

WESTERN

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Marion (Banks) Gross '82



Western Illinois University

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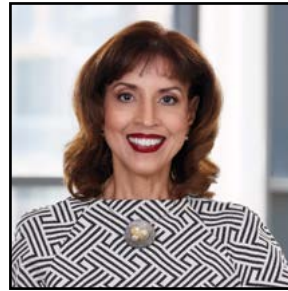


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FEATURES



From W to M

WIU alumna grows supply chain career with McDonald's.

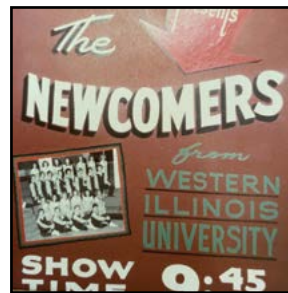
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Rocky on Parade

An idea drawn on a napkin has grown into a popular public art project.

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Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of The Newcomers

Ladies and gentlemen, presenting WIU's historic singing group.

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WIU's Natural Campus:

The Mississippi River offers students a unique classroom.

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Have tips, questions or comments for the Western Illinois University Alumni Magazine?

Email jk-pospeschil@wiu.edu.

To send us your news, see pg. 41.

Editor's Note: We apologize for the delay with this latest issue of the Western Magazine. Due to unforeseen circumstances (paper and other shortages, as well as cost increases for materials), we were unable to produce this latest issue for several months. Thank you for your understanding and patience. We hope you enjoy this new issue of the Western Magazine.



LETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni & Friends,

I've had the privilege to meet many of you around the United States in the past year as I embarked on my inaugural Alumni & Friends Tour with our staff in the Office of Alumni Relations, as well as during events on campus and in our communities. It has been a pleasure learning about your experiences at Western and hearing your ideas for, and feedback about, your alma mater.

My first year as your president was productive and immensely satisfying. I am proud that, together, we are working toward an even more vibrant future for Western Illinois University. We are here for all of our students, faculty, and staff, and we are working hard to ensure that Western is a safe and welcoming institution for everyone to live, learn, and work.

As I promised when I joined the Leatherneck family in January 2021, I pledge to continue to commit time, energy, and persistence to existing and new initiatives, including recruitment and retention, financial sustainability, diversity and racial and social justice, institutional distinctiveness, internationalization, and strengthening the relationships with our communities.

I remain dedicated to student success, growth, excellence, innovation, and transformation.

Again, thank you for making my first year and a half at WIU a memorable and remarkable year. I'm honored to serve as your president, and I look forward to seeing you in the coming months at events in Macomb and the Quad Cities, and throughout the U.S. (and mark your calendars for Homecoming 2022, which is set for Oct. 21-22)!

Wishing you the best,

Guiyou Huang, Ph.D.

President

University News

Organic Farmer

Western Illinois University alumnus Dave Campbell '80 was recently named the 2022 Organic Farmer of the Year by Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services (MOSES).

The award was presented at the 33rd annual Organic Farming Conference, organized by MOSES, and held in La Crosse. This conference is the largest organic farming conference in the country.

Campbell, a graduate of WIU's teacher education program, was one of four students in his class who were given a unique opportunity to do their student teaching in Montana. While he did not major in agriculture, he ventured into organic farming because the teaching job he had originally been offered did not work out, and the next job he was offered was simply not what he was looking for. As someone who was raised by a farmer, farming was the next logical step.

"As it turned out, I have used my education background to assist me through many activities I have participated in over the past 20 years, including curriculum development work for organic farming publications written for some of the Land Grant Universities here in the upper Midwest, presenting numerous workshops, along with serving on National Policy Committees based in Washington, D.C.," said Campbell.

Campbell was inspired to go into organic farming specifically because of his father, who adopted the organic method in 1967, when Dave was just 12.

"We believed that organic was the way to do it," said Campbell. "We didn't like spraying chemicals on the farm, and we knew, with good management, we could grow our farm that way."

As an alumnus, Campbell has not lost his passion for the University. He returns to Macomb every time he has a chance in order to attend events at the Allison Organic Research and Demonstration Farm, such as the Organic Farm Field Day, and to engage with current faculty and students. He has advice for current



students, whether they are majoring in agriculture or not.

Andy Clayton '96, the research technician who just retired from managing the WIU Allison Organic Research and Demonstration Farm, said Campbell has been coming to events for many years and has been very supportive of the agriculture program, especially research programs involving current students.

"Dave has generously donated to our program, but has also given back in other ways," said Clayton. "Last year, on our Field Day, we were having an issue with some of our equipment and he went above and beyond to ensure we could fix it even though he was just a guest at the program."

Clayton has attended the MOSES conference before and therefore has an understanding of the importance of this opportunity for not only Campbell, but also WIU as his alma mater.

"This conference is the largest in the country and this award is the most prestigious award given at the conference," said Clayton. ●



Beloved Mascot Reproduced as a Bobblehead

The sweet face of Western Illinois University's Col. Rock IV (aka "Ray") mascot now graces an officially licensed and limited edition bobblehead, produced by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum.

The AKC-certified English bulldog is wearing his official "W" jersey, and his ever-present bulldog tongue is part of the statuette. The bobbleheads are available at bit.ly/WIURayBobblehead, at a cost of \$25. A portion of the proceeds from the bobblehead sales support WIU's live mascot program.

Rocky joined the WIU family on May 15, 2010, and was WIU's first official four-legged mascot since the 1970s. He officially retired in Summer 2019, when the collar was passed to Ray as WIU's official live mascot. Both Rocky and Ray were donated by Richard and Beth Siess, of the Siess Ranch in Seneca, KS. WIU alumni Joe Roselieb '07 MS '09, executive director of auxiliary services and risk management at Western, and Ketra Roselieb '09 MBA '11, executive director of financial affairs at the University, house and train (and chauffeur) Ray, who turned 4 Feb. 14. The Roseliebs were also the caretakers for Rocky, who passed away Jan. 25, 2021, just before his 11th birthday.

In Fall 2021, the Mascot Memorial Plaza project was unveiled outside of the University Union, which pays tribute to WIU's live mascots, both past and present. ●



Bobblehead proceeds benefit WIU's live mascot program.



WIU Art Professor Creates 66-foot Community Mural for Macomb Beautiful

Macomb's downtown area recently became host to an artistic addition, as Western Illinois University Art and Design Professor Bill Howard installed a 66-foot mural on the north wall of Gelsosomo's Pizza.

The mural, unveiled during a June 16 ceremony, was commissioned by the Macomb Beautiful Association as part of the organization's 50th anniversary celebration. The MBA began in 1972, with the intention to beautify the community, and its members voted in 2019 to have the mural created as a gift to the community. Jim and Amy Buwick offered the side of the Gelsosomo's building for the mural's home. Amy recently retired as the director of the University's Counseling Center.

The 12-foot tall mural is made up of 24

four-foot by eight-foot aluminum panels that were painted by Howard and other WIU faculty and student and community volunteers in Garwood Hall. Howard, along with other current and former art faculty and students, completed a mural on the north side of The Old Dairy in June 2019 to portray the community's history.

"The response to the mural at the Old Dairy was so positive, it seemed natural to create another," Howard said. "I was very excited and honored to design and complete this mural project for the Macomb Beautiful Association. This group was very motivated to give Macomb a piece of public art we can all be proud of, and I believe the design we came up with truly reflects the essence of our beautiful community, and its many

talented residents. Though the scope of this project was challenging, it proved to be very rewarding."

Macomb Beautiful President Barb Knox said the organization's membership discussed four plans to commemorate its anniversary, but the overwhelming choice was the mural so "we could provide the city with something everyone could enjoy." Planning for the mural began in 2019, and Knox said the organization's members wanted it to reflect the natural landscape of the region.

The mural location is at the intersection of U.S. Routes 67 and 136.

The MBA's 50th anniversary planning committee launched a fundraising campaign last year to pay for the mural. ●



Howard, at the top of the photo, creating the mural on aluminum panels to be hung on the side of Gelsosomo's Pizza in Macomb. He is pictured working on the mural with Steve Hensley.



WIU Art and Design Professor Bill Howard addresses the crowd at the June unveiling of a new community mural.



Macomb Beautiful President Barb Knox said the organization voted overwhelmingly to commission a mural to commemorate its 50th anniversary.

Agriculture Alumni Aid in Kentucky Tornado Response

“In a time of need, the answer is simple, help.”

Those are the words of Western Illinois University alumnus Riley Hintzsche, the agricultural educator and FFA advisor at Streator Township High School.

University
News

When Hintzsche, a 2014 graduate, and fellow WIU alumnus, 2016 graduate Mitch Miller, the agriculture teacher at Midwest Central High School in Manito, IL, heard about the tornado that struck Mayfield, KY, in December, both knew they needed to take action. Both were then contacted by Jesse Faber, the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Pontiac High School, and the man both call the “ringleader” of efforts to gather supplies to send to the region.



Hintzsche and Faber happen to be friends with Mayfield school administrator and former district agriculture teacher Richard Horn, and contacted him. In just six days, truckloads of supplies were headed south.

One of Hintzsche’s former students, Ali Talty, is the store manager of the Streator RP Home and Harvest, and donated two pallets of water and helped with the purchase of pallets of cat and dog food and pine shavings. A parent of another former student called the Ottawa Community Food Bank, which donated seven pallets of items.

“The donation drive escalated beyond what I ever imagined,” said Miller. “We quickly got to a point where a semi and a 53-foot enclosed van trailer were going to be needed and beyond. I reached out to some contacts I had about borrowing such equipment and we (so many were involved with this) made it happen.”

Miller and others drove three large trucks to Kentucky, beginning in Peoria, IL Dec. 17, with a stop at 5 Star Water to add seven pallets of donated and reduced cost water to the truck.

The caravan moved to Manito, IL, then to Pontiac, IL, to collect donations from the Midwest Central, Streator, and Pontiac school districts. Faber said more than 90 donations of cash and other items were dropped off at the school in Pontiac. That total includes two FFA chapters whose combined efforts



resulted in three vehicles filled with donations. A truckload of contributions was also delivered from Platteville, WI, and from local individuals and businesses.

After delivery of all the donations, including \$2,000 in monetary donations and three pallets of miscellaneous items, Horn took the volunteers on a driving tour of the devastation.

“I thought I was in a war zone—homes leveled, businesses in piles, streets barely clear enough to drive through,” said Miller. “Richard shared with us that 60-70 students and eight staffers lost their homes.”

WIU School of Agriculture Director Andy Baker said he is extremely proud of the University’s agriculture alumni, who didn’t hesitate to react to a critical situation.

“Leatherneck Pride is everywhere, and we need to celebrate those Leathernecks who step up and take action at a moment of crisis,” said Baker. “It is a truly proud moment for the Leatherneck Nation.” ●



Student Spotlight

AMANDA SHEPARD

Junior psychology major, mental health minor, at the Western Illinois University-Quad Cities campus.

My name is Amanda Shepard, and I am currently a junior psychology major, mental health minor, at the Western Illinois University-Quad Cities campus.

I initially went to college right after high school, dropped out and then went back for a semester a few years later before leaving college again. In that time, I had a couple kiddos and chose to stay home and raise them. And now I'm back in college after being out for 12 years.

It was a little nerve-racking coming back! I knew I wanted to go into the field of psychology, but I wasn't 100 percent sure if I wanted to counsel or do something else with my degree. Thankfully, I had some really good mentors who strongly encouraged me to go back to school. I am strong-minded and determined, so I knew that all I had to do was get my foot in the door and allow the classes, along with my passion for psychology, to guide me.

I am also a student who lives with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). I have learned that for students like me, we qualify for accommodations through the Disability Resource Center at WIU. There are a number of great things people with ADHD can do, but there are also limitations, so



the accommodations WIU offers are something I am incredibly thankful for. I'm also so appreciative at how helpful the professors are at helping students succeed, and I also appreciate the passion and enthusiasm they have for the subjects they teach. That makes for an encouraging learning environment.

As a part of the college and life experience, I knew I wanted to connect outside of my classes. I accepted a job on campus in the WIU Counseling Department and I also joined one of the many student organizations at WIU: the Psychology Club. What a great opportunity this has been. I've gotten to know people in that group and made meaningful connections, and I now serve as the organization's president. I am also a member of the Quad Cities chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success.

I am thankful for these learning experiences and leadership opportunities that I can take into the workforce after I graduate.

I am so thankful for all the opportunities and relationships I have developed while being at WIU. I look forward to what my future has to offer. ●



WIU Columbarium Placed on Hill Overlooking Campus

By Jodi K. Pospeschil, MA '15

Foundation
News

An idea to celebrate a lifetime of love for Western Illinois University has evolved into the placement of a columbarium on a hill overlooking the University campus. The granite monument contains spaces for the interment of ashes.

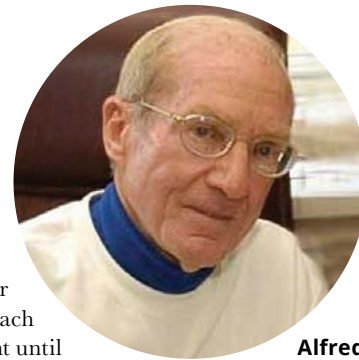
Before he passed away in May 2017, WIU Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration Professor Emeritus Alfred “Gil” Belles discussed the original columbarium construction idea with WIU Foundation Executive Officer Brad Bainter '79 MS '83. Belles' ashes were the first to be interred in the columbarium at a ceremony in October 2021.

In 2007, Belles established an endowment to WIU, which supports the Performing Arts Society, Tri States Public Radio and the RPTA department. Each of those areas agreed to forgo the income from the endowment for one year to create the columbarium, with the WIU Foundation and a private donation paying the remaining balance.

Belles' passion for WIU was clear to everyone who knew him, and he could often be found in the audience at countless University events long after his 1996 retirement.

“Gil supported WIU and its students,” said Bainter. “This University and its people were his home and family. He will forever be a part of WIU.”

Belles first came to WIU in 1968 to teach in the history department. He also helped create WIU's Black Studies department, and served as chair of the University's African



Alfred
“Gil” Belles

American Studies program. He continued to study, earning another degree and moving to teach in the RPTA department until his 1996 retirement.

A passionate advocate for Western and for Macomb, Belles previously served on the board for the Performing Arts Society, YMCA of McDonough County, Tri-States Public Radio and Tri-States Audio Information Services, the Western Illinois Museum, Meals on Wheels, McDonough County Historical Society and the Macomb Public Library. He received the WIU Honorary Alumni Award in 2010.

The remaining spaces in the WIU columbarium are for sale for \$3,000 each and proceeds will be put into a fund for maintenance and future expansion. Two thirds of the cost is tax-deductible.

A married couple recently purchased the monument's second space and the WIU Foundation oversees the funds.

The columbarium is placed on a hill east of Sherman Hall, adjoining the Memorial Tree Grove, where one tree is planted each May to honor employees who have passed away that year. To date more than 60 University employees have been honored with the plantings.

For more information about the purchase of columbarium spaces, contact the WIU Foundation at wiu.edu or call (309) 298-1808. ●





WIU Alumnus Makes Planned Gift to Fund Computer Science Scholarships

A planned gift to Western Illinois University from a 1977 Information Science graduate will impact generations of students studying computer science, paving the way for full-ride scholarships within the College of Business and Technology.

Martin R. Brown has pledged a \$5 million gift to the WIU Foundation, which, at current investment levels, would provide annual scholarships to cover tuition, room and meal plan and fees for 10 WIU CBT students per year. Brown received his bachelor's degree from WIU in information science.

While growing up in DuPage County, Brown attended Glenbard North High School and graduated as a member of the first class at the school. Several of his friends attended WIU and, after visits to campus, he realized he could see himself "being happy here."

After graduation, Brown joined the Arthur Andersen & Co. accounting firm in Chicago, and was made a partner in 1987. He was working in the consulting division, which later became Andersen Consulting, then Accenture. Brown is now a retired partner and consultant from Accenture.

"My education was a great starting point," he said. "The biggest surprise for me was how little I actually knew once I began working. That's not a negative statement about WIU, rather recognition of the amount of additional knowledge I needed to gain on the job to be proficient."

Throughout his career, Brown said he most enjoyed staying immersed in technology.

Recently, he began rethinking his estate planning and began discussions about possibilities with then-WIU CBT Development Director Suzanne Woodward MS '98. He said he believes giving back to WIU is important because his professional experiences taught him to be grateful and to give back.

"I was really thinking about what I cared about and where I wanted to leave my estate," Brown said. "My firm had a strong belief in stewardship that molded who I became."

Now, in retirement, Brown is operating a "hobby" farm in Michigan.

"It's 40 acres and wooded—it's a project of passion," he said.

"I garden, grow fruits and vegetables, mow and plant trees. I previously took care of bees, but now I keep it to goods I can consume."

Brown previously established an endowed scholarship at Western, which supports a \$1,000 annual scholarship.

From his time at WIU, Brown said he most remembers the ability of professors to guide students to what jobs would be best for their talents.

"It was expected that we would stop by during office hours and spend time getting to know our professors outside of the classroom," he said. "They helped you succeed. They interact with recruiters from different companies and they can recommend students. Students shouldn't overlook the role faculty can have in helping figure out their future."

Brown was last back on the WIU campus in 2007, when his nephew, Jacob Davis '08, graduated.

"Planned giving is a very important part of our development program at Western," said Brad Bainter '79 MS '83, executive officer of the WIU Foundation. "These gifts help our University and its colleges and departments plan for our future and ensure Western will remain strong for many years to come."

For more information about estate planning options at WIU, visit wiu.giftplans.org, contact WIU Executive Officer Brad Bainter at BL-Bainter@wiu.edu, or call (309) 298-1808. ●



WIU Agricultural Research Provides Alternative Crop Options to Regional Farmers



By Jodi K. Pospeschil, MA '15

WIU Assistant Professor of Agriculture Shelby Henning (left) and University of Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator Chris Enroth look at the root growth of a recently harvested crop of ginger at the University farm.





“Both of these plantings have medicinal qualities,” said Henning. “Ginger is good for digestive health and nausea reduction, and turmeric has anti-cancer qualities.”

Henning and Enroth raised five varieties of ginger and recently obtained an Illinois Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant to further study ginger production in Illinois. The latest batch of ginger was planted in the high tunnel in late May.

