



Presidential Scholars

Fortieth Anniversary
1981 - 2020

Presented by
The Office of the President
and
The Faculty Senate

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Office of the President

On behalf of Western Michigan University, it is my great pleasure to congratulate our 2020 Presidential Scholars on being named by our faculty as our outstanding students in their senior year. Although we were not able to come together to celebrate your accomplishments in person this year, we are exceptionally proud of you and the many personal and academic accomplishments you have achieved.

Our Presidential Scholars are chosen by the faculty on the basis of academic and artistic excellence in their major program, as well as their overall promise of success. In addition to being exemplary scholars, the students being honored are notable for their involvement in our broader community and impact upon society. They are volunteers, athletes, musicians, researchers, actors, and entrepreneurs. These are true leaders in every respect. The wealth of academic talent and skills they have honed at Western Michigan University will take them far into their future, and we look forward to the future successes of these young scholars.

Students, congratulations in being named as our 2020 Presidential Scholars, and thank you for representing 50 of Western Michigan University's newest points of pride.

Sincerely,

Edward Montgomery
President
Western Michigan University

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The Presidential Scholars

College of Arts and Sciences

Makayla R. Long

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Makayla is from Edwardsburg, Michigan, and a graduate of Edwardsburg High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in biological sciences, minoring in American Sign Language and Chemistry and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Makayla plans to complete an accelerated graduate degree program to earn a Master of Science in biological sciences at WMU. Her research will focus on inner ear neurosensory development, working with Dr. Jeremy Duncan, assistant professor of biological sciences. After completing her master's degree, Makayla will apply to medical school to become a physician. While at WMU, she has served as a human anatomy supplemental instructor, creating supplemental resources for students to aid in their understanding of lecture materials. Her honors thesis focuses on building a better community of educated advocates who are aware of the needs of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Makayla has received numerous awards for her studies and work while at WMU, including the Academic Excellence Award and the Research and Creative Scholarship Excellence Award, among others. She became a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Academic Honors Society in 2019.

Austin Z. Salome

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN CHEMISTRY

Austin is from Kalamazoo and a graduate of Comstock High School. He is majoring in chemistry and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Austin plans to pursue a doctorate in chemistry, specializing in inorganic or analytical chemistry. Having the unique opportunity of conducting research starting freshman year, Austin focused on a combination of inorganic and organic synthesis. The results of this research will be published, making him one of the few published undergraduate students in the Department of Chemistry. Austin has received several awards for his studies, including the 2019 Undergraduate Award in Physical Chemistry, American Chemical Society Inorganic and Physical Chemistry awards, and the Adli Kana'an Award, among others. Austin has shared his passion for chemistry with younger generations at both Chemistry Day at Kalamazoo Valley Museum and Jr. High Science Day at WMU. His internship at Pfizer has helped him gain insight and knowledge on analytical techniques and their fundamental uses for the pharmaceutical industry.

Madilyn L. Darling

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN COMMUNICATION

Madilyn is from Livonia, Michigan, and a graduate of Churchill High School. She is majoring in public relations and creative writing, and is enrolled in the School of Communication's accelerated graduate degree program. She expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation and the completion of her master's degree, Madilyn plans on working for an international public relations agency and becoming an account executive to lead campaigns. She hopes to gain enough experience to one day own and operate a public relations consulting firm. She also would like to earn a doctorate in public relations and teach at the college level. During her time at WMU she has been on the dean's list every semester and has a 3.83 cumulative GPA. Madilyn has conducted quantitative research and wrote a research proposal on students suffering from unmediated communication apprehension after meeting new friends online. She has submitted a public relations case study paper to the National Communication Association and has created several campaigns during her academic career at WMU. Madilyn traveled to London to study media ethics in summer 2019 with the School of Communication. Outside the classroom, she has interned for Lam & Associates in downtown Kalamazoo as a public relations intern, assisting in various projects in the community.

College of Arts and Sciences

Charlotte A. Morse

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION

Charlotte is from Hartland, Michigan, and a graduate of Hartland High School. She is majoring in comparative religion and criminal justice, and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, she plans to go to law school to eventually work in corporate law and human rights and social justice law. Her current internship with Dr. Ashlyn Kuersten, professor of sociology, focuses on researching new data and assisting in educating students about wrongful conviction. Charlotte's interests and studies focus on intersectionality in the criminal justice system, religious influence in the American constitution, the role of women in Abrahamic traditions and the role of religion and group socialization in the federal correctional system. Charlotte studied abroad in Fuzhou, China, to learn about and experience Buddhism and monastic life. She is a resident assistant in Residence Life, an active member of Alpha Lambda Delta and an associate justice of the Western Student Association Judicial Council. She has been on the dean's list every semester and has maintained a 4.0 cumulative GPA. Charlotte volunteers for several organizations, including with Peace House Kalamazoo and the Boys and Girls Club of Kalamazoo. She also is a peer educator with FIRE Place at WMU, supporting sexual assault survivors and providing resources and educational seminars to students.

Claire S. Dziewicki

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ECONOMICS

Claire is from Parchment, Michigan, and a graduate of Parchment High School. She earned an associate's degree in liberal arts from Kalamazoo Valley Community College and attended the University of Michigan Dearborn. At WMU, she is majoring in economics and political science and expects to graduate summa cum laude in April 2020. In addition, she is pursuing an accelerated graduate degree and anticipates earning a Master of Arts in applied economics with a concentration in econometrics and statistics in April 2021. As a member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is currently finishing her honors thesis with the working title "An Economic Analysis of the Impacts of a Points Based Immigration System on Specific Markets." Claire became interested in the topic after participating in the honors college's Study in the States program, with excursions to El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. As part of the program, she assisted immigrant families and learned about immigration policy. Active in politics, Claire is the elected delegate for her township. Since becoming a student at WMU, she has been learning German and did so in depth by studying in Berlin, Germany, at Humboldt-Universität. She also studied in London at Richmond University and interned at IHS Markit, a London-based global information provider. During her time at WMU, she was a member of the Western Michigan Bronco Marching Band Drumline. She also marched in Winter Guard International, earning the distinction of Open-Class finalist in 2014. Interested in passing on her knowledge and skill, Claire has taught for many area high school drumline programs.

Nicholas M. Vichinsky

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ENGLISH

Nicholas is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Northern High School and attended Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. He expects to graduate from WMU in April 2021 majoring in secondary English education. Nicholas plans to become an English educator after graduation, helping students connect and develop their fascination with literature. He was a teaching assistant for Dr. Gwen Tarbox, professor of English, for an adolescent literature class. Nicholas is a part of Sigma Tau Delta international English honor society, and has been nominated for the Ellen Brinkley Award for Promising Teachers and for the Diversity Studies award. Currently, he is interning at Linden Grove Middle School with Arneisha McDermott and seventh-grade students. Previously, he has worked with Jen Heymoss, Alyssa Moon, and Stephanie Hampton at Maple Street Magnet School. Nicholas is a volunteer at WMU's Third Coast Camp for Young Writers to enhance the appreciation for English studies in a fun atmosphere.

