Visiting scholars, alumni and dignitaries offer students unique perspectives
Message from the Dean

I am pleased to be serving once again as interim dean of the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences. As many of you may know, Dr. George Ross returned to campus in March to serve as president of Central Michigan University. Dr. E. Gary Shapiro, who had served as dean of CHSBS since 1997, was appointed provost after serving as interim provost since July 2009. We congratulate both President Ross and Provost Shapiro. I believe that the university is extremely fortunate to have such strong leadership as we continue to face uncertain budgetary times for 2010-2011.

Despite the uncertainty faced by the university due to the economic crisis at the state level, I invite you to read about their notable accomplishments.

The College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences encompasses a diverse and successful group of academic departments and programs. Although their research interests and outreach opportunities may differ, our students and faculty share a dedication to excellence and a passion for learning.

We are also proud to host several endowed speaker series and professorships in the college. These endowments provide unique opportunities for us to introduce our students and faculty members to experts in their field of study. This newsletter features information about the inaugural guest speakers and visiting professors funded by three of our newest endowments (pages 4 - 6).

Likewise, our faculty members continue to demonstrate progress in critical areas of research, and CHSBS faculty win numerous teaching awards each year. I am proud to use this newsletter as a platform to recognize their accomplishments.

Finally, I am pleased to offer each of our alumni an opportunity to return to campus. We hosted visits from two of our esteemed graduates this spring: Col. Elaine Edwards, CMU’s highest ranking female ROTC alumna (page 15), and Andrew Arena, the special agent in charge of the FBI’s Detroit division (page 16). We also honored CMU veterans during a special football game celebration on Veterans Day (page 11).

The students put their classroom instruction to the test through hands-on policing experience during the weekend academy. Along with physical training, the students learned control and defense tactics, arrest procedures, and completed the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards assessment test. They also participated in building searches and active shooter exercises, and received training in pursuit driving and traffic stops.

“The whole idea of the academy is to help foster and improve relations with the academic community,” said Sgt. Trent Case of the CMU Police Department. “This can be done by allowing the students an inside look at our department. It also gives those who are thinking of entering law enforcement a better outlook as to what they can expect.”

A highlight of the weekend academy included training on decision-making skills. “A decision-making academy is a great opportunity to learn effective decision-making skills,” said Sgt. Trent Case of the CMU Police Department. “It also helps to bridge the gap between the academic community and police officers.”

Members of Central Michigan University’s Justice Society were introduced to the realities of an actual police academy when they began physical training the morning of April 10. The students were being introduced to the world of law enforcement through the CMU Police Department’s inaugural Citizen’s Academy.

More than 20 students, many of whom are majoring in criminal and social justice, took part in the academy that began in February and culminated with a weekend of hands-on training in April.

Classroom instruction by CMU police officers took place in February and March and covered topics such as communications and technology, personnel safety, community policing, narcotics investigation, officer safety, building searches, traffic patrol, and crime scene investigation.

“This academy allowed students to see criminal justice in action and gave those who might be considering policing a taste of what a real police academy might be like,” said Rebecca Hayes-Smith, sociology faculty member and faculty advisor of the Justice Society. “It also helps to bridge the gap between the academic community and police officers.”

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Remembering the Holocaust

Renowned World War II historian Gerhard Weinberg was the keynote speaker for the inaugural Dr. Harold Abel Endowed Lecture Series in the Study of Dictatorship, Democracy and Genocide November 9—the anniversary of Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass.

Weinberg gave his talk, “A New Look at Hitler and the Beginning of the Holocaust,” to a standing-room-only audience in the Bovee University Center Auditorium.

Weinberg, the 2009 recipient of the Pritzker Military Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement, has published, edited and co-authored many books and articles dealing with the origins and course of World War II, the Holocaust and German records. One of the works he edited and published was a book that Adolf Hitler dictated in 1928 but never published, which Weinberg discovered while microfilming German documents in the 1950s.