Henning and Enroth previously donated 30 pounds of harvested ginger to Forgottonia Brewing in Macomb. Forgottonia co-owner and brewer Sean West, a webmaster at WIU, said he used part of the crop to brew six kegs, or 93 gallons of Belgian Triple beer, which sold out, and was well received. He said the Belgian yeast used in the mix already has a spiciness, and the ginger accentuated that.

In addition to ginger and turmeric, Henning has grown a wide variety of specialty crops in the high tunnel, including tomatoes, bell and hot peppers, eggplant, lemongrass, basil, lettuce and a variety of cover-crops. He uses the high tunnel and its plantings for hands-on instruction as often as possible. This semester, the tunnel was used for laboratory exercises by students enrolled in an introductory course covering horticulture and agronomy Henning teaches with WIU Agriculture Professor Mark Bernards.

“This kind of collaborative approach in research and teaching really demonstrates the quality of the agriculture program here at WIU,” said Henning. “Also, on a somewhat more selfish level, this research allows me to indulge myself in the enjoyment of cultivating uncommonly encountered crops, as the more unusual the crop is, the more likely I am drawn to plant it.”

For more information about the WIU School of Agriculture, visit wiu.edu/agriculture or call (309) 298-1080. ●

Western Illinois University School of Agriculture Assistant Professor Shelby Henning has added two more specialty crops to his campus research program to provide information to local and regional farmers on growing options.

Henning, in cooperation with University of Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator Chris Enroth, recently harvested several varieties of ginger and turmeric in an effort to develop them as alternative crops for Illinois growers. Both men agree the work is unique because there is a lack of data available about ginger and turmeric production in Illinois.

Enroth said this trial is intended to both broaden and inform what could be planted as part of a grower's crop rotation. As Henning and Enroth dug into the dirt at the School of Agriculture's high tunnel recently, just off Tower Road, the rich aroma of the two plantings was hard to miss.



The ginger and turmeric harvest at WIU adds to the data available about growing the crop in Illinois.

WIU Opens

Largest eSports Facility

in the Midwest

By Rachel Greene
University Communications
and Marketing Intern

In Fall 2021, Western Illinois University unveiled a new amenity to students on the Macomb campus, the Digital Recreation Center. While partially geared toward students who are interested in eSports, particularly the Western Electronic Gaming Association (WEGA) and WIU Macomb's eSports team, the center houses equipment and games that can be enjoyed by any student on campus.

The Digital Recreation Center currently holds the title of largest University eSports facility in the Midwest, paving the way for schools in the region and beyond to elevate their facilities and promote student awareness of and involvement in gaming and eSports.

The center is open from 10 a.m. - 2 a.m., giving students hours that differ from those of a typical academic building. Equipment available at the center includes PCs, Nintendo Switches, Xboxes, Virtual Reality systems and more.

Ian Szechowycz '12 serves as University Technology's director of Digital Spaces and of the Digital Recreation Center. He played a crucial role in bringing this center to campus, along with WIU Auxiliary Services, and specifically its executive director, Joe Roselieb '07 MS '09, WIU Facilities Management, uTech, and many other individuals who saw this vision and wanted to help.

"It has been a long process to get this center on campus, but we thought the benefits of it were immense for our students," said Szechowycz. "Everyone has been blown away by the space so far and we have not heard any negative feedback."

Students have had a part in creating the space and calling it their own, being allowed to help design walls, suggest new systems, and provide ideas. The center even held a competition in Fall 2021 for students to submit wall art related to video games; allowing them to choose mediums such as painting, drawing, photography, digital media, prints or mixed media.

While the unveiling of the center may be over, it is not done evolving and growing. According to Szechowycz, student suggestions are being taken on a rolling basis to help the center best accommodate the wants and needs of the campus community.

"The more this place grows, the more we will adjust to it growing," said Szechowycz. "I don't foresee this being a stagnant place, I think it's going to be ever-evolving. The more people and more feedback we have, the better this will become."

Students interested in utilizing the center must go to their

Scan for video
interview





WIU's Digital Rec Center and gaming lounge - Now Open!

- One of the largest in Illinois
- Equipped with 24 Dell Gaming PCs, 2 PS5s, 2 Xbox Series Xs, 4 Nintendo Switches, original Nintendo, Super Nintendo and 3 VR sets
- Broadcast room for events and streaming
- Hours ranging from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily

STARS account to complete the terms of agreement, which will provide them access for the semester. The center is located at 717 W. Adams St., across from Sherman Hall, in the former Chapman's Bookstore. The building was purchased by the WIU Foundation. ●

STRAIGHT FROM A STUDENT

Elizabeth Orwig, Junior, Special Education

Summer of 2020 was a blur. It was the summer after I graduated high school and my last two months before I left home for college.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I missed out on multiple traditional senior experiences. Finishing my track career, prom, graduation—all things I had been looking forward to since I began high school were gone. While I was going through the motions of online classes and virtual ceremonies, I couldn't really seem to find the closure I was looking for in this chapter of life. Those feelings made college seem very uncertain. I didn't know what to expect, and wondered if I was ready for such a change in my life under the circumstances. Despite these feelings, I knew Western was the place for me; and, if I was going to take the jump anywhere, I wanted it to be Western.

Western was always in the books for me considering I am a legacy student. My grandpa Orwig graduated from WIU in 1968. My dad received three degrees from Western, recently graduating in

what Western is to me. I wanted the chance to know my professors and for them to know me. I know I will get a quality education at Western at a reasonable price.

I knew I wanted to be a teacher at a young age. At that age, it was because I liked holding the pointer, reading the date and weather to my classmates, and drawing on the SMART Board. Although not much has changed, since I do still like writing on SMART Boards, there is much more depth in my choice to pursue education as my career path. Public education is something I am passionate about. I know the importance of education and of educators who are role models to students. I have been lucky enough to have had many teachers and professors in my life who I look up to. I hope that after college,



and when I become a teacher, I will have students who look up to me the same way.

In high school, I was fortunate enough to help during adaptive P.E. class for students in special education. I fell in love with the class, and I looked forward to it every day. Another experience that led me to a career in special education involves coaching Special Olympics basketball. In working with these athletes, I learned the importance of caring for others and about being selfless, no matter what in life. My students were some of the happiest people I knew. They were always smiling and cheerful. They didn't let anything stop them. The athletes and students from adaptive P.E. taught me to love this career, and

2018 with his Ed. Specialist and Superintendent Licensure. My mom went to Western to receive her master's in reading in 2002. I also have aunts and uncles that graduated from Western. Safe to say, Western has had its fair share of Orwigs!

Being a legacy student isn't the only reason I chose Western. I came to Western because of the smaller campus size. I wanted to go somewhere that felt like a community, and that is exactly

they inspired me to reach my future goal of being a teacher.

I started out my college career knowing that I wanted to leave it better than I came in. My first idea? An Education Living Learning Community (LLC). Being a passionate education major, I immediately saw the need. An LLC is a floor of a residence hall which focuses on one major. This allows residents to live, study and socialize with students in their program. WIU is known for its tremendous School of Education, and turning out great teachers, some of which taught me during high school.

Tea Wheat '21, another education major, and I took the initiative of reaching out and conversing with the School of Education to get their support. After we received their endorsement, we set up a meeting with Residence Life, where we presented our idea.

The floor was approved in the beginning of February 2021.

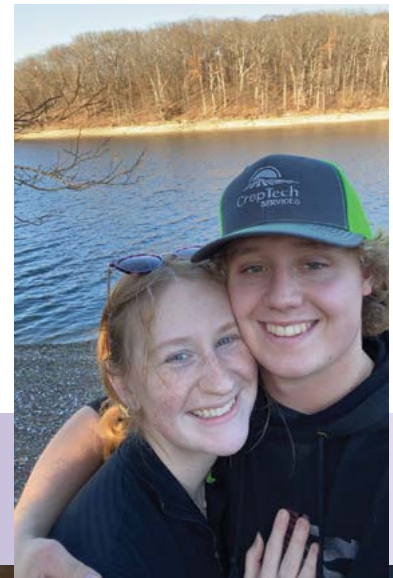
I look forward to Fall 2022 where all education majors, no matter what stage they are at in their program, can collaborate and live



Of all my involvements, being president of the Student Government Association (SGA) is my favorite. Freshman year (Fall '20) I was lucky enough to interview and get the position of Director of Academic Affairs on SGA's Cabinet. In this position, I attended Faculty Senate meetings as the student liaison. I also handled SGA's social media efforts. Fast forward to April 2021—the end of my first year at Western—I was elected to serve as the Student Government Association President of the Macomb campus. I was honored to be voted into this position by my peers as a sophomore.

Working with Cabinet on various occasions has been the highlight of SGA for me. I am honored to say that I work with the most amazing people. Everyone is hardworking and always ready for a challenge.

I have also enjoyed the opportunity SGA has given me to grow professionally. In my position, I am asked to speak at events and meetings on behalf of the students. Through this I have met so many individuals and made connections across campus that I am thankful to have during my time here.



Straight from a Student



together to create a community. Having that support system in the education profession is important, and the floor that I helped establish will build connections that future educators can take into their careers.

Upon my arrival at Western, I knew I wanted to get involved. I was heavily involved in high school, and wanted to keep that up in college. Over my past year and a half at Western, I have been involved in the Student Government Association, Food Pantry, Residence Life, Homecoming Committee, the Westernettes Dance Team, Lincoln/Washington/Grote Hall Government and various committees across campus. I also have an on-campus job working in the Photography and Design Production office. I have met the most amazing people through these activities who I am lucky enough to call my friends.

Between school, work and SGA, I am pretty busy. When I do have time, I like to run on campus, go to the Rec, play piano at Browne, hike at Argyle Lake State Park or spend time with my aunt, uncle and two cousins, who live in Macomb. I am on track to graduate in Spring 2024 with a Bachelor of Science in Education - Special Education, with endorsements in Elementary Education, Middle Level English and Language Arts, and Middle Level Social Studies. After graduation, I look forward to teaching at a school-of-need in Illinois to fulfill my Golden Apple Scholarship commitment, a scholarship program dedicated to ending the teacher shortage in Illinois. In the meantime, I will continue to enjoy my time here at Western! ●



MOVING FROM W TO

By Darcie Shinberger '89 MS '98

Editor's Note: Since the story went to print, Marion Gross has been promoted to Executive Vice President, Global Chief Supply Chain Officer, and will join McDonald's Corporation's Global Senior Leadership Team, effective Sept. 1.

When describing Western Illinois University alumna Marion (Banks) Gross' '82 successful supply chain management career, you could easily say "she's lovin' it."

Gross, who is the senior vice president and chief supply chain officer for McDonald's USA, has had a nearly 30-year career with the corporation, starting a few years after getting her degree in Business Transportation and Physical Distribution (now called Supply Chain Management). As Gross explained it, she came by her career choice honestly.

"Supply chain runs in my family. I was an Army brat, moving around the U.S., as my dad was an ordnance officer with the U.S. Army," she said. "My father always used to tell us that we could be whatever we wanted in life. When I told him I wanted to be an artist—I always had a great passion for the arts, drawing, painting, pottery—he told me, 'expect that you'll starve.'"

"I'm not sure if that comment was as much about the difficulty of the profession, or his view of my capability," Gross laughed. "With that very honest perspective from him, I quickly pivoted and aspired to a career in business."

WIU Memories

And that "career pivot," turned out to be a successful move for Gross. After her graduation from Rich South High School in Richton Park (IL), she intended to go to college in Illinois as she, along with her three siblings, would all be in school at the same time at some point, so a state college was most affordable. Gross looked at all of the in-state schools and "WIU just felt right."

"The campus and the culture suited me, and it was the right size for me to have a great college experience. I felt at home here, and I felt like I could thrive at Western," Gross remembered.

While she was focused on getting her degree and graduating, building on her love of the arts, dance and creative expression, Gross joined the WIU Wranglers Dance Team (now called the Westernettes), and was an active member of the team for three years.

“The fondest memories I have about WIU are around the friendships and relationships I built,” she added. “The learning and growth that comes from being on your own for the first time, and becoming an adult with responsibilities and all that comes with taking charge of your life. Of course, there was great fun too.”

She first chose QIS (IT) as her major when she landed at WIU in 1979, but by the time she hit the first semester of her junior year, she realized that she didn’t have a passion for IT, so she made a change to her degree program, first considering management and marketing.

“While I thought that major was interesting, I would be competing with a huge population of graduates with those majors. That’s when I discovered Transportation and Physical Distribution,” Gross explained. “This was a male-dominated industry then, and I can attest to that as many of my 300-student lecture halls were 95 percent-plus men. But I knew that this industry was ripe for change and that it would need women. My instincts were right. Upon graduation, I quickly found a job sooner than my friends with other business degrees, and with higher pay.”



During her time at WIU, Gross was a member of the Wranglers Dance Team for three years.

Starting Out

Her first job was in operations as a dispatcher and office manager for the messenger courier service Uni-Carrier, in Willowbrook, IL. After two years, Gross took a job in sales for Yellow Freight, and after a few years there, decided sales wasn’t for her, so she returned to operations as a dispatcher and manager for Golden Arch Express, a transportation company that delivered food and packaging from McDonald’s suppliers to their distribution centers.

“This was my first introduction to the McDonald’s system,” Gross added.

She has been with the McDonald’s system, which includes its suppliers, for 35 years. On March 1, Gross celebrated her 29th year with McDonald’s.

“I stayed with Golden Arch Express, which was a HAVI company, for three years, and after they sold the company, I joined another HAVI company, Perseco, which was responsible for the procurement of all of McDonald’s packaging, such as French fry boxes, cups and straws,” Gross said.

I felt at home here, and I felt like I could thrive at Western.

Over the next four years, Gross went from manager to senior manager to director ... and then McDonald’s took notice and hired her for their company. Since that time, she has held supply chain management positions over the years, starting in what was then called purchasing (which evolved over the years to include purchasing, distribution and sustainability, and is now known as supply chain).

“I held a number of different buying positions for food, packaging, toys, equipment, taking laterals and promotions along the way, which I recommend by the way. You learn a lot by moving laterally and that increases your value to the company, and better prepares you for the next higher role,” she said.

A Golden (Arches) Career

Gross led the company’s Field Supply Chain Team, and has held her current role as SVP for the past nine years. As a senior vice president and chief supply chain officer, she is responsible for executing the strategic direction of McDonald’s Supply Chain, including the oversight of nearly \$14 billion in food and beverage, equipment, packaging and premiums, and distribution for more than 15,000 restaurants across the U.S. and Canada. According to Gross, her primary focus is developing strong teams to drive business results, in quality and food safety, strategic sourcing and cost management, logistics and supply chain integration, sustainability, new product commercialization, field execution and supplier diversity.

“Nearly 29 years later with McDonald’s, I still love what I do, and I honestly have never thought of doing what I do anywhere else. McDonald’s is such a wonderful brand, with a strong, people-first culture that I love being a part of,” she said. “McDonald’s has afforded me many opportunities to grow and develop into the leader I am today. Our three-legged stool business model, where the franchisees, suppliers and company must all succeed for McDonald’s to succeed, is one that has served us well and is a true competitive advantage still today.”

Gross has held numerous positions over the years, and learned many aspects of the company’s business model. With the multiple experiences she’s had with McDonald’s, she noted that the most rewarding part of her distinguished career has been the people she has met and worked with along the way.

“I truly mean that. Being able to work with, collaborate with and lead so many talented people is truly a pleasure and an honor. At McDonald’s, we say we are ‘better together’ and it’s true. When we are aligned, the franchisees, employees and our suppliers, we can accomplish anything, and we have fun doing it,” she explained.

“When we’re talking about people, my favorite part of the job is working with top talent. My team surprises me every day with their amazing talent, working with suppliers who are deeply committed to the success of McDonald’s, and with franchisees who make it happen at the moment of truth for approximately 28 million customers every day at the front counter and in our drive-thru’s, and with the size and scale of the McDonald’s



Gross visits one of McDonald's Distribution Centers.

system, the unique and undeniable ability to make an impact and a difference for our industry, communities and the planet," Gross added.

Learning from the Pandemic

While the job remains fun for Gross, she shared, the past few years have been a challenge in the midst of the global Coronavirus pandemic. However, Gross said her team and her company have been fortunate to endure and experience continued success in the marketplace.

"It has been challenging for all supply chains, across many sectors. And when you're the size and scale of McDonald's, it's even more challenging," she explained. "Three things have enabled us to mitigate or minimize impacts to our supply chain and manage significantly better than others: our strategic focus on resiliency started well before the pandemic; we have strong contingency plans in place, and we have committed suppliers who prioritized our business needs, enabling us to assure supply.

"Now, as the marketplace rebounds, many businesses are seeing strong demand and labor pressure resulting in supply/demand imbalances, longer raw material lead times and higher costs. Some are temporary and others will linger. We are doubling down on our efforts around digitizing our supply chain so that we have even greater transparency across all nodes of the chain; automation to deal with the labor crisis and ensuring we have the right distribution network, close to the market to rapidly replenish restaurants," Gross added. "The resilience we've demonstrated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic is a great example of the strength of the McDonald's system, and our celebrated three-legged stool."

Another challenge has been "striking a balance." Gross noted that in today's hybrid work environment, it's easy to stay glued to a computer screen for 12-plus hours a day.

"I must purposefully pull back when I need to in order to recharge my battery. Caring for our mental and physical health during these times is critical," she explained. "I often say you don't have a work life and a personal life: you have one life and balance is the key to maintaining good mental and physical health and well-being."

In the Spotlight

Gross has been recognized by the National Diversity Council for being one of Illinois' Most Powerful and Influential Women, by Black Enterprise, as one of the most powerful women in corporate America, by CNN as a risk-taker and more.

"I'm extremely humbled by any recognition that I receive. I truly have achieved what I have because of so many who have come before me, because of many who believed in me or gave me an opportunity that I might not have otherwise been afforded," she said. "Today, McDonald's Supply Chain is recognized, four years in a row, by Gartner as one of the top supply chains in the world, and that's because of the great team I have executing our strategy every single day. So, I accept the recognition on behalf of the team."

According to Gross, she also recognizes that when the spotlight shines on you, you must make good use of the moment.

"To me, as a Black female, being a leader is both a responsibility and honor. A responsibility in that the shadow you cast is long and the behaviors and leadership qualities I role model, hopefully inspires and shapes future Black and female leaders," she pointed out. "I have a responsibility to bring others like me along, women and people of color, through mentoring, sponsoring, and coaching, and by providing opportunities like those afforded me along the way.



