

BUSINESS & FINANCE NOTES



February 2026

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Did you know?

Landscape Services Partners with KVCC for Training

WMU's Director of Landscape Services Mark Frever, KVCC's Director of Sustainable Horticulture Sara Tanis, and AFSCME have partnered to create a new training program for Landscape Service employees, modeled after KVCC's Horticulture Program. Through funding from the Office of Business and Finance, employees can attend class at no cost, and those who successfully complete the program will earn a position upgrade for certain eligible positions.

Several employees, including Mike Bailey from Landscape Special Projects, are already enrolled. Mike completed the herbaceous-plants course last fall and is now diving into a pruning and maintenance course. As a first-time college student, he shared that he feels privileged to have this opportunity. He enjoys learning from his instructor, is eager to deepen his landscape expertise, and believes the knowledge he is gaining will benefit both him and his team. Mike's long-term goal is to become a master gardener.

OBFIT Gets Fit

The Office of Business and Finance Information Technology (OBFIT) team made a commitment to get fit — and they meant it. Over the last three years, the team has gradually gotten on board, and together the team has lost more than 190 pounds. They take advantage of the Student Recreation Center (SRC) lunch hour workouts and the employee membership benefits at both the SRC and West Hills locations. They also use tracking apps, AI tools, and the Holtyn Wellness platform to stay motivated.

Everyone has his/her own specialty:

Michael Sisk is a 3rd degree black belt in Taekwondo.

Chad Strauss is basically a pull-up master.

Brittany Welsh competes in softball and bowling.

Scott Puckett is on not one but two downhill-slalom ski teams.

Ryan McGregor enjoys walking outside on sunny days.

Does your team work out together or challenge each other? Thinking about getting started? WMU has plenty of resources to help you ease in. You don't have to start big to start.. Check out some of the resources at wmich.edu/wellness

And did you know?

The Answers to the Holiday Party Trivia.

On Dec. 17, 2025, a party was held at the Fetzer Center to appreciate the Business and Finance employees. They enjoyed food, fellowship, music, and trivia. Six stations around the venue tested our knowledge of the university. Did you know the answers?

If you took a chance and left your answers in the box, you were entered into the drawings. Six stations, six winners; the correct answer had to be on your slip to win. The winners will have their choice of two tickets to any 2026 sporting event or to a Miller performance. Since the full list of dates is not currently known, the winners will have until mid-August to select their prize.

What were those answers?

Station #1

What year was Western Michigan University founded?

1903

Station #2

What landmark on WMU's main campus has housed two presidents?

The Oaklands



Station #3

What conference does WMU compete in for most sports?



Station #4

WMU was originally founded as a school for what profession?



Station #5

What was WMU's original mascot?

The Hilltoppers



Station #6

How many departmental units report to the Office of Business and Finance?

Twelve (12)

Department Units

The Office of Business and Finance includes the following units at Western Michigan University:

Accounting Services
Accounts Receivable
Auxiliary Enterprises
Business and Finance Information Technology
Budget
Environmental Health and Safety
Facilities Management
Human Resources
Investments and Endowments Management
Logistical Services
Payroll and Disbursements
WMU Public Safety

And the winners are...

- 1) Ty Overhiser
Landscape Services
- 4) Carrie Boorsma
University Budget Office

- 2) Jamie Clark
Parking Services
- 5) Eunice Ruiz
Public Safety

- 3) Maria Sidor
Custodial Services
- 6) Jean Strand
Landscape Services

MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES!

Paper Pilot Plant



Craig Wyant

Craig, a parent of a graduate, is the lead operator at the Paper Pilot Plant. Before joining WMU, he worked in the paper industry at the WestRock Battle Creek Mill for 17 years and has been with the Pilot Plant since August 2017. His favorite days are when clients gain valuable knowledge, data, or results from the trial work they perform. These trial projects involve clients from all over the world. His favorite parts of the job are his coworkers, the student employees, and repeat clients at the plant. Although the Pilot Plant is located at the Parkview Campus, Craig's favorite campus hangouts are Asylum Lake Preserve and the Dinosaur Park near Rood Hall. Outside of campus, Craig enjoys traveling, spending time outdoors, hiking, and attending sporting events with his wife.