The endowed lecture series, established by the family of former Central Michigan University president Harold Abel, brings to campus distinguished scholars to discuss the impact of worldwide genocide.

► Click here to view a video of Gerhard Weinberg’s lecture.

Investing in Education

Visiting professors address Native American topics

Author and scholar Eddie Benton-Banai, the inaugural Olga J. and G. Roland Denison Visiting Professor of Native American Studies, visited campus for four weeks in September and October.

He taught one course, “Being Indian Today: Identity and the Contemporary Anishinaabeg,” and hosted two public forums: one on the The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the other an Ojibwe language workshop.


The painting (top, left) depicts pride and honor among Native American women across America. It features women from four regions of the country, four sacred colors — white, red, yellow and black — and four sacred plants — sweetgrass, cedar, tobacco and sage.

In addition, the university displayed several of his paintings in the Park Library Baber Room.

The late Olga J. and G. Roland Denison and their children established the Denison Visiting Professorship in Native American Studies to increase understanding of the historical experiences, cultural traditions and innovations, and political status of Indian peoples in the United States and Canada.
Sen. Levin discusses ethics in politics

The College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences hosted U.S. Senator Carl Levin as the inaugural speaker of the Philip A. Hart and William G. Milliken Endowed Speaker Series for Integrity in Politics in November.

CHSBS established the speaker series in 2006 with the goal of challenging our students and communities to approach politics in a way that embraces America’s diversity of ideas and perspectives and to strive to replace negativity and partisanship with creativity and innovation in shaping public policy.

The speaker series is named in honor of two highly respected Michigan politicians, the late Philip A. Hart, who served as U.S. Senator from 1958-1976, and William G. Milliken, who was governor from 1969-1982. Both Hart, a Democrat, and Milliken, a Republican, earned praise for their ability to work together with members of opposing political parties.

As chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Levin has earned a reputation as a supporter of national defense and as a fighter against wasteful government spending.

Levin has gained respect from both parties for his attention to detail and knowledge of policy. During his speech, “Keeping an Ethical Course In a Political Storm,” Levin said the duty of legislators is to serve as fiduciaries of the public trust. “The obligation of a public servant is not to serve the public mood of the moment, but to serve the public interest,” he said. He praised the university for its efforts in establishing the speaker series and lauded the legacies created by Hart and Milliken.

“Tonight is especially humbling because of the character of the two leaders that Central Michigan has chosen to honor with this speaker series,” Levin said. “These two men were exceptional public servants – so decent, so principled, so clearly striving to do the right thing.”

Milliken and two of Hart’s sons—Michael Hart and Clyde Hart—also attended the event.

► Click here to view a video of Sen. Carl Levin’s speech.

Exercise as a Parkinson’s disease treatment

During physical therapy for a knee injury, Justin Oh-Lee, an associate professor of psychology who has been researching Parkinson’s disease treatments for a decade, wondered how exercise and physical therapy could improve the quality of life for the 1.5 million Americans with the disease.

So Oh-Lee, director of the neuropharmacology laboratory and a faculty member in CMU’s Brain Research and Integrative Neuroscience Center, set out to learn more.

Through clinical testing on rodent models and by working with human volunteers, Oh-Lee’s research indicates that combining drug therapy with exercise is beneficial to people with Parkinson’s disease. He has shown that exercise works to prevent and alleviate the motor and nonmotor side effects that are associated with Parkinson’s disease drug therapy.

Levodopa is the most common treatment for Parkinson’s disease, but about two-thirds of patients receiving it develop side effects, which may include impaired movement, motor response fluctuation, confusion, depression and hallucination.

“People with Parkinson’s disease take medication to slow down the progression of the disease. But the problem is that side effects to the medication also can impair a person’s quality of life,” Oh-Lee says. “This is a problem for patients and family members who serve as caregivers.

“But the person has to want to exercise, and they have to think positively about it,” he says. “It is not only the movement that’s important; it is the emotional and cognitive state of mind. If they do not want to exercise and have a very negative reaction to it, it may do more harm than help.”