While receiving numerous awards during her career, Gross believes it is important to make use of the moment to help others.

“Being a leader is an honor because someone saw the potential and capabilities in me and now, I too can empower others to achieve more than they thought possible,” Gross added. “And if I do things right, I can make a lasting difference.”

Giving Back

Outside of work and home, Gross has made it a priority to give back to her community.

“I have always gravitated towards using my time, treasure and talent to support children’s causes, the homeless and veterans who selflessly served our country: children, because they are the future and much will be expected of them, more than the generations before them; the homeless because everyone should have their basic needs met—a roof over their head, clothes on their back and food in their mouth; and veterans, well I guess I come by that honestly being an Army brat. My father was a military lifer who made great sacrifice for our freedom, having served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. So, giving back to them seems the least of what I can do,” she explained.

Beyond the Arches

While Gross isn’t ready to hang up her hat just yet, she said when she does, she has plenty of interests on the horizon, including getting back to her “creative” side—music and art, along with using her “real” camera (versus the cell phone) “to capture the beauty around me.”



In her free time, Gross enjoys visiting national parks in the western part of the country with her husband, Brian, and their dog, “Harry.”

“Photography was something I grew to love from a class I took at Western, so getting back to that is like getting back to my college roots. And of course, I will continue my philanthropic work as a board director for Ronald McDonald House Charities, with veterans, Special Olympics, the homeless and underserved youth,” Gross said. “And most importantly, I will spend time with family and friends, nurturing the important relationships in my life, traveling with my husband, and our dog, “Harry,” hitting the open road in an RV.

“Life is short,” she added. “And I intend to continue making the most of every day.” ●

Marion
Gross

What I Know Now



- Decide what you want to be, but be open to trying different things. You never know where your path will lead. What’s important is doing something you love.
- Be brave and trust your gut. Don’t be afraid to take risks.
- Never sacrifice what’s most important to you, your values, your beliefs, your family, your health, — whatever it is prioritize it.
- Step outside your comfort zone early and often in your career—outside your comfort zone is where you learn and grow.
- Be agile—recognize good enough, and don’t strive for perfection. It’s more important to be decisive and agile to make the progress you intend.
- Be kind and grateful.

Tips & Tidbits

Favorite McDonald’s Menu Item:

Hands down, Chicken McNuggets with BBQ sauce (although our new Crispy Chicken Sandwich is fast becoming a strong contender for first place). And at breakfast, there’s nothing better than the iconic Egg McMuffin.

Favorite WIU Memory:

Hanging out at Lake Argyle with friends on the weekend.

If I Could Change One Thing:

If I could change one thing, it would be that humankind would be more empathetic and compassionate.

On Being Remembered:

I hope when my career at McDonald’s is done, I will be remembered as someone who cared deeply about people, gave freely to help others, was a person of uncompromising integrity and that I made a difference.

ROCKY ON PARADE

Public Art Project Provides Annual Art Scholarship Funding

By Jodi K. Pospeschil, MA '15

A scrap of an idea, sketched on a paper napkin at Macomb's Sports Corner @ 124 by a group of Western Illinois University faculty and administrators one night in 2012, has evolved into a wildly-popular, biennial public art project, which instills pride in the University's bulldog mascot, while raising thousands of scholarship dollars for WIU art and design students.

The 90 pieces of public art—fiberglass, painted bulldogs - are placed around the Macomb community, as well as one on the University's Quad Cities campus, as a constant reminder of the connection between the University and the Illinois communities it calls home; Macomb and Moline.

The majority of the existing dogs: considered "Big Dogs," while a few larger dogs, called "Alpha Dogs," are part of the collection, which is under the umbrella of the College of Fine Arts and Communication (COFAC) and the Department of Art and Design.

The first set of 13 dog statues was placed in 2013. Rocky on Parade program director and WIU Art Professor Bill Howard said the number of dogs sold in the first offering greatly exceeded organizers' expectations.

"The first year, we thought we would get three - five sponsors, and we missed that projection by





a mile,” said Howard. “As they started to sell, we decided to stop at 12, so we could do a calendar. The second year we had 21, the third year 24 and, in 2021, we had 26.”

Inspired by successful projects like the 300 fiberglass bovine in Chicago’s Cows on Parade, and similar programs across the nation, Rocky on Parade matches sponsors with local artists, a group which includes students, current and retired faculty and staff, as well as community members. Artists, who are given a stipend for paint costs, sketch out a rough idea for their Rocky statue and sponsors choose their painted dog from those sketches during a “draft.”

“Our students really get into it because they are able to leave a legacy behind when they graduate,” said Howard.

Sponsors then choose the location for their dogs to be placed after they are unveiled during the annual Town & Gown event. Wayland Ready Mix, of Macomb has donated each of the dogs’ concrete pads. Before placement, the dogs are clear-coated to protect them from the weather and a laser-cut, metal identification sign is also affixed to each base.

The dog placements have become unique, with many in front of sponsors’ businesses and other interesting spots, such as Spring Lake, north of Macomb, and one recently placed in the newly renovated Jackie and Dave Thompson Dog Park in Macomb. Two pups hang on the outside wall of Sports Corner @ 124, with the height for their positioning chosen by Howard and Dan O’Neill.

“I stood on the sidewalk and jumped several times to see how high I could reach,” Howard said. “Then I just placed each dog higher than that, out of reach.”

A few dogs are also placed around WIU’s Macomb campus. A map, which is updated after each series is placed, is available at wiu.edu/vpaps/rocky_on_parade.

Art with a Purpose

At the heart of the Rocky on Parade program is its various community outreach components. Local school children were part of a 2020 coloring contest, from which one drawing was chosen to be replicated as one of that year’s statues.

In 2020, the University Bookstore began designing merchandise in conjunction with the Rocky on Parade program, including acrylic magnets and stickers of each dog’s design, as well as coffee mugs and other items. The merchandise production was the idea of Justin Derry ’16, a marketing associate in WIU’s Office of University Communications and Marketing, but who was previously employed at the bookstore. Derry’s sister, WIU Library Specialist Ashley Derry, has painted two Rocky on Parade dogs: one at McDonald’s on East Jackson Street and a 2021 addition next to Lake Ruth, on the corner of Adams Street and University Circle, sponsored by contributions from WIU’s Mega Reunion.

All of the Rocky on Parade merchandise can be ordered online at bit.ly/3GSQCYh, and expansion of the collection is expected.

Proceeds from the Rocky on Parade program have resulted in an endowed scholarship fund, which provides \$1,000 per year to a freshman, sophomore or transferring art student. A small amount of the money brought in is put in a fund for maintenance of the existing dogs when repairs or repainting is needed.

Over the years some of the statues had to be redone after accidents—one was hit by a snowplow and one was damaged by a bicyclist colliding with it in downtown Macomb—and paint had to be touched up on several after they stood in the elements for a number of years.

Art Creates Interest in Replication

Since its launch, Howard has been contacted by numerous colleges and communities interested in beginning a similar program. He has developed a packet of information that allows for other interested communities and people to replicate the program.

“The idea is not uniquely ours, but we were due for a major town and gown event. It is the participation from the community and University that makes this project successful,” said Howard. “Since it started, I have been contacted by 25-30 people and I send them my packet.”

The WIU project is guided by a steering committee, which is made up of University and community members, some who were in attendance when the 2012 idea was sorted out. The current committee is made up of Howard; then-Interim Provost Billy Clow; Macomb City Administrator Scott Coker MBA ’16; former Interim McDonough County YMCA CEO Mick Cumbie; Graphic Design Manager Natalie Divan ’03 MA ’16; Foundation



Administrative Assistant Stacy Dorethy; Assistant to the COFAC Dean Dana Moon '98 MBA '01; Art and Design Chair Kat Myers, Associate Art Professor Duke Oursler; Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management Troy Rhoads '19; Associate Art Professor Ian Shelly and COFAC Development Director Liz Swigart.

Myers said the program has enhanced the image of WIU's campus, the Department of Art and Design, and has created foot traffic and new business for local proprietors.

"There are a lot of people who know about the department, but didn't know we had an Art Gallery on campus," she said. "It has also helped with recruitment and retention efforts."

Work on the 2023 program is already underway and the larger the collection gets, the more visual interest it creates.

"I absolutely didn't know this program would be this amazing," Howard said of the program's pieces. "In 2012, the

Performing Arts Society gave us some seed money, and the WIU Foundation was onboard with the first dog purchased. People just jumped right on it. The dogs are everywhere, and it's pretty cool."

For more information about the program, visit WIU.edu/ROP. ●

"Poppy Puppy" sponsored by the WIU Foundation and painted by Art Professor Jan Clough located at the Alumni House.



FUN FACTS



- The working title for the program was "Bulldogs on Parade," but was deemed "too boring" early in the process.
- Professor Bill Howard still has the napkin in his office, which was used to sketch out the program's original framework.
- The first dog was purchased by the WIU Foundation and its Executive Officer Brad Bainter '79 MS '83.
- Several artists have created a new dog for each year the program is offered and several sponsors have purchased a dog each year they were available.
- WIU Office Administrator Deb Lutz '84 '05 has painted one dog in each round of the collection
- The WIU Foundation, Dan and Linda O'Neill and Citizens Bank have sponsored a dog in each round.
- The most photographed Rocky is located at WIU's Alumni House, followed by the Rocky in front of MidAmerica Bank, on the north side of the Macomb square.



WIU Libraries Specialist and Art Student Ashley Derry works on her Rocky dog, named "Kaleidoscope." This Mega Reunion sponsored dog's base will include names of it's 300+ donors.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the formation of The Newcomers. This pop-folk music ensemble, which began as a group of 28 Western students who auditioned for a coveted position in the group each fall, appeared on television specials and performed at alumni events, hundreds of times on campus and on the road with the likes of Burl Ives, Bob Hope and many more.

Over the last 50 years, members of The Newcomers have gone on to have very successful careers in the music business. There's an Emmy winning producer/director for HBO, Showtime and comedy specials; a vocalist, songwriter and recording artist; third trumpet for the New York Metropolitan Orchestra and founder/CEO of a coaching and consulting company.

The following are news clips generated by the group's various performances:



Q & A with Newcomer Pamela Fischer BA '79, Music

Pamela Fischer is founder and CEO of Motivity, Inc., a coaching and consulting company that works with high growth company executives, owners, and teams to grow their businesses. She works with U.S. and international-based companies in technology and service industries.

Prior to starting her own company in 1995, Fischer was an award-winning account executive and team leader at Zenger Miller/Achieve Global, an international training company. Early in her career, she developed funding initiatives for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chicago Opera Theatre and produced EPCOT's International Showcase Program for the Walt Disney Company.

Following her music education training at WIU, Fischer completed her M.A. in Organizational Development at Loyola University in Chicago. Since then, she has supported owners, founders, and entrepreneurs through critical business transitions such as the start-up and high growth phases, leadership elevation, funding raises, and merger and acquisition opportunities.

Fischer has served as a coach and trusted advisor to clients in



Catalyst

February 2, 1971

Western's music department has formed a new pop-folk ensemble, as yet unnamed, made up of 28 members of the men's and women's glee clubs. These 14 boys and 14 girls were chosen after try-outs were held. The ensemble's repertoire will concentrate mainly on musical comedy numbers, pop, and folk songs, with the instrumental backing provided by the members themselves, many playing guitar, piano, or percussion.

This new group is under the direction of Mr. Robert Hills, director of the men's and women's glee clubs, who explained that public demand was the main source of the

idea to form this type of group in the first place. The dancing included in the programs will be choreographed and taught by Miss Nancy Gunderson, from Richmond, Illinois. Rehearsals have already begun, and Mr. Hill stated that the group "will be available to any university or community in and around the Macomb area."

Fortune 1000 companies, educational and community non-profits, high growth technology companies, and leaders in design, media, architecture, health & fitness, and lifestyle service companies. Her own experience as a founder and entrepreneur informs her work and consulting approach. Motivity was among 20 New Mexico companies selected to participate in Technology Ventures Corporation's 2008 Symposium and business incubator to develop the company's software-based analytics for measuring and coaching high potential talent.

The following is from a recent question and answer session with Fischer.

Q How did you decide to come to WIU?

A While attending Guilford High School in northern Illinois, I met Bob Hills at an all-city choral event in my hometown. Bob was a WIU music professor, and the leader of the Newcomers. He recruited me to attend Western and I followed up on his suggestion to explore the school and pursue my undergraduate degree.

Q How did you get involved in The Newcomers?

A I was a freshman music education major at WIU and learned about the opportunity to audition for the Newcomers within weeks of arriving in Macomb. Because I had been a member of and choreographer for my high school show choir in Rockford, IL, I was excited and nervous about Newcomer try outs, and competing for a spot against so many talented singers on the WIU campus.

OF THE NEWCOMERS by Amy Spelman MS '98

Catalyst

February 26, 1971

Newcomers Perform Sunday

This Sunday evening, the Newcomers will present an open concert in the Heritage Room of the University Union. Students, faculty, and members of the community are invited to come at 7:30 on March 4.

The Newcomers of Western Illinois University have gained extreme popularity in the state during the past two years as they have performed music from the Broadway stage, along with popular folk-rock selections.

The ensemble consists of twenty-four students from a variety of major fields who are selected from members of university choral groups by audition.

Organized in the winter of 1971 by its director, Mr. Robert Hills of Western's vocal music department, the Newcomers performed first early that spring. Since that time, the group has had over 100 appearances for the university and community functions, high school choral festivals and clinics, and at other universities.

Also to their credit is a statewide tour, a record album, and a half-hour television special. Auditions are held each fall quarter, and this year over eighty students tried out for the twenty-four positions. Since the most

important quality to be considered is the vocal ability of the students, they sing a contemporary solo of their choice for the other students. Based on tone quality, vocal projection and skill, stage poise, and general appearance, six sopranos, altos, tenors, and bases are selected by the directory, Mr. Hills. The choreography is later worked into the ensemble selected according to their dancing ability.

This year the Newcomers performed for a Parents Day program, the Bernhard's Christmas Show, and have sponsored two high school swing choir clinics. The group is planning a three-day tour in the Chicago area and a tour of the western Illinois area.

The Sunday night open concert program will be taken from the following selections: "Show Business," "The Summer Knows," "I Believe in Music," "Put Your Hand in the Hand," "Candy Man," "Old Man River," "Love is Surrender," "Sandman, Summertime," "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," "Luck Be a Lady," "Cohan Medley," "Maria," "This is What We Are," "Sometimes," "Anything You Can Do," and "I Want to Be Loved by You."

Q Can you tell us about some of the events, activities, trips, etc. you participated in?

A With its genesis in the Fine Arts College, The Newcomers evolved to be more than a performing ensemble. We were asked to perform regularly at alumni, community and other special events as ambassadors for the University. Members studied for various degrees including fine arts, business, communications, education, English, psychology, recreation and others, so we had a broad representation of students beyond the music department who were Newcomers.

I recall regular bus trips to perform at WIU regional alumni events throughout Illinois; show choir festivals where we were guest performers, adjudicators or clinicians for high school students; and appearances for other special events such as a celebration for the late Governor Jim Thompson in Chicago. During spring breaks, we would travel to Biloxi, MS, for a week of performances and fun at the Broadwater Beach Hotel on the gulf coast. I'd return to campus during the summers to work with Bob Hills and other Newcomers in delivering summer show choir camp experiences for high school students. Bob was always careful to check performance dates with the group so that we could juggle school and exam commitments with our performance schedule.

Westerner

February 1972

Harkening to the sound of different drummers are the many musical groups at Western who perform both on and off campus. Joining the field of pop music is a vibrant group of 24 young singers and dancers entitled "The Newcomers." Selected from 87 singers who auditioned last spring for Dr. Forrest Wanninger and Robert Hills, director, the vivacious ensemble specializes in musical comedy and folk-pop music.

After selecting the group last spring, many hours of rehearsals followed before the ensemble's debut at the President's Honor Banquet in May. They were so well received that many engagements followed, and they performed 27 times in that quarter alone. This fall 107 talented students battled for the 24 positions. The only requirement for

auditions is that students must be a member of one of the six recognized university choral organizations. By selecting the best from other groups, many believe the singers are only music majors, but this is not the case. Only ten students in the group are majoring in music with others coming from physics, art, math, biology, physical education, drama, business, psychology, and elementary education.

Highlighting this year's performances were appearances with Burl Ives, invitations to both the State Leadership Music Conference and State Music Convention, a half-hour special on WEEK-TV, and appearing on other university campuses. "The Newcomers" will tour Illinois in May and like to perform. If you have a special program or school assembly, the director says, "Try em'—you'll like em'!"

Q What is your favorite memory of WIU? Of The Newcomers?

A Of the Newcomers? One of my favorite memories was in October 1975, when the Newcomers, directed by Bob L. Hills and the WIU Jazz Band, directed by Dr. Robert Morsch, performed together as the pre-show entertainment for Bob Hope's Homecoming weekend performance. As a freshman, it was my first Newcomer performance. We rehearsed for hours and hours over a few short months to prepare a program that was polished and adapted to a non-traditional "360 degree" performance format for an audience of 10,000 people in Western Hall. Our performance was well-received, and it was an amazing experience for me to perform with my fellow Newcomers as the warm-up talent for an entertainment icon like Bob Hope. In the years following, we supported entertainers Rich Little, Gabe Kaplan and others, thanks to the visionary work of Bill Brattain at WIU. I took from these experiences a great sense of accomplishment and understanding that hard work, practice, and teamwork can transform amateur talent and passion into professional quality outcomes. I drew upon the lessons of my Newcomer experiences when I worked as part of a team for the Walt Disney World's EPCOT opening year in 1982 - 83.



Peoria Journal Star

February 15, 1976

It's Standing Room Only When Newcomers Swing

"Ladies and gentlemen, the WIU Newcomers!" With these words, another performance by 24 bright and brassy Western Illinois University students begins...smiling, swirling, singing, dancing—a dozen lovely, mini-skirted coeds accompanied by a dozen lithe, jump-suited young men.

During the next hour, they will deliver their musical numbers with finger-snapping vitality and professional precision—the kind of polished performance usually seen in the casinos of Las Vegas rather than in the heartland of west-central Illinois. This unique swing choir plays to standing-room-only crowds on the campus, and turn down more offers than it can accept....

