WIU recognized for service by McCormick Foundation

Public service and giving back are at the heart of Western Illinois University’s mission and core values. Because of the University’s commitment to civic engagement, WIU was recently awarded two grants from the McCormick Foundation.

The $3,000 and $300 grants, administered by the Illinois Campus Compact (ILCC), have been awarded to Mary Kubasak, assistant director of student activities for Volunteer Services, and AmeriCorps VISTA member Andrea Bell, who works with Western’s Volunteer Services program, respectively. Kubasak was selected to serve as one of four ILCC/McCormick Community Service Director Fellows, while Bell received the grant for a Martin Luther King Grant Challenge Project.

In addition to serving as a Community Service Director (CSD) Fellow, Kubasak has also been selected as the CSD project coordinator, in which she will provide guidance, resources and support to the other CSD Fellows. She will also assist in planning the ILCC’s regional dialogue meetings that focus on leadership and globalization.

“It’s truly an honor for Mary and Andrea to receive the McCormick Foundation grants, and it’s a testament to the University’s commitment to civic responsibility and service,” said Ann Comerford, director of Student Activities. “I look forward to seeing the programming and initiatives that are a direct result of this grant.”

The Illinois Campus Compact is a coalition of 43-member campuses who join together to actively engage presidents, faculty, staff and students to promote a renewed vision of higher education, one that supports not only the civic development of students, but the campus as an active and engaged member of its community.

The McCormick Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to strengthening our free, democratic society by investing in children, communities and country. It was established in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune.

Scholarship director interviews ongoing

Interviews for the Director of University Scholarship Activities began Jan. 7 and will continue through Tuesday, Jan. 26. The candidates and their interview dates include:

Teresa Hare, associate director of financial aid at Western, (Jan. 7);
Lorette Oden, professor of health sciences at Western, (Friday, Jan. 8);
Kellie Esters, vice president of fund development at the Scott County (Iowa) YMCA in Davenport, Friday, Jan. 22; and
Craig Schmidt, director of development at Iowa State University Foundation (Ames, IA), Tuesday, Jan. 26.

The schedule for the remaining candidates’ open session with the Macomb and campus communities is as follows:

* Esters: 2-2:45 p.m. Jan. 22, University Union Sandburg Lounge; and
* Schmidt: 2-2:45 p.m. Jan. 26, University Union Sandburg Lounge.

Want WIU news? We’ve got an app for that

Users of the Apple iPhone or iTouch can now get news from WIU via University Relations’ new “WIU News” app (application) available through Apple’s App Store and iTunes. Developed through AppMakr (from the company PointAbout, Inc.), the WIU News app provides a quick way for iPhone or iTouch users to get the latest news from Western.

According to Darcie Shinberger, director of University Relations, while the app does have a limited audience (users of latest generation of iPhone and iTouch devices made by Apple), it provides University Relations yet another way to provide information about Western via mobile devices.

“In our increasingly mobile society, it’s essential that we stay on top of the latest trends so we can provide the most up-to-date news to our students, faculty, staff and alumni, as well as to the general public,” Shinberger added.

To install the WIU News application, search for “WIU News” in the Apple’s App Store via your iPhone or iTouch device or through iTunes.

To get the latest news from Western via Facebook, see facebook.com/wiu.edu; through Twitter at www.twitter.com/WIU_UR; and from University Relations online at wiu.edu/unews.

For more information, contact Teresa Koltzenburg, public information specialist and new media coordinator in University Relations, at (309) 298-1993 or TE-Koltzenburg@wiu.edu.
Sperry named GIS director

Chad Sperry, who has served as manager of Western’s Geographic Information System (GIS) Center since 2004, has been named GIS Center director. The title change from GIS manager to director was effective July 1.

The center, which is part of the geography department and located in Tillman Hall, serves the McDonough County GIS Consortium: a partnership involving the City of Macomb, McDonough County and WIU. The center compiles, manages and stores GIS data layers for the Consortium and regularly provides technical, analytical and map-making support for Consortium clients.

Under Sperry’s leadership as manager and director, the center has completed GIS and GPS projects for federal agencies, state and local entities, partnered with WIU faculty members on research projects and provided hands-on GIS and GPS training for Western’s students, according to Samuel Thompson, chair of the department of geography.

“It is a privilege to serve the GIS Center as director and to lead such a remarkable group of professionals and students. I am certain we can meet new challenges with continued success,” Sperry said.

Sperry has focused on multiple applications of GIS, planning, data collection and analysis. He has been the principal investigator for both large and small projects involving local government agencies, drainage districts, federal government and private entities.

