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We Are...Marshall, March 12, 2014

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Marshall professor named West Virginia Professor of the Year

Dr. Kateryna Schray received the 2013 Professor of the Year award last night from the Faculty Merit Foundation during a banquet held in the Great Hall of the Culture Center in Charleston.

The Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia each year honors an outstanding faculty member at a West Virginia college or university. The award winner receives a $10,000 cash prize, with smaller awards to the other finalists. The Professor of the Year award is presented with financial support from United Bank.

According to Provost and Senior Vice President Dr. Gayle Ormiston, “Dr. Schray is well recognized for her gift of connecting with students of diverse backgrounds and motivating them to achieve the highest levels of performance. The impact of her contributions to the university, its students and the broader community Marshall serves is without question significant.”

Schray feels that next to stepping into a classroom, her favorite part of the workday is meeting with students in her office. She was honored to have been asked to speak at the Freshman Convocation for the Marshall University incoming class in both 2009 and 2013. She said, “The whole idea behind having a faculty member address the new class is to offer advice for success, both academic and personal, during that critical first year, an important investment in student well-being, safety and retention.”

Schray’s work extends beyond the confines of Marshall University. Through work she undertook during a sabbatical in 2010-11, she has become an in-demand speaker on using writing in the elementary and middle school classrooms to enhance student learning and skills and regularly works with these students and teachers in the classroom. She recently expanded her efforts by involving her freshman students to work with young writers at the elementary and middle school level.
The goal was to help her students become better writers. However, her students made substantial connections with their elementary school experience and genuinely enjoyed being needed.

“When our state government funded the Pathways program for certifying those teaching English out of field, they had to assume that an individual such as Kateryna Schray existed and that she would take on this almost impossible task and turn her work into a public good,” said Dr. Jane Hill, professor and English department chair.

John Van Kirk, an English professor and colleague, described Schray this way: “Unquestionably a first-rate teacher, a serious scholar and a generous colleague, authoritative without ever being authoritarian, she teaches and writes from a deep love of her subject matter, a love of language, and a love of teaching itself and the relationships with students that comes with it.”

Shaina Taylor, a former student currently in law school at William and Mary, said that “Dr. Schray does more than excel in her outstanding innovation, ample creativity, and professional leadership. Quite simply, she sets the standard. She raises the bar.”

In addition, Schray has contributed to the West Virginia education community by serving as an on-line RESA Pathways Certification Program Instructor for state high school teachers, conducting writing workshops for Cabell County elementary schools, serving as the president of the West Virginia Association of College English Teachers, and serving as a writing mentor to the Yeager Scholars Program, Marshall’s most prestigious academic student merit program.

“As you can see, Dr. Schray is the real deal,” Ormiston said. “She demonstrates excellence in all aspects of her contributions to the university as a faculty member—a dedicated teacher and extremely productive scholar. We congratulate her as well as the other finalists for this award, and thank them all for their commitment to first-class higher education in West Virginia and to their students.”

Schray received a B.A. in both German and English from La Salle University, an M.A. in British Literature from Georgetown University, and a Ph.D. in English from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She has been teaching at Marshall University since 1996. The University previously awarded Professor Schray with its top two awards: the Hedrick Outstanding Faculty Award in 2013 and the Reynolds Outstanding Teaching Award in 2009.

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ellzey, English and modern language professor at Shepherd University, was first runner-up for this year’s Professor of the Year. Dr. David Cerbone, philosophy professor at West Virginia University; Dr. Powsiri Klinkhachorn, computer science and electrical engineering professor at the West Virginia University Benjamin H. Statler College of Engineering; and Dr. Lisa Reilly, physical science and mathematics professor at Bethany College, also received prizes as finalists for the award.

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Reminder: University community to review progress to date on Marshall 20/20 at March 25 retreat

Members of the Marshall community who have been working on any aspect of the Marshall 20/20 strategic planning project will be attending an all-day retreat Tuesday, March 25, at the Heritage Farm Museum and Village in Huntington.

Mary Ellen Heuton, senior vice president of finance/chief financial officer, who is among the planners of the retreat, said that this is a follow up to the Oct. 11 leadership retreat. It will be a time for members of the university’s Board of Governors, the Marshall 20/20 planning group, and the various action teams to address the work completed to date, focus on challenges moving forward and the integration of the various action items into a larger whole.

The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will continue until 4:30 p.m.

To reserve a place at the retreat, send an e-mail to Cora Massey in the president’s office no later than Friday, March 14.

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Women’s Studies book club to present “The Truly Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” March 26 and 27

Marshall University’s women’s studies program will host two events connected with the New York Times bestselling book, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Wednesday, March 26, and Thursday, March 27, on Marshall’s Huntington campus.