From his pleasant, sunny office on the campus. Where framed photos of yesteryear's students decorate a bulky grand piano, Hills explained how it all began. He organized the Newcomers in the spring of 1970, upon receiving a request for show music to entertain at a banquet. Hills, whose academic specialty is serious choral music, found that WIU didn't have a group to perform pop numbers. He asked for volunteers from his university chorus, and the Newcomers were born.

Requests poured in for workshops to train high school choral directors to organize their own swing choirs. Clinics on the campus for high school students developed. Week-long summer camps on the campus for high school students soon followed. Hills recruited students in the Newcomers to help run these programs, giving them valuable experience in the process. But the razzle-dazzle takes

time and draws Hills away from his first love, serious choral music. He stopped smiling as he talked about tension between his obligations as a serious musician in a university faculty and the popular appeal of his show-stopping creation. The public clamors for Stevie Wonder songs—but Hills' professional reputation as an academian depends upon his directing Bach's classical cantatas properly. Nobody stands in line to hear Bach.

Newcomers have a camaraderie. "They're like brothers and sisters," Hills claimed. "They're very open with each other, and grow very close." Old grads keep in touch. A Newcomer alumni weekend is scheduled for May, with parties, dinners, and a bi show planned. Brett Goad, a Newcomer from Galesburg typifies student enthusiasm. He dashed into Hills' office to ask a question but had time to tell how much he liked being a Newcomer. A graduate assistant in the choral department. Goad hopes to organize his own swing choir when he becomes a teacher. "They may move like klutzes, but I'm going to try," he said.



Catalyst

February 26, 1973

Music Ensemble Specialize in Comedy and Folk

The Newcomers, a student music ensemble of 24 talented singers and dancers, will perform in concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, in the Heritage Room....Since its beginning, almost four years ago, the ensemble has grown to great popularity throughout Illinois and Iowa. Among their many accomplishments are: numerous clinic and workshops where

they have coached 110 junior and senior high school swing choirs; more than 200 performances on tour.

They recently performed in the elegant "Top o' the Towers" night club in Arlington Heights, Illinois, and are in the process of finalizing plans for a 10-day engagement at the Trade Winds Hotel in Biloxi, Mississippi.



Q & A with Newcomer Lisa (Loacker) Lauren, BA '79, Music

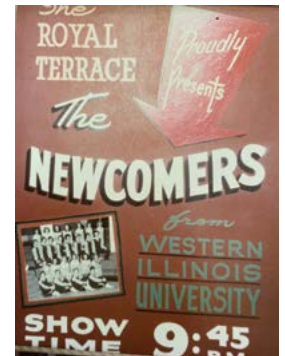
Lisa Lauren is a Chicago-based recording artist who earned national and international attention with the release of her first CD, "what comes around." The recording is a mix of originals and Baby Boomer classics. Lauren sent her CD to dozens of radio stations around the country, which garnered airplay on hundreds of contemporary jazz and pop stations across the U.S., as well as in Europe and Australia.



Lauren has performed with guest artists including saxophonist David Sanborn. She has released four subsequent CDs. Her songs are also featured on numerous compilations in Germany, Japan, Singapore, and the Philippines. Her music can be heard on the Play Network (Starbucks), Pandora and Spotify, and her version of "Love Me Do," featuring Willy Porter, is

currently featured on Sirius XM's Coffeehouse channel.

She taught high school music for a few years after graduating from Western, then started playing solo piano gigs in downtown Chicago hotels. She then moved to playing with an acoustic bass and other solo instruments. She and her band have played many Chicago clubs.



Q How did you decide to come to WIU?

A I had been attending ISU, and came to WIU for the Summer Music Theatre. I ended up liking it so much that I decided to transfer. Also, my boyfriend at ISU had just broken up with me so that was also part of the decision!

Q How did you get involved in The Newcomers?

A I had performed in musical theatre and choir in high school and this seemed like an exciting musical opportunity. They were definitely the "in" musical group on campus. I wasn't a music major at the time, but (switched later) found that many of the members also weren't music majors, so it made for an eclectic group of people.



Macomb Journal

August 26, 1980

Newcomers Still a Hit With Up-Beat Style

A reunion for Newcomer alumni is scheduled for this spring, and many of the former students from the past ten years are expected, said Hills. Activities will include rehearsals, a public performance by the alumni, and, of course, "lots of catching up. "The alumni have gone into just about every occupation you can imagine," smiled Hills. "Professional song-writing, performance, modeling, computer programming, the ministry, advertising, and teaching. One even works as the activities director of a dude

ranch, where the group held a clinic last year!" But the old "sawdust in the blood" theory holds true for Newcomer alumni, claimed Hills. Despite the varied careers and backgrounds of his former students, they all will be transformed back into Newcomers for the alumni show, he said. "There is usually a chemistry that develops within the group," explained Hills, "And by the end of the school year, these kids are more like family than co-performers."

Macomb Journal

April 22, 1976

Five Years New: The WIU Newcomers

The Newcomers are nearly self-supporting by operating on a shoe string budget. The Student Government Association helps subsidize some traveling expenses and pay for incidentals such as the purchase and dry cleaning of their red, white, and blue costumes. Any money they make goes back into the Student Government Fund.

The Newcomer's most exciting and dependable concert is the spring break trip to Biloxi, Mississippi. "The parents of an

old Newcomer live there. They invited us to come down to perform." It's now become an annual ritual. Once in Biloxi, they stay at the posh Broadwater Beach Hotel and spend the week performing before groups including the Biloxi Yacht Club, junior colleges, grade and high schools, a military base, civic groups, and special performances at the hotel. The Newcomers even open the Biloxi Mardi Gras and ride in the Mardi Gras Parade.



Q Can you tell us about some of the events, activities, trips, etc. you participated in?

A We performed for Homecoming when "big name" stars would perform. The year before I got into Newcomers, Bob Hope was the featured act. My first year it was Gabe Kaplan. He probably doesn't sound familiar to most, but he was huge at the time as the star of "Welcome Back, Kotter," with John Travolta. We traveled around the state and performed at various high school show choir competitions and other small town concerts. We also performed for Governor Jim Thompson's victory celebration in downtown Chicago. We felt like superstars (even if we were wearing short skirts and white shoes).

Q What is your favorite memory of WIU? Of The Newcomers?

A Some of my closest friends to this day were in the group with me and many of us also keep in touch through the group's Facebook page. The Biloxi trips were definitely my favorite memories. Both years that I was in the group we travelled on a bus to Biloxi, MS, where we stayed for a week and performed nightly at the Broadwater Beach Hotel. All of the time spent performing together (and riding on the bus) created a unique bond that we all share, connected by a love of music and laughter. Just so many laughs and indelible experiences. We still make jokes about Krispy Kreme donuts to this day.

Q Who was the University leader for the group?

A Bob Hills was the director, and was beloved by everyone. He was amazingly talented—and funny—and inspired us all to be better performers.



Q Do you have anything else to add?

A We also performed for a lot of alumni events and became friends with Alumni Director Gordy Taylor and his wife, Diane, who were wonderful people and big supporters of The Newcomers. We had a lot of laughs over the years with Gordy.





Q & A with Karen Krieger '76 Music

Q How did you decide to come to WIU?

A It wasn't the circa five-hour drive from the southside of Chicago. An older brother of one of my best high school friends loved WIU, so five of us followed in his footsteps. Okay, my music scholarship helped seal the deal.

Q How did you get involved in The Newcomers?

A A few members asked me to try out. I said, "You already have a keyboard player—the talented Jerry Ray." No, as a singer-dancer. The rest is history, 1974-76.

Q Can you tell us about some of the events, activities, trips, etc. you participated in?

A We performed on the same show as Bob Hope. Trips to Biloxi, MS were highlights as well.

Q What is your favorite memory of WIU? Of The Newcomers?

A Besides the well-rounded education at WIU, weekly Newcomer rehearsals, the music and lasting friendships are highlights and cherished memories.

Q Who was the University leader for the group?

A No question, membership in The Newcomers Swing Choir changed my musical life. It was Professor Bob Hills' outstanding musicianship and creative talent and leadership that made a huge difference. I bring his musicality and spirit to work every day.

Western Courier

November 13, 1985

Director, Newcomers Changing Style after 15 Years

The Newcomers? No, they're not a group of new students. They're a musical ensemble and a very popular one at that. Since their beginning 15 years ago, the group has done over 650 performances on college and high school campuses and has grown to great popularity throughout the Midwest. Besides concerts, the ensemble has coached more than 700 junior and senior high school swing choirs.

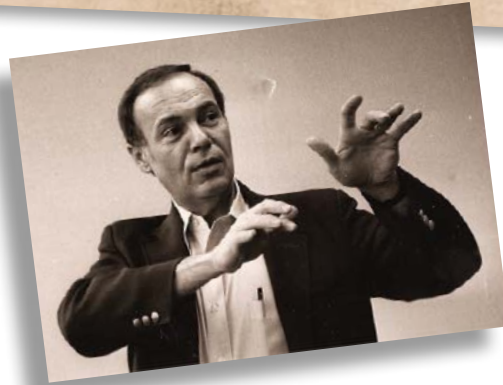
Along with concerts at Western the group performed at several other universities, plus state political functions, conventions, conferences, and night clubs including "Top o' the Towers" in Arlington Heights. Burl Ives, Bob Hope, Bob Newhart, and Red Skelton are a few of the popular entertainers the Newcomers have been on stage with.

The song and dance group is composed of 22 singer/dancers and a nine piece brass and rhythm section. The members, selected at the beginning of the fall semester, are selected based upon tone quality, vocal projection, skill, stage poise, general appearance, and choreographic ability, according to Jim Parks, director and assistant professor in the music

department. The newcomers aren't just music majors either. They come from all areas of the university. Robert Hills founded the ensemble in 1971 and directed it until this year when Parks took over.

Parks said the ensemble is changing the sounds and presentation and "and adding more jazz and maybe some gospel." He said that rather than staying with a certain theme as has been done in the past, they are mixing the songs and putting on a different type of show. "I'm excited about the group," Parks said. "They are more than willing to make the change in style and grow in the new direction."

The Newcomers will present their fall concert at 8:00 p.m. Wednesday November 20 in the University Union Grand Ballroom. The fall concert will include music from Lionel Richie and will open with "Since I Fell for You," with special guest Bernard Thomas, a tenor saxophone player. The concert will also include two gospel numbers including "Just Tell Jesus," with soloist Acquinetta Hayes. The Macomb High School swing choir Main Street will open for the Newcomers.



Q Anything else to add?

A Thank you, Bob Hills and Western Illinois University. You, Ann Collins, James Magsig and Bob Morsch laid the musical foundation for a wonderful career. I'm eternally grateful.

Q What have you been doing since graduating?

A After WIU, I attended the University of Illinois, then took a position at Columbus State University in Columbus, GA. An opportunity arose to become a weekend weather person at WKRN-ABC so I took the fork in the road. That road led to a position at WSMV-NBC in Nashville, TN, while teaching at Vanderbilt University. Thirty-four years later, I'm an associate professor of piano and piano pedagogy and the Collegiate Keyboard Area coordinator, and I still drive to work every day saying, "I love what I do." I am married to a wonderful man and we have a four-legged kid named Barney beagle.



Western Courier

November 19, 1982

WIU's Newcomers Ensemble in Concert Tonight

The Newcomers, WIU's vocal show ensemble, has in its 12-year history, earned statewide recognition for excellence in musical/variety entertainment. Comprised of more than 35 singers, dancers, and instrumentalists, Newcomers strives to bring high quality entertainment to all audiences. Performing all styles of popular music, combined with striking choreography, costumes, and staging, Newcomers host annual vocal show ensemble clinics and workshops which bring more than 300 students and teachers in contact with WIU.

In recent years the ensemble has shared the stage with such show business greats as Bob Hope, Burl Ives, and Gabe Kaplan and have been invited to perform with Olivia Newton-John and John Davidson. Recently, the

Newcomers performed with Bob Newhart at last year's WIU Homecoming Show.

The vivacious musical show ensemble is directed by Robert L. Hills, associate professor of music. Hills also teaches vocal and choral conducting, as well as directing the Varsity Men's Glee and University Singers, the selected choral ensemble at WIU. Members of the Newcomers come from various areas on the WIU campus and must re-audition each year to stay in the group. Auditions, which are held in the fall, are open to all WIU students. Selections are made on the basis of vocal ability, coordination, stage presence, and appearance.

The Newcomers are scheduled to appear in concert at the Grand Ballroom tonight at 8 p.m.

Western Courier

October 8, 1987

Song and Dance Troupe Make Changes

Out with the old and in with the new! That's the motto for WIU's song and dance group, "Spectrum," formerly called "The Newcomers." They have come up with some new changes, ideas, and concepts to kick off this year. Some of these changes are to perform more pop songs than ever before, use more sophisticated rhythms, and hopefully start to learn scat singing.

The biggest change, however, is the change in name from The Newcomers to Spectrum. Ever since 1972, the group has been called The Newcomers, practically a tradition in the music department. They have always been known as a co-ed group, but this year the ensemble consist of eight female members being accompanied by a jazz choir called Octagon, featuring 18 co-ed members. The groups will be backed by piano, bass guitar, drums, auxiliary percussion, trumpet, saxophone, and trombone.

Phill Waite, director, gave the girls a chance to voice out any ideas and opinions they had about making the ensemble more updated.

Waite wanted to change the name for a long time and he let the girls vote on any names they came up with at random. "We are performing much harder music now and need something new and fresh to go by," said Waite. "We are hoping to see the group eventually grow into a large, 30-voice choir and take group tours across the country and possibly overseas."

The group is hoping that all these changes will create a positive effect for them and hopefully draw more attention and publicity. Spectrum's performance schedule this fall will include five performances, both on and off campus. The major performance is on November 17th in the Grand Ballroom of the University Union. Unfortunately, most of the performances are not open to the general public.

Q & A with Jerry Ray

Q How did you decide to come to WIU?

A I knew in my senior year that I wanted to major in music education and be a high school music teacher. I must admit that I very quickly glanced at the music department classes and instantly announced that I'd go along with my best friend, who was going to Western, and be roommates. It all worked out and we were placed in Tanner Hall.

Q Can you tell us about some of the events, activities, trips, etc. you participated in?

A The Newcomers were constantly touring. Usually, there were two or three shows per month when we'd all pile into a Greyhound-style bus and hit the road—shows at schools, chamber groups, trade shows, and state music conventions, plus shows on the WIU campus. The big trip of the year was to Biloxi, MS. This was the highlight of the year—12 hours on the bus, stops in Memphis, to see Elvis' Graceland, and right into glorious Biloxi. There were yachts, speed boats, long-piers, beaches, upscale hotels, and fancy restaurants—this was the promise of Biloxi. Who wouldn't give up their spring break for this?

Q What is your favorite memory of WIU? Of The Newcomers?

A Biloxi—see above.

Q Who was the University leader for the group (did you have an advisor or someone working here that worked with you)?

A Professor Bob Hills was the creator and brainchild of The Newcomers. In addition to having a full stable of voice major/minors under his wings, plus several large campus choral ensembles he directed, he took the time and applied the immense energy to put together The Newcomers—24 singers/dancers, plus four musicians and two technical staff. "Hills," as we called him, had more talent and style in his little finger than most musicians have in their entire being. He was the consummate professional educator, pianist, arranger, and always a friend. Without "Hills," there would be no Newcomers.

Q What have you been doing since graduating?

A The music opportunities afforded me while in The Newcomers paved the way for my career in the professional music industry. In the education realm, I have hundreds of choral publications that sell all over the English-speaking world, and over 30 piano publications. I've been fortunate to work with many talented professional singers and instrumentalist at all levels of the creative process. My career has spanned being a composer, songwriter, arranger, producer, editor, keyboardist and even as talent manager for several bands and singers including an AMERICAN IDOL finalist! I've written music for NBC-TV, Disney Channel, Disney Imagineering, Dick Clark Productions, plus several jingles. I can say without hesitation that without Bob Hills and the WIU Newcomers, none of these "hats" would have come to light. Thank you, "Hills." ●



Kibbe Life Science Research Station Offers Unique Opportunities to Students Nationwide

By Jodi K. Pospeschil, MA '15

The proximity of the campuses of Western Illinois University to the Mississippi River provides unique opportunities for students interested in studying in the natural classroom the waterway provides. Add to that the University's Alice L. Kibbe Life Science Research Station, on the banks of the Mississippi in Hancock County, and the opportunities expand exponentially, not only for WIU students, but for youth from across the country interested in the biological sciences.

The 115-acre site, just outside Warsaw, IL, was donated to WIU by Carthage College Professor Emerita Alice L. Kibbe in 1964, and the University later purchased 222 adjoining acres to create the research station. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources owns the 1,458 acres bordering Kibbe, which includes the Sand Hills Nature Preserve and the Cedar Glen Natural Area. WIU's Department of Biological Sciences began holding summer classes at Kibbe in 1966.

Together the nearly 1,800 acres are the Kibbe

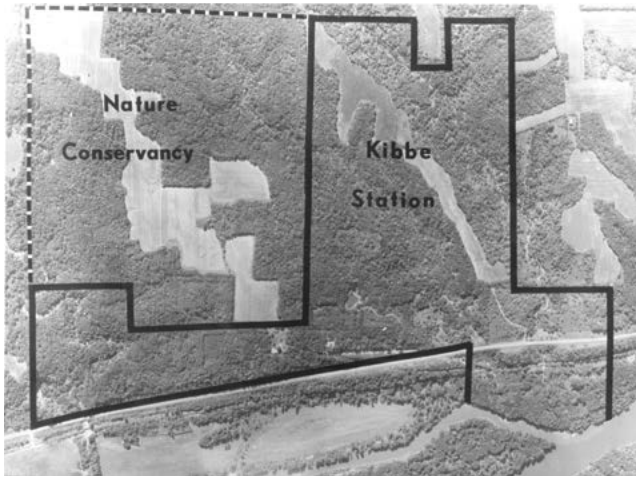
Macrosite, which is made up of restored tallgrass prairie, limestone bluffs, hill prairies, upland oak-hickory woodland, floodplain forest and three miles of Mississippi River shoreline. It is also home to hundreds of bald eagles, who spend their days fishing on the river, and their nights roosting in a bowl-shaped valley deep in the heart of the property.