In addition to exercise, Oh-Lee is researching diet and looking at nutrients that are beneficial for Parkinson’s disease patients. He has noticed positive improvement with foods rich in vitamin C and omega-3 fatty acids.

Oh-Lee says some simple lifestyle changes can affect the disease progression.

“We are looking into other avenues of treatment that are more innovative and cost-effective to help the patients,” he says. “This is really the goal of the research at CMU.”

► Click here to view a video report of Dr. Oh-Lee’s research.

Join our fundraising efforts!

The College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences remains committed to its fundraising efforts for the Philip A. Hart and William G. Milliken Endowed Speaker Series for Integrity in Politics.

Making a gift to this speaker series enables our students, faculty and members of our community to interact with the brightest minds in American politics, individuals whose work to reshape the political landscape extends beyond partisan lines and exemplifies the highest standards of public service.

Our fundraising goal is $1 million. Thanks to the generous support of many friends and alumni, we’ve already raised $513,000 for this campaign.

We invite you to join us in supporting this important project to help make a difference for CMU students and future leaders.

For more information, please contact me at 989-774-3341 or lesa.smith@cmich.edu.

Lesa Smith
Director of Development

Pharmacy professor Robert Stecker received a 2009-2010 Fulbright Award from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars.

Stecker was based at Lingnan University in Hong Kong from January through June where he taught a philosophy of art course. He also hosted lectures at other universities in Hong Kong and Asia and conducted research for his new book, Intersections of Value, in which he’ll discuss the ways ethical, aesthetic and other central values interact in art, our thinking about the environment, and the pursuit of a good life.

Each year, the Fulbright Scholar Program sends some 800 U.S. faculty and professionals to 140 countries to lecture, research, or participate in seminars.

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Sen. Carl Levin

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CNRS.jpg

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War-time treasures

A wispy wedding dress in CMU’s Museum of Cultural and Natural History carries with it stories of war and waiting and heroism.

Bill Blamer, ‘43, made a trade with another soldier in Germany to get a parachute to mail to his fiancée, Bernice Filer, ‘44. Retrieved parachutes were special, and brides considered it patriotic to have their wedding dresses made from parachute silk.

Bernice spent months taking apart the parachute’s seams and nylon tubing. She had the dress carefully sewn from the silk, a commodity difficult to obtain during the war. Then she waited for the call that Bill would be home on leave.

Bill served in General Patton’s 3rd Army Medical Corps, helping to rehabilitate injured soldiers. He earned a Bronze Star in the Battle of Bastogne for the evacuation of casualties.


Museum uses NEH grant to preserve textiles collection

Bernice’s wedding dress is now carefully stored in CMU’s museum, which houses more than 700 textiles of historical and cultural interest—an impressive collection for such a small-spaced museum, says Angela Riedel, collections manager.

Other textiles housed in the museum include a blanket and table cloth from the S.S. Manitou, a luxury steamship built in 1893 that carried passengers to summer resort areas between Chicago and Mackinac Island, several men’s and women’s uniforms from World War I and II, and several Victorian and Edwardian women’s dresses.

The Museum of Cultural and Natural History received a $5,990 grant in 2008 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to re-house and preserve the textiles collection.

“We are documenting and photographing all of the textiles to update our collections management database,” said Riedel. “When needed, we also clean some items using a HEPA filter vacuum specifically designed for museums. Finally, all of the textiles are placed in archival quality boxes with acid-free tissue or on hangers also using archival materials.”

Due to a lack of exhibition space, the museum is unable to display the textile collections on a permanent basis. Most recently, several items were displayed as part of the Isabella County Sesquicentennial celebrations in the museum’s temporary gallery last fall.

For more information about the museum, visit www.museum.cmich.edu •

Library offers assessment materials to schools

Modestly tucked away in a corner of Sloan Hall, Central Michigan University students and faculty members are providing a service to hundreds of school psychologists and social workers that is the only one of its kind in the country.

