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## We Are...Marshall, July 24, 2013

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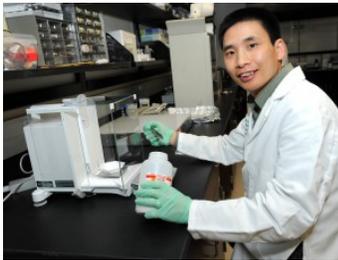
# WE ARE... MARSHALL®

The Newsletter for Marshall University

July 24, 2013

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## Researchers awarded \$750,000 NASA grant to study muscle and bone loss associated with space travel



Dr. Miaozong Wu of the Center for Diagnostic Nanosystems at the School of Pharmacy has been awarded a \$750,000 grant from NASA to lead a team of researchers investigating the muscle and bone loss associated with space travel.

Wu's three-year project was one of only 14 funded nationally through NASA's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). According to Dr. Majid Jaridi, chairman of the

NASA West Virginia EPSCoR Committee, which coordinates the grant proposal process in West Virginia, researchers in 29 states were eligible to compete.

"Marshall University has had a track record of success in winning these grants. The program is quite competitive and this latest award is a great achievement for the team," Jaridi added. "I look forward to working with them to get the project started."

Wu said, "The loss of muscle and bone observed with space travel is an important and vexing problem, and NASA has put a high priority on identifying risk factors and treatments. It was really exciting news to get this award. We have a great team ready to get to work."

Wu's team of collaborators for the project includes Dr. Eric Blough and Dr. Nicole Winston, also of the School of Pharmacy; Dr. Henry Driscoll and Dr. Omolola Olajide of the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine; and Dr. John Leidy of the Huntington VA Medical Center. Other contributors include colleagues at West Virginia State University, University of Louisville, University of Delaware, Universities Space Research Association and NASA's Johnson Space Center.

"The lack of gravity and the exposure to increased radiation in space are believed to be related to musculoskeletal loss, but very few studies have been done," he said. "Our findings will have direct applicability not only to NASA personnel traveling in space, but also to anyone who is experiencing muscle and bone loss, including aging patients and those suffering from cancer, AIDS and diabetes."

Wu added that the project will involve undergraduate and graduate student researchers, and endocrinology physician fellows from the Department of Internal Medicine's Endocrinology Fellowship Program.

"An important component of this particular NASA program is to train students for science and other high-tech careers," he said. "We will be giving them hands-on opportunities to do significant research associated with this study."

Dr. Kevin Yingling, dean of the School of Pharmacy, congratulated Wu and his colleagues for the award, saying, "This project will further the team's partnerships, significantly increase the state's research and development capabilities, and support both our educational mission and economic development in the region. It's really a win-win."

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*Photo:* Dr. Miaozong Wu of the School of Pharmacy is leading a team of researchers studying the muscle and bone loss associated with space travel. The project is funded by a recent \$750,000 grant from NASA's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.

*Photo by Rick Hays.*

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## Autism training center director at MU named Professional of the Year



Dr. Barbara Becker-Cottrill, executive director of the West Virginia Autism Training Center (WVATC) at Marshall University, was recently named the Dr. Cathy Pratt Autism Professional of the Year at the 44<sup>th</sup> annual Autism Society of America Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Becker-Cottrill has served as executive director of the WVATC for the past 23 years. Among her accomplishments in this position was the development and implementation of a comprehensive service delivery program for families and their children with autism spectrum disorders.

"It was truly an honor to receive this recognition from the Autism Society and it has been a great honor to serve as the director of the WVATC," Becker-Cottrill said. "There are few statewide programs in the nation that provide direct services and supports specifically targeted for families of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) of all ages."

Becker-Cottrill is the founder and co-developer of the College Program for Students with Asperger Syndrome, sponsored by the West Virginia Autism Training Center and housed at

Marshall University. She served as the principal investigator for the surveillance of autism grant with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She also is a co-author of the book “Autism: A Primer for Educators.”

Becker-Cottrill will be retiring from her position as the executive director on July 31. A retirement reception will be held at Foundation Hall on the Huntington campus of Marshall University from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, July 26. The public is invited to attend.

Becker-Cottrill says she plans to focus on autism research activities in the upcoming year. “We have also done a lot of collaborative work with the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs in the past few years which has opened up training and coaching opportunities for educators of students with ASDs,” she said. “Marshall University has been a tremendous supporter of our work and I am deeply grateful. I believe we have come a long way in the provision of evidence-based services for people with ASDs and I know there is a long way to go.”