"There is a valley on the site that keeps them out of the wind; it's warmer and helps them conserve energy," said Kibbe Station Director and WIU Professor Sean Jenkins. "We have 200-300 bald eagles there every morning."

In addition to the hundreds of eagles that winter in the area, Jenkins said there are a pair of resident eagles that have lived on-site since 2008.

A white sign with black text is mounted on a post. The sign reads: "ALICE L. KIBBE LIFE SCIENCE STATION. WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY". The sign is set against a background of trees and foliage.

ALICE L. KIBBE
LIFE SCIENCE STATION.
WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



The Kibbe property was donated to WIU in 1966 by Carthage College Professor Emerita Alice L. Kibbe.

The Kibbe Macrosite, comprised of the Kibbe Field Station and Cedar Glen Nature Preserve, includes 12-14 miles of hiking trails, and is open to the public. Kibbe is made up of pole barns and a large, multi-purpose facility, opened in 2004, which offers meeting and dormitory space in an environmentally-friendly building.

Kibbe is maintained by WIU's Department of Biological Sciences and managed by Jenkins and Program Coordinator and WIU alumnus Neil Gillespie '10 MS '18. Together the two run the site's programming for University students, as well as summer classes for high school students, and partnerships, such as the one with the Wounded Warrior Project, to provide opportunities for veterans to spend time on the Mississippi River.

Grant partnerships are also enhanced by the site to study migrating ducks and Asian carp. Another partnership, with the Mississippi Flyway Council, draws multiple wildlife agencies to the site to band and conduct research on two species of ducks, lesser scaup and canvasbacks. In previous years, WIU graduate students have directed the banding project and the related research.

Each spring the program traps, bands and releases ducks on Pool 19 of the Mississippi River, which is just north of Kibbe. The area is an important mid-migration site for both duck species as they move from Louisiana, and the country of Cuba, to Canada and Alaska.

Kibbe has been home to a wide variety of research over the years. The most recent is being conducted



Kibbe has one of the largest populations of Illinois Bunchflower in this section of the state.



Kibbe

Kibbe is managed by Station Director and Professor Sean Jenkins and Program Coordinator and WIU alumnus Neil Gillespie '10 MS '18.

by Jenkins and involves a series of "exclosures" placed around the site to study how deer browsing and prescribed fire impact oak regeneration at the site. There has also been research that includes trapping flying squirrels and studying the impact of prescribed burns at Kibbe on land snails and ticks.

The adjacent section of the Mississippi River is a major flyway for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Pileated woodpeckers and a variety of other bird species nest and feed in the woodlands and prairies along the bluffs.



Professor Sean Jenkins shows one of the numerous Kibbe sites where research is conducted.



Carthage College Professor Emerita Alice L. Kibbe.
Photo courtesy of the Kibbe Hancock Heritage Museum,
Carthage.

With the extensive collection of boats and other equipment at Kibbe, classwork includes taking students out on the Mississippi River to study fish and their habitats.

“Our electrofishing boats have changed our ability to do research,” said Jenkins. “We are the only state university of our size with these boats and the Department of Natural Resources and the United States Geological Survey use the same boats, so the data we collect is comparable.”

The Beginning

Alice Kibbe purchased her 115 acres from speculators in the 1920s. The previous owners of the property were trying to develop the site as a housing subdivision, and a series of roadways was already in place. The site was eventually annexed in to the adjoining city of Warsaw.

Serving as chair of the biology department at Carthage College from 1920-1956, Kibbe was a well-known botanist who moved to the region from the state of Washington, where she finished her doctoral degree. She had a dream of turning the rural property into a field station, and using it as a research site for her students.

“When Carthage College administrators announced the college was moving to Kenosha, WI, Alice was very upset by that,” said Jenkins. “She donated the property to WIU in 1964, and wanted it to be used for the education of local children, and as a research location for students.”

Jenkins and Gillespie said Kibbe is home to a wide variety of native flora and one of only six populations of Illinois Bunchflower.

Part of the Kibbe property had once belonged to the Nature Conservancy. Jenkins is certified as a burn manager and Gillespie is certified to work on prescribed fires. Jenkins teaches fire ecology classes on the site to show how to use fire in a controlled way to improve the health of the prairie and woodlands, as well as to control invasive plant species.

“Eighty years ago this was all cornfields and pastured woodlands,” said Jenkins. “Now we have some of the nicest prairie and oak forest in western Illinois, managed by fire. These systems evolved with fire.”

Gillespie previously worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where he also trained to become a wildland firefighter. He has served several duty tours battling wild fires in the western United States.

Gillespie began living and working at the site in 2019, after receiving his bachelor’s degree in 2010, and his master’s degree in biology in 2018, both in biology and both from WIU. While studying at Western, Gillespie did research at Kibbe and had summer jobs there doing trail upkeep and other maintenance projects. He happened upon the Kibbe job opportunity and said he knew it was supposed to be the next step in his career.

“My wife and I spent 10 years in Macomb,” he said. “I applied and received an offer; I didn’t think twice about it.”

The prior field station manager was Jim Lamer ’01 MS ’06, who moved on to direct the Illinois River Biological Station for the Illinois Natural History Survey.



Decades of WIU students, as well as high school students from across America, have studied the biological world at Kibbe.



Hundreds of eagles spend their evening hours roosting in a bowl-shaped valley on the property.

WIU's Quad Cities campus also provides Mississippi River programming through the recent addition of a doctoral degree in Environmental Science: Large River Ecosystems. More information about that program is available at wiu.edu/cas/ies/espshd.php, or call (309) 298-1632.

WIU is currently searching for an aquatic ecologist to join the Department of Biological Sciences and conduct research using the extensive equipment collection in place at Kibbe Field Station. The faculty addition would help seek grant money to study the ecology and control of highly-invasive Asian carp above Lock and Dam 19.

For more information about Kibbe, visit wiu.edu/kibbe, or call (309) 298-1546. ●



Kibbe's electrofishing boats offer the opportunity to work on the Mississippi River.



Kibbe offers students the opportunity to immerse themselves in their studies.



WIU Professor Emeritus Tom Dunstan releases an Eagle at Kibbe.



LEATHERNECK ATHLETICS

It's Okay Not to Feel Okay

By Matthew Brooks

WIU Athletic Communications

The importance of mental health can never be overstated.

As student-athletes develop, both on and off the field, pressures can add up. From playing time to academics, and everything in between, it requires wearing a multitude of different hats, and that can be stressful at times.

Though there isn't a perfect recipe for managing the ups and downs of being a student-athlete, coaches must start somewhere. For Western Illinois University softball, that starts with something simple: caring about those around the program.

"I think Coach (Alisa) Goler is very creative in her practice plans. Just this last fall, to this current fall, we had a lake day, movie nights ... all sorts of things," said Assistant Softball Coach Collin Hopkins. "She never asks people to just show up like robots and practice for an hour. It's 'hey, how's your day going, how's school going,' those sorts of things. She genuinely cares."

A three-time All-American at the University of Georgia, WIU Coach Alisa Goler had an extensive career within the softball community, broke numerous career and single-season records, and was a finalist for the 2009 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year. She also played seven successful seasons in the professional ranks.

Though she was someone who seemingly had it all—national recognition, awards, records—it wasn't always perfect.

"I was just a bundle of nerves who felt like I had to hit .300 on the day to have had value in the game, and that's no way to work or play. It just wasn't sustainable," Goler admitted. "I had a lot of ups and downs throughout my career, but I didn't use my resources as well as I should have. I think, like most athletes, I was probably too proud at times, or thought it wasn't relevant because I was blessed on the field."

However, at one point during her playing career at Georgia, Goler was approached with a simple question: "What do you want your legacy to be?"

Now, having finished her second season at the helm of WIU's program, this emphasis on self-care and perspective has become integral to the lives of both players and coaches alike. For pitcher Abby Carlin, of Huxley, IA, who has made 75 appearances across the previous four seasons as a Leatherneck, that starts with a sense of support from coaches and teammates.

"I feel very supported by the coaching staff and my teammates.

I am able to be open and honest with them about how I am feeling, how school/softball/life is going, and I feel they truly care about my well-being and health," Carlin said. "My approach to mental health and self-care has changed since Coach Goler took the head coaching job. I have learned mental health can affect everyone in different ways and it's okay to not be okay and ask for help."

As Goler was watching the New York Yankees face Cleveland on Sept. 29, 2020, an announcer made a statement on the broadcast that struck a chord.

She took to Twitter with the insights, sparking a discussion about the comment and pinning it to the top of her account: 195 retweets, 38 quote tweets, and over 1,200 likes later, it is clear this discussion is something very important to a much broader community.



At the end of the day, playing careers conclude. Be it in two years or 20, the physical demands of playing cannot be met forever. Knowing that, Goler says, one pillar of her coaching philosophy emphasizes teaching players lessons that go beyond the field.

"When I started my coaching career, I wanted to know that on my worst day or during my worst season that I was going to be able to do right by the stuff that matters, and mental health is something that matters," Goler said. "Sure, I would love to churn out All-Americans and win a bunch of games, but I want players that come here to know that we didn't just bring them here for what they can do on the field. We brought them here because they're fun to be around, they make us better as people, and that at the end of the day, that's everything—that's your stamp, your legacy: be good people." ●



Returning Home:

Myers Hendrickson Named WIU Football Coach

By WIU Athletic Communications

Myers Hendrickson was a Fighting Leatherneck long before he was named the 31st head football coach in Western Illinois University history. He has returned to his alma mater, the place he spent three seasons as a Leatherneck student-athlete and academic standout bringing championship and postseason experience as a coach and former athlete.

“I’m very excited to have Coach Myers Hendrickson leading the Western Illinois football program,” said then WIU Director of Athletics Danielle Surprenant. “His passion for WIU is unbelievable.

“Myers has amassed great success as a head football coach. Pairing that with his familiarity with the program, experience, and connections recruiting in the Midwest, I’m excited about the future of WIU Football.” she added.

As the head coach at Kansas Wesleyan University, Hendrickson led the team to an overall record of 30-4, which included two Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) championship titles in 2019 and 2021. The latter season contained a bevy of personal and team accolades as he was twice named Coach of the Year, while the team garnered KCAC Player of the Year, Offensive Player of the Year, and Defensive Player of the Year recognition. Six Coyotes were also named AP NAIA All-America, and the 2019 season also saw KWU reach as high as number two in the national coaches’ poll—the highest ranking in school and conference history.

Hendrickson’s name is connected to several successes as the offensive coordinator and offensive position coach at Kansas Wesleyan (2015-16, 2019-21), Northern State University (2017-19), and Coe College (2016-17). His tenure at KWU featured conference and school records for the most points (90) and yards (793) in a single game, as well as the Coyotes’ season mark in passing yards (4,089). The team finished the 2020 season in the top 10 in the country in nine offensive categories.

While at Coe College, in nearby Cedar Rapids, IA, Hendrickson coached three Kohawks to single-season records, including receptions (73), passing touchdowns (27), and passing yards (3,436). The Kohawks crowned the 2016 season as Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (IIAC) champions with a second-round appearance in the NCAA Division III playoffs. In his first season with the program, the offense ranked 15th in the nation in rushing offense, with 253.7 yards per game, 26th in the nation in total offense with 473.6 yards per game, and 23rd in the nation in red-zone offense, scoring 86.8 percent of the time.

Hendrickson began his coaching career as the defensive quality control coach at Auburn University in 2012, before moving on to Holmes Community College in 2013.

Hendrickson competed as a wide receiver for Western from 2009-11, playing in every game during his last two seasons.



As a senior, he was named Phil Steele Preseason College Football Second Team All-Missouri Valley Football Conference (MVFC) as a punt returner. The three years also saw him land on the Missouri Valley Football Conference (MVFC) All-Academic Team each season, along with receiving the Dr. Frank Sorenson Award for Academic Achievement — awarded to the student-athlete with the highest GPA on the football team.

Hendrickson was introduced on campus during the Dec. 18 men’s basketball game in Western Hall. There was also an introductory press conference Dec. 20 in Western Hall’s Hall of Fame Room.

Since Hendrickson was hired to lead Leatherneck football, he has added the following position coaches to the program, including two who have playing time as former WIU players. ●

The team’s additional coaches include:

- **Jeremy Curry** – Defensive Line: A WIU football alumnus ('14), moving from coaching at Lake Charles College Prep. Other coaching experience includes St. Louis Catholic High School, Buena Vista University, SUNY Alred State College, and Rochester Community and Technical College.
- **Brandon Kreczmer** – Linebackers: Also a Leatherneck alumnus ('10 MS '12), Kreczmer coached at Newman Central Catholic High School from 2019-2021 and as a linebacker coach at Illinois College in 2012.
- **Zach Grant** – Tight Ends / Fullbacks: Grant previously served as the Leathernecks’ running backs coach. His coaching career began at his alma mater, the University of Illinois.
- **Quinn Schafer** – Quarterbacks: Schafer moves from the University of Indianapolis, where he was the quarterbacks coach. Schafer’s collegiate coaching career includes stops at Northern State University, Lake Forest College, and Coe College.
- **Donnell Kirkwood** - Running Backs: Kirkwood has spent two seasons as the running backs coach and player experience coordinator at Northern State University in South Dakota.
- **Brian Frana** – Offensive Line: Frana was most recently at Luther College in Decorah, IA, where he was the team’s offensive coordinator, coaching the offensive line and tight ends.
- **Michael Priefer, Jr.** – Special Teams, Tight End and Fullback Coach: Before coming to WIU, Priefer was special teams coordinator at Northwood University. He has also served as a defensive graduate assistant at the University of Pittsburgh, focusing on linebackers, and a defensive graduate assistant at the University of Minnesota. He played college football at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.
- **Airon Savage** – Defensive Backs Coach: Most recently, Savage was secondary quality control coach at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Prior to that position, he was the safeties coach, and assisted with special teams at Arkansas-Pine Bluff. He has also coached the cornerback position at Georgia State and Northern Iowa, as well as serving as the secondary quality control coach at the United States Military Academy. He was also secondary coach at Arkansas Tech (2015-17), and a graduate assistant at Georgia Tech and Auburn, and played college football at Auburn.

Class Notes

Carl Thornblad '55 MS-ED '60, Sterling, is retired.

Robert DuChateau '68, St. Louis, MO, is retired as exec. vp of the former First Nat'l Bank of Chicago.

Kendall Starkweather '68, Jacksonville, FL, is retired as the exec. dir/CEO of Int'l Technology & Engineering Education Assoc.

Norma Warner Matthews '70, Clermont, FL, is retired from the City of Clearwater.

Sharon Umenhofer Lee '71, Buffalo Grove, is retired from Joann Fabrics.

Randy Sollenberger '71 MS-ED '75, Macomb, is unretired and is a substitute teacher at Rushville/ Industry Community School Dist.

Bruce Clay '72, Moorpark, CA, is the president at Bruce Clay Inc. in Simi Valley.

Stephen Davis '72, Crown Point, IN, is an estate planning officer for Family Life Radio.

Brice McKinney '72, Bartlett, is retired from AEA Shelter and Scott County Juvenile Detention as a teacher and is now working at Mississippi Bend AEA in Bettendorf, IA.

Joe "Buck" Vojtech '72, Rio Rancho, NM, is retired.

Lawrence Bradley '73, Singapore, is retired.

Margaret Carey '73, Wheaton, is a document delivery library asst. for the Nat'l U of Health Sciences in Lombard.

Mary Miller Jaeger '73, Baton Rouge, LA, is retired.

Linda Simpson Lehtola '73, Lynnwood, WA, is retired.

Gerald Patton MA '73, Rancho Mirage, CA, was named to the KY State University Board of Regents.

Sean Murphy '74, Lake Forest, was appointed to the Board of Directors for TriSalus Life Sciences.

Thomas Rigg '74, Topeka, KS, retired from BNSF and is an asst. funeral dir. for Newcomer Funeral Service Group, Inc. at the Park-Price Funeral Home.

Stan Campbell MS '75, Lincoln, NE, is retired as the dir. of campus recreation from the U of NE after 42 yrs. of service.

Michael Gorsuch '75 MBA '81, Rushville, is retired after 44 years in purchasing for Armour Foods.

John Hauptman '75, Morrison, was assigned Appellate Court Justice in the Third Dist.

Thomas Hepburn '75 MS '05, Peru, is retired as a hospice RN from IL Valley Hospice.

Mary Wiermanski Kauper '75, Nokomis, FL, is a sr. dir. of graduate medical education admin. at Beaumont Health.

Craig Morgan, '76, Lisle, is retired from Blistex Inc.

Debra Hudson Powell '76, Bushnell, is retired from Farmers & Merchants State Bank of Bushnell.

Curtis Anderson '77, Mt. Prospect, is retired as a finance mgr.

Russell Crull '77, Byron, retired from a career in the specialty hardware industry and one patent award.

David Krause '77, Mesa, AZ, retired as an aerospace sr. buyer from MD Helicopters Inc.

Tiana Osterbur Montgomery '77, Monticello, is retired as the dir. of trust services from U of IL Foundation.

Marc Ristow '77, Templeton, CA, is retired.

Rick Andress '78, Moscow Mills, MO, is retired from Assured Partners.

Thomas Eichorst '78, Elmhurst, is a retired financial exec.

George Krumb '78, Honolulu, HI, is a self-employed actor.

Michael Lynch '78, Watseka, is the president at MSL Benefits & Consultants, Inc.

Roger Orban '78, Sarasota, FL, is the industry manager for Autodesk in San Rafeal, CA.

Brian Sanders '78 MS-ED '85, Dublin, OH, is retired.

William Toerpe III '78, Cincinnati, OH, is retired after 43 yrs. with Ryder Systems as exec. sales officer.

Jim Casey '79, Durango, CO, is a retired judge for the City of Durango and the State of CO.

Thomas Eberlin '79 MBA '80, Peoria, retired after 40+ yrs. at Caterpillar in various global marketing and leadership roles.

John Field '79, Highland, is a retired letter carrier after 36 yrs. for the USPS.

Selene Skonie Hardin '79, Johnson City, TN, is retired from the Johnson City School System.

Brian Manigold '79, Hanna City, is the Chaplin for the U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs.

Mark Adamson '80, Oak Ridge, TN, is a sr. exec. vp at Douglas Dynamics.

David Erickson '80, Altona, was presented the Charles B. Shuman Distinguished Service Award from the IL Farm Bureau.

