



Developments

This issue profiles individuals who have chosen to share their resources with Western Illinois University. The desire of these individuals to share their success with the University touches the lives of students on both of Western's campuses.

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Wong Award for Academic Assistance in the College of Arts & Sciences



Margaret and Cecilia Wong

Sisters Margaret and Cecilia Wong arrived at Western Illinois University from Hong Kong in 1969. Western was the only school they applied to for admission.

“There were no U.S. News and World Reports back then, no college rankings you could look up,” said Margaret. “We had enough money to apply to one school, and we had heard a lot about WIU at our high school in Hong Kong,

WIU made us feel very comfortable during the application process...we really appreciated that.”

Overcoming language and cultural barriers, they attended Western to study biology and foreign languages.

“We had jobs as RAs, which really helped us integrate into the University. We saw how the mainstream students did things; how they ate and drank;

how they used their knife and fork, and we picked up on it. It helped us make lots of good friends,” Margaret added.

The sisters graduated in 1973. Margaret chose law school after graduation, and Cecilia earned a master's degree in comparative literature and a master's in business administration (MBA). Margaret founded Margaret W. Wong & Associates in Cleveland, OH, with one desk and no secretary. As an immigration specialist, her legal practice now includes 10 attorneys and 35 other staff members, with offices in seven major cities in the United States. Cecilia has worked alongside her sister for many years, managing the firm's finances.

As an immigrant, Margaret said she has found herself “living the American dream,” and she also is an entrepreneur. Together, Margaret and Cecilia have established the \$100,000 Margaret W. Wong and Cecilia Wong Award for Academic Assistance in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The fund will provide assistance for the needs of all departments within the CAS in order to advance its academic mission.

“We were recently reminded about our days at WIU, and WIU was so good to us back then,” the sisters said. “We decided to make a gift to academics because that is the purpose of the University. There is, after all, nothing to offer without a strong academic program.”

Margaret’s legal career, managed and supported by Cecilia, has helped thousands of people coming to the

United States to become permanent residents, advance their education, work and pursue opportunities.

“They both exemplify the qualities many Americans admire,” said CAS Director of Development Bryce Dexter, after meeting the two.

“Margaret and Cecilia display a strong work ethic, an entrepreneur’s drive, resourcefulness and compassion for those in need.”

“The College of Arts and Sciences is so grateful to Margaret and Cecilia,” said CAS Dean Sue Martinelli-Fernandez. “Their generous gift will strengthen CAS programs and help us better prepare our students for careers and graduate study. They are outstanding role models to our current students and alumni.” ♦



McDonough County Summer Music Institute Scholarship

Lin Stults is a familiar face around Macomb and Western Illinois University. The recipient of the 2010 Town & Gown Award for her contributions to the campus and community, Stults has long been involved with and provided service to many organizations and initiatives.

As the owner of Engraving by Lin in Macomb, for the past 35 years she has provided trophies, custom ribbons, plaques, name tags and more. In the community, Stults is a member of the board of trustees for the Macomb Public Library District and is a member of the Macomb Altrusa Club, the Salvation Army and Macomb Rotary. She has volunteered with the Macomb Area Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Development Corporation and Dickens on the Square.

On campus, Stults is a supporter of Tri States Audio Information Services, Tri States Public Radio and Intercollegiate Athletics. Recently, she established the McDonough County Summer Music Institute Scholarship to provide financial assistance for deserving students to attend WIU’s Summer Music Institute.

“Music has always been a large part of my life and I simply want to assist area

school students who want to enhance their talents through the Summer Music Institute,” said Stults. “I grew up with band, orchestra and chorus at Western High School and just feel this is something important to do.”

The scholarship was created in memory of Stults’ nephew, Austin Stults, who was killed in an auto accident in 2013. Austin was a music

lover and played in a band. Stults also credits her son, Ted Renner, as an inspiration for the award. Renner is a popular local musician and co-founder of the rock group Hong Kong Sleepover.

“We are very blessed to have Western Illinois University in our community and the availability of the Summer Music Institute,” Stults added.



Lin Stults, left, and her sister, Diane Hammon

Her scholarship will help McDonough County students attend the Summer Music Institute as a commuter or resident to study instrument or voice.

The scholarship is structured to help as many students as possible, regardless

of means or musical interest. It will be administered by the Summer Music Institute staff. For details or applications, contact SM-Camps@wiu.edu. ♦



WIU in Science Program Strives to Improve Retention

The Western Illinois University College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is developing a new program to provide encouragement for women studying in the science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) fields through Western's academic programs.

The Western Illinois University Women in Science (WIU-WIS) program is being designed to improve retention of students who enter WIU in one of the STEM fields. The program is being helped by 1984 WIU alumna Susan Buta, who along with her husband, Paul, have donated a lead gift of \$10,000 to help start the program.

WIU Department of Chemistry Chair Rose McConnell said the donation will help offer scholarships to female undergraduate and graduate students majoring in a STEM discipline who would like to conduct scientific research.

"We would also like female faculty members or alumni to come to campus to talk with the students about why they got into science and the challenges they faced," McConnell said.

The WIU-WIS program would also match female STEM students with WIU female science and math faculty members who will serve as mentors. The faculty-student teams would then attend seminars together, and the mentors can aid the students in career

counseling and furthering academic careers.

McConnell said the hope is that the WIU-WIS program can grow and partner with student organizations and that a living-learning community for STEM majors can be developed in WIU's residence halls.

"We hope this program helps with retention of students in the University's STEM programs," McConnell said. "We also hope to develop additional support programs to recruit women faculty in STEM."

Another component of the WIU-WIS program, as it develops further,

McConnell said, is to involve juniors and seniors from regional high schools to show what WIU has to offer STEM students.

The issue of women in science is important to McConnell. When she was an undergraduate at Arkansas State University, she was the only female chemistry major at the school.

For more information about WIU-WIS, contact McConnell at RM-McConnell@wiu.edu or call (309) 298-1538. ♦



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Shoemaker Named Director of Donor Relations



Amanda Shoemaker, associate director of Western Illinois University Alumni Programs, has been named director of donor relations at WIU, effective June 1. Shoemaker takes over for Julie Murphy, who has been serving in an interim capacity since her May 2014 retirement.

Shoemaker has served as associate director of Alumni Programs since March 2009. She was hired as assistant director in January 2005. In her role as associate director, Shoemaker has been responsible for assisting with the management and administration of the Alumni Association, as well as planning alumni events; coordinating marketing and public relations efforts; working with colleges and departments on alumni-related topics; supporting the WIU Alumni Council; serving as the alumni programs' webmaster and assisting with the department's social media presence and advising the Student Alumni Association. She also serves as the host of "The Purple Chair," a WIU monthly television show, which she will continue as director of donor relations.

"Amanda's background in alumni relations, her knowledge of our operations and her communication skills will make her a great addition to the Advancement and Public Services division," Bainter said. "I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to Julie Murphy for coming back to the division following her retirement. She has been an instrumental part of our success, and she has been a wonderful steward for this University."

Prior to joining alumni programs, she was employed for more than three years at KHQA-TV 7 News in Quincy (IL) as an anchor, producer and reporter. "I am thrilled with this new opportunity," Shoemaker said. "I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting and working with so many WIU alumni and friends for more than a decade, and I am excited to continue those relationships in a new capacity."

◆ Shoemaker received her bachelor's degree from Illinois College and her master's degree from WIU.

Amanda Shoemaker



Created by Authority of the State of Illinois 5/2015 • 15010D

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 SPRING 2015
 ISSUE 52