College of Arts and Sciences

Alyssa N. Tittle

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Alyssa is from Niles, Michigan, and a graduate of Niles High School. She earned an associate of science degree from Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor, Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she graduated summa cum laude from WMU with a Bachelor of Science in environmental and sustainability studies and a Bachelor of Arts in economics in December 2019. Alyssa was on the dean's list throughout her time at the University and was the first person to be awarded an honors in economics designation for outstanding performance in her coursework in fall of 2019. She successfully completed and defended her undergraduate thesis, titled "Air Quality and Environmental Justice: An Analysis of County-level Data in the United States." Alyssa completed a horticulture internship with Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve in 2017. In 2019, she completed an internship and management position with The High Five Program, an event sustainability organization. Alyssa spent much of her free time on campus with Students for a Sustainable Earth. Highlights of her time at WMU include environmental advocacy collaborations with the community, which include lobbying in Lansing, Michigan, with her environmental policy class. In September 2019, Alyssa helped coordinate a march from WMU to Arcadia Creek for the Global Climate Strike. She also coordinated recycling, composting and waste collection for the event. In October 2019, she was a youth mentor for the Great Lakes PeaceJam Climate Crisis Slam and Youth Summit.

Brielle E. Babcock

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

Brielle is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a graduate of East Kentwood High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she expects to graduate in April 2020, majoring in gender and women's studies, and psychology. Brielle plans to pursue a master's degree in applied behavior analysis to become a behavior analyst, providing psychological services to underserved populations. Her academic interests include child welfare, children with developmental disabilities, and improving racial and gender disparities. Brielle has assisted on research projects led by Dr. Amy Damashek, associate professor of psychology, and Dr. Bilinda Straight, professor in Gender and Women's Studies. In April, Brielle will defend her honors thesis, titled "Using a Progressive Time Delay to Increase Mands in a Child with Autism," and present her work at upcoming research conferences. Her gender and women's studies major has granted her opportunities such as becoming a member of Iota Iota Iota (Triota), the national women's studies honor society, and service on both the Gender and Women's Studies Student Advisory Council and the WMU Academic Integrity Committee. In addition, she served as the webmaster for the honor society Alpha Lambda Delta and as the campus liaison for WMU's chapter of Psi Chi International Honor Society.

College of Arts and Sciences

Marshall L. Kim

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN GEOGRAPHY

Marshall is from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and a graduate of Skyline High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he expects to graduate in April 2020, majoring in geography. Marshall plans to pursue a master's degree and eventually work for a Native American tribe in resource management. His academic interests include natural resources management, river and stream restoration, stream ecology, and wildlife biology. He also is interested in environmental and climate justice, as well as food sovereignty. His honors thesis focuses on crude oil pipeline spill response in the Great Lakes, using geographic information system mapping and secondary sources. In 2017, Marshall studied abroad in Peru with Dr. Jeffrey Jones, an associate professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies, working with a group called ProPeru to build ecological stoves in people's homes. Also, in 2017, he was accepted into the University of California-Santa Cruz Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program, where he learned how to conduct conservation-based research and traveled to different UC research stations. He has been on the dean's list every semester. Marshall has held numerous internships, including with the Quinault Indian Nation Division of Natural Resources in Washington state, WeSustain at WMU and the University of South Dakota Sustainable RIVERS, which stands for Remediating InVasives to Encourage Resilience. Marshall is a member of Gamma Theta Upsilon and the president of WMU's Latino Student Alliance.

Conner H. Carpenter

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN GEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Conner is from Austin, Texas, and a graduate of McCallum High School. He attended Austin Community College; Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana; and Grand Rapids Community College, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At WMU, he is majoring in geology and expects to graduate in June 2020. Conner plans to attend graduate school, following opportunities that have the highest potential for learning and scientific and humanitarian impact. His courses in geology have exposed him to different ways of interpreting, questioning and analyzing data. In 2019, he was awarded the Department of Physics Book Award and the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences Core of Four Award. He will be attending a field course in Turkey in summer 2020.

Jessica R. Poling

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Jessica is from Kalamazoo and a graduate of Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center and Gull Lake High School. She attended the University of Dayton, in Dayton, Ohio. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in global and international studies and expects to graduate in April 2020. Jessica plans to continue with a Master of Arts in evaluation, measurement and research at WMU and pursue an assistantship in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. She hopes to receive her elementary education teaching certificate and eventually earn a doctorate in public policy. Her honors thesis is focused on examining the trends of sustainability in higher education. She has been on the dean's list every semester and is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi honors society. Jessica has studied abroad in Ecuador, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Spain and Iceland. She was awarded the President's Scholarship for Study Abroad, Lee Honors College Study Abroad Scholarship and the LaGrange Family Scholarship to fund her travels. In 2017, she was the recipient of the Scholarly Student of the Year and Greek Student Service of the Year awards. Throughout her time at WMU, Jessica has served as the vice president and political affairs chair of the Western Student Association. She was an active member and Panhellenic delegate of Alpha Chi Omega sorority as well as volunteer coordinator for Refugee Outreach Collective.

College of Arts and Sciences

Julia A. Herman

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN HISTORY

Julia is from Rochester, Michigan, and a graduate of Rochester Adams High School who attended Anderson University. She expects to graduate in April 2020, majoring in public history and minoring in Spanish. Upon graduation, she plans to complete a Master of Arts in museum studies with a focus in collections work, eventually working in museum educational programming. In fall 2017, Julia studied abroad at Queen Mary University of London with a focus on European and British history. As an undergraduate student, she completed a summer internship at the Lake Placid Olympic Museum in Lake Placid, New York. During this internship, she gained experience in collections work, exhibit design, educational programming and oral history projects. Currently, she interns at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. Julia is a member of several honor societies, including Phi Eta Sigma, Alpha Chi, Tau Sigma, Phi Alpha Theta and Phi Kappa Phi. In 2019, she received the Dale P. Pattinson Award, which recognizes undergraduate history majors who engage in scholarly activity outside of the classroom and who pursue opportunities that advance their goals as historians.

Lauren E. Denby

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN INTERCULTURAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES

Lauren is from Royal Oak, Michigan, and a graduate of Royal Oak High School. She majored in anthropology as well as environmental and sustainability studies and graduated from WMU in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Science. Her next academic goal is to complete a master's degree in environmental sustainability with a focus on environmental justice. She envisions creating a position within a city that does not yet have a sustainability plan. Lauren has interned at the Kalamazoo Nature Center as an environmental educator. She completed her field research at the University of Toledo. While at WMU, Lauren dedicated her time to Phi Sigma Pi, a gender-inclusive National Honor Fraternity based on a triad of scholarship, leadership and fellowship. She served on the organization's executive board as initiate advisor and service chair. In 2019, she was awarded the Academic Excellence Award from WMU's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability.