Steve Ashenbrener '81, Peoria, AZ, is an underwriting supervisor for EMC Insurance Co.

Phil Brown '81, Mears, MI, is retired as the VP of global key accounts from Henkel Automotive Fiat after 31 yrs. & 15 yrs. of being a volunteer fire officer.

Jimmy Crowley '81, Elmhurst, is a retired marketing exec. after 38 yrs. with Six Flags Great America.

Diane Mellon Geron '81, Diamond Bar, CA, is retired as a sr. mgr. in HR for The Walt Disney Co. after 39 yrs.

Mark Miller '81, Woodstock, is retired after 31 yrs. working in the mental health field and is currently working as an assoc. with kindergarten students.

Laura Burlingame Torres '81, Monticello, IN, is retired from Harvest New Beginnings Church and was the early childhood dir. in Oswego, IL.

Jean Heyduck '82, Bluffton, SC, retired from Community Foundation of the Lowcountry as vp for marketing & communications in Hilton Head Island.

Michael Jogerst '82, Chicago, is retired from the University of Chicago as the asst. Dean.

Evangeline "Vange" Noplos LeClerc '82, Sierra Madre, CA, is retired from Anthem after 23 yrs. and with 40 yrs. as an HR professional.

Linda Garcia Merchant '82, Houston, TX, is the public humanities data librarian

Beth Long Miller '82, Woodstock, retired from teaching after 31 yrs. at Woodstock CUSD # 200.

Kerry Jamison Morris '82, Piedmont, SC, is a self-employed seamstress designer.

Jean Blew Sproles '82, Melbourne, FL, retired after a 34-yr. career in the IT dept. at State Farm Insurance Co. in Bloomington, IL.

William Wayne '82, Rio Verde, AZ, is retired from Munich Reinsurance America.

Janet Westover MS-ED '82, The Villages, FL, is retired.

Michael DeFilippis '83, Homer Glen, is a cost accountant at Carl Buddig in S. Holland.

W. Craig Fishburn '83, Greenwood, IN, is retired from the Indianapolis Police Dept.

Lee Staley '83, Rochester, NY, is the football coach at St. John Fisher College in Pittsford.

James Benisek '84, Stafford, VA, is a magistrate for the 15th Judicial Dist. for the Virginia Judicial System.

Chris Edwards '84, Clarksville, TN, is retired.

Dennis Eveland '84, Laredo, TX, is retired from teaching after 35 yrs. as the band dir. at United Independent School Dist.

Tim Farniok '84, Dallas City, is the vp of commercial lines at Word Insurance Assoc. in Burlington, IA.

Richard Seelinger '84, Poulosbo, WA, is the CEO of Enstar (US).

Darrel Steinhour '84, Venice, FL, is retired.

Kay Thomas Steinhour '84, Venice, FL, is retired.

Sherri Martin '85 MS '02, Lomax, is retired.

Donald Person '85, Elwood, is the dir. of global quality assurance at Signode in Glenview.



Steve Scherer '85, Geneseo, is retired from being the band dir. at Geneseo High School.

Joyce Hertko MS '86, Indianapolis, IN, is the COO at Regenstrief Institute.

William Hoon '86 MA '91, Macomb, is the dean of the APSU College of Arts and Letters.

Bruce Buick '87, Olympia Fields, is a resident engineer/materials coord. at Globetrotters Engineering Consultants in Chicago.

Susan Redington '87, Monmouth, is retired.

Troy Brown '88, Avon, OH, is the vp of Security & Operations for the XFL.

Karen Doane '88, Peoria, AZ, is a case mgr. for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

Gerald Schmell '88, Ankeny, IA, is retired from law enforcement.

Kathleen Crowe Wayland '88 MS '90 Fuquay Varnia, NC, is the CEO at Wayland Studios.

Loren Godsil '89 MA '05, Lake St. Louis, MO, was promoted to Sergeant at the St. Louis County Police Dept. in Clayton.

Tracy Green Hart '89, Lakeside Park, KY, is the dir. and sr. lecturer/first year programs at N. KY University in Highland Hts.

Jeffrey Kistner '89, Indialantic, FL, is a self-employed marketing exec.

Dan Moushon MS '89, Chapel Hill, NC, is the president of the Appalachian League for Major League Baseball.

Jeff West '89, Cave Creek, AZ, is the managing dir. at Charles Schwab.

Bruce Western '89 MBA '98, Macomb, is the interim chief HR officer at WIU.

Merle Wilder '89, Belleville, received the Emerson's Excellence in Teaching Award.

Julian Parrott MA '90, Urbana, is an asst. vp at the U of IL System and published his first novel, *Fit for Purpose*.

Gary Rapp '90, Wichita, KS, is the state coord. at GLSEN-KS.

Beverly Walkington Brown '91, Madisonville, TN, is the office mgr. at Educational Talent Search.

Rosalind Jones Dale '91, Browns Summit, NC, is the vice provost for engagement & outreach at N. Carolina A&T State University.

Michael Oine '91, Marengo, was promoted to Div. Fire Chief for the City of Elgin.

Eddie L. Oliver '91, Houston, TX, is the vp of Operations for Sodexo.

Angela Baldwin Richardson '91, S. Holland, is a sr. tech trainer at Winston & Strawn LLP in Chicago.

Michael Sebillé '91, Fargo, ND, is a web support specialist at U.S. Bank.

Marty Anderson '92, Carmel, IN, is the president at Spry.

Kelly Cameron Dold '92, Monticello, IN, is the marketing & communications manager for Purdue University Veterinary Hospital & Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Shelbyville.

Lee Helbert '92 MA '93, Park Forest, earned his Ed D in higher education with a community college focus from NIU and is the mgr. (head of dept.) at Prairie State College in Chicago Hts.

J. Spencer '92, State College, PA, is a sr. broadcast producer for AccuWeather.

Angela Meyers Zehnle '92, Quincy, is a benefit specialist at Health Care Service Corp.

Paul Brown '93, Daphne, AL, is a special agent in charge for the FBI in Mobile.

Michelle Wilkinson Gross '93, Bement, was elected IL Bankers Assoc (IBA) Board Chair.

Terry Inman '93, Rochelle, is the deputy police chief for the Rochelle Police Dept.

David Julian '93, Oswego, is the vp of business development at Phoenix Builders in Rolling Meadows.

Margaret Bradley Lawler '93, Peoria, is the exec. dir. of diversity, equity, and inclusion at Blackburn College in Carlinville.

David Orr '93, Aurora, is the surveillance lead at Hollywood Casino.

Kevin Zook '93, Phoenix, AZ, is the operations mgr. at Certified Languages Int'l.

Mark Hutchinson '94, Ft. Wayne, IN, is the dir. of financial planning & analysis at Byrider in Carmel.

Joseph Lampinen '94, Algonquin, is the vp/product mgr. at Kelly Services Inc. in Troy, MI.

Erica Behnke '95, Vancouver, WA, is a technical marketing mgr. for HP.

Gerald Coquillard '95, Chicago, is a sr. acct. mgr. & technical consultant for One Lambda a brand of Thermo Fisher Scientific.

Jason Harper '95, Kahoka, MO, is the superintendent for the Palmyra School Dist.

Steve Laing '95, Pocatello, ID, is the HR mgr. at Lamb Weston.

Eunsik Park '96, Sejong-si, S. Korea, is an asst. professor at Kongju Nat'l U in Chungcheongnam-do.

Geoff Van Deusen '96, Olathe, KS, is the CEO of United Soccer Coaches.

Shawna McNeff White '96, Macomb, is a loan admin. at MidAmerica Nat'l Bank.

Matthew Bierman '97 MA '99 MBA '03, Bloomington, is the vp of Business Affairs at Eastern University.

Mandi Urban-Lester '97, Wadsworth, was selected as the College of Lake County's Outstanding Adjunct Faculty of the Year for 2021, and was awarded the IL Community College Trust Assoc.'s 2021 award for Outstanding Adjunct Faculty of the Year for the State of IL.

Vannie Keever, '98 Gladstone, is the Chief Information Officer for XPAC.

Christina Frank Bavery '98, Manhattan, is the sr. vp, managing dir., commercial banking at First Bank Chicago, a div. of First Bank of Highland Park.

Terrell Duffin '98, Hazel Crest, published a children's golf book, *Help! My Dad Lost His Golf Ball!*

Kerry Lemaster McBride '98 MA '00 MS-ED '08, Rockledge, FL, is a lean training coord. at Health First.

Nadir Khan '99, Macomb, is the sales mgr. at UM Autos.

Keri Roberts Olson '99, Sterling, is the CEO of United Way of Whiteside County.

Matt Field '00 MA '02, Purcellville, VA, is a special asst. to the dir. at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

Paul Mott '00, Montello, WI, is the chief of police for the City of Wautoma.

Carrie Blomquist Starks '00, Canyon Country, CA, is a sr. graphic designer for CBRE, PSW Division in Los Angeles.

Buffie Cerutti Stewart '00, Chugiak, AK, is a recreation specialist for the U.S. Forest Service in Anchorage.

Paul Bubb MS '01, Macomb, is the Director of WIU Intercollegiate Athletics.

John Cain MS-ED '01, Bettendorf, IA, is the superintendent for the S. Tama School Dist.

Spring Kuczvara-Hyde '01 MA '04, Lincoln, is the dept. chair for languages & humanities at Lincoln College.

Jeremy Moore '01, Tulsa, OK, is the fire chief for the City of Broken Arrow and was selected one of Tulsa Community College's 50 Notable Alumni.

Ronee LaRoche Baracani '02 MS '04, Loveland, CO, is a sr. scientist toxicology for Loxo Oncology at Lilly in Boulder.

Rachel Palmer Bollinger MS-ED '02, Coal Valley, is a first-grade teacher at C.R. Hanna Elementary in Orion.

Amanda Thomas Crossland '02, Springfield, is the owner of Mel-O-Cream Donuts.

Douglas Eck '02, Chicago, is the dean of students at Columbia College Chicago.

Jason Tanamor '02, Portland, OR, wrote a YA romantic comedy novel, *Love, Dance & Egg Rolls*.

Kris Trepac '02, Downs, is an admin. aide at IL State University.

Keith Dobbins '03, Osh Kosh, WI, is retired.

Marisa Hollenback '03, Las Vegas, NV, is a musician with BluSoul Productions and has recorded her 2nd album.

Derek Nelson '03, La Quinta, CA, is the dir. of operations at Marriott Desert Springs Villas in Palm Desert.

Michelle Meier Poneleit '03 '04, Edwardsville, is a graphic designer at SIUE.

Karin Koning Spader '03, Madison, WI, earned her PhD in curriculum & instruction from the U of WI-Madison.

Derek Steele '03, Upper Marlboro, MD, is a supervisory attorney at the U.S. Dept. of Labor.

Paul Bergstrand '04, Washington, DC, is an asst. inspector general for the office of special review & evaluation for the EPA, Office of Inspector General.

William Coffey '04, Crown Point, IN, is a detective for Calumet City PD.

Steve Gugliotta MA '04, Galesburg, is the dir. of community development.

Todd Kelly MS '04, Chicago, is the Head Men's Basketball Coach at Dallas Christian College.

Kristy McArthur Kotek '04, Crystal Lake, is the exec. dir. of alumni engagement & career services at Roosevelt University.

Matt O'Kray '04, Geneva, is the asst. vp of industrial development for the Genesee & Wyoming, Inc.

Keith Peterson '04 MBA '14, Warm Springs, GA, is the project mgr. for Duracell in LaGrange.

Sarah Sharifi '04, Daly City, CA, is a lead content strategist for Momentive.ai in San Mateo.

Lakeisha Williams Steele '04, Upper Marlboro, MD, is the deputy asst. secretary (OLCA-higher Ed) at the U.S. Dept. of Education.

Scott Weber '04, Chagrin Falls, OH, is the vp of production at Locus Bioenergy in Solon.

Ryan Anderson MA '05, Onalaska, WI, is a professor at Viterbo University.

Kelly Sobotka Curtin '05, New Lenox, is an art teacher for Richards High School.

Scott Rothenberg '05, Richardson, TX, is a campus IT mgr. at Akiba Yavneh Academy of Dallas.

Gary Weiland '05, Ponder, TX, is a fire fighter for the Denton Fire Dept. and competed on "American Ninja Warriors" and released two books, Fischer's Accident and Fischer Finds a Friend.

Meghan Sheehan Litko '07, Downers Grove, is the dir. of special education for Dist. 108 in Willow Springs.

Megan Thurston Becker MS '08, Chesterfield, VA, is an assoc. dir. of residential life at VA Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Justin Hegy '08 MA '10, Palatine is the reg. mgr. at IL EPA.

Ryan Lambert '08 MA '21, Trivoli, is a history teacher at Farmington Central High School and has been selected as the IL High School Theatre Festival exec. dir. for 2023.

Drew Simpson '08, Pekin, is a school recruiter for Midwest Technical Institute.

Drew Donahoo MS '11, Macomb, is the director of donor relations & Special events for Western Illinois University Division of Advancement & Alumni Relation.

Jason G. Poulter '09, Belleville, is the manager of ALC Specialized office.

Denver Murphy '10, USAF Academy, CO, is a vocalist for the USAF Academy Premier Band.

Brandy Lumpkins Powell '10, Hermantown, MN, is a supervisor of education for the Dept. of Justice in Sandstone.

Andrew Raya '10, Coal Valley, graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

Kristi Manwill '11 MS '13, Salt Lake City, UT, is the assoc. dir. of conduct and care at the Univ. of UT.

Michelle Kenney Christopher '12, Romeoville, is a multi-needs teacher at Valley View School Dist. 565U.

Ashley Van Speybroeck Bozman '13 MS '17, Sandstone, MN, is a fellowship coord. at Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Ctr.

Brent Gordon '13, Mission, KS, is a product support specialist for Copart.

Kara Collins Moon '13, Golden, is an outpatient clinic therapist at Blessing Physician Services.

Brittany Bainter Robinson '13, Oswego, is a teacher at Yorkville School.

Andrea Patten Shetler '13, Glendale, CA, is a paid search & social lead for Motorola.

Kayla Norman Thurman '13 MS '16, N. Platte, NE, is the asst. dir. of early entry & program development at Mid-Plains Community College.

Meghan Vold '13, Palos Hts., is the first female sergeant at the Park Forest Police Dept.

Alaina Di Giorgio Macaulay '14 MS '16, Springfield, MA, is the exec. dir. of diversity and inclusion, Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst and was selected as a member of the 40 Under Forty Class of 2022 by Businesswest.

Jeffrey Thurman '14 MS '17, N. Platte, NE, is an asst. activities dir. and head women's basketball coach at Mid-Plains Community College.

Samantha Wallace '14, Eugene, OR, is an asst. dir. of youth & family programs at University of OR PE and Rec.

Cali Edwards Dambacher '15, Virginia, is a member services mgr. at Grain and Feed Assoc. of IL.

Holly Gloodt '15, Quincy, works at Blessing Hospital in the behavior health unit as a caregiver & engagement specialist.

Levi Campbell '16, Quincy, is an attachment & trauma coach at Chaddock.

Paige Senatra Hillyer '16, Bettendorf, IA, is an attorney at Betty, Neuman & McMahol, PLC. in Davenport.

Maggie Miller MS '16, Lincoln, NE, is an asst. dir. of recruitment and retention for the University of NE-Lincoln.

Daniel Ramirez MA '16, Richmond, CA, is a contracting officer at General Services Administration.

Abbie George Seaton '16, Aurora, CO, is the station services team lead for Southwest Airlines – Denver Station.

Rebecca Young Zobrist '16, Highland, is a physical therapist at Barnes Jewish Hospital.

Brittany Cordero Bugaj '17 MS '19, Jacksonville Beach, FL, is an RN for UF Health Jacksonville.

Heather Grooms Monson MA '17 MA '21, Colona, received a Master's in political science from the American Public University.

Luke Otto '17, Chicago, is a client acct. exec. at Kenway Consulting.

Stephanie Bergland Briggs '18, Silvis, is a music educator at Bettendorf Community Schools in Bettendorf, IA.

Elizabeth Miller Midsdarffer '18, Tuscola, is a grain origination specialist for ADM.

Amy Lejsner Simpson '18, Arlington, is a teacher at Putnam County CUSD 235.

Joshua Stuenkel MA '18, Springfield, was promoted to the rank of asst. chief at the Springfield Police Academy.

Yoana Villegas-Ruiz '19, Carpentersville, is a case mgr. at Maryville Academy.

Jennifer Vojvoda '19, Lockport, is a patrol deputy for the Kendall County Sheriff's Dept.

David "Sento" Ashby MLAS '20, Holladay, TN, has been named an officer in the American Society of Fight Directors.

David Block '20, Aiea, HI, is an officer in the U.S. Army.

Teonna Wade '21, Ft. Worth, TX, is an engagement specialist for the NewDay Services for Children & Families.

Whitney Phillips Miller '22, Adair, is the chief operating officer at IL Digital Educators Alliance.

Caitlyn Tracy '22, Elmwood, is a teacher at Bartonville Grade School.

Luan Rickard Statham MS-ED '05, Galesburg, is the asst. dir. of special education for Galesburg CUSD # 205.

Greg Hill '06, Eldridge, IA, works for the Scott County Sheriff's Office special operations unit and was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

Heather Frisch Jones '06, Mendota, is an office admin. for the State of IL.

Emma Clinton '07, Chicago, is a special education teacher for the Chicago Public Schools.

Michele Cameron Lovell '07, Macomb, is an accountant at McDonough Power Cooperative.

Ashley Davis Stokes '07, Phoenix, AZ, is an asst. professor at Barrow Neurological Institute.

Megan Smith Swanson '07, Salem, WI, works inside sales for Bar Code Integrators, Inc.

Steven Syoen '07, LaFollette, TN, is an asst. dir. for the U of TN Knoxville.

Jose Marroquin '08, Berwyn, is the dir. of student affairs at Loyola University Chicago.

Tim Ocasek '08 MA '10, Algonquin, was promoted to sergeant for the St. Charles Police Dept.

Meet Western Illinois University's 12th President Guiyou Huang



Join your WIU Alumni Association and President Huang for our Inaugural Tour!

For a list of Inaugural Tour events, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/WIUInauguralTour.

Jordan Tabb '08, Lincoln, CA, is an intel analyst for the U.S. Dept. of Justice.