The book, written by Rebecca Skloot, is about Henrietta Lacks, an African American mother of five, who died of cancer in 1951. A sample of her cells was retained without her knowledge or consent. The cells were used in a number of scientific studies and made way for several important breakthroughs.

Medical researchers discovered her cells, known as HeLa, possessed unexplainable immortal properties. Over the past 60 years, HeLa cells have been instrumental in contributing to scientific
breakthroughs such as the polio vaccine, in-vitro fertilization, cloning and gene mapping. Her cells have enabled scientists to better understand the effects of the atom bomb, cancer and HIV. In total, HeLa cells have been the subject of more than 74,000 studies, and scientists estimate that more than 50 million metric tons have been cultured to date. They are even being utilized in the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine.

However, all of this work was undertaken without the knowledge and consent of either Henrietta Lacks or her family. Her children never even knew about their mother’s cells until the 1970s, when scientists attempted to experiment upon them. None of the companies or laboratories who profited from the HeLa cells ever sought their consent. Skloot’s book changed all that. Since its publication, Henrietta’s children and grandchildren have spoken out about their experiences all over the country. Several of her grandchildren have been inspired to join the medical and science professions.

Dr. Greta Rensenbrink, director of the women’s studies program, said a conversation about the book will take place at 5 p.m. March 26 in the Drinko Library atrium. No reservation is required. “Just read the book and come join us!” she said.

Two members of Henrietta Lacks’ family will participate in a speaking engagement and book signing at 7 p.m. the following evening, March 27, in Marshall University Foundation Hall, home of the Erickson Alumni Center. President Stephen J. Kopp will introduce David Lacks Jr. and Kim Lacks. Two Marshall students, one from the School of Medicine and one from the Honors College, will moderate a question-and-answer session. A book signing will follow the formal event, with copies of the book available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public.

David Lacks Jr. is the grandson of Henrietta Lacks and son of David “Sonny” Lacks, a featured figure in the book. David Lacks Jr. has a degree in computer information systems and has traveled around the United States and Canada setting up computer systems and labs for companies and educational institutions. He lends his talent by helping create and maintain the Lacks family website. David Lacks represents the family on the National Institute of the Science’s panel that reviews applications to conduct research using the HeLa genome.

Kim Lacks, a banking representative from Baltimore, is Henrietta Lacks’ granddaughter. She has traveled with her father and other family members on dozens of trips around the country, adding her own perspective on the legacy of Henrietta Lacks and the HeLa cells. She is also one of the family members consulting on the highly-anticipated HBO film based on the book and produced by Oprah Winfrey and Allan Ball.

“The Truly Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” is sponsored by the Office of Medical Education, Office of Graduate Medical Education and Office of Diversity of the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine as well as the Women’s Center, Intercultural Affairs, the Center for African American Students, the Office of the President, the Honors College, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Department of Psychology and the Department of History of Marshall University.
For further information on the events, contact Dawn Howerton (howertond@marshall.edu) or Laura Michele Diener (diener@marshall.edu).

Photo: Henrietta Lacks, the subject of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. Click to view March 27 event flyer.

Dave Smith named Employee of the Month

Dave Smith, trades specialist in Physical Plant, has been named the Marshall University Employee of the Month for December, according to Michelle Brown Douglas, chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.

Employed since October 2007, he was nominated by Eric Wallace.

In his nomination, Wallace wrote: “Dave works hard, cares about his job. Always wants to do his best, no matter what the job is. Very reliable and we could use more like him.”

Smith was presented with a plaque and a check by President Stephen J. Kopp.

Photo: President Kopp (left) congratulates Employee of the Month Dave Smith.
In Memoriam: W. Fred Pauley

Dr. William Frederick Pauley, professor of elementary and secondary education, died March 6 in South Charleston.

Born in Charleston, W.Va., he graduated from Logan High School and went on to attend Marshall University, where he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and active in Campus Crusade for Christ. After earning graduate degrees from Marshall and Tennessee Temple University, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut.

Known for his easygoing spirit and his lighthearted personality, he enjoyed a wide variety of sporting events and tournaments, especially fishing and golf. In addition, he was an avid runner who successfully completed the Boston Marathon.

A memorial service is planned for 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, Cunningham-Parker-Johnson Funeral Home in Charleston, with visitation taking place prior to the service.

Foster Care Awareness subject of event tonight

WomenConnect is hosting an awareness event about foster care in West Virginia at 6 p.m. tonight, March 12, in the Shawkey Dining Room in the Memorial Student Center.

Presenters will address current issues within the foster-care system of West Virginia, according to Dr. Laura Michele Diener, assistant professor of history and one of the organizers of the event. They also will discuss opportunities for internships and careers, as well as potential projects for service learning courses. The National Association of Social Workers will have an information booth.