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## Jody Scott named Employee of the Month



Jody Scott, Admissions Assistant III in Undergraduate Admissions, has been named the Marshall University Employee of the Month for March, according to Michelle Brown-Douglas, chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.

She was nominated by Eric R. Casto, Marc F. Danner and Tammy Johnson.

In their nomination they wrote: “Jody has sustained an exceptional work ethic during her time in the Admissions Office and is an integral member of our team. She is self-motivated and has the drive to produce results. She diligently works to complete assigned duties and is always willing to take on extra tasks when needed. She displays a willingness to help co-workers and students anytime she can. She is a team player that is dependable and takes the initiative to do the little as well as the big things to help keep the office running smoothly and efficiently. She has been a great asset to our office and is the definition of a hardworking Marshall employee.”

She was presented with a plaque and a check for \$100 by President Stephen J. Kopp.

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## Herd fans to choose Marco costume from among three concepts



Marshall's beloved mascot is getting a new costume, and for the first time the responsibility of choosing his new look is in the hands of Thundering Herd fans and friends.

Beginning today through Facebook social media, Herd fans have the opportunity to determine whether Marco will keep his current design or be given a new or updated look. His current costume, after five years of extensive wear, travel, cleaning and repair, has been stretched as far as it can, so it's time to replace it, said Matt Turner, Marshall's chief of staff.

"There's no doubt that Marco means a lot to our fans and alumni so we want their help to choose his appearance," Turner said. "He is as iconic as Old Main and his public appearances extend well beyond the field, so we think it's important to hear from them."

All Marshall fans, alumni, students and faculty/staff are encouraged to cast their votes via Facebook.

Matt Hayes, Marshall's executive director of alumni relations, said, "This is a great concept, a wonderful way to involve alumni and friends of Marshall who care deeply about how the mascot embodies and represents the face of the university. I'm sure the Herd nation will not be shy and will make their voices heard."

A costume maker has provided three concepts from which the voters can choose from now through midnight Saturday, Aug. 10. They are:

Option 1: Current Marco.

Option 2: A partial makeover of current Marco. This "hybrid" version of current Marco includes returning to the hoof feet and fur-covered legs of the previous mascot costume.

Option 3: A more complete makeover. This new design more closely resembles the previous Marco with a friendlier face and bison goatee.

Aaron Goebbel, associate director of athletics for external affairs, said, "Marco represents our fans and they are the ones he is most involved with. It's magical when Marco shows up at an event and he always wants to look his best. And we think it will be a lot of fun having the voting done on social media."

Voting has begun on Marshall's Facebook site – <https://www.facebook.com/marshallu> – and participants can vote only once. The Marco costume that receives the most votes will be announced on Facebook on Monday, Aug. 12.

Once the design is finalized, Turner said he expects the new costume to be completed in time for Marshall's homecoming game at Joan C. Edwards Stadium Saturday, Oct. 5, against UTSA. Game time is 2 p.m.

As a reward for helping select one of the three concepts, someone will win tickets and a tailgate package for four to the first Thundering Herd football game of the season, scheduled at 7 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 31, at home against Miami (Ohio). They also will receive Marshall hooded sweatshirts.

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## Marshall faculty member and former Olympic trainer will travel to Brazil to present biomechanics research



Dr. Suzanne Konz of the College of Health Professions will travel to Natal, Brazil this summer to present research at the 2013 International Society of Biomechanics (ISB) conference, which takes place once every two years.

Konz, an assistant professor of biomechanics in the School of Kinesiology, said she will share her research among the biggest players in the biomechanical field. She will give an oral presentation on her work titled, "Changes in Windmill Pitch Over Time."

"This is one of those conferences, as a biomechanist, that seems more challenging because I'll be presenting in front of scholars from all around the world," Konz said. "It's exciting to think I could potentially expose someone else to a different perspective of biomechanics research."

Cristina Arikawa, a member of the ISB organizing committee, said only 40 percent of the 858 submitted abstracts were chosen for an oral presentation. She said 53 countries will be represented at this year's conference.

A 2002 Winter Olympic Games athletic trainer, Konz now serves as a member of the USA Track & Field sport science biomechanics group specializing in throwing events, specifically the hammer throw.