Joseph Heckman '09 MS '11, Redwood City, CA, is a program admin. for NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

Sujan Kamma MS '09, Bear, DE, is a sr. system admin. for Envision InfoSolutions Inc.

Jessica Ball Mueller '09 MS '11, Chicago, completed her MBA from Northeastern IL University.

Amy Schroeder '09, Decatur, is a child welfare specialist for the Dept. of Child & Family Services.

Karen Terry '09, Macomb, works at Genesis Garden as a re-housing navigator.

Adam Allworth '10, Wapello, IA, is the plant mgr. for Miller Bros Solar.

Brandy Blender Bigger '10, Media, is a probation officer for Henderson County Court Services.

Stephanie Wyffels Clark '10 MS '12, Brookings, SD, is a relationship management coord. at S. Dakota State University.

Ellen Engh MS '10, Waverly, IA, is the dir. of alumni & parent engagement at Wartburg College.

Jenna Keane Granstra '10, Austin, TX, is a project mgr. for Montrose Air Quality Services.

Alison Meyers Jefferson MS '10, Macomb, is the CEO facilitator for the McDonough County CEO.

Erin McDonald '10, Rolla, MO, is an RN at MO Baptist Sullivan Hospital and 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force Nursing Corps.

Brandon Murray '10, Effingham, was promoted to sergeant at Effingham County Sheriff's Office.

Bobby Elliott '11, Ft. Myers, FL, is an area retail sales mgr. for AT&T.

Jessica Bryan Heyen '11, Petersburg, is the risk management specialist for the USDA in Springfield.

Lori McLean Howard '11, Astoria, NY, was elected vp of the Talent Managers Assoc.

Randon Lingle '11, Oklahoma City, OK, is a customer acct. mgr. for Sunset Equipment Co. LLC.

Rachel Tabor Schmock '11, Lincoln, is the chief of staff for the IL House of Representatives.

Alan Cale '12 MS '21, Stuart, FL, works for Int'l Training as the territory mgr.: Europe, Middle East, Russia.

Amanda Long Carroll '12, Dixon, is the dir. at Kreider Services.

Brad Cirks MS '12, Orion, is the pe & health teacher at Orion Middle School.

Brett Hartigan '12, S. Elgin, is the asst. store sales mgr. at Best Buy.

Megan Kave '12, Chicago, is a controller for Tampico Beverages.

Madeline McGuire '12, Indian Head Park, is the casework supervisor for IL Dept. of Corrections in Chicago.

Jake Augustin '13, Charleston, WV, is a program dir. & asst. professor of sport business at the U of Charleston.

Jameel Granberry '13, Germany, is a special agent for the U.S. Army.

Kendra Lutterman Epley '14, Pana, works for Heartland Dental as the temporary staffing doctor recruiter.

Claire Sladek Essig '14, Arlington Hts., is an exec. asst. at CDW.

Riley Hintzsche '14, Ottawa, has been named a Nat'l Assoc. of Ag Educators (NAAE) Teach Ag Champion.

Alfred Robinson '14, Pittsfield, is a security officer for Illini Hospital.

Molly Rupert '14, Ankeny, IA, is the parks & recreation supervisor at Des Moines Parks & Recreation.

Jacob Taylor '14, Galesburg, is the K9 handler/patrol officer for the Galesburg PD.

Kathryn Post Boll '15, Frankfort, is a food labeling specialist for TreeHouse Foods.

Kyle Boll '15, Frankfort, is a firefighter/paramedic for Frankfort Fire Protection.

Brendan Heye '15, Plainfield, is a patrol deputy for the Kendall County Sheriff's Office.

Rachel Keating '15, Macomb, placed first in the UPAA September competition's Sports Action category for her caught-in-the-moment shot for Leatherneck Men's Soccer.

Kassandra Massolle Leber '15, Mt. Morris, is a self-employed/private practice licensed clinical social worker.

Jeremy McCool '15 MA '17, Imperial Beach, CA, was featured in Pittsburgh Magazine's 23rd annual "40 under 40" list.

Philip Moe MS-ED '15, Geneseo, is the principal at Millikin Elementary School.

Michaela Wheeler Rentmeester '15, New Holstein, WI, is the general mgr. at Harbor Centre Marina.

Ashley Clark Swingel '15, Oglesby, is a marketing specialist for Carus.

Brianna Gavel Thul '15, Tiffin, IA, is the community development planner for the City of Iowa City.

Kortney White Watts Bourquin '16, Mt. Horeb, WI, is the grants admin. at the U of WI Madison.

KaBree Braggs '16, Houston, TX, is a residential life coord. for the U of Houston.

Zachary Clark '16, Princeton, is a pe/health education teacher at Logan Jr. High School.

Justin Derry '16, Macomb, is a graphic designer asst. in University Relations at WIU.

Julia Evans MA '16, E. Moline, is a self-employed website developer.

Mary Fuller MS '16, St. Louis, MO, is the STEM program mgr. for the Girl Scouts of Eastern MO.

Kaci McAfee Geisler '16, Piasa, is the ag instructor at Southwestern High School.

Monserrat Zepeda Sharpfish '16, Horizon City, TX, is a military policeman for the U.S. Army.

Deziree Vaughn '16, Peoria, is the social service dir. for Heritage Health in Chillicothe.

Kristyn Curry Watkins '16, Petersburg, is an RN at Springfield Memorial Hospital.

Caitlyn Westfall MS '16, Richmond Hts, MO, is the dir. of membership education at Zeta Psi Int'l Fraternity in Pearl River, NY.

Sarah Peterson Clark '17, Princeton, is the pe/driver's ed teacher at Bureau Valley High School in Manlius.

John Edmondson '17 MBA '21, Thonotosassa, FL, is the regional dir. of strategic sourcing for public institutions at JLL.

Levi Huls '17, Waterloo, IA, is the sr. mgr. of operations at J.B. Hunt.

Jesse Wallace PB-CER '17 MS '19, Fairfax, IA, is the digital media mgr. & producer at U of IA Hospitals & Clinics.

Sadie Hiltner Barber '18, Roseville, is the human services caseworker for the Dept. of Human Services.

Nadia Saracco '18, Montgomery, is a ranger police officer for the DuPage Forest Preserve Police in Wheaton.

Abigail Adkisson Shull '18, Otley, IA, is a hospice social worker at WesleyLife Hospice.

Becca Wegs Smith '18, Dunlap, is a credit officer for Compeer Financial.

Madeline Stolinski '18, Orland Park, is the dir. of memory care at Bella Terra Lombard.

Danielle Coffin Stalder '19, Davenport, IA, is an HR generalist at SAL Family & Community Services.

Victor Dantas '20, Monmouth, is the head coach for the men's soccer team at Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg.

Jonathon Marino '20, Hoffman Est., is a waiter at Moretti's in Schaumburg.

Class
Notes

Elijah Richardson MA '20, Madison Hts., MI, is the president & community initiatives dir. of WHOH Detroit.

Lauren Wood '20, St. Louis, MO, is the band & choir teacher at St. Pius X High School.

Danielle Harris '21, Canton, is a special education teacher at Cuba Elementary School.

Susan Monahan '21, Geneseo, is an 8th grade teacher for Orion School Dist.

Marriages

Taylor Blythe '20 and Madi Brewer, Apr. 16, 2022.

Brittany Cordero '17 MS '19 and **Brock Bugaj '17 MS '19**, Apr. 23, 2022.

Mariah Dickson '20 and **Zachary Riel '17 MA '19**, Aug. 13, 2021.

Chandler Horrell '16 and Matt Adkisson, Oct. 16, 2021.

Nadia Saracco '18 and Tory Jones, Aug. 21, 2021.

Claire Sladek '14 and **Michael Essig '11**, Apr. 2021.

Nichole Wisslead '16 and **Jon Sandoval '12 MBA '16**, May 14, 2021.

Rebecca Young '16 and **Matt Zobrist '16 M.Acct '17**, Jan. 2, 2021.

Births & Adoptions

Marlon Aguilar '06 and Kori, Lucas Simonson, Oct. 26, 2020.

Meggi Tibbetts Aspengren '11 and Jason, Jalen, June 23, 2020.

Nicholas Atwood '09 and Alysia, Connor, June 2020.

Kaitlyn Dyché Bagley '11 MS-ED '16 and **Justin Bagley '12**, Kane Michael, July 1, 2020.

Kaylee Kirby Baker '18, Henslee Jane, May 2021.

Nick Bangert '18 and **Sidney Lilienthal Bangert '20**, Sutton Dale, Nov. 28, 2020.

Taylor Blythe '20 and Madi, Coe Alvin Mikal, Dec. 13, 2021.

Katy Post Boll '15 and **Kyle Boll '15**, Cohen Robert, Feb. 17, 2022.

Kortney White Watts Bourquin '16 and **Justin Bourquin '16**, Kennedy Marie, Jan. 25, 2021.

Shannon Phillips Bowsher '07 and **Michael Bowsher '05, MS-'07**, Lily Marie, Mar. 23, 2021.

Thomas Boyles '06 and Amy, Charles Paul, Oct. 20, 2021.

Ashley VanSpeybroeck Bozman '13 MS '17 and **Alex Bozman '13**, Sydney River, Aug. 5, 2021.

Jake Brandenburg '05 and Jessica, Madelyn, Nov. 15, 2021.

Kelsey Michelini Brannan '13 MS '15 and **Seth Brannan '12**, Julianna, Mar. 23, 2020.

Christina Barrows Brown '10 and Chad, Cayleigh Rose, June 10, 2021.

Bianca Banti Campbell '11 and **Larz Campbell '11**, Thea, June 8, 2020.

Alexander "Levi" Campbell '16 and **Hannah Wegs Campbell '17**, Noah Christopher Lee, Feb. 9, 2022.

Allison Morgan Carroll '09 MS '11 and **Rob Carroll MS '11**, Maxine Rose, Sept. 3, 2020.

Michael Chezum '08 and **Kacey Politsch '09**, Colette, July 8, 2020.

Michelle Kenney Christopher '12 and Jim, Miles, May 30, 2021.

Stephanie Wyffels Clark '10 MS '12, Maddux Axel, July 15, 2020.

Sarah Peterson Clark '17 and **Zachary Clark '16**, Isa Maragret, September 17, 2021.

Amanda Thomas Crossland '02 and **Darin Crossland '02**, Amber Lee, Aug. 7, 2021.

Becky Trudeau Culvey '10 and **Zach Culvey '10**, Connor, Sept. 19, 2020.

Ashley Bishop Cushman '04 MS '06 and **Jay Cushman '05**, Leo James, Feb. 17, 2022.

Ben Dahlstrom '14 and **Michelle Dumele Dahlstrom '14**, Penelope May, Dec. 31, 2021.

Jon Danielson '11 and **Lindsey Powell Danielson '11**, Leo Michael, Aug. 19, 2020.

Sarah Knapp Dean '11 and **Jason Dean '11**, Barrett, Sept. 9, 2020.

Tim Dime '04 and **Amanda Rubio Dime '05**, twins, Zac Elliot and Mason Joaquin (MJ), June 30, 2020.

Jessie Rhodes Dimmick '06 and Sam, twins, Everett Burke and Vivienne Meriwether, Nov. 5, 2020.

Andrew Dix '01, twins, Gavin and Grayson, Oct. 13, 2020.

Patrick Downing '09 and Kristena, Bennett Lane, Aug. 29, 2021.

Robert Elliott '11 and Kelly, Rhyan Marie, Jan. 14, 2021.

Kendra Lutterman Epley '14 and **Clinton Epley '14**, Faith, Feb. 23, 2021.

Julie Briggs Erickson '16 and **Matthew Erickson '17 M.ACCT '18**, Ellis, Sept. 5, 2021.

Claire Sladek Essig '14 and **Michale Essig '11**, Lillian, Feb. 28, 2022.

Stephanie West Gall '13, MS'20 and **Cory Gall '11, M. ACCT. '12**, Abigail Ann, Nov. 29, 2021.

Jenna Keane Granstra '10 and **James Granstra '10**, Joshua, Mar. 1, 2021.

Beth Cheney Grzeszczak '11 and Andrew, Lukas Andrew, Jan. 6, 2020.

Joe Hahn '12 and Liz, Hazel Rose, July 2020.

Taylor Ruder Harper '11 and **Jake Harper '10**, Jack Judah, Aug. 24, 2020.

Kristina Sanchez Hauge '08 MA '10 and Robert, Isabella Maria, July 8, 2020.

Payton Creasey Hinman '18 and **Dylan Hinman '17**, Nolyn Creasey, May 11, 2022.

Jessica Sparks Hollensteiner '09 and Patrick, Arabella, Nov. 28, 2020.

Allison Troy Housewright '12 and **Mitchell Housewright '11**, Luka, Sept. 26, 2019.

Levi Huls '17 and **Alexus Roberts Huls '17**, Cayson, Apr. 2, 2021.

Brittania Swindler Hulslander '04 and **John Hulslander '04**, Maxwell Jonas, Jan. 24, 2020.

Joseph Illichman '12 and Heather, Logan Joseph, June 3, 2020.

Stephanie Jacobs '14 and **Jeffery Woodyatt '13 MS '18**, Theodore Randal, Oct. 23, 2020.

Amanda White Johnston '09 and Glen, Bodhi, July 15, 2020.

Michael Jones MS '12 and **Miranda Edler Jones '06 MS '08**, Madison Hazel, May 25, 2020.

Courtney Whitcomb Kilver '16 and **Thomas Kilver '17**, Tanner, April 30, 2021.

Brittany Kimes '06, Charlotte, Sept. 23, 2020.

Natasha Presswood Kraushaar '04 and **David Kraushaar '03**, Phoebe Nicole, Dec. 6, 2019.

Jessica Makler Larsen '07 and Matt, Amos, Apr. 17, 2020.

Bethany Corbin Leary '13 and Nick, Wyatt Bennett, Feb. 16, 2022.

Kassandra Massolle Leber '15 and **Joseph Leber '15**, Myles Christopher, May 3, 2021.

Gina Mugavero Leffelman '11 and **Spencer Leffelman '11**, Cade, May 15, 2020.

Katie Tucker Lemenager '15 and **Dillon Lemenager '15**, Bailey, March, 2021.

Meghan Sheehan Litko '07 and **Russ Litko '07**, Luke Russell, Apr. 4, 2022.

Christine Weinmann Looman '12 and **David Looman '10**, Shepard Ryan, July 1, 2021.

Erin McNamee MacLean '08 and David, Jack Henry, Mar. 6, 2022.

Michelle Stone Markey '13 M. ACCT '14 and **Caleb Markey '14**, Ainsley Mae, Oct. 2, 2020.

Candace Henshaw Marks '07 and Kevin, Nora Jean, June 15, 2022.

Hannah Schulz Marshall '18 and **Nathaniel Marshall '14**, Rosalee Suzanne, Jan. 15, 2022.

Brianna Martinez '19, Amora, Oct. 13, 2020.

Colleen Spreitzer McGavock '12 and **Patrick McGavock '12**, Connor Patrick, Sept. 4, 2020.

Carley Bobell McGrew '13 and **Jordan McGrew '11**, Jackson James, Jan. 8, 2022.

Heather Melarkey Menconi '05 MA '07 and Mark, Ariella, Jan. 2022.

Elizabeth Miller Mitsdarffer '18 and **Riley Mitsdarffer '18**, Ada Rose, Apr. 2, 2022.

Denver Murphy '10, Charlotte, April, 2021.

Thomas O'Brien '07 and Samantha, Conor Randall, May 8, 2022.

Leah Hartzell O'Neill MBA '16 and Alec, Declan Daniel, Aug. 18, 2020.

Abbie Markley Pendarvis '13, and Jake, Markley Gwynn, Nov. 29, 2020.

Alumni Benefits & Services

Western Illinois University students become MEMBERS of the Alumni Association the day they graduate! As non-dues paying members, all graduates are entitled to the following benefits and services provided by the Alumni Association:

- Free quarterly issues of the *Western* Alumni Magazine
- Networking opportunities with other alumni at more than 50 events hosted by the Alumni Association around the world each year
- Use of Western's Leslie F. Malpass Library
- Access to benefits provided by WIU's Center for Career Preparation and Employer Engagement
- The opportunity to purchase membership to the Donald S. Spencer Student Recreation Center
- Disability, dental and travel insurance opportunities
- WIU Debit Card
- Alumni Travel Abroad programs
- Alumni class rings, diploma frames and WIU Illinois license plates
- 21 scholarships given each year to children or grandchildren of alumni
- Access to the online directory exclusively for WIU graduates!
- Monthly issues of RockeNews, an eNewsletter from the WIU Alumni Association
- And ... Exciting Alumni Benefit Announcement:
Farmers Insurance® has teamed with the Western Illinois Alumni Association!
- Discount rate for the IMEG Business Lounge at the Quad Cities International Airport



Class
Notes



The Western Illinois University Alumni Association strives to develop and sustain lifelong relationships with students, alumni and friends to advance the mission of the University.

Ashley Brown Radosav '08 MS '09 and Adrian, twins, Michael Cristian and Madelyn Harper, Oct. 6, 2020.

Taylor Johnson Reece '19 and Daymon, Willow, Feb. 18, 2022.

Tiffany Kimbrell Reel '14 MS '16 and **Cyle Reel '14**, Owen Benjamin, Oct. 20, 2020.

Michaela Wheeler Rentmeester '15 and Zachary, Jackson Reilly, June 23, 2021.

Donna James Renz '12 and **Michael Renz '12**, Edwin James, Dec. 29, 2019.

Rebekah Baughman Ridgeway '03 and John, Luke, Dec. 7, 2020.

Holly Stauffer Ritter '16 and **Kurt Ritter '15**, Harley, May 31, 2022.

Ryan Rivard '11 and Katie, Parker Ryan, July 15, 2020.

Brittany Bainter Robinson '13 and **Michael Robinson '11**, Hayden, Feb. 22, 2022.

Scott Rothenberg '05, Charles Lincoln, Apr. 8, 2022.

Katie Savage '09 and **Mike Mongoven '09**, James Patrick, Oct. 26, 2021.

Amy Schroeder '09, Asher James, January 30, 2020 and Annistyn Kay, May 5, 2021.

Abbie George Seaton '16 and Brad, Norah Rae, Nov. 5, 2021.

Madi Merritt Severs '19 and Nick, Ryle Merritt, Dec. 25, 2021.