The Central Assessment Lending Library (CALL) is stocked with up-to-date psychoeducational tests and instructional materials to evaluate and assist children with low-incidence disabilities, including those with autism, hearing impairment, motor impairment, visual impairment, and severe cognitive impairment.

“Because of the children’s unique needs, traditional tests usually are inappropriate,” said Sharon Bradley-Johnson, a CMU psychology professor and co-director of CALL. “They’re also expensive—ranging from $300 to $1,500 per test kit—and many school districts lack personnel with sufficient expertise in low-incidence assessment. Without an appropriate assessment for these children, it is very difficult to plan an appropriate instructional program for them.”

Meeting specialized needs

Bradley-Johnson, along with CMU psychology professor Carl Johnson, established CALL in January of 2006 after surveying special education directors throughout Michigan and determining that they were overwhelmingly in favor of a lending library for assessment and instruction materials that would be free of charge to school districts.

School personnel benefit tremendously because the assessment and instructional materials are designed specifically for their students’ special needs. They also receive personalized assistance from the CALL staff on selecting and administering the materials.

CALL is available to any school district in the state of Michigan. The library offers a wide variety of materials, including tests for autism, intellectual disabilities, hearing for children who are deaf. We have tests for Braille reading, reading programs specifically designed for students who are cognitively impaired, and social skill training programs for children with disabilities” said Bradley-Johnson. “We also provide training seminars to school personnel on topics such as autism assessment and addressing children’s sleep problems.”

Looking ahead

For the past four years, CALL has been funded through a grant from the Michigan Legislature distributed by the Michigan Department of Education. Unfortunately, due to state budget shortfalls, that funding will end in September.

“Having these materials in a central location saves money for school districts and also improves the services and skills of school personnel working with these children, so we feel very strongly about seeking alternative resources to keep CALL open,” said Bradley-Johnson.

The Johnsons are so committed to CALL that they recently made a financial contribution to help keep the program running this fall. The university has also pledged funds, and new efforts are underway to secure private and foundation gifts to provide long-term funding stability for CALL.

“CMU is fortunate to have professors who are both highly respected in their fields of study and also passionate in their dedication to CMU,” said Lesa Smith, director of development for the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences. “Sharon and Carl are an inspiration to many.”

If you would like more information about the Central Assessment Lending Library or about making a financial contribution to the program, please contact Smith at 989-774-3341 or lesa.smith@cmich.edu •

Left: School psychology doctoral students Danny Drevon and Rachel Knight package assessment materials requested from the Central Assessment Lending Library.
Faculty Honors

Faculty receive CMU teaching awards

Psychology professor Bryan Gibson has received Central Michigan University’s 2010 President’s Award, the university’s most prestigious award for outstanding research and creative activity. Gibson is a leading researcher in a wide range of psychological areas and an international expert on managing behaviors linked with social consequences. His cutting-edge and influential work has played a key role in government policy on issues related to habitual and addicting behaviors.

His current research involves two lines of study: examining how exposure to media, evaluative conditioning and propositional reasoning all contribute to attitude formation; and self-presentation as it relates to performance, focusing on issues of sandbagging and hypercriticism.

Christi Brookes, an assistant professor of French, received the CMU Excellence in Teaching Award in recognition of her creative and student-centered approach to teaching, promoting critical thinking, and being a role model and mentor to her students.

She also received the Lori Ryan Memorial Excellence in Teaching Award, a monitory award granted annually to one faculty member who demonstrates a strong teaching ethic in the classroom, exemplifies a commitment to community services, and who personifies respect and inspiration while being a positive role model.

Dan Pugh, an assistant professor of anthropology, received the 2009-2010 College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award.

The award selection committee chose Pugh because of his expertise in his field, his accessibility to his students, and his ability to plan and organize his courses effectively. He inspires his students to strive for excellence and receives high praises from them in return. He is an admired advisor and mentor to future educators.

Hicks receives technology and teaching award

Assistant professor of English Troy Hicks received the National Technology Leadership Award in English Education from the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education. He received the award in April for his presentation, “Creating Your Digital Writing Workshop,” given during the National Conference for Teachers of English annual convention in November.