Marcus S. Moore

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MATHEMATICS

Marcus is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Central High School. He is majoring in mathematics and expects to graduate in April 2020. After graduation, he plans to teach mathematics at the high school level before pursuing a master's degree and doctorate in mathematics education. While at WMU, he was a member of the Future Educators Program, eventually leading to the founding of the Future Teachers of Color organization. He plans to continue his involvement with this organization throughout his professional career, bringing more educators of color into the teaching profession. Marcus hopes to inspire students to see that the subject of mathematics is something that is powerful and meaningful.

College of Arts and Sciences

Levi R. Durham

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN PHILOSOPHY

Levi is from Kalamazoo, Michigan and a homeschool graduate. He earned an associate's degree in general studies from Kalamazoo Valley Community College. At WMU, he is majoring in philosophy and expects to graduate in April 2020. Levi plans to attend graduate school in fall 2020 with hopes of eventually pursuing research and teaching at a university. In addition to his interest in the history of philosophy, Levi's main philosophical interests are grounded in the intersection of epistemology, metaphysics and the philosophy of science. In 2019, Levi was accepted to participate in the Summer School in Logic and Formal Epistemology at Carnegie Mellon University, where he learned more about current interdisciplinary research between philosophers and scientists. He has been active on campus by helping re-found the undergraduate philosophy club and serving as the president of WMU's chapter of Ratio Christi. For the past six years, Levi has worked as an arborist for a local company.

Conor A. Doig

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN PHYSICS

Conor is from Rochester Hills, Michigan, and a graduate of Rochester Adams High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he expects to graduate in April 2020, majoring in physics and general mathematics. Following graduation, Conor plans to continue his education by pursuing a doctoral degree in mathematical physics. He envisions a career in academia or designing physics engines for use in software programming. His academic interests include differential equations and their applications to physics, as well as theoretical particle physics. Currently, Conor is working on his honors thesis with Dr. Manuel Bautista, professor of physics. He is working to come up with variationally optimized multipole corrections to the Thomas-Fermi-Dirac-Amaldi potential for orbital electrons in atoms and ions. Conor's academic career at WMU includes such accomplishments as winning the 2018 WMU Math Prize Competition and being named 2019 Presidential Scholar in mathematics. He has received multiple scholarships, including the University's Gwenivere Rabe Scholarship and the Robert Meagher Memorial Scholarship. Outside of class, he works at the Developmental Math Tutor Lab and is goaltender for the WMU men's club lacrosse team.

Ali M. Tinai

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Ali is from Keren, Eritrea, East Africa and a graduate of J.W. Sexton High School in Lansing, Michigan. He attended George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. At WMU, he is majoring in political science and expects to graduate in April 2020. After graduation, he plans to seek professional employment in international affairs, particularly for the U.S. Department of State, before going to graduate school. His academic interests include international politics, specifically in East and North Africa, and the Middle East. Ali interned with the Enabling Peace in Iraq Center, a nonprofit in Washington, D.C., as a translator, researcher and advocate. An advocate for youth who have experienced foster care, he has presented many times on the topic of foster youth and assisted with outreach events for WMU's Seita Scholars Program, which serves the needs of WMU students who lived some or all of their teenage years in foster care. Ali has served multiple leadership roles on campus, including as vice president and president of the WMU College Democrats, as a WMU student ambassador as well as a peer mentor for the Seita Scholars Program. He was the recipient of the 2018-19 Mark Delorey Service Award and in 2019 was inducted into Pi Sigma Alpha and Phi Kappa Phi honors societies and was on the dean's list for six semesters.

College of Arts and Sciences

Cristal Cardoso Sao Mateus

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN PSYCHOLOGY

Cristal is from Vitoria, ES Brazil and a graduate of Centro Educacional Primerio Mundo in Vitoria. She attended Universidade in Federal do Espirito Santo in Vitoria. At WMU, she majored in psychology, graduating summa cum laude in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Science. As a recent graduate, she is currently applying to doctoral programs, with plans to one day become a tenured professor, teaching and conducting research. Her interests include the subfield of experimental analysis of behavior and cultural and decision-making behavior. As an undergraduate, Cristal worked as a research assistant and a teaching assistant for faculty members and graduate students. She was recently inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and in 2018 received the Gwen Frostic Creative Writing Award for poetry.

Lorna M. Sture

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN SOCIOLOGY

Lorna is from Deal, Kent, England and a graduate of Mattawan High School, Mattawan, Michigan, where she graduated summa cum laude before attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Transferring to WMU, she expects to graduate in April 2020, majoring in sociology and criminal justice. Following graduation, Lorna plans to attend law school and become a prosecuting attorney with a focus on criminal or family and child law. She is currently a teaching assistant for Dr. Angela Moe, professor of sociology. Lorna has served as a WMU Fall Welcome Ambassador and as an eMentor with the Peer2Peer program. She is an active member of numerous honors societies, including Sigma Alpha Lambda, Alpha Lambda Delta, Alpha Kappa Delta and Phi Kappa Phi. While at WMU, Lorna has participated in numerous volunteer opportunities that have included tutoring students and becoming a statistician for the Mattawan High School junior varsity and varsity soccer teams.

Emily J. Raak

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN SPANISH

Emily is from Zeeland, Michigan, and a graduate of Zeeland West High School. She majored in Spanish, graduating from WMU in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts. Emily plans to pursue her master's degree in early elementary education with a specialization in early childhood education, using her degree to become an elementary school teacher in a Spanish immersion classroom. In 2017, she studied abroad in Burgos, Spain, participating in the immersive language program. Emily was an intern for the Walt Disney Company as a member of the Disney College Program. A member of Phi Kappa Phi, she has received both the President's Scholarship and the Michael Braun Award.

College of Arts and Sciences

Aaron P. Carr

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN STATISTICS

Aaron is from Houghton, Michigan, and a graduate of Hackett Catholic Prep in Kalamazoo. He is majoring in statistics and expects to graduate in April 2020. Upon graduation, Aaron plans to pursue a graduate degree in statistics and work in data analysis. His academic interests include studying nonparametric statistical methods. During his time at WMU, he earned a spot on the dean’s list for six semesters. Aaron works as a retail clerk for Meijer and enjoys camping as well as playing volleyball, hockey, football and video games.

Hannah E.M. Vinande

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN WORLD LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Hannah is from Midland, Michigan, and a graduate of Midland High School. She is studying French language and literature with a minor in music and expects to graduate in April 2020. Upon graduation, she plans to earn a master’s degree and doctorate to become a professor of French or to teach English in metropolitan France in conjunction with earning certifications in translation. Hannah spent a semester abroad in Besancon, France, where she studied a variety of subjects, including French history and governmental policy, as well as reading, writing and speaking in French. Her time at WMU has provided her the opportunity to take the business French exam, and she attended various talks and presentations on topics that included French literature, translation and business. Hannah served as the president of the French Club and freelanced as an interpreter with Enlaces Language Solutions.

