Western Points of Pride
August 2016

Excellence in our Faculty/Staff

Awards

- Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology and department chair, and Dr. Jeff Poet, professor of mathematics, in collaboration with Dr. Malcolm Campbell and Dr. Laurie Heyer of Davidson College in North Carolina, received a three-year grant of $1,106,896 from the National Science Foundation to conduct undergraduate synthetic biology research.

Significant appointments

- Dr. Bob Willenbrink, founding dean of the School of Fine Arts, has been selected for membership in the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers.
- Shana Meyer, vice president of Student Affairs, co-chaired the 2016 Trails West! Festival with Robbie Morton. Trails West! is an annual arts festival in August celebrating the unique cultural heritage of St. Joseph, Missouri.
- Jana Frye, assistant professor of social work, was elected to the National Association of Social Workers - Missouri Chapter Board of Directors as vice president.
- Brett McKnight, student employment coordinator, attended the annual Midwest Association of Student Employment Administrators regional conference in Champagne-Urbana, Illinois at the University of Illinois. McKnight currently serves as vice president of membership on the board and was also part of the conference planning committee for the 2016 as well as the 2017 conferences. McKnight’s conference abstract proposal, “Will You Find Me a Job?” was accepted for a session at the conference.

Published articles

- Dr. Mark Mills, associate professor of biology, along with former student Jordan Meyer and Squaw Creek wildlife biologist Darrin Welchert, published the article, “The Hills are Alive with Herps” in the Missouri Prairie Journal. This article summarized amphibian and reptile survey work done by the authors and students.
- Dr. Kay Siebler’s, professor of English, book “Learning Queer Identity in the Digital Age” was published in July.
- Dr. Jon Mandracchia, assistant professor of psychology, co-authored a manuscript “Who Do You Think You Are? An Initial Investigation of Ego Identity Development and Criminogenic Thinking Among Incarcerated Offenders” that was accepted for publication in the refereed Journal of Criminal Psychology.
Dr. Susan Bashinski, associate professor of education, had her publication “From Manual Typewriter Operator to Graduate Online Programs Director…..The Journey From a Technological Perspective” published in the Hawk Hopes Blog.

Dave Tushaus, professor of legal studies, wrote and published “Conducting a Community Needs Assessment: A Student-Client Approach to Clinic Research” in the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education with his colleague in Nepal, Dr. Nirmal Upreti, and four Nepali law students from the National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata.

Dr. Sergio Molina, assistant professor of physical education, Andrew Chappell with the Los Angeles Baseball Organization, Jonathon McKibben with Texas Tech University, and David Stodden with the University of South Carolina published “Examining Impulse-Variability in Kicking” in Motor Control.

Presentations

- Dr. Bob Bergland, professor of journalism, presented the teaching panel session “Safe Spaces, Drowned Bunnies, and Prior Review: Facing an Academic Environment That Just Doesn’t Get It,” at the Association of Educators of Mass Communication and Journalism Conference in Minneapolis.
- Dr. Jennifer Hegeman, professor of mathematics and department chair, represented the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics at the Missouri Department of Higher Education Corequisites at Scale Taskforce meeting in Jefferson City, Missouri.
- Dr. Stacia Bensyl, professor of English, co-directed the Freeman Institute on Japanese Studies at the University of Hawai’i, Manoa. This institute prepares faculty to infuse Japanese studies into the curricula at undergraduate institutions.
- Dr. Mike Cadden, professor of English, delivered the paper “Narrative Theory in Children’s Literature: A Brief History and Proposal” at the Children’s Literature Association Conference in Columbus, Ohio.
- Dr. Kay Siebler, professor of English, presented her paper on training new teachers using feminist pedagogy at the Gender and Education Conference in Linkoping, Sweden.
- Dr. Matt Loehr, assistant professor of social work, was the lead trainer for the Trust Based Relationship Interventions training at Drumm Farm in Independence, Missouri. Dr. Loehr, along with four social work students, Nisha Jefferson, Ashley Buzzard, Julia Loehr and Precious Leonard, participated in the Brain Fit Camp hosted by Drumm Farm. Dr. Loehr also coordinated and assisted in organizing this event.
- Jana Frye, assistant professor of social work, taught the National Association of Social Workers’ Licensing Test Prep class in Kansas City, Missouri.
Dr. Pam Clary, assistant professor of social work, presented to the Mosaic Life Care Chaplain Education Unit on “Responding to Victims of Trauma: The Expectations of the Minister/Chaplain,” in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Dr. Sergio Molina, assistant professor of physical education, co-authored “Examining Supine-to-Stand as a Measure of Functional Motor Competence and Health in Children” with Danielle Nesbitt and David Stodden from the University of South Carolina. They also presented at the Feldenkrais Educational Foundation of North America Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, and at the 2016 North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSPA) in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Additionally, Dr. Molina and Stodden presented “Examining Impulse-Variability Theory and the Speed-Accuracy Trade-Off in Overarm Throwing Performances in Children” at the NASPSPA conference.