Jamie Dixon Shanahan '02 and Jason, Connor James, Dec. 8, 2019.

Amy Melton Sheehan '09 and William, Vivian Jo, Aug. 1, 2020.

Andrea Patten Shetler '13 and **James Shetler '13**, Sutton, Nov. 29, 2021.

Amber Shupe '21 and **Abin Cherian '20**, Violet Ruth, May 17, 2022.

Amy Lejsner Simpson '18 and **Scott Simpson '16**, Addison Lee, Mar. 8, 2022.

Stephanie Holda Spjuth '13 and, Justin, Lincoln, Aug. 4, 2020.

Derek Steele '03 and **Lakeisha Williams Steele '04**, Ari Omoye, Jan. 4, 2022.

Megan Smith Swanson '07 and Jake, Jhett Daniel, Aug. 2021.

Steven Syoen '07 and Elise, Darby Reese, Oct. 15, 2020.

Sara Koslowski Szalkowski '10 and **Mark Szalkowski '11**, Landon Mark, July 30, 2020.

Kayla Lang Villalon '12, Dahlia, Nov. 29, 2021.

Jennifer Burns Villard '09 and David, William James, July 16, 2020.

Yoana Villegas-Ruiz '19 and Henry, Penelope, Jan. 12, 2022.

Rebecca Gray Wade '09 and Richard, Remi Lee, June 14, 2019.

Katie McHugh Wall '10 and Gerald, Rogan Allen, July 17, 2020.

Brandi Watkins Warner '09 and Jan, Janaya Victoria, Mar. 23, 2020.

Kristyn Curry Watkins '16 and Dustin, Lyla Ann, June 20, 2021.

Samantha Heaton Whitham '14 and **Nathan Whitham '14**, Hunter David, July 18, 2020.

Amanda Doyle Wiese '12 and Kyle, Sutton, Mar. 27, 2020.

Melissa Bishop Willock '12 and TJ, Adalynn, Aug. 30, 2020.

Kathryn Boyd Wilson '07 and **Chad Wilson '03**, Emmalyne June, Feb. 24, 2022.

Hayley Delia Wozny '14 and **Lukasz Wosny '15**, Edyta Zofia, Aug. 25, 2021.

Rebecca Young Zobrist '16 and **Matt Zobrist '16 MA '17**, Reilly, Nov. 16, 2021.

Deaths

1940 Dorothy F. Newell Vail, Macomb, Mar. 2, 2022.

1941 John R. Pletkovich, Peoria, June 14, 2022.

1942 Dorothy A. Eller Claiborn, Houston, TX, Mar. 16, 2022.

1946 Charles H. Kirkpatrick, Roseville, Jan. 11, 2022.

1946 Jean Tuschhoff Pistorius, Forsyth, Mar. 28, 2022.

1946 Anita L. Stodgel Wight, Williamsfield, Mar. 7, 2022.

1950 Robert L. Cozine, Emmetsburg, IA, Jan. 23, 2022.

1952 Elizabeth M. Stough Loepfe, Kronenwetter, WI, Jan. 13, 2022.

1952 Richard D. Stephens, Macomb, Apr. 5, 2022.

1953 Clarence R. "Ray" Grinter, Edwardsville, Mar. 1, 2022.

1954 Lois E. Burgard Gorsage, Canton, Jan. 23, 2022.

1954 Mamoru Kanda, Los Angeles, CA, Mar. 10, 2022.

1954 Donna L. Dowacter McCutchan, Quincy, Jan. 16, 2022.

1955 Robert L. Hoburg MSE '56, New Milford, CT, May 13, 2022.

1955 Carl E. Thornblad MS-ED '60, Philippines, June 15, 2022.

1957 Hazel D. Dixon Hart MS-ED '68, Culver City, CA, Apr. 14, 2022.

1957 Richard A. Scott MS-ED '63, Bushnell, Apr. 13, 2022.

1958 D. Richard Jennings, Moline, Jan. 14, 2022.

1958 Max H. Neuneker, Carson City, NV, July 8, 2022.

1959 Charles F. Armitage MS-ED '62, Normal, June 12, 2022.



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- 1959 Diana K. Ecklund Riley**, Galesburg, July 10, 2022.
- 1960 Glenda S. Kaufman Anstine**, Novi, MI, May 9, 2022.
- 1960 Connie A. Warner Fornal**, Aurora, Feb. 12, 2022.
- 1961 Luana C. Boyle Galvin**, Burlington, IA, May 31, 2022.
- 1961 Alan F. Logan**, Davenport, IA, May 24, 2022.
- 1961 Larry E. Mead**, Columbia, MO, Jan. 11, 2022.
- 1961 Harlan W. "Bill" Suffield MSE**, Cary, May 20, 2022.
- 1962 Darrell W. Darling**, Santa Cruz, CA, Feb. 3, 2022.
- 1962 Jesse J. Porres**, Libertyville, Feb. 19, 2022.
- 1962 Tobein M. Tegard**, Grindley, Jan. 9, 2022.
- 1962 Gerald L. Zeller**, Fernandina, FL, Jan. 15, 2022.
- 1963 William J. Kenney**, Peru, Apr. 10, 2022.
- 1963 Gerald D. "Jerry" Robbins**, Quincy, Jan. 31, 2022.
- 1965 James E. Casson**, Prophetstown, Feb. 15, 2022.
- 1965 Allan D. Peters MS-ED**, Jefferson, WI, Apr. 14, 2022.
- 1965 Steven A. Taylor**, Rock Island, Jan. 22, 2022.
- 1965 Karen C. Moyes Tilton**, The Villages, FL, Feb. 10, 2022.
- 1966 Larry E. Ancelet MS-ED '69**, Alexis, Apr. 28, 2022.
- 1966 David C. Myers**, Oswego, May 13, 2022.
- 1966 Richard L. Wherley**, Rushville, May 5, 2022.
- 1966 Edward C. White MS-ED '68**, Galesburg, May 24, 2022.
- 1967 Charles R. Cordis**, Pt. Charlotte, FL, Mar. 29, 2022.
- 1967 Gerald L. Dakin**, Wheaton, May 12, 2022.
- 1967 Mary Beth E. Fetgatter Graves**, Warsaw, IN, July 11, 2022.
- 1968 Marianne Kastner Bricker**, Princeton, Mar. 8, 2022.
- 1968 Charles L. Kuykendall**, Bettendorf, IA, Apr. 12, 2022.
- 1968 Robert J. Majetich**, Falls of Rough, KY, Apr. 3, 2022.
- 1968 Jane M. Ahlander Valiga**, Bedford, TX, Feb. 15, 2022.
- 1969 Richard A. Bailey**, Savanna, Feb. 12, 2022.
- 1969 Calvin W. Baumann**, Basco, Mar. 16, 2022.
- 1969 Neal A. Brokaw MS-ED**, Burlington, IA, July 5, 2022.
- 1969 Elaine E. Rosenberry Dillow**, Kewanee, Mar. 29, 2022.
- 1969 Michael H. Haney**, Ely, MN, Apr. 17, 2022.
- 1969 Kenneth D. Neahring**, Geneva, June 19, 2022.
- 1969 Russel W. Rommel MS-ED**, Davenport, IA, July 17, 2022.
- 1970 Charles F. Butterfield**, Colchester, Jan. 17, 2022.
- 1970 Barbara K. Crossland Clem**, Burlington, IA, Feb. 28, 2022.
- 1970 Jim E. Dennis**, Quincy, July 4, 2022.
- 1970 Rosemary J. Link Grohmann MS '78**, Gilson, Mar. 9, 2022.
- 1970 Lauretta M. Roberts**, St. Louis, MO, Apr. 12, 2022.
- 1970 Larry D. Skipper**, Polson, MT, Jan. 23, 2022.
- 1970 Harry E. Wallace**, Woodland Park, CO, Jan. 11, 2022.
- 1970 Robert A. Yaap**, Ankeny, IA, Feb. 18, 2022.
- 1971 Stephen C. Austin**, Warsaw, Apr. 23, 2022.
- 1971 James S. Boblak**, Macomb, Feb. 26, 2022.
- 1971 Craig W. Cutbirth MA**, Champaign, Mar. 23, 2022.
- 1971 James W. DiSanto**, Naperville, Apr. 25, 2022.
- 1971 Michael E. Law**, Macomb, Mar. 20, 2022.
- 1971 Karen Proulx**, Good Hope, July 6, 2022.
- 1971 Nancy D. Hughes Wickwire**, Florence, AL, June 30, 2022.
- 1971 Mary J. Bilderback Wood MS-ED '00**, Springfield, May 16, 2022.
- 1971 James G. Wyman**, Sandwich, Jan. 9, 2022.
- 1972 Gretchen S. Johnson**, Chicago, May 19, 2022.
- 1972 Donald E. Kaminski**, Danville, NH, Feb. 28, 2022.
- 1972 Dean A. Reeverts MA**, Macomb, Jan. 11, 2022.
- 1972 Gary W. VanCourt MA '77**, Rock Island, Mar. 29, 2022.
- 1973 Bonnie S. Berry Hester**, O'Fallon, Jan. 22, 2022.
- 1973 Brian L. Kempf**, Rock Island, Feb. 16, 2022.
- 1973 Pamela L. Schinler Wyman**, Sandwich, June 14, 2022.
- 1974 Stephen A. Baker**, Knoxville, Jan. 21, 2022.
- 1974 Stephen W. Baker**, Des Plaines, June 10, 2022.
- 1974 Debra A. Reynolds**, Macomb, Feb. 25, 2022.
- 1974 Carolyn S. Ray Thompson**, Macomb, May 16, 2022.
- 1974 Connie M. DeDecker Tourville**, Annawan, Jan. 13, 2022.
- 1974 Linda Christine Uhlmann Vanderhart**, Rockford, MI, June 16, 2022.
- 1974 Danny C. Veach**, Golden, Jan. 28, 2022.
- 1974 William J. Walt**, Deer Park, Apr. 12, 2022.
- 1974 Jeffrey D. Roan**, Bushnell, Mar. 18, 2022.
- 1976 Janet B. Reed Ackerman**, Ohio, Feb. 3, 2022.
- 1976 Thomas M. Buess**, Brookfield, Mar. 20, 2022.
- 1976 Jerry L. Friend MA '79**, Galesburg, May 23, 2022.
- 1976 Mary V. Stevens Hofer**, Tinley Park, Apr. 22, 2022.
- 1976 Douglas K. Limkeman**, Long Beach, CA, Mar. 18, 2022.
- 1976 Dennis W. Moldenhauer**, Easton, June 29, 2022.
- 1976 Robert S. Romanik**, Belleville, May 7, 2022.
- 1976 Dale G. Ruebner**, Galesburg, Apr. 29, 2022.
- 1976 James D. Turek**, Naperville, Jan. 27, 2022.
- 1977 Judith A. Konofsky Duprey**, Deerfield, May 8, 2022.
- 1977 Wendy A. Burt Dust**, Effingham, Mar. 10, 2022.
- 1977 James I. Newton MS-ED/ED-SP '86**, Princeton, Mar. 25, 2022.
- 1977 Mark S. Rusin**, Tucson, AZ, Jan. 25, 2022.
- 1977 Peter L. Scarano MS-ED**, Clinton, IA, Apr. 1, 2022.
- 1978 Lawrence T. Fan MS**, San Francisco, CA, Feb. 21, 2022.
- 1979 Michael A. Graves**, Godfrey, Jan. 19, 2022.
- 1980 Joseph D. Comeau MS '93**, Plano, TX, Feb. 28, 2022.
- 2008 Bobbi J. Bradley Halemeyer MA '09**, Keokuk, IA, Sept. 4, 2021.
- 1980 Betty J. Followwill Ledford MS-ED**, Shelby Twp, MI, May 13, 2022.
- 1980 Sara Jo McLemore MS**, Winter Park, FL, Mar. 24, 2022.
- 1980 Edward P. Short**, Moline, Jan. 5, 2021.
- 1980 Robert R. Wagner**, Burnside, May 3, 2022.
- 1981 Cynthia L. Beals MS**, Yale, MI, Jan. 6, 2022.
- 1982 James E. Kruse**, Itasca, Dec. 27, 2021.
- 1983 Douglas G. Armstrong MS**, Torrington, WY, May 10, 2022.
- 1983 Carol K. Palmer Ralston**, Galesburg, May 26, 2022.
- 1984 Perry E. Ehlen**, Peoria, Nov. 6, 2020.
- 1984 Lorrie L. Luallen Gray**, Sullivan, NH, Apr. 19, 2022.
- 1985 Janine A. Fixler Calkins**, Janesville, WI, Sept. 25, 2021.
- 1985 Robert L. Christine MA '92 '11**, Macomb, Apr. 8, 2022.
- 1985 Michael D. Hensley**, Sandwich, Dec. 31, 2021.
- 1985 John P. "Pat" Lee**, Kewanee, Apr. 21, 2022.
- 1985 Blaine D. Rucks**, Machesney Park, Dec. 9, 2021.
- 1985 Jennie J. Clayton Trias MA '87**, Macomb, Sept. 2, 2021.
- 1986 Lawrence A. Ales**, LaPorte, IN, Nov. 13, 2019.
- 1986 Kenneth E. Argenbright**, Macomb, Dec. 25, 2021.
- 1986 Fannie J. Skinner Pitchford**, Havana, Jan. 2, 2021.
- 1986 James R. Sheltz MS-ED**, Jacksonville, June 21, 2022.
- 1987 Mary F. Rosano Aten MS-ED '94**, Macomb, May 10, 2022.
- 1987 Leah R. Hyde MS-ED**, Bettendorf, IA, Nov. 10, 2021.
- 1987 Dana Jo Sinn Olson**, Peoria, Sept. 6, 2018.
- 1987 Larry A. Toppert**, E. Moline, June 6, 2022.
- 1987 Martha A. VanBaale**, Rushville, Feb. 12, 2022.
- 1989 Arthur K. Graham**, Rockford, Dec. 6, 2021.
- 1989 Danny J. Hamm**, Macomb, Mar. 3, 2022.
- 1989 Cherri A. Ware Montgomery MA '97**, Springfield, Feb. 21, 2022.
- 1989 Jane Orr Toland MS-ED**, Macomb, Dec. 4, 2021.
- 1990 Sharon J. Young Bork**, Rolling Meadows, Oct. 14, 2021.
- 1990 Lisa L. Newburg Leahr MS**, Rockford, Mar. 14, 2022.
- 1990 Terry D. Mahon MS '02**, E. Moline, Mar. 16, 2022.

PROTECTING YOUR LEGACY.



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The WIU Foundation's new partnership with FreeWill makes estate planning free and accessible for all Leathernecks through an online tool that allows you to complete your plans in less than 20 minutes. By removing the expensive fees associated with writing a will, your estate planning can be simple, secure, and attainable.



FreeWill is a trusted partner of Western Illinois University. Used by more than 480,000 people to plan their estate, FreeWill can also be used alongside an attorney for more complex estate planning, and allows you to update your will as needed.

Safeguarding your loved ones and planning your legacy with FreeWill are among the many benefits of your connection to Western. Please consider this opportunity to protect the people and causes important to you, and start your free will at FreeWill.com/WIU, or scan the QR code.



1991 Johannah M. Hallman, Burlington, IA, Oct. 3, 2021.

1991 John F. Krzyzaniak, Macomb, Sept. 27, 2021.

1991 Malcolm L. Little, Orrington, ME, May 16, 2021.

1993 Terrence E. Dugan, Silvis, Dec. 14, 2018.

1994 James D. Elmer MBA '95, Burlington, IA, May 19, 2021.

1994 James K. Hill, Sunrise Beach, CA, Apr. 3, 2022.

1994 John G. Kammerer, Rock Island, June 24, 2022.

1994 Joseph R. "Randy" Lillard MS-ED, Canton, MO, Mar. 18, 2022.

1994 Gloria A. Kozlowski Marcott, Macomb, Feb. 11, 2022.

1994 Jeffrey D. Schneider, Raleigh, NC, Mar. 10, 2021.

1996 Darla A. Durham Williams MS-ED '99, Litchfield, AZ, Sept. 19, 2021.

1996 Michael J. Witt, Oak Lawn, Mar. 27, 2022.

1997 Christopher M. Reed MS '01, Burlington, IA, Aug. 7, 2020.

1998 James W. "Coach" Edlen, Galesburg, May 15, 2022.

1998 John R. "Ronnie" Thompson, Macon, GA, Mar. 22, 2020.

2003 Fanindra P. Bhatta MS, Kent, OH, June 21, 2021.

2003 Shannan M. Smith Curths, Alton, Mar. 2, 2022.

2003 Bridget A. Dambacher, Virginia, May 28, 2022.

2003 David P. Little MS, Astoria, July, 23, 2021.

2003 Amanda L. Brown Mehaffy, Blandinsville, Jan 25, 2022.

2003 Cory L. Wingerter, Braidwood, Mar. 10, 2022.

2004 Ramon M. Escapa, Rushville, June 19, 2022.

2004 Janice C. Watts MS-ED, Bettendorf, IA, Oct. 17, 2021.

2006 Stephanie D. Duffield, St. David, July 30, 2020.

2008 Cecilia A. O'Brien, Moline, May 12, 2022.

2008 Yvonne M. Zaborac, Canton, June 10, 2022.

2009 Amber L. Michlig Bishop, Harvard, June 11, 2022.

2009 Nicholas D. Weist, Viola, Apr. 29, 2022.

2011 Mary C. Hogg MS-ED '16, Cedar Rapids, IA, Mar. 10, 2022.

2012 Sharon M. Herrington, Avon, Jan. 27, 2022.

2013 Alex A. Stanley, Chicago, July 1, 2022.

2018 Robert T. Ontiveros, Moline, Feb. 8, 2022.

2020 Joshua J. Brennan, Davenport, IA, Mar. 4, 2022.

2021 Hunter L. Mason, Kansas City, MO, May 31, 2022.

To view a complete list of those who have passed away since our last issue, visit bit.ly/3vTYoOj or scan the QR code.



CLASS NOTE CRITERIA

Information received will be published in the next edition if any of the following have occurred in the past 12 months: a job change, promotion, special honor, retirement, marriage (include date), births or adoptions (include date).

Information will be listed by year of first degree earned. Due to the high volume of address changes, information will not be published if there simply has been a change of address.

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