Konz said she will continue to develop relationships with other professionals in this global forum and showcase the amazing work being done at Marshall University.

“I believe this opportunity puts Marshall on the map in terms of research capabilities in the field of sports science,” Konz said. “From a university standpoint, we want students to see what we do and help provide them with similar opportunities to meet the scholars they read about in their textbooks. This makes our department more personal.”

“Dr. Konz is an undeniable asset to the College of Health Professions and the School of Kinesiology,” Dr. Gary McIlvain, chair of Kinesiology and associate dean of the college, said. “I look forward to her future research endeavors, which can only highlight the breadth of possibilities available here at Marshall.”

The conference takes place from Aug. 4 to 9, and Konz will give her oral presentation from 6 to 8 p.m. Aug. 7. For more information about this year’s conference, visit <http://www.isbbrazil.com>.

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## Retirement receptions to honor Becker-Cottrill, Dempsey

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Retirement receptions honoring two longtime employees have been scheduled over the next few days.

A reception for Dr. Barbara Becker-Cottrill, who for 23 years has served as the executive director of the West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall, will take place Friday, July 26, from 4 to 6:30 p.m. in the Foundation Hall rotunda.

Paul Dempsey, a forty-plus year employee, will be celebrated for his service in the School of Music and Theatre Monday, July 29, from 2 to 4 p.m. in Smith Music Hall 107.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend these receptions and wish these retirees well.

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## ‘Tech Up’ program helps nontraditional students with technology concerns

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MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

“Tech Up,” which debuts next month, has one purpose—to help nontraditional students succeed at Marshall by being technologically up to speed by the time they take their first course.

What surprised Riffle most was the learning style of the current traditional students and the extent to which they rely on technology. Because of the requirements of one class, she said she found it necessary to become immediately familiar with MUOnline, which uses systems from Blackboard, a global technology company.

In a letter last February to Steve Hensley, dean of student affairs, Riffle shared her experience and suggested a program be developed to help nontraditional students who are not tech savvy. That’s the goal of “Tech Up.”

Hensley said, “We have found that many of our students, particularly those students who have been out of school for a few years, are not as tech savvy as they would like to be. This new program will help these students discover the essential technology students use at Marshall.”

In her letter to Hensley, Riffle said not a day passes that she does not use Blackboard for one or more purposes.

The MU Information Technology personnel will conduct the “Tech Up” sessions, which are scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 22, and from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 29, in Drinko Library rooms 138 and 349. To reserve a space, students may call the Office of Student Affairs at ext.6-6422 or e-mail [studentaffairs@marshall.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@marshall.edu).

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## Marshall gives Scouts a look at virtual technology, 3-D printing



Scouts who attended the National Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in Fayette County got the opportunity to explore state-of-the-art virtual technology and 3-D printing, thanks to Marshall University's engineering and advanced manufacturing programs. The Jamboree ended yesterday.

Hundreds of Scouts each hour visited the Jamboree exhibits sponsored by the Center for Environmental, Geotechnical and Applied Sciences and the Robert C.

Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing.

CEGAS Director Dr. Tony Szwilski says his group demonstrated their latest research and development efforts, including an interactive, multi-user virtual program designed to support mine emergency response training.



The program simulates an underground coal mine and uses a video game engine—a platform familiar to Jamboree participants. The format allows users to practice their communications and decision-making skills in dangerous and stressful environments.

“Although this exhibit is just a small-scale version of the Visualization Lab we have on our Huntington campus, the Scouts were fascinated by the 3-D stereo display technology and the virtual environments we have created,” said Szwilski.

“This has proven to be a wonderful way to share what we are doing and showcase our programs to future students. It’s been a great experience all the way around.”

RCBI gave the Scouts an opportunity to experience firsthand one of the world’s most exciting technologies—3-D printing, which turns digital designs into actual objects. The technology is beginning to be used in the aerospace and automotive industries, health care, architecture, engineering and countless other fields.



Charlotte Weber, the institute’s director and CEO, said her group was glad to be part of the Jamboree and to share the technology with Scouts, who used RCBI’s printer to produce copies of a fleur-de-lis, the stylized flower used in the Boy Scout symbol.

Weber added, “3-D printing isn’t the wave of the future; it’s happening here and now. Over the last few years, our labs have given dozens of manufacturers and

entrepreneurs access to our 3-D printers for everything from rapid prototyping to full-scale production. Now we're thrilled to have offered Jamboree participants a hands-on introduction to this truly revolutionary technology."