College of Aviation

Ismail N. Abuzir

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN AVIATION SCIENCES

Ismail is from Lockport, Illinois, and a graduate of Lockport Township High School. He majored in aviation flight science and graduated cum laude from WMU in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Science. Following graduation, he has been building flight hours to obtain his airline transport pilot license so he may fly for a regional airline. He then hopes to progress to a large legacy airline to fly wide-body aircraft internationally. Ismail completed an internship at United Airlines at O’Hare International Airport in Chicago, Illinois, during the summer of 2019. He was also named to the dean’s list. Ismail served as treasurer for Alpha Eta Rho, an international aviation business fraternity, as well as outreach chair for the WMU chapter of Women in Aviation. Extracurricular activities include staying involved in both Women in Aviation International and the WMU chapter.

College of Business, Haworth

Spencer D. Robertson

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ACCOUNTANCY

Spencer is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is a graduate of Forest Hills Northern High School. He is majoring in accountancy and finance and expects to graduate in April 2021. Following graduation, Spencer plans to pursue a Certified Public Accountant certification and work in the accounting and finance industry. Spencer completed four internships—two with Plante Moran, one with PricewaterhouseCoopers and one with Greenleaf Trust—where he worked with corporations and individuals to meet their tax filing deadlines, learned about innovative technology integration and explored the different service areas of each firm. In 2019, he collaborated with the Black Student Union to give a financial literacy presentation to students on campus. Spencer has served in several leadership positions within the Haworth College of Business, including president of WMU’s chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants and the Financial Services Club. In addition, he was selected as a member of The 30, a digital publication that recognizes emerging business leaders in the Haworth College of Business.

Josh M. Wenke

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN BUSINESS INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Josh is from Kalamazoo, and is a graduate of Kalamazoo Christian High School. He is majoring in computer information systems with minors in business analytics and management and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, he plans to start his career as an information technology and business analyst for Innovative Software Solutions in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Josh has been named to the dean’s list in the Haworth College of Business numerous times. As president of the Business Technology Network—an organization that connects students with the information technology industry—he has planned multiple workshops and professional development events with local businesses, and has helped quadruple the organization’s membership. He also serves as a WMU student ambassador and as a volunteer for the Western Michigan IT Forum, and is founding president of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity, which was established with the primary objective of making a positive impact in the community. In 2020, Josh was selected as a member of The 30, a digital publication that recognizes emerging business leaders in the Haworth College of Business. Additionally, he has volunteered as a graphic designer for the PeaceJam Foundation and created a free app for student organizations to manage their events and membership.

Megan C. Wicklein

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN FINANCE AND COMMERCIAL LAW

Megan is from Downers Grove, Illinois, and is a graduate of Downers Grove South High School. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in finance and general psychology with minors in economics and general business, and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Megan plans to pursue a career in corporate finance management. She is preparing for this endeavor by participating in Eaton Corp.’s Financial Leadership Development Program, through which she will hold various roles in three separate Eaton locations over three years. Megan previously served with Eaton’s functional budgets team for North America. She also served as a teaching assistant for the organizational psychology program and learning assistant for WMU’s introductory psychology course for four semesters. Megan has held leadership positions with two student organizations, has participated in a number of community service events, and has been named to the dean’s list each semester.

College of Business, Haworth

Joy C. Goldschmidt

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN INTEGRATED SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Joy is from Troy, Michigan, and is a graduate of Troy Athens High School. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in integrated supply management with minors in business analytics and international business and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Joy plans to begin her career as an analyst with the supply chain development program at Dell in Austin, Texas. Joy completed four internships and co-op experiences at Mann+Hummel, Bayer, Stryker and Johnson & Johnson. She was one of just six students nationwide to earn a coveted R. Gene Richter Scholarship, awarded through the Institute of Supply Management and the R. Gene Richter Foundation. Additionally, she has been named a National Defense Transportation Association Scholar, an APICS Scholar and an Indirect Supply Chain Scholar, which gave her the opportunity to present on the topic of ethical sourcing at the Integrated Supply Management Indirect Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. She has also been named to the dean’s list each semester and was a finalist for the WMU Trailblazer Award. Joy has served as a student alumni ambassador, business ambassador, computer information systems tutor and APICS student chapter president. A native of Germany, she has participated in study abroad programs at the Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia, and in India and Thailand. In 2020, Joy was selected as a member of The 30, a digital publication that recognizes emerging business leaders in the Haworth College of Business.

Megan N. Miller

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MANAGEMENT

Megan is from Lake Orion, Michigan, and is a graduate of Lake Orion High School. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in marketing and leadership and business strategy and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Megan plans to begin her career as a risk intelligence consultant with Deloitte in Chicago, Illinois. She previously completed an internship with Deloitte in Detroit, Michigan, and with Kellogg’s in Battle Creek, Michigan. Additionally, Megan was part of a student team that developed a business model for Bronconess, a new wine brand with a philanthropic impact. She also serves on the Haworth College of Business strategic planning counsel and WMU’s Think Big strategic design team and was selected to represent WMU as part of the Stanford University Innovation Fellows program in 2017. As a leadership and business strategy program assistant, Megan has helped shape the program into one of the fastest growing majors on campus. She served as a member of the Haworth College of Business Student Leadership Advisory Board and the WMU AdClub. Megan also participated in a study abroad program in Italy and plans to travel to Spain and Portugal upon graduation. In addition, she was selected as a member of The 30, a digital publication that recognizes emerging business leaders in the Haworth College of Business.

College of Business, Haworth

Anthony A. Bowie

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MARKETING

Anthony is from Ada, Michigan, and is a graduate of Forest Hills Central High School. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, he majored in sales and business marketing and graduated from WMU in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Following graduation, he has been working as a marketing specialist at MiEN Co. and hopes to pursue a career in professional soccer. For his honors thesis, titled “Think Greater Than Soccer,” Anthony created a marketing plan for a program designed to help youth soccer players build a foundation and utilize their passion for the game both on and off the field. He also was an undergraduate research assistant for Dr. Ann Veeck, professor of marketing, and earned a contributing author credit on a paper titled “Majoring in ‘just marketing’: Student Perceptions of General Versus Specialized Marketing Majors.” Anthony maintained a 4.0 grade point average throughout his college career and was named to the dean’s list each semester. Additionally, he studied abroad for the German Business and Culture course in partnership with Paderborn University. Anthony was a four-year member of the WMU men’s soccer team, for which he earned numerous academic accolades. He was also a member of the Sales and Business Marketing Association, the Men’s Soccer Leadership Council and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, as well as serving as vice president of Aspiras Foundation and a Fellowship of Christian Athletes leader. Anthony volunteered with several nonprofit organizations in the community and was a coach and mentor to the boys’ soccer team at Heritage Christian Academy.