Hicks teaches writing methods courses at CMU and is an expert on writing and technology. His new book, The Digital Writing Workshop, explores the ways that new technologies—such as blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, podcasts, and multimedia resources—have changed writing and offers guidance on ways to use these technologies to enhance writing instruction.

“My vision of a digital writing workshop is that it builds on long-held principles of writing instruction—such as student choice in topic and genre—that is intertwined with technology,” said Hicks. “By focusing on the needs of the writer first, then the particular writing task, and finally on the technology, I encourage teachers to work closely with their students as they learn to create new forms of writing that combine text, images, audio, and video.”

McLean’s book receives prestigious award

Anthropology professor Athena McLean received the 2009 New Millennium Book Award from the Society for Medical Anthropology for her 2007 book, The Person in Dementia: A Study of Nursing Home Care in the US.

The award is given for the work judged to be the most significant and potentially influential contribution to medical anthropology.

Books published between 2005 and 2008 were considered for the award. McLean received a $500 prize and was recognized at the Society for Medical Anthropology Awards event during American Anthropological Association’s annual meeting in December.

ROTC hosts Veterans Day celebrations

Central Michigan University celebrated Veterans Day with unrivaled fanfare in November. Cadets from the ROTC program hosted a variety of activities to commemorate all veterans and their family members, including many CMU alumni, before and during a weekend football game at Kelly/Shorts stadium.

ROTC cadets cooked hot dogs and hamburgers for all veterans during a tailgate celebration outside of the stadium. Just before kickoff, the Fastrax Army skydiving team descended into the stadium, with lit flares on their legs, to deliver the game ball.

During halftime, 45 new military enlistees were sworn in and the veterans were recognized for their service. Brigadier General John Kuhlavi, ’65, a Vietnam veteran and former CMU Board of Trustees member, led the group to the field. The Michigan Army National Guard band performed with the CMU marching band.

Bechtold receives leadership award

Sociology professor Brigitte Bechtold has received the Woman of Excellence Award from the Michigan American Council on Education Network for Women Leaders in Higher Education.

The award honors Central Michigan University employees who have demonstrated outstanding leadership to women on campus and in the community.

Bechtold received the award during a ceremony hosted March 26 by the CMU Network for Women.

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Go paperless!

Cut down on the mail and go paperless. Subscribe to the online version of the CHSBS newsletter by contacting us at CHSBS@cmich.edu. We’ll send you an e-mail reminder to view each issue online.
In Memoriam

The faculty and staff from the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences extend their condolences to the family and friends of two respected colleagues who died during the spring semester.

Political science faculty member Donald Wayne Wright died March 10 after being diagnosed with cancer last fall. His areas of specialization included personnel administration, decision-making theory, and the effects of organizational change. He taught classes in CMU’s Master of Science Administration program on campus as well as at several off-campus locations.

In addition to working as a temporary assistant professor at CMU, Wright also worked for the Social Security Administration for 27 years, retiring two years ago.

Professor emerita of psychology Sophie Lovinger died March 23. She was a retired clinical psychologist and served as a consultant pro bono in family drug court.

She published numerous books and articles and achieved the rank of Fellow in the American Psychological Association. Her research interests included child psychotherapy, language learning disabilities, and learning disabilities and games.

She taught at CMU from 1970 to 1997. She is survived by her husband, Robert Lovinger, who was a member of CMU’s psychology faculty from 1967 to 1998.

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work celebrates 50 years

In 1959, Central Michigan received university status. Judson W. Foust became president, and the College of Arts and Sciences was established. Within that new college, the sociology program and its eight faculty members officially became an independent department.

The sociology department was originally housed in Rowe Hall before moving to newly built Ansaph Hall in 1966. Beth Dillingham, the first anthropologist, was hired in the early 1960s. Jack Chapis, the department’s first social work faculty member, was hired in 1972.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary, faculty, staff, students and alumni from the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work hosted a month-long celebration in April that included guest speakers, film screenings, a museum exhibit and a formal dinner.