“I am pleased to have Chad as director of the center. He is constantly pursuing internal and external projects for the GIS Center, and involving both undergraduate and graduate students in the respective Center’s activities,” Thompson added. “I look forward to further expansion of the Center’s activities.”

Prior to coming to Western, Sperry worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District and was a GIS specialist with Klingner & Associates, P.C. in Quincy, IL (1999-2002). He earned his master’s degree from Purdue University (1999) and his bachelor’s degree from Western (1995).

Phi Beta Delta founding induction ceremony

Western Illinois University’s chapter of the Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society inducted its charter members during International Education Week in November 2009.

The purpose of the Eta Epsilon chapter is to recognize and encourage superior professional, intellectual, academic and personal achievement in the field of international education, said Barbara Ribbens, associate professor in management and the chapter’s first president.

Grants & Contracts

Rori Carson, College of Education and Human Services (COEHS)—$175,750 from the Illinois State Board of Education for “West Central Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative - FY10.”

Vivian Coeur, Beu Health Center—$15,000 from Eastern Illinois University for “EUDL FY10.”

Charles Darnell, Physical Plant—$170,616 from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for “Lighting Upgrades V.”

Carol Dennhardt, Radio Information Service—$36,968 from the Illinois State Library for “Radio Information Service - FY10.”

Gisele Hamm, IIRA—$20,000 in supplemental funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service for “Community Outreach Support.”

Kristi Kupka, IIRA—$68,000 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for “Procurement Technical Assistance Center - FY10.”

Karen Mauldin-Curtis, IIRA—$22,500 in supplemental funding from various sources for “Peace Corps Fellows Community Contributions.”

Timothy Roberts, History—$3,000 (internal) CAS Faculty Mentoring Grant, 2009-2011.

Kimberly Sikes, CAIT—$4,080 from the Illinois Attorney General for “Cyber-bullying Website & Domestic Violence Updates.” Sikes and Paul Sweet, CAIT—$70,921 from the McDonald’s Corporation for “McDonald’s Global eLearning Hosting & Maintenance.”

Dorie Vallillo, WIUM/ WIUW—$165,524 from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for “Radio Community Service 2010-2012.”

Dan Voorhis, Small Business Development Center—$144,000 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for “Illinois Small Business Development Center FY10” and $82,500 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for “Disaster Assistance Grant.”

Kimberlee Wisslead, CAIT—$9,520 from the Illinois State Board of Education for project “Illinois Reading First Academy.”

wiu.edu/connection — page 2
Civil Service News

New Employees

Edwards, Diane E., office support specialist, Geology, 12/14/09, 115 Tillman Hall, 298-1151.

Hamlin, Jennifer L., clerk, Women’s Studies, 12/4/09, 510 Currens Hall, 298-2214.


Spence, Holly E., collection specialist II, Billing & Receivables, 12/7/09, 106 Sherman Hall, 298-2031.

Promotions/Transfers/Reassigns

Bilbrey, Curtis L., police corporal, Public Safety, promoted to police sergeant, Public Safety, 12/14/09.

Green, S. A., office support specialist, Educational and Interdisciplinary Studies, promoted to program administrative assistant, Physical Plant Administration, 12/7/09.

Reed, Christina M., office support associate, Recreation, Park & Tourism Administration, promoted to office support specialist, President’s Office, 4/1/10.

Vincent Gayle L., staff clerk, Financial Aid, promoted to financial aid adviser IV, Financial Aid, 12/1/09.

Retirements

Bay, Robert K., police sergeant, Public Safety, 11/30/09.

Johnson, Linda S., offset press operator, 7/1/09.

Employee of the Month nominations

Western faculty, staff and administrators, as well as community members, wishing to nominate a civil service employee for this recognition should contact Tishly Herrington, Civil Service Employees Council (CSEC) public relations representative, at (309) 298-3157 or e-mail TA-Herrington@wiu.edu.

The Civil Service Employees Council (CSEC) at Western Illinois University and Sharp/Watts Copy Systems announced in December 2009 that Teresa Little, a staff clerk in Western’s Office of the Vice President for Advancement and Public Service, was named the 2009 Civil Service Employee of the Year.

Little was selected from a group of Employee of the Month recipients for 2009; she was the August Employee of the Month. She received $500, a plaque, and will have her name placed on a permanent plaque in the Human Resources office.

According to her nominator, in addition to serving as a staff clerk, Little also serves as assistant to the director of marketing, and in that role she is responsible for a myriad of activities and tasks.

“Teresa takes her job seriously and does not procrastinate. She treats all requests as ‘Priority 1.’ She is committed to helping Western increase its visibility and has far exceeded the job requirements for her position,” said her nominator.