Speakers will include Carrie Dawson, M.A., Public Relations Director at Mission WV Inc.; Jessa Dingess, B.S.W., Child Protective Services worker at the Department of Health and Human Resources; Julia Kesler, M.A., LSW, Director of Permanency Services at Children’s Home Society in Charleston; Rachel Kinder, M.S.W., Permanency Coordinator for the Mission WV Inc. FrameWorks Program; Jake Ross, permanency social worker at the Children’s Home Society; Amy Sadler, child protective services worker at the Department of Health and Human Resources; Kristy Schnierlein of the Cammack Children’s Center; and Nikki Thomas from the Golden Girl Group Home.
This event is free and open to students, staff and faculty, as well as the community. It also is sponsored by Marshall’s Center for Teaching and Learning, Women’s Center, Women’s Studies program and Service Learning program.

South Charleston bookstore to close March 31

The bookstore operation located in the administration building of the South Charleston campus will close effective April 1, according to Dr. Karen Kirtley, senior vice president for administration.

The trends toward online textbook purchasing and rental, among other factors, have led to a marked decrease in customer traffic in the store, Kirtley said. After a thorough evaluation, it has been determined there is no longer enough demand to support a full-service bookstore in South Charleston. All bookstore services will be provided through the store on the Huntington campus.

“Please be assured that the university and Follett are committed to making sure students will continue to have access to all course materials,” Kirtley said.

For convenience and to ensure timely access to these items, the following services are expected to be provided to the South Charleston campus community:

- FREE shipping for online orders of course materials at www.marshallustore.com;
- A mobile bookstore operation on the South Charleston campus at the beginning of each term; and
- A rental textbook check-in station on the South Charleston campus at the end of each term.

The South Charleston bookstore operation began marking down merchandise March 11. All clearance items will be sold for an additional 75% off sticker price, Marshall University South Charleston Campus merchandise will be 50% off, and all snacks will be 50% off.

Questions about bookstore services may be directed to Mike Campbell, bookstore manager, at (304) 696-2456 or by e-mail at mcampbell@marshall.edu.

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Calling their service commendable, the West Virginia State Senate on March 6 adopted a resolution honoring School of Medicine resident physicians for their work at the Legislature providing physician resources through the Paul Ambrose Health Policy Fellowship Program.

Dr. Kimberly R. Becher, a third-year resident from Sissonville, W.Va., Dr. Matthew Q. Christiansen, a first-year resident from Spencer, W.Va., and Dr. Kane A. Maiers, a third-year resident from Short Gap, W.Va., were honored by the resolution authored by Sen. Robert H. Plymale of Wayne County. The resolution also names Dr. Tracy Hendershot, MUSOM class of 2008, who served as the first Ambrose fellow.

“Our physicians have worked diligently to help our lawmakers explore and vet dozens of issues that affect the health and well-being of the citizens of West Virginia,” said Dr. Stephen M. Petrany, co-director of the health policy track at Marshall and chairman of the department of family and community health. “One of the goals of this program is to help young physicians fine-tune their leadership skills so they can effectively contribute to the health policy process. They have committed many hours to the process and we are very proud of their efforts.”

Both Becher and Maiers have served in the program for three years and tackled such topics as this year’s catastrophic water crisis in central West Virginia and the Methamphetamine Lab Eradication Act.

The Ambrose Health Policy Program was started at Marshall University in 2010 and is believed to be the only such program of its type in the country. It is a partnership of Marshall’s department of family and community health, Robert C. Byrd Center for Rural Health, and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. It was inspired by namesake Paul Wesley Ambrose, a Marshall medical alumnus whose life and dynamic health policy career were cut short on September 11, 2001.

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*Photo:* Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine Ambrose Health Policy Fellows are, from left, Dr. Kimberly Becher, Dr. Kane Maiers and Dr. Matthew Christiansen. *Photo by Martin Valent, West Virginia Legislative Photography, 2014.*

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Winners of student pharmacist competition announced at MU School of Pharmacy

Four second-year students in Marshall’s School of Pharmacy were named as winners in a patient education competition last week. The first-place winner, Sarah Dunaway from Greenup, Ky., will represent the school later this month at the American Pharmacists Association/Academy of Student Pharmacists national competition set for March 27-31 in Orlando, Fla.

The remaining winners and their hometowns are as follows:

- 2nd place: (1st runner-up): Stephanie F. Walker, Auburndale, Fla.
- 4th place (3rd runner-up): Daphne B. Hollingsworth, Gallipolis, Ohio

This is the first time Marshall, which opened its school of pharmacy in 2012, has participated in the contest. It is designed to encourage student pharmacists in their efforts to become better patient educators. This year’s contest was sponsored by Fruth Pharmacy.

The next issue of *We Are...Marshall* will be distributed March 26, 2014. Please send any materials for consideration to Pat Dickson by 5 p.m. Monday, March 24.