Click here to view photo galleries from the 50th anniversary events.

Writing Center partners with Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College

The Central Michigan University Writing Center now offers support to students attending the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College in Mount Pleasant. This unique partnership, which began in 2009, gives SCTC students access to all of the resources available at the Writing Center’s campus locations as well as a satellite center at SCTC two days each week.

Students from any discipline can seek assistance during all stages of the writing process, including brainstorming, reviewing drafts or seeking guidance on grammar and citation guidelines. Consultants work one-on-one with clients for up to 50 minutes during each session.

Writing Center director and English professor MaryAnn Crawford says the partnership is a wonderful opportunity for all of the students to learn from each other.

“While both institutions offer higher education, they differ in the extent of education available and the populations served. The CMU consultants gain an understanding of socio-cultural differences, of adaptations needed for working in various environments and community values, and of differences between two-year and research-level institutions,” said Crawford.

“Similarly, SCTC students benefit from access to the Writing Center’s resources and the expertise of CMU’s highly-trained consultants.”

“At SCTC, we pride ourselves on the strength and comprehensiveness of our writing program,” said Katy DenHeeten, academic support services manager.

Similarly, SCTC students benefit from access to the Writing Center’s resources and research-level institutions,” said Crawford.
Alumni Announcements

1950s & 60s
Clare M. Hart (Eng. ’51) retired from Grand Rapids Public Schools after 30 years of teaching. He is an avid genealogist and has discovered connections to ancestors who arrived on the Mayflower (Cooke and Warren) and who played a notable role in the American Revolution (Grey and Hart).

Fernando Richards (Pol. Sci. ’66) retired from the federal government in April 2007, after a 30-year career in the international field. He served with the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and was a founding member of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

1970s
Lori Lee Ericson (Anne Rasmussen- Salahekeh, Soc. ’70) is the author and illustrator of Book of Creature Ditties: An Artistic Use of Alliteration in Absorbing the Alphabet . . . For Fun— to Mental Learning. She is a retired English teacher from Okemos, Mich., and home schooled their four children for 12 years. She and her husband, John, live in the San Francisco Bay Area.

1980s

Gen. Alfonso E. Lenhardt (MPA, ’76) was appointed by President Obama in 2009 to serve as ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania. Previously, he was president and CEO of the National Crime Prevention Council; senior vice president of government relations for The Shaw Group; the 36th Sergeant at Arms for the U.S. Senate; and commanding general of the U.S. Senate; and commanding general of government relations for The Shaw to serve as ambassador to the United appointed by President Obama in 2009. Gen. Alfonso E. Lenhardt


Michael D. Trout (MA Psych. ’78) is founder and director of the Infant-Parent Institute in Champaign, Ill. He has produced 15 documentary films on infant mental health and attachment research and published three books: The Jonathon letters: One Family’s Use of Support as They Took in, and Filled in Love With, a Troubled Child. Baby verses: The Narrative Poetry of Infants and Toddlers; and The Hope-Filled Parent: Meditations for Foster and Adoptive Parents of Children who Have Been Harmed. He serves on the advisory board of Attachment Parenting International.

Rev. Steven Michael Smith (Psych. ’79) is pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Carthage, Ill. He received a master’s degree in divinity with emphasis in theology and pastoral care from Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo.

Mary Jo (Irish) Thayer (BS Ed. Eng. ’81) teaches theology at Lansing Catholic High School and is a public speaker who has developed seminars for parents and teens on life topics. She received a master’s degree in curriculum and teacher education from Michigan State University.

Joseph G. Jarret (MPA ’83), Chief Deputy Law Director, Knox County, Tenn., received the 2006 Florida Association of County Attorneys “Gordon Johnston Public Service Award” for outstanding and ethical contributions to the practice of local government law. He also is president of the Tennessee Valley Mediation Association.

