite part of his job, which he otherwise loves.

“I really like working with the students,” he said. “Every meeting I have with the students is always different.”

He schedules at least one 30-minute advising appointment with each of 275 students each semester. Because he must see so many before registration begins Nov. 1, he begins the meetings on Sept. 1.

A typical day at the office begins at 7:30 a.m., preparing for appointments. He meets with as many as 12 students a day beginning at 9 a.m.

“Planning is a huge part of what I do,” he said. “But it’s not the only thing I do.”

If a student is feeling overwhelmed, he said, he gives a pep talk.

“Part of my job is to figure out who’s going to get into the program,” he said. If a student is not getting high enough grades, he’ll encourage him or her to consider other careers. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required to earn one of the 30 slots reserved for junior students who have completed the two-year pre-nursing courses.

At age 27, Schultz is only slightly older than the undergraduate students he advises. And he is younger than the working nurses enrolled in a second curriculum track designed to let them pursue bachelor’s degrees and Registered Nurse certification while continuing to work. The majority of these non-traditional students are in their 40s and hold two-year degrees, Schultz said.

Schultz never planned to become an adviser; he majored in biology at WIU with an eye toward becoming a fish biologist with the state. Growing up in Alpha, Ill., he developed a love of fishing from accompanying his father and grandfather on fishing trips as far away as Canada.

But upon graduating from WIU, he learned how scarce the fish biologist jobs are. He moved back home and drove a forklift for six months.

He returned to WIU for a master’s in biology, thinking it would improve his chances for finding a job in his field. But his graduate assistantship required him to work in advising, and he was hooked.

“I never had any intention of doing any advising at all until I got the assistantship,” he said.

He was hired as adviser for the then-new Nursing Department in August 2009, the same month he finished his thesis.

Schultz is one of the support staffers who “have been instrumental in bringing the new nursing program to reality,” P. Lea Monahan, chair of Nursing, said in an e-mail.

Though Schultz has been encouraged to pursue a doctorate and work in university administration, he fears the prospect of losing contact with students.

“I hope to still be doing this” in 10 years, he said. “I hope I still have the passion that I do now.”

Kernek is an assistant professor of Journalism

Photo by Visual Production Center
The third area of inquiry is how to recognize and cope with the spatial reorganization of economy and society.

1. How is the movement of people, goods and ideas transforming the world?
2. How is economic globalization affecting inequality?
3. How are geopolitical shifts influencing peace and stability?

Each of these questions is broad and complex. In order to answer any of them, one not only needs a broad, strong background in the liberal arts, one needs geography. Geography is a bridge connecting the liberal arts, and geographic inquiry will be particularly relevant for researchers and policy makers grappling with these questions.

In June, 2011, Charlie Rose interviewed author David McCullough following the release of McCullough’s most recent book The Greater Journey. During the interview, the conversation turned to education when Rose asked, “If your grandchild came to you and said ‘I have no idea what I want to study in college.’ Would you say study literature or history or languages?”

McCullough responded, “Yes. All of the above. Liberal arts education is the best thing you can have. If somebody wanted to become a journalist I would say, ‘Don’t study journalism. Study Arabic. Study philosophy.’”

Add geography to his list as well. And add geography to any list of critical disciplines all persons should study, regardless of their vocation or avocation… because geography matters!

2. How will we sustainably feed everyone in the coming decade and beyond?
3. How does where people live affect their health? Added to this question is how the interconnectedness of people affects health—particularly in the context of regional and global health epidemics.

Assistant Professor Weijia Li published his first book, China und China-Erfahrung in Leben und Werk von Anna Seghers (Peter Lang) and presented lectures at the Research Institute of Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies and the Department of German, both at Beijing International Studies University in Beijing in June.

Geography
Assistant Professor Marcus Buker gave an invited colloquium talk at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in March and received $71,000 in funding from the National Science Foundation for his project “Collaborative Research: An Investigation of Dynamical Processes Driving the Genesis and Maintenance of Tornado Vortices,” to investigate the dynamics resulting in the genesis and maintenance of tornadic vortices. The grant is funding work from October 1 through next September.