She said she hopes exposure to the possibilities presented by 3-D printing will spur some of the Scouts to become interested in Marshall, high-tech manufacturing and entrepreneurship.

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*Photos: (Above)* Scouts try their hand at navigating the virtual coal mine developed by the Center for Environmental, Geotechnical and Applied Sciences for use in mine emergency response training. *(Middle)* Jamboree participants proudly display a fleur-de-lis produced at a 3-D printing exhibit sponsored by the Marshall's Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing. *(Below)* Scouts from all over the country and around the world have visited Marshall University's exhibits this week as part of the 2013 National Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in the New River Gorge.

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## In memoriam: Goran Boskovic

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Dr. Goran Boskovic, manager of the Next Generation and Microarray Core facilities and professor of biochemistry and microbiology, died July 14 at his home in Louisa, Ky.

Born in Nis, Serbia, in 1963, he received a B.Sc. in chemistry from the University of Nis and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the Medical College of Wisconsin. He came to Marshall in 1996 and served until 2004 as a postdoctoral fellow in the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine. In 2004 he joined the Genomic Core facility, where he was manager of the Microarray Core until 2011 when he was named Manager of both the Microarray Core facility and the Next Generation sequencing facility.

Boskovic had previously served as a chemical engineer for NISSAL, an aluminum treatment factory in Nis, as well as well as a teaching assistant for physical chemistry at the University of Nis. He had extensive experience in all areas of microarray experiment, including labeling, hybridization, scanning and data extraction, as well as pathway analysis.

He is survived by his wife, Allison Goble Boskovic; daughters Maria Boskovic of Proctorville, Ohio, and Luna Boskovic, at home; son Luka Boskovic, at home; stepdaughter Bailey Orf, at home; and his mother, Ruzica, and brother, Zoran, both of Nis, Serbia.

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## Kimberly White elected to social work board

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Kimberly White, a Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) and a mental health specialist in the MU Counseling Center, has been elected president-elect of the National Association of Social Workers West Virginia Chapter Board of Directors. Her term as president will run from June 2014 through June 2016.

“I am honored to have been elected by the NASW-WV membership,” White said. “My involvement with NASW-WV has provided me so many opportunities for personal and professional growth, and now I am pleased to be able to serve the organization and its members in this leadership role.”

NASW-WV is a professional organization of social workers that provides guidance, advocacy, practice and policy information, along with professional development opportunities to its 540 members. The West Virginia chapter is renowned for delivering the largest social work conference in the nation, with approximately 1,200 attending annually.

As board president, White will be responsible for governing the organization by presiding over the executive committee, establishing board policies and objectives, protecting the chapter’s financial viability, and promoting the chapter’s programmatic and membership goals.

White received her master’s degree in social work from the University of Kansas in 2005. She is married to Dr. Chris White, a faculty member in Marshall’s history department. They are the parents of seven-year-old twins, Vincent and Mason.

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## MU Foundation surpasses goal in 630 by 6/30 challenge campaign

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The Office of Development surpassed an ambitious fundraising goal in June, helping the MU Foundation finish the fiscal year on a strong note.

A one-month campaign, called “MU Challenge 630 by 6/30,” raised more than \$78,000 – including two endowed scholarship gifts totaling \$32,000, according to Griffin Talbott, director of annual giving.

The goal was for 630 donors to make contributions during the month of June. Overall, 648 donors gave to the campaign.

Dr. Greg Crews and Dr. Dallas Nibert, who have a family dentistry practice in Huntington, agreed to contribute \$10,000 when the goal of 630 donors was met.

“The MU Challenge 630 by 6/30 was a huge success,” Talbott said. “Thanks to Drs. Greg Crews and Dallas Nibert. They were the first to offer a challenge gift.”

Talbott said he was thrilled with the success of the challenge campaign. He praised Marshall alumni, friends and family for their contributions. Christine Anderson, assistant vice president with the MU Foundation, said she also is grateful to all who contributed.

“We are grateful to doctors Greg Crews and Dallas Nibert for serving as examples in our first-ever challenge campaign,” she said. “Our success is made possible by the partnerships we have with our friends and alumni and they are certainly a testament to that.”

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The next issue of We Are...Marshall will be distributed August 14, 2013. Please send any materials for consideration to [Pat Dickson](#) by noon, August 12.