1990s
Mary Jo (Irish) Thayer (BS Ed. Eng. ’81) teaches theology at Lansing Catholic High School and is a public speaker who has developed seminars for parents and teens on life topics. She received a master’s degree in curriculum and teacher education from Michigan State University.

Diane O’Dell (Eng. ’93) was awarded $100,000 by the South Carolina Film Commission for production of her film script, Dreadful Sorry. She is serving as associate producer, and her husband, Robert, is directing.

Scott A. Torkko (Soc. ’99) is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Cadillac, Mich. He received a master’s degree in divinity from Luther Seminary of Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minn.

2000s
Jared W. Reed (Soc. Sci. & Geng. ’05) is a development services coordinator for the City of West Burlington, Iowa, where he is responsible for coordinating all aspects of development—including planning, zoning, building inspections and housing inspections—for the city. In 2009 he received a master’s degree in geography from Western Illinois University.

Send us your news
We want to include your career, educational or family announcements in our next newsletter.

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       Mount Pleasant, MI 48859

ROTC alumna shares experiences with students

Students from the Department of Military Science and Leadership had the opportunity to meet with the highest ranking female officer to graduate from Central Michigan University’s Army ROTC program.

Col. Elaine Edwards visited campus March 31 to serve as the keynote speaker for the Col. William B. Nolde Lecture Series. Edwards is the director of marketing for the U.S. Army Cadet Command, where she orchestrates all aspects of the national-level marketing of the Army ROTC program, the nation’s largest single source of commissioned officer leaders.

Edwards believes it’s important for alumni to return to campus to meet with students because it provides a mutual exchange of information and experiences.

“I was impressed by the level of maturity, professionalism and enthusiasm displayed by all of the CMU ROTC students,” said Edwards. “While a lot has changed in 30 years, I think the Army values and leadership training espoused within ROTC programs remains unchanged.

“The single most important advantage to being part of the ROTC program is the leadership opportunities that are afforded young people early in their careers. There is nothing greater than having the inner confidence, physical stamina and mental discipline to compete on an Army field or in a corporate boardroom.”

Edwards graduated from CMU in 1981, with a degree in journalism and a minor in military science. She commissioned as a military intelligence officer and has held numerous commands at senior levels within the Army’s military intelligence community.

She also earned a master’s degree in international relations from the University of Southern California and a master’s degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. This year, she will complete her doctoral degree in public policy and administration from Walden University.

“I was blessed to have the opportunity to serve in the Army and fortunate to have started that journey at CMU,” said Edwards. Edwards was impressed with the campus improvements that provide additional resources to ROTC students, including the firing range and the number of physical fitness facilities on campus. She’s also excited about the prominent role that the ROTC cannon and cadets play at CMU football games—proudly firing the cannon after each touchdown.

The lecture series is named in honor of Col. William B. Nolde, former CMU military science faculty member. The goal of the series is to promote leadership both in the military and American society as a whole.”

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FBI agent, alumnus hosts career forum

Central Michigan University alumnus Andrew Arena, the Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Detroit Field Office, told an auditorium filled with more than 80 CMU students that each one of them has the skill set that the FBI is seeking for internships and employment.

Arena and two of his colleagues hosted an internship and career forum at CMU April 19 to encourage students of all majors to consider a career path with the FBI. The agency expects to see a significant hiring increase over the next several years to replace retiring agents and to fill newly created positions. In addition to special agents and security specialists, the FBI is actively recruiting individuals with training in accounting, graphic design, linguistics, psychology and information technology, to name a few.

Arena has been in charge of the Michigan operations of the FBI since December 2006 and a member of the FBI since 1988. His past assignments include investigating organized crime, leading a violent street gang task force, and overseeing counterterrorism and counterintelligence programs.

He graduated from CMU in 1985 with a bachelor’s degree in history and political science and a minor in religion.

“I owe a great deal to Central Michigan University,” says Arena. “Every time I come back to campus it’s a great privilege and honor to talk to the students and faculty.”

Andrew Arena, ’85