Jason arrived at Western in 2017 to pursue his doctorate in paper and printing science, following a bachelor's in chemical engineering from Southeast University in China and a master's from the University of New Brunswick in Canada. He started as a process engineer at a pulp mill in British Columbia, then served as a research engineer at the University of New Brunswick before relocating to Michigan. In 2020, he interned as a paper engineer at WMU's Pilot Plant and became a research scientist there in 2023. A proud Bronco, he enjoys collaborating with industry partners and startups to promote sustainability. Jason values diversity in his work, which includes lab studies, paper testing, fiber molding, and coating trials. An avid tennis player, he is aiming for his first tournament win this year, supported by family, his 6-year-old son, and his cat.



Jason Wang



Lynn Martin

Before joining WMU in 2021, Lynn worked in the paper industry. He started at Graphic Packaging in Kalamazoo, preparing pulp for a K-2 paper machine. Later, he worked at USG Corp. in Otsego in shipping and receiving, eventually focusing on quality control. He also spent a short time as a DJ at WIDR. As a plant operator at WMU, his role is multifunctional. Everyone shares the workload and takes on tasks needed for the day. Lynn appreciates the uniqueness of his job. The challenges from new customers feel like puzzles to solve. Happy customers and successful trials are rewarding, but he finds the work itself interesting and engaging. The variety of wildlife at the Parkview Campus adds to his enjoyment. In his free time, he tinkers with electronics, such as vintage stereos and speakers, or spends time with his family enjoying outdoor activities, trips north, and boating.

With a background in industry and research, Travis worked for WestRock before joining WMU. There he occupied roles in production, safety, and environmental areas, and participated in a maintenance-apprenticeship program. Currently Travis is a plant operator at the Pilot Plant. He thrives in his new environment and says, "It's pretty awesome meeting new clients." He enjoys collaborating on trials and takes pride in being part of the team. He brings a strong focus on growth and development to everything he does—both in his career and in the daily adventure of raising his 2-year-old daughter with his wife. During the summer, Travis participates in a golf league, hikes, camps, and goes fly fishing. In winter, he skis and cheers on the Bronco hockey team whenever he has free time.



Travis Arnett

Final Thought...

Showing Up for Yourself

February often nudges us to reflect on love, connection, and sometimes loneliness. This year, I'm challenging myself to think differently — to focus not on what I lack, but on what I already have. I'm choosing to treat myself the way I would treat my Valentine.

We're all experts at cheering for, encouraging, and supporting others. But how many of us truly know how to extend that same kindness and grace to ourselves? Valentine's Day doesn't have to bring negativity into our lives. Be your own Valentine, as cheesy or romantic as you like. Do for yourself what you wish someone else would do.

Send yourself a Valentine — mail it if you enjoy getting mail. Tuck a note somewhere so you'll find it later. Buy yourself flowers or pick up your favorite treat. Enjoy ice cream and chips during a movie. Go out to dinner or stay in and create your own candle-lit moment.

The beauty is that you can show up for yourself anytime, not just in February. When we do, we open ourselves to more of the world around us. It's not always easy, but I hear practice makes perfect.

Send me a note and tell me how you showed up for yourself this month.
-Karmella

Upcoming Events

March 3 - Tina - The Tina Turner Musical
Miller Auditorium

March 5 - Science on Tap
Old Dog Tavern

March 19 - 86th Annual Southwest Michigan
Vocal Festival
Miller Auditorium



Sarah's Back in the Saddle (Interim Edition!)

We are pleased to share that Sarah Curry has joined our team on an interim basis. Sarah is the Executive Assistant to the Vice President and will be in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. She will serve as the primary office contact. We're pleased to have her with us and appreciate your support as she settles into the role.