Little began working at Western in 2006 as a chief clerk for the Office of the Vice President for Advancement and Public Service. She was reclassified, per audit, to her current position in 2007.

Employees of the Month

Neil Huston, grounds foreman in the Physical Plant landscape maintenance department, has been named the WIU January Civil Service Employee of the Month.

According to his nominator, Huston goes above and beyond his normal assignments and helps complete any task at hand. “He treats his crew with a great deal of respect and does not ask anything of them that he himself would not be willing to do.”

“Neil has assisted the Foundation office for many of their events, including setting up fencing and preparing the grounds prior to pre-game events. He is also instrumental in helping the Foundation office take care of the mums used at events throughout the year,” his nominator added. “He has come in on weekends when he was not on duty to make sure jobs were being completed and to help in any way possible.”

Huston was hired in 1997 as a building service worker I and worked as extra help through 1998. In 1999 he was hired as a grounds worker learner and became a status employee in 2000. Huston was reclassified to his current position in 2008.

Patty Mason, admissions/records supervisor in the admissions office, was named the December (2009) Civil Service Employee of the Month.

According to her nominators, Mason is friendly to everyone she assists, including students, their family members, and employees. “She always has a positive, caring attitude. She is very committed to her job and to the students coming to Western.”

“Her dedication allows the students to receive valuable information from someone who is willing to reach out to them. It is obvious that Patty cares about the University and sees the ‘big picture,’” her nominators added.

Mason began working at WIU in 2003 as a temporary/extra help secretary II in the Provost’s Office. She also worked as a cashier II for the University Bookstore and as a clerk II in the Office of the Registrar. Mason was hired as a full-time employee in 1996 as a typing clerk II in the Office of the Registrar and in 1997 was reallocated to a clerk III position. Three years later Mason was reallocated to an admissions/records specialist I and in 2000, she was promoted to an admissions/records officer I in Office of the Registrar. She was promoted to an admissions/records officer II in the admissions office in 2006, and in 2007 was reclassified to her current position.

wiu.edu/connection — page 3
Moreno publishes new book

In addition to advising students who work at Western Illinois University's student newspaper, Western Courier, Richard Moreno, director of WIU student publications, finds Nevada to be such a mysterious place that he suggests it's easy to believe in the existence of something at the bottom of Lake Tahoe. In his new book, "Mysteries and Legends of Nevada: True Stories of the Unsolved and Unexplained," Moreno also relays the state's enigma through the legend of a Nevada U.S. senator, who died a few days before an election, and to prevent voters from finding out, his body was kept iced in a bathtub.

Moreno recounts these stories and 15 more of the most enduring and fascinating tall tales in the Silver State. Among the mysteries explored in the 208-page book are such questions as: Did Butch Cassidy rob the First National Bank of Winnemucca? Who killed gangster Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel? Why did a San Francisco newspaper announce that the Garden of Eden had been found in Nevada?

Before coming to WIU, Moreno was publisher of Nevada Magazine. He is also the author of nine Nevada-related books, including "Nevada Curiosities." In 2007, he was honored with the Nevada Writers Hall of Fame Silver Pen Award. In addition, Moreno teaches journalism classes in Western's English and journalism department.

Published by Globe Pequot Press, "Mysteries and Legends of Nevada: True Stories of the Unsolved and Unexplained," is available in local bookstores and through amazon.com.


Barclay Key, History, presented “Southern Confessional: Racial Reconciliation in the 1960s,” Dec. 14, at the American Studies Center, University of Warsaw, Poland.

Reinhard Lindner, EIS, has been selected to serve on the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education's (AACTE) Committee on Research and Dissemination, and will serve on the editorial board for the Association's flagship journal, the Journal of Teacher Education.


Nicholas Pano, (history emeritus), served as chair and discussant for the session on “The 2009 Albanian Parliamentary Election” at the National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies on Nov. 15 in Boston, MA, and authored the article, “Stavro Skendi dhe studimeve albanologjike ne SHBA,” which was published in the November-December 2009 issue of ILLYRIA.

Frances Steward, C&I, was awarded an honorary membership in the Golden Key International Honor Society Nov. 8 ceremony on the WIU-Macomb campus.

Sandra Watkins, Educational Leadership, co-presented (with Larry Weber, Germantown, IL school district) “The Lost Generations: The Critical Need to Challenge the Advanced Learner at Lighting the Way,” at the Triple I School Boards Conference Nov. 19-22 in Chicago. Watkins was also elected as the higher education representative to the National Rural Educators Association and will serve on its executive board.


wiu.edu/connection — page 4

Professional activities

J.Q. Adams, Educational and Interdisciplinary Studies (EIS), facilitated a workshop, “Developing Competency,” for Grand Valley State Universities of Education Nov. 30 in Grand Rapids, MI. He was also keynote speaker at the Child Care Association of Illinois’ annual conference on Dec. 2 in Lisle.