College of Education and Human Development

Ava M. Daly

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Ava is from Wyandotte, Michigan, and a graduate of Gabriel Richard High School in Riverview. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in dietetics and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Ava plans to complete a dietetic internship and graduate program focused on public health. She is interested in evidence-based practice and public health. For her honors college thesis, she collaborated with The Invisible Need Project to develop survey and focus group questions and assess food access and barriers to food pantry use among students on campus. Ava is a recipient of the Lee Honors College Research and Creativities Scholarship and Student Travel Grant Award. She was involved in WMU’s Student Dietetic Association, serving as both secretary and president. She volunteered for an eating disorder clinic, Meals on Wheels, and as a clinical dietetic intern at Ascension Borgess Hospital where she helped implement a volunteer feeding assistance program to mitigate barriers to consuming enough food in the clinical setting. Ava worked for Continental Services, Kalamazoo Chips, Fresh Food is Fun, as an undergraduate research team leader, and as a supplemental nutrition assistance program specialist for Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

Kassidy D. Davis

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN HUMAN PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Kassidy is from Riverview, Michigan, and a graduate of Riverview Community High School. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in exercise science and expects to graduate in June 2020. Following graduation, Kassidy plans to intern at NovaCare in Kalamazoo and then pursue a Doctor of Physical Therapy and Master of Business Administration at the University of Michigan-Flint. She is working on her honors college thesis with Dr. Timothy Michael, professor of human performance and health education, researching the effects of pre-workouts on fitness assessment testing. She is the recipient of the Bullard Endowed Scholarship, the Miller Endowed Scholarship and the Trow Undergraduate Scholarship. She is the president of Alpha Lambda Delta honors society, a member of WMU’s club-level swim and dive team, she nannies for a local family, works as a server and assistant manager at East Egg restaurant, and volunteers at the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center in Centerville, Michigan, while maintaining above a 3.9 GPA.

College of Education and Human Development

Haley G. Mowry

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND LITERACY STUDIES

Haley is from Mattawan, Michigan, and a graduate of Mattawan High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Kalamazoo. She is majoring in special education and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Haley plans to be a special education teacher and hopes to someday earn a doctorate in special education. She will be certified to teach in the areas of learning disabilities and emotional impairments as well as elementary general education K-5. She participated in a special education internship at Portage North Middle School in Portage, Michigan, and is currently participating in an internship at Moorsbridge Elementary in Portage. In 2018-19, she was the vice president of Kappa Delta Pi, an international honors society for educators, and was on the dean's list eight consecutive semesters.

Cindy Mhay Borja

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN TEACHING, LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

Cindy Mhay is from the Philippines and is a graduate of Battle Creek Central High School who attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Kalamazoo and Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Michigan. She is majoring in elementary education and integrated science and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Cindy Mhay plans to teach and pursue a master's degree in education. She was selected along with seven others to participate in the Pathways to Science Teaching Summer Program funded by the National Science Foundation and presented at the Geological Society of America national conference in Indianapolis. She is a recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship and the Burge Scholarship. She was a member of FOCUS Kalamazoo, the treasurer of the Western Student Education Association for two consecutive years, public relations officer for the Alliance of Filipino American Students, and a LeadCorp intern for a year. She volunteered with Ministry with Community, Habitat for Humanity, Stewards of Kleinstuck, Ronald McDonald House, and Friendship Village and was a mentor for the Ryan Readers book club, Health Literacy program for Refugees, and Great Lakes PeaceJam.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Erin C. Riley

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN CHEMICAL AND PAPER ENGINEERING

Erin is from Dryden, Michigan, and a graduate of Dryden High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in paper engineering with minors in mathematics and graphic and printing science and expects to graduate in December 2020. Following graduation, Erin plans on entering the paper industry as a process engineer. She has completed Lean Six Sigma Yellow belt training and had two process engineering internships with Kimberly-Clark in its Owensboro, Kentucky, mill and its Family Care Research and Engineering Process Optimization team. Erin has secured a technical sales internship at Ecolab in its Nalco Water division. She has served as Graphic Arts Society co-president and TAPPI student chapter president. She has also regularly volunteered with FOCUS Kalamazoo.

Carolyn V. Nauta

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN CIVIL AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

Carolyn is from Rockford, Michigan, and a graduate of Rockford High School. She is majoring in civil engineering and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Carolyn plans to pursue a career and work to get her professional engineer's license. In 2018, she worked for a geotechnical engineering company that placed her in the field collecting data and conducting tests. She also worked for a site development company training on various computer programs and assisting both project managers and engineers in the creation of detailed construction documents. Carolyn was the captain of the steel bridge team, leading the design and fabrication of a scale bridge model for a regional competition. At the American Society of Civil Engineers regional conference in 2019, she placed second in the technical presentation category on the topic of ethics and discrimination. In 2020, Carolyn is serving as the president of the student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, bringing students the opportunity to network with different civil engineering companies from around Michigan. She also regularly volunteers with FOCUS Kalamazoo and her local church.

Joshua D. Chandler

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Joshua is from Grand Ledge, Michigan, is a home school graduate, and graduated summa cum laude from Lansing Community College and graduated summa cum laude from WMU in December 2019. Joshua is pursuing a master's degree in computer science at WMU and is a recipient of the prestigious Georgeau Family Scholarship, and has regularly made the dean's list. After graduating with his master's degree, he plans to work at a technology company focusing on foundational tools. In 2018, he interned at Quicken Loans and will be working as an intern at HPE in 2020 focusing on debugging tools used on high-performance computers. He is the president of the Computer Club at WMU, leading efforts to establish a computer science demonstration station at WMU for high school tours. He has directed the programming portions of the Michigan Science Olympiad at WMU for the past three years.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Benjamin J. Hahn

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING

Benjamin is from West Olive, Michigan, and graduated from West Ottawa High School in Holland, Michigan. He attended Hope College, in Holland; Grand Rapids Community College, in Grand Rapids; and Grand Valley State University, in Allendale, Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is double majoring in electrical engineering and trombone performance and expects to graduate in June 2020. He plans to study music performance in graduate school using his electrical engineering background to assist in the creation of new music by programming Arduinos to create unique sound profiles. He plans to earn a doctoral degree and teach trombone at the college level, sharing his passions with the next generation of students. While at WMU, Benjamin completed research in the field of electrophysiology, specifically the extracellular stimulation of neurons and as a part of his first honors thesis, co-designed a "Cost-Effective DIY Electrometer," which explored the instrumentation in electrophysiology. His other honors thesis was an hour-long recital, "A Performance of Classical Trombone." He has received numerous scholarships, including the Medallion Scholarship, the Edwin E. Meader Scholarship, the Harper C. Maybee scholarship, and a scholarship from Tau Beta Pi. He has earned dean's list honors every semester while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. Benjamin also received the Learning Community Assistant of the Year award for his time as the learning community assistant in the Fine Arts House. He has also served as the president of Tau Beta Pi and volunteered as a mentor at a local middle school as a part of the Future Leaders of Kalamazoo project.