Professor Jongnam Choi presented at the 17th International Seminar on Sea Names, co-organized by the Society of East Sea and the Northeast Asian History Foundation, held in August in Vancouver, Canada, and at June’s 2nd International Conference on Territorial and Geographic Education, co-organized by the Northeast Asian History Foundation and the Korean Geographical Society, in Seoul, Korea, which he helped organize. Dr. Choi also organized a panel session at April’s Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Seattle, where he also co-presented, and received a $5,600 grant from WIU’s University Research Council for his project “Qualifying the impact of rainfall on carbon sinks in the subtropical forests using remotely sensed data and CO2 emission measurement.”

Associate Professor Redina Guada Cabeedo-Timmons received an award for “Dedication and Service to the International Friendship Club of Western Illinois University” at the Casa Latino Recognition Banquet.
Herman chaired the Geographical Analysis session at the Illinois Geographical Society meeting in Macomb in March.

Assistant Professor Fuyuan Liang co-authored articles in Carso-Logica Sinica, the journal Ecological Indicators, and Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology.

Professor Emeritus Siyoung Park presented on “Place Names and Languages” at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in April in Seattle, where she also co-presented “Public Knowledge and Perceptions about Korea by American Geography Educators.”

Professor Christopher J. Sutton co-authored Student Atlas of World Geography (McGraw-Hill), served as the judge for Illinois Geographic Bee in Glen Ellyn in April, and was conference organizer for the annual meeting of the Illinois Geographic Society in April in Macomb.

Chair Samuel Thompson reviewed “Delivering Development: Globalization’s Shoreline and the Road to a Sustainable Future” for the Professional Geographer.

Associate Professor Tom Williams presented at the Central Iowa National Weather Association’s 15th Annual Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference in April in Ankeny, and also at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers in April in Seattle.

History

Chair Emeritus Larry Balsamo and Assistant Professor Barclay Key led a group of 28 Illinois teachers on a Teaching American History trip to the South this summer. “Into the Heart of Dixie: One War, two presidents, Five Decades of Struggle” visited historic sites in Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia.

Chair Virginia Boynton received a $35,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education and published a review in Annals of Iowa.

Associate Professor Lee Brice co-edited Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World (Regina Books), for which he co-wrote the introduction. Dr. Brice also gave a presentation for the Illinois State University History Department in Normal in April, conducted an Illinois Humanities Council Road Scholar presentation for the Western Illinois Museum in Macomb in May, and published a review in the Journal of World History. He also presented at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece, where he was named a Senior Associate Member.

Professor Peter Cole – also a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for the Study of Societal Issues at the University of California, Berkeley – presented at the Conference on Race, Radicalism and Repression on the Pacific Coast and Beyond at the University of Washington in Seattle in May. Dr. Cole also gave three presentations on African American labor leader Ben Fletcher in Oakland, San Francisco and Philadelphia in June and July.

Assistant Professor Barclay Key wrote a chapter in the book Painting Dixie Red: When, Where, Why, and How the South Became Republican (University Press of Florida).

Associate Professor Walter Ketchik published the book U.S. Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror (University Press of Kansas).

Assistant Professor Roberto Mazza co-edited Jerusalem in World War I: The Palestine Diary of a European Diplomat (I.B. Tauris), reviewed two books for DOMES, plus reviews for Jerusalem Quarterly and the Middle East in London. He also presented at the Middle East History and Theory (MEHAT) conference at the University of Chicago in May, the International Conference on Urban Conflicts in Belfast in May, and the Food and Drink Histories Conference in Preston, England, in June.

Associate Professor Jennifer McNabb presented at the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association Conference in April in Salt Lake City, where she also was a “Publication Roundtable” panelist.

Professor Scott Palmer presented “Strategic Visions and Tactical Realities on the Frontlines of Digital Humanities: Russia’s Great War and Revolution” at the Conference on Representing Knowledge in the Digital Humanities in Lawrence, Kan., in September.

Assistant Professor Febe Pamonag wrote the “Japan” chapter in Encyclopedia of Women in Today’s World (Sage) and presented at the 104th annual meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American
Assistant Professor Timothy Roberts presented at the annual conference of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic in Philadelphia in July, and he wrote two chapters in the book *American Centuries: The Ideas, Issues, and Trends that Made U.S. History* (Infobase Publishing). Dr. Roberts also received a $3,500 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for his project “Let’s Talk About It: Making Sense of the American Civil War.”

Institute for Environmental Studies

In September, IES co-sponsored the fourth annual Upper Mississippi River Conference at the Quad Cities Waterfront Convention Center in Bettendorf, Iowa. Faculty from WIU Departments of Biological Sciences, English and Journalism, and Geography also took part.