The Career Development Center developed a career readiness activity for the 2016 summer Chiefs camp interns. In total there were 26 interns representing 21 different universities and colleges from around the United States. The interns were divided into four smaller groups and participated in a scavenger hunt as part of their orientation training allowing them to become more familiar with Missouri Western’s services, departments and personnel. The personnel in the CDC arranged an exercise to promote professionalism that included an informative etiquette quiz along with a display of a formal place setting in order to showcase the importance of etiquette rules.

Attended

- Associate Provost Dr. Doug Davenport attended the Society for College and University Planning annual meeting. The meeting provided a wide range of speakers and panel discussions focused on strategic planning and innovation.
- Dr. Pam Clary, assistant professor of social work, volunteered at the MWSU/YWCA Golf Tournament at the St. Joseph Country Club in St. Joseph, Missouri.
- Admissions staff attended the ACT Enrollment Planners Conference. This conference covered most recent topics on enrollment management, innovative market and retention ideas utilizing social media, and national trends and best practices in recruitment, admissions and retention.
- Marilyn Baker, director of Financial Aid, attended the Veterans Certification Conference in St. Louis.
- Shana Meyer, vice president of student affairs, attended the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Board of Directors meeting in Miami Beach. Meyer serves as the professional standards division director for the Association. Her team has recently concluded a six-month process in which they oversaw a task force’s revision and redraft of the Association of College Personnel Administrators NASPA Professional Competencies Rubric.
- Recreation Services volunteered for face painting for the YWCA Women’s Shelter. This was a program for the children that live in the shelter as a welcome back to school.
- Kay-lynne Taylor, director of the Career Development center, attended the annual Missouri Chapter of the Society for Human Resources Management Conference this week in Osage Beach, Missouri. She serves as a representative of the local SHRM Chapter - HRMA of
Northwest Missouri. Taylor currently serves as vice president of membership for the local chapter.

**Excellence in our Students**

**Published article**

- Student Jordan Meyer along with Dr. Mark Mills, associate professor of biology, and Squaw Creek wildlife biologist Darrin Welchert, published the article “The Hills are Alive with Herps” in the *Missouri Prairie Journal*. This article summarized amphibian and reptile survey work done by the authors and students.

**Presentation**

- Four social work students, Nisha Jefferson, Ashley Buzzard, Julia Loehr and Precious Leonard, participated in the Brain Fit Camp hosted by Drumm Farm in Independence, Missouri. Dr. Loehr was the lead trainer for the Trust Based Relationship Interventions training at Drumm Farm.

**Attended**

- Two students traveled to East China Normal University in Shanghai for summer Study Away. Two students studied in Saint-Etienne, France. All three received Western Institute scholarships of $500.
- A group of 11 students, faculty, and community members traveled to India to offer nursing and physical therapy to patients in a rural area of the country. Dr. Maureen Raffensperger, associate professor of biology, and Stephanie Stewart, instructor of nursing, led the trip.
- One student from the Department of Criminal Justice, Legal Studies and Social Work presented a paper at the fifth Annual Pro Bono Conference in Bali, Indonesia in August. She was accompanied by her instructor, Dave Tushaus.

**Excellence in our Programs**

**Presentation**

- “Fiddler on the Roof” was a success, both in terms of critical acclaim and attendance. Closing with a sell-out, four of the six performances had attendance over 390 in a theatre with 431 seats.