Luis E. Vargas

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ENGINEERING DESIGN, MANUFACTURING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Luis is from South Haven, Michigan, and a graduate of South Haven High School. He attended Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor, Michigan; Kalamazoo Valley Community College; and Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, he is majoring in engineering design technology and expects to graduate in April 2020. His honors thesis is "Autonomous Vehicle Interior Design." Luis plans to work at General Motors as a design engineer and pursue a master's degree in an engineering program at the University of Michigan. His research interests are primarily in fluid mechanics focused on computational fluid dynamics, finite element analysis and numerical analysis. He has participated in five internships, including two in the operations department at New Covert Generating, which is a combined-cycle natural gas power plant in Covert, Michigan. His three other internships were with GM in Warren, Michigan, where he gained valuable experience in computer-aided design, prototyping, manufacturing and computer-aided engineering software. In 2019, Luis received the Outstanding Student Award in Engineering Design Technology. He is also a member of the WMU chapter of Phi Beta Kappa and Pi Mu Epsilon, the U.S. honorary national mathematics society. He is also a member of the social fraternity Pi Kappa Phi and served as the chief standards board officer. He is currently serving as treasurer of the WMU student chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and is a general assembly member of the Latino Student Alliance.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Lydia S.V. Bajema

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN INDUSTRIAL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ENGINEERING AND ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT

Lydia is from Grandville, Michigan, and a graduate of Grandville High School. She is majoring in industrial engineering and expects to graduate in April 2020. Lydia participated in a study abroad to India focusing on sustainability and social justice and has a passion for applying her engineering talents in underdeveloped nations and in refugee camps. Following graduation, she plans to work as a technology consulting analyst at Accenture. She completed an internship at Gordon Food Service in Grand Rapids as a national account coordinator and logistics specialist and with Intralox in New Orleans, Louisiana, as a quality engineer. Her senior design project focused on process improvement for Chick-fil-A in Portage, Michigan. Lydia also played on the WMU women's soccer team and worked for Bronco Productions as a media intern. Lydia was named First Team Academic All-District by the College Sports Information Directors of America and earned Academic All-MAC honors. In addition, Lydia was a representative for the women's soccer team on WMU's NCAA Student Athletic Advisory Committee. She is a member of the Alpha Pi Mu, a national honor society for industrial engineering students, and has received the WMU Multicultural Scholarship, Engineers Week Scholarship, George E. Kohrman Scholarship and Leo S. Rayl Scholarship.

Hannah G. Sargent

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MECHANICAL AND AEROSPACE ENGINEERING

Hannah is from Lewis Center, Ohio, and graduated from Olentangy Orange High School. A member of WMU's Lee Honors College, she is majoring in aerospace engineering and expects to graduate in April 2021. She plans to apply for the accelerated graduate degree program for aerospace engineering next semester to continue her education and plans to pursue a career with NASA. She is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta national honor society and volunteers as a refugee mentor with Bethany Christian Services. She is a member of the WMU women's soccer team, earning honors that include MAC All-Freshman Team, CoSIDA First Team Academic All-District, Academic All-MAC Team and MAC Distinguished Scholar Athlete. She also volunteers with Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes and Kalamazoo Gospel Mission. Hannah is also a member of the Columbus Eagles, a semi-professional women's soccer team in central Ohio.

College of Fine Arts

Lauren J. Maksymiuk

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN ART

Lauren is from Richmond, Michigan, and a graduate of Richmond High School who attended College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Michigan. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in graphic design and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Lauren plans to work at an agency in New York City in marketing and branding. She has been a design intern at the Haworth College of Business student-led marketing consultancy Bronco Connect for the last three years. She interned at Circa Design, Tekna and Greenstreet Marketing and Design. Lauren participated in many extracurricular activities, such as the Sunseeker Solar Car business team, Outdoor Club, Alpha Lambda Delta, and she was president of WMU’s chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. She plays co-ed intramural soccer. Lauren had the opportunity to study abroad in Italy on BookArts.

Jasmine C. Clark

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN DANCE

Jasmine is from Franklin, Tennessee, and a homeschool graduate. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in dance and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Jasmine plans to move to a metropolitan area to pursue a dance career, performing and creating work specializing in improvisation and post-modern dance theatre. Eventually Jasmine hopes to earn a Master of Fine Arts in dance and return to academia to teach dance to undergraduate students. Jasmine was selected to be part of the Great Works Dance Project at WMU and learned and performed “Three Themes” from George Balanchine’s master work, “The Four Temperaments.” Jasmine attended the American Dance Festival and was selected to perform Merce Cunningham’s work “How to Pass, Kick, Fall, and Run” in the Footprints concert as a part of the Cunningham Centennial celebration. Jasmine was the 2018 recipient of the Wendy L. Cornish Endowed Dance Scholarship, designated for the student who “transcends the ordinary in attitude, discipline, sense of ensemble and commitment to the process, product and audiences of dance.” Additionally, Jasmine has served as a member of the WMU Academic Integrity Committee for the last two years. Her undergraduate thesis is a choreographed work that will be presented as part of the Bachelor of Fine Arts dance Graduating Presentations concert examining how the overarching story of God in the Christian Bible is paralleled intra-personally between the interactions of the body, the soul and the spirit. This is a continuation of her personal creative research exploring the dichotomy of body and spirit through a quirky and theatrical post-modern lens.

College of Fine Arts

Kennedy T. Dixon

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MUSIC

Kennedy is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a graduate of Northview High School who attended Grand Rapids Community College. A member of WMU’s Lee Honors College, she is majoring in viola performance and composition and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Kennedy plans to complete a Master of Arts in music at WMU. Her thesis will include her performing solo and chamber works on her senior viola recital. Kennedy was recently invited to attend the Missouri Experimental Sonic Arts Festival taking place at the University of Central Missouri to perform her piece “Pretty on Paper” for solo viola and improvised electronics. Kennedy will attend Nief-Norf Summer New Music Festival at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, as a Performer-Composer Fellow with an Alumni Scholarship Award. Kennedy’s other accomplishments and endeavors include membership in the Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society, being a WMU Pressor Scholar, dean’s list recipient, WMU School of Music Student Initiative Project Grant Student Committee membership, Michigan Competitive Scholarship recipient, School of Music Scholarship recipient, and the WMU Multicultural Leader Scholarship. Kennedy is currently the president of the Western Student Composers Alliance. She also serves as the assistant principal violist of the Holland Symphony Orchestra, a position she has held for two years. She is a program assistant with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra’s Kids in Tune afterschool music program, working with elementary, middle and high school instrumentalists. As a previous Mosaic Scholar with the Grand Rapids Symphony, Kennedy gives back to her hometown orchestra as she volunteers regularly throughout the year.