**Mathematics**

The annual Girls-Plus Math enrichment program took place July 17-22. The summer program provides a stimulating environment for girls and promotes interest in mathematics, a willingness to take risks in analysis, and the self-confidence and motivation to persist in problem-solving. Girls participating in this program study mathematics in a hands-on learning environment.

Assistant Professor Amy Ekanayake co-presented “Comparison of Stochastic Models for Metapopulations” at the International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics conference in Vancouver, B.C., in July.

Associate Professor Bob Mann co-presented “STEM Activities for the Math & Physics Classroom” at the Colloquium on P-12 STEM Education Research in St. Paul, Minn., in August.

Dave Voss, mathematics emeritus, presented “MIME Runge-Kutta methods for time-dependent PDEs” at the mini-symposium “Software for the Numerical Solution of Initial and Boundary Value ODEs/DAEs” at the International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics conference in Vancouver, B.C., in July.

The department introduced its Wolfmeyer Scholarship this year. This is a two-year scholarship starting at the junior year for a Mathematics major. The amount of the award is $1,000 per year for junior and senior years.

Also this year, the department established a textbook scholarship available to any new student (freshman or transfer) who is a Mathematics major. The amount of this award is $125 per year.

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**Nursing**

Instructor Patricia Eathington presented “Teaching Rural Nursing in an Undergraduate Nursing Program: A Day on the Farm” at the International Rural Nursing and Rural Health conference in Binghamton, N.Y., in October.

Assistant Professor Wendy Kookken co-presented at the Midwest Nursing Research Society in Columbus, Ohio, in April.

**Philosophy & Religious Studies**

Associate Professor Amy Carr reviewed *Deconstructing Theodicy: Why Job Has Nothing to Say to the Puzzle of Suffering* for *Dialog: Journal of Theology*. She also published an entry entitled “Temptation” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Cambridge University Press), served as section chair in theology at the Midwest Academy of Religion meeting in Rock Island, Ill., in April and facilitated three sessions there.

Professor David Haugen reviewed *Disagreement* for Philosophy in Review and wrote two encyclopedia articles in *Masterplots, Fourth Edition* (Salem Press).

Assistant Professor Sarah Haynes presented at the Midwest American Academy of Religion in April in Rock Island, Ill., and at the Re-imagining South Asian Religions: A Conversation on Old World Cultures through the 21st Century, at the University of California-Riverside in March.

Assistant Professor Betsy Perabo presented at the Midwest American Academy of Religion in April in Rock Island, Ill.

Chair John Simmons published the foreword for *A Comparative Study of Adjustments to Social Catastrophes in Christianity and Buddhism* (Edwin Mellen Press).

**Physics**

Assistant Professor Esteban Araya co-wrote an article for Astro-
physical Journal Letter. Dr. Araya also co-presented at the American Astronomical Society meeting in Boston in May, and mentored five student projects for April’s Illinois Student Research Conference and the Student Research Symposium at the Illinois Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers, both in Charleston.

Chair Mark Boley mentored four student projects for April’s Illinois Student Research Conference in Charleston.

Associate Professor Kishor Kapale presented at the 42nd Annual American Physical Society’s Division of Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics (APS-DAMOP) in Atlanta in June, and mentored four student projects for April’s Illinois Student Research Conference and the Student Research Symposium at the Illinois Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers, both in Charleston.

Associate Professor Pengqian Wang presented at the 42nd Annual American Physical Society’s Division of Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics (APS-DAMOP) in Atlanta in June, presented at April’s joint meeting of the Illinois Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and the Illinois State Research Conference in Charleston, where he also mentored a student project.

Political Science

Associate Professor Julia Albarracin co-authored an article for the Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences and presented at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association (APSA) in Seattle in September, plus at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March. Also, Dr. Baldi’s dissertation, “The Politics of Differentiation: Education Reform in Postwar Britain and Germany,” was co-winner of the APSA European Politics section prize for best dissertation on Europe for 2010.

Interim chair Keith Boeckelman presented a paper at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March.

Assistant Professor Jonathan Day presented a paper at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March, and also at the 2011 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA) in Seattle in September.

Associate Professor Janna Deitz presented at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March.

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Assistant Professor Casey LaFrance co-authored two articles for Law Enforcement Executive Forum, and presented at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration in New Orleans in September. Dr. LaFrance also co-presented a paper at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March.