Kathy Barclay, Curriculum and Instruction (C&I), presented “Meeting Young Children’s Individual Literacy Learning Needs” at the Regional Conference of the International Reading Association Nov. 30 in New Orleans, LA, and "Will Head Start Children Be Ready for Kindergarten? What Teachers and Parents Need to Know About Language and Literacy Development” at the National Head Start Parent Training Conferences Dec. 5 in San Jose, CA. Barclay’s “Together We Can: Uniting Families, Schools and Communities to Help All Children Learn” has also gone into its second edition (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company). She presented the keynote address, “Paying Attention to Young Children’s Language,” and conducted two break-out sessions, “Using Literacy Centers to Meet Young Children’s Individual Literacy Learning Needs” at the Southern Illinois Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Conference, Jan. 15 in Mt. Vernon, IL.


John Closen, Educational Leadership, (along with Dave Gilliland, Superintendent of Stockton School District; and Jodi Scott, Regional Superintendent of Schools, ROE 22); co-presented the session “District Consolidation—Can We Improve Educational Opportunities for Students at Lighting the Way?” at the Triple I School Boards Conference Nov. 19-22 in Chicago. Closen also attended the seminar “Response to Intervention (RTI) ‘In the Trenches’!”

Celebration Concert to feature humorists

The next Celebration Concert will feature musical humorists Lou and Peter Berryman at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 23 in the Music Performance Studio at Tri States Public Radio, 320 W. University Drive.

Lou and Peter Berryman were both raised in Appleton, WI, and began playing music together in high school during the Sixties. During the following nomadic decade, Lou studied classical voice and music theory in college while Peter continued an unfocused fascination with surrealist art, beatnik poetry, and jug band music.

They have written songs about history, cheese, beer and strange politics of their home state. They have appeared numerous times on such national programs as “A Prairie Home Companion” and “Weekend Edition,” and tour across North America throughout the year.

Seating is limited, so advance purchase of tickets is strongly encouraged; order online at tristatesradio.com or call (800) 895-2912 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Tickets are $10 for Tri States Public Radio members; $15 for the general public. Everyone attending is encouraged to bring a nonperishable food item or personal care item for donation to Macomb Loaves and Fishes.

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‘Go Red’ Feb. 5

The Western Illinois University Women’s Center, along with Campus Recreation, Employee Wellness, and the Beu Health Center, invite the campus community to a Go Red for Women Heart Healthy Luncheon from 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Friday, Feb. 5 in the Multicultural Center.

The Heart Healthy Luncheon will be prepared by dietetics majors from the Dietetics, Fashion Merchandising, and Hospitality (DFMH) department. The event will also include a resource fair and raffle.

Reservations are due by Friday, Jan. 29 to the Women’s Center. Admission is $10. Make checks payable to the WIU Women’s Center.

Those who cannot attend the luncheon are encouraged to wear red Feb. 5 in support of the Go Red for Women, which celebrates the power women have to band together to wipe out heart disease and stroke. For more information, contact Janine Cavicchia at (309) 298-2242 or J-Cavicchia@wiu.edu.

Save date for summit

Mark your calendars now for Western Illinois University’s Seventh Annual Environmental Summit, to be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday, April 7, in the University Union. The summit is open free to the public.

According to Mindy Pheiffer, summit chair, the theme for the 2010 event is “Protecting the Planet While Creating a Green Economy,” which focuses on the relationship between the environment and the economy in a way that is relevant to the residents of west-central Illinois, as well as to other rural and urban communities. The theme of the summit coincides with the 2009-2010 Universitywide theme “Dollars and Sense: Personal Finance to World Poverty.”

Ron Sherga, a WIU biology and geology graduate, will present the keynote address at noon on the Macomb campus and at 7 p.m. at the Figge Art Museum in Davenport, IA.

More information is also available at wiu.edu/sustainability/summit.

Library sale

Tired of that Super Mario Bros video game? Have an extra set of dominos sitting on the shelf gathering dust? Then consider donating these items — and more — to the University Libraries’ annual book, media and game sale, which will be held Feb. 8-11 in the Leslie F. Malpass Library staff lounge.

Donations of books, CDs, DVDs, games (computer or board games), software and other media are now being accepted. Donated items, which may be tax-deductible, may be dropped off at the access services desk, Malpass Library second level.

Proceeds from this sale are used to purchase furniture, equipment and supplies for student use. For more information, contact Greg Phelps at GW-Phelps@wiu.edu or (309) 298-2730.