Logan T. Dolence

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN MUSIC THEATRE PERFORMANCE

Logan is from Zeeland, Michigan, and a graduate of Zeeland East High School. He majored in music theatre performance and graduated in December 2019. Logan plans to move to New York City to pursue a career as a musical theatre artist. He has two auditions lined up with the All in One Theatre conference and the United Professional Theatre Auditions. Both of these auditions are for regional theatres, cruise ships and amusement parks. In March 2020, Logan performed in the WMU senior showcase auditioning for New York agents and casting directors. Also in March, he performed in a concert version of “West Side Story” with the Billings Symphony Orchestra in Montana. Logan’s goal is to have a successful career as a theatre artist. He has been awarded incredible opportunities that have aided his growth as a performer, and in 2016, Logan had the opportunity to attend the National High School Musical Theatre Awards and perform on a Broadway stage in New York City. At WMU, he has found a passion for choreography through teaching student workshop classes at WMU, choreographing for musical theatre classes and working at his high school dance program. He choreographed the main-stage musical “Urinetown” at WMU.

College of Fine Arts

Costandina J. Daros

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN THEATRE

Costandina is from Davisburg, Michigan, and a graduate of Clarkston High School. She is majoring in theatre design and technical production, minoring in Multimedia Arts Technology and expects to graduate in April 2020. After graduation, she plans to attend graduate school to further her education in sound design to explore new ways to combine music with storytelling and to impact audiences throughout the world. Costandina has worked on a multitude of shows, musicals and plays in the Department of Theatre, including “The Wiz,” “Jesus Christ Superstar,” “The Game’s Afoot”, and “Urinetown.” She also has been the sound engineer for several projects within the Department of Dance, including its annual Winter Galas and the 2018 student collaboration, “Wisteria.” In 2018, Costandina had an audiovisual internship at The Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre in Logan, Utah, and in 2019, she worked as the audio engineer at The Stephen Foster Story amphitheater in Bardstown, Kentucky. Costandina is a Legacy Scholar, following the footsteps of her grandmother Connie Contos Daros, who was an abstract artist.

College of Health and Human Services

Rebekah E. Bensley

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN INTERDISCIPLINARY HEALTH PROGRAMS

Rebekah is from Schoolcraft, Michigan, and a graduate of Schoolcraft High School. She earned an associate of arts from Kalamazoo Valley Community College. At WMU, she is majoring in public health and expects to graduate in December 2020. Following graduation, Rebekah plans to attend Georgetown University to pursue a Master of Public Health and a juris doctorate. Her current area of academic interest is epidemiology, specializing in the impact of health-related policy on health outcomes. In 2019, Rebekah participated in a study abroad opportunity in South Africa, where she studied a variety of health services offered in the country as well as major public health concerns. Focusing on health policy closer to home, her capstone project is titled “Altering the Tobacco-Free Policy on the Western Michigan University Campus to Create Improved Clarity and Understanding.” Rebekah has made the dean’s list each semester at WMU, amassing a 4.0 cumulative grade point average. Rebekah has received numerous awards while at WMU, including the 2020 Founders’ Award from Eta Sigma Gamma, WMU Health Education Student of the Year from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing and a 21st Century Scholarship (and the distinction of being named a SOPHE WMU Collegiate Champion) by the Society of Public Health Education.

Kendel N. Wiercinski

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN NURSING

Kendel is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a graduate of Kenowa Hills High School, who attended Grand Rapids Community College. She majored in nursing and graduated in December 2019 with a Bachelor of Science. Kendel is currently working at Spectrum Health Hospital in Grand Rapids and plans to return to school to pursue a pediatric nurse practitioner degree with a concentration in pediatric oncology. While in WMU’s nursing program, Kendel co-published a paper with fellow students in the *International Journal of Science and Research Methodology*. She maintained a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 and was on the dean’s list throughout her time at WMU. Kendel was a mentor for the Empower Success program at WMU, as well as a supplemental instructor for a physiology course and nurse extern on the medical/ oncology unit at Ascension Borgess Hospital. She has volunteered as a camp counselor at Special Days Camp, a pediatric oncology camp, and plans to volunteer there again. She also volunteers for the Kenowa Hills Athletic Boosters and at elementary schools in the Grand Rapids area.

College of Health and Human Services

Taylor A. Young

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN SOCIAL WORK

Taylor is from Portage, Michigan, and a graduate of Portage Northern High School, who attended Michigan State University. She is majoring in social work and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Taylor plans to seek her Master of Social Work degree at Grand Valley State University and obtain a certificate in social work. She made the dean’s list every semester at WMU. Taylor is co-president of Eta Eta Sigma, the undergraduate social work volunteer organization, and a member of Phi Alpha, the social work honors organization. She took part in a study abroad in Puerto Rico in 2019 where she learned about social justice in Puerto Rico and heard many stories of people and families affected by Hurricane Maria. Her most memorable accomplishment was raising money and donations with classmates to donate care packages to young adults and children entering the foster care system. Taylor wants to give special thanks to Dr. Gary Mathews, professor of social work, who nominated her for this award and always believes in her.

Sara C. Femminineo

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING SCIENCES

Sara is from Shelby Township, Michigan, and a graduate of Lutheran High School North in Macomb. She is majoring in speech pathology and audiology and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Sara will attend the University of Wisconsin at Madison’s Master of Science in speech pathology program. She hopes to go on to work with individuals with communication disorders in a medical setting. Currently, Sara is a research assistant with Dr. Suma Devanga, assistant professor, speech, language and hearing sciences in the Neurogenic Communication Intervention laboratory at WMU, where she analyzes language samples from individuals with aphasia. She hopes to continue research and work in this area after graduation. Sara participated in a short-term study abroad in South Africa where she studied public health and health care systems and became interested in improving access to health care services at home and abroad. She is president of WMU’s chapter of the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association, where she supports her peers in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership and advocacy related to speech and hearing sciences. In addition to volunteering at the Michigan Speech Language Hearing and Michigan Autism conferences, Sara also held a volunteer position at the Kalamazoo Drop-In Child Care Center where she became interested in emergent literacy and hopes to continue with this interest in the future.

Extended University Programs

Jesse J. Garchow

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN UNIVERSITY STUDIES

Jesse is from Skidway Lake, Michigan, and a graduate of Whittemore-Prescott High School who attended Tidewater Community College in Portsmouth, Virginia, and Hillsborough Community College in Tampa, Florida. He is majoring in University Studies, with concentrations in medicine, biology and chemistry, and expects to graduate in April 2020. Following graduation, Jesse plans to pursue medical school and wants to attend the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. His academic research interests are in infectious diseases, public health, entomology and traumatic brain injury. A now-retired U.S. Marine sergeant with multiple overseas deployments, Jesse’s goal is to pursue a career as a physician within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. As a marine, he was an aviation hydraulic mechanic and a non-destructive inspection technician. He became interested in medicine after being involved in a serious accident in which he suffered extensive life-altering injuries, traumatic brain injury and thoracic aortic dissection leading to cardiac and respiratory arrest. He spent weeks in a coma while undergoing numerous life-saving surgeries at Cooper University Hospital in Camden, New Jersey. The treatment he received from health care providers has been a driving force behind his desire to become a physician. Jesse says that he wants to give back to medicine because it is what has given him another chance at life. He wants to use his second chance to help others “when they most need it.”