Associate Professor Jongho Lee presented a paper at the 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago in March.

Assistant Professor Erin Taylor received one of a dozen student-nominated H.O.P.E (Honoring our Professors of Excellence) awards for teaching at WIU.

Psychology

Professor Tracy Cruise gave two presentations at the 13th Annual Intern Supervision Day at Illinois State University in Normal in September, and she co-presented a day-long workshop study for a seminar in school psychology, also at ISU.

Professor Virginia Diehl and students presented at the Association for Psychological Science conference in Washington, D.C., in May.

Associate Professor Colin Harbke co-presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago in May, and at the Association for Behavior Analysis International in Denver in May. Dr. Harbke also co-authored articles published in Military Psychology, the International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology, and Personality and Individual Differences.
Assistant Professor Julie Herbstrith was recently awarded the Outstanding Dissertation in School Psychology Award from the American Psychological Association for “A multi-method investigation of pre-service teacher attitudes toward gay and lesbian parents.”

Associate Professor Melanie Hetzel-Riggin wrote a piece for the Journal of Family Violence and presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago in May.

Professor Tracy Knight in April presented at the national conference of the Society for Humanistic Psychology in Chicago, and published in PsycCRITIQUES – Contemporary Psychology: APA Review of Books.

Associate professor David Lane co-wrote articles for Basic and Applied Social Psychology and for the Journal of Applied Social Psychology. Lane also collaborates with Instructor Mitchell Lorenz and others in presenting “Losing man’s best friend: Anthropomorphism, control and pet loss” at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago in May, and a second presentation there with a student co-author.

Assistant Professor Dana Linde mann presented at the annual meetings of the Association for Behavior Analysis International in Denver in May and the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago in April.

Professor Kimberley McClure co-presented at the 48th annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences in Toronto, Ontario, in March.

Associate Professor Sandra McFadden presented at the ILLINOISY Data Conference at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, IL, in September and also at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago in May.

Sociology & Anthropology

Associate Professor Tawyna Adkins Covert won the CAS Award for Teaching with Technology.

Associate Professor Pat Anderson in October donated home-made spindles and sheep’s wool to her Anthropology 330 (Sex & Gender in Archaeology) class, which studied the ancient technology of twisting plant or animal fibers into yarn, string or thread, and actually spin material. (“Males and females,” she said.)

Assistant Professor Laurian Bowles presented at the Netherlands Association for Gender Studies and Feminist Ethnography Conference in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in July. She also was awarded at WIU University Research Council Grant for “Brain Drain to Capital Gain: Upper Class Market Women and Cosmopolitanism in Ghana.”

Assistant Professor Gordon Chang co-presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in August in Las Vegas.

Faculty Assistants William R. Faulkner and Richard Mathers received a $219,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services for testing services.

Associate Professor Robert Hironimus-Wendt co-presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society in March in St. Louis.

Won Moo Hurh, sociology emeritus, contributed the entry on Korean immigrants to Multicultural America: An Encyclopedia of The Newest Americans, Volume 3 (Greenwood/ABC-CLIO).

Professor Heather McIlvaine-Newsad co-presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Seattle in March. She also developed and taught a WIU Study Abroad Course, “Cultural Anthropology Field School in Germany” in Celle and Berlin, Germany in May.

Associate Professor David Rohall co-presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in Las Vegas in August.

Associate Professor Lora Ebert Wallace co-authored an article, “Potential Risks of ‘Risk’ Language in Breastfeeding Advocacy,” for Women & Health.

Associate Professor Oswald Warner’s 2006 Michigan Sociological Review article “Black-White Divide: Racial Residential Succession and Racial Residential Segregation in the City of Saginaw, Michigan: 1960-2000” was picked as one of the 10 best published there since the 1980s. It appears in “Twenty-five Years of Excellence in Michigan Sociology.”

Assistant Professor Bridget Welch presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in Las Vegas in August.

Chair John Wozniak presented “Unlocking the Legal System from Vengeance, Harm, and Punitive Justice: Toward a Compassionate Revolution of Peace, Caring and Universal Justice” at the annual meeting of the Justice Studies Association in Philadelphia in June.

Women’s Studies

Professor Lori Baker-Sperry co-presented with Communication Professor Judith Dallinger “Assessment of Student Learning Data: What Do We Want?” at the annual conference of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in Chicago in April. It also was published in the commission’s A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Development 2011.