The University

Western Michigan University is a national research university enrolling more than 22,500 students from across the United States and 101 other countries. Founded in 1903, it is a learner-centered, discovery driven and globally engaged public university that stands out among America's more than 4,600 degree-granting colleges and universities.

WMU combines the resources of a major research university with the personal attention and friendly atmosphere often found at a small college. Taking full advantage of that combination gives students the edge they need to succeed in graduate school, the workplace and life.

Academic programs

Students attending WMU enjoy top-notch programs, teachers, facilities and hands-on learning opportunities. They expect and receive one-on-one attention from senior-level faculty members and find mentors, tutors, advisors and career specialists within easy reach.

The University offers 152 bachelor's, 78 master's, one specialist and 34 doctoral programs through seven degree-granting colleges: Arts and Sciences, Aviation, Education and Human Development, Engineering and Applied Sciences, Fine Arts, Haworth College of Business, and Health and Human Services.

Many of those programs rank among the top of their kind in the country. They give WMU a national or international reputation as one of the best places to study in fields as varied as accountancy, aviation, creative writing, earth sciences/geosciences, engineering management technology, education, evaluation, medieval studies, occupational therapy, psychology, public affairs, sales and business marketing, and the performing arts.

Instructional programs are designed so graduating students are ready to immediately add value to their employers. Plus, the University's partnerships with business, industry and government and its exchange agreements with organizations around the globe provide countless opportunities for students to obtain internships, conduct research, gain field experience and study abroad.

Learning environment

WMU attracts faculty members who have been trained at the world's leading universities and bring a global perspective to the classroom. Most of the more than 800 scholars in its full-time faculty ranks have well-established careers and a passion for

research as well as teaching. They not only share their cutting-edge work in the classroom, they also welcome undergraduate and graduate students alike into their research laboratories and creative studios.

The University's robust academic environment is bolstered by hundreds of student organizations, sports teams and cultural programs; nationally acclaimed initiatives that are creating a more environmentally responsible and sustainable campus; and some of the best instructional, cultural and recreational facilities in the Midwest.

Notable facilities include a world-class aviation campus; a state-of-the-art science complex; modern buildings devoted to education, chemistry and the visual arts; a cutting-edge home for health and human services programs; a sophisticated engineering campus that includes a thriving Business Technology and Research Park; the third largest theatre in Michigan; a well-equipped student recreation center; and a high-tech esports arena.

Far-reaching impact

The University reaches far beyond its Kalamazoo borders to meet state and national challenges as well as to meet the educational needs of its students and provide direct service to the public.

For example, it operates two components of Michigan Economic Development Zones, conducts research and testing for numerous industries, serves as a hub for student and community entrepreneurs to develop and commercialize their ideas, and annually handles some 88,000 patient visits, alone, through its Center for Disability Services and College of Health and Human Services clinics.

WMU also extends its reach by offering quality academic and professional development programs online and at regional locations in eight Michigan municipalities: Auburn Hills, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Clinton Township, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Muskegon and Traverse City.

In addition, the University is affiliated with the 21st-century WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine in Kalamazoo, which graduated its first class in 2018, as well as with the WMU Thomas M. Cooley Law School, which offers courses in Kalamazoo and has three campuses in Michigan and one in Florida.

Points of Pride

- The 50 individuals named Presidential Scholars for 2020 exemplify the outstanding students WMU attracts and the excellence they demonstrate in and out of the classroom.

- WMU alumni are successful—quickly after graduation, 94 percent are employed, engaged in military service or continuing their education; 88 percent are satisfied with their jobs; and 85 percent have jobs related to their degree.

- The Carnegie Foundation classifies WMU as one of just 185 public U.S. colleges and universities that conduct research at the “higher” or “highest” levels.

- *U.S. News & World Report* has designated WMU one of America's best national universities for 28 consecutive years.

- *Washington Monthly* categorizes WMU as both a top-100 national university and a Best Bang for the Buck school.

- *Washington Monthly* has ranked WMU #1 in Michigan for earnings by graduates from all backgrounds and the best public university in Michigan for moving up in the world.

- *INSIGHT Into Diversity* annually presents WMU with its Higher Education Excellence in Diversity—HEED—Award in recognition of “outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.”

- *Military Times* and the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency rank WMU among the country's best higher education institutions for veterans, and WMU is the only Michigan school to appear on all nine years of its annual Best Colleges list.

- The U.S. Department of State reported that WMU was among the country's top 10 producers of American Fulbright Scholars in 2016-17.

- WMU's Lee Honors College is among the oldest honors programs in the nation and has a student profile rivaling that of the most elite private colleges in the United States.

- In recent years, WMU has been cited for having the world's No. 2 integrated supply management program; the nation's first higher education program in sustainable brewing; the nation's No. 1 school for sales and business marketing program; and a College of Health and Human Services that offers six graduate programs ranked among the country's top-100 programs of their kind.

- With 152, WMU offers the second most undergraduate degree programs of any public university in Michigan.

- The University is one of a small number of higher education institutions in the country able to offer both medical and legal professional education, doing so through two private school affiliations.

- WMU operates the nation's largest and most comprehensive collegiate support program for former foster-care youth and is an international model for teaching, research, learning and public service related to foster care and higher education.

- Demonstrating its transfer-friendly status, WMU has reverse transfer agreements with all 28 community colleges in the state.

- WMU offers some of Michigan's largest awards for incoming freshmen, including the Medallion and Foundation scholarships worth \$60,000 each and the MLK GOLD Scholarship worth \$32,000.

- The University has a diverse campus, with minority groups making up 24 percent of the student body and international students 8 percent.

- Students can choose from more than 100 WMU-operated study abroad programs in some 40 countries and have access to countless more through the University's worldwide linkages.

- Exploring professional and personal interests is made easy through more than 400 registered student groups as well as scores of intramural sports and wellness and fitness programs.

- The Sustainable Endowments Institute named WMU one of the country's six winners of 2015 Best of GRITS—Green Revolving Investment Tracking System—awards, honoring the University as the largest nonprofit institution with the most carbon emissions saved to date.

- Since 2005, more than 59 percent of the buildings WMU has constructed or significantly renovated have earned Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification, making its commitment to LEED one of the best in Michigan.

- The No. 15-ranked WMU Broncos played in the 2017 Cotton Bowl Classic, marking only the second time in Mid-American Conference history that a MAC team was selected for a New Year's Six bowl game.



The Convocation Committee

Sue Brodasky
Suzanne Davenport
Paula Davis
Michelle Hruska
Terri Riemland
Sally Sutkowi
Stacy Thinnies
Sally Vliem

The Faculty Senate Executive Board

(as of March 2020)

Richard Gershon
President

Marilyn Kritzman
Vice President

Osama Abudayyeh
Suzan Ayers
Decker Hains
John Jellies
William Rantz
C. Dennis Simpson
Sarah Summy