



At the Watercooler ... Kalamazoo people are talking

Signs mark the progress -- SignArt Inc., of Kalamazoo, installed wall signs for the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine on June 25. A spokeswoman for the medical school said a majority of the work on the facility had been completed by the time staff began moving in on June 13. The original 320,000-square-foot, former Pfizer Inc. building has undergone an estimated \$68 million in renovations. It was donated to WMU in December of 2011 by William U. Parfet, chairman and CEO of MPI Research in Mattawan. In 2011, Ronda Stryker and William D. Johnston, gave WMU \$100 million for the medical school, which is named in honor of Stryker's grandfather. A grand opening for the campus is scheduled for Sept. 18. *(Courtesy Photo)*

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KALAMAZOO, MI — At the Watercooler is a regular listing of announcements from Southwest Michigan businesses, individuals and organizations.

WORTH PRAISE

-Three area Allstate agents are being recognized by **Allstate Insurance Co.** for outstanding customer service and business results in 2013.

Jeff Duncan, of Mattawan, and **Melissa Kleinart**, of Schoolcraft, were part of a top group honored with the Inner Circle Elite Award. Professionals in that category demonstrated exceptional customer service skills and surpassed sales goals in 2013.

Brian Johnson, of Kalamazoo, was honored with the Circle of Champions Award for high standards in customer satisfaction, customer retention and financial services sales. The Circle of Champions Award is awarded to the top-performers among the company's agency network.

NEW DIRECTION

-**Jodi Havera**, chief financial officer of **Ship-Pac Inc.**, will chair the Junior Achievement Board of Directors of **Junior Achievement of Southwest Michigan**. A board member since 2011, Havera has served JA as board



SignArt Inc., of Kalamazoo, installed wall signs for the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine on June 25. Portage Street, between South Street and Lovell Street in downtown Kalamazoo, was closed while the signs were installed on the newly renovated building.

Courtesy Photo



Jodi Havera

secretary and chaired the Short-Term Funding Committee. She joined Ship-Pac in 2013 and previously worked at MPI Research as controller and at BDO USA as an accountant. A graduate of Western Michigan University, Havera is a registered Certified Public Accountant in the State of Michigan and is active in community organizations. Joining Havera on the JA board are three new directors: **Kathy Casey**, vice president and general manager, U.S. Channels, Kellogg Co.; **Timothy Martin**, senior banker, Middle Market Commercial Banking, at JPMorgan Chase; and **Thomas Zaiden**, director of human resources, Vehicle Group North American Automotive Region, at Eaton Corp.

-**Kelly T. Murphy**, a partner in the Intellectual Property Department at **Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn**

LLP, has been elected to the board of trustees for the Irving S. Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. His renewable four-year term begins on Sept. 1. The Gilmore Keyboard Festival is the internationally recognized, piano music festival held every other year in and around Kalamazoo. Murphy focuses his practice on patent procurement, regulatory compliance and the negotiation of licensing, collaboration and service agreements for pharmaceutical and technology companies, nonprofits and academic institutions.



Kelly T. Murphy

COMMUNITY MINDED

-From early grade reading to support services for seniors, 106 programs operated by nonprofit agencies across the region are welcoming support totaling more than \$7.6 million from **United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region**. Funding went to programs in education (\$1,812,860), income (\$1,322,440), health (\$2,834,750), and basic needs/community supports (\$1,681,640). "Because of our incredibly generous supporters, United Way is able to fund programs that are changing lives in meaningful ways," said Michael Larson, president and chief executive officer of UWBCKR. "More kids will learn to read well so they can succeed in school. More families will achieve financial stability. More people will embrace healthier lifestyles. More individuals in crisis will get the help they need."

GOING GREEN

-**TowerPinkster's** new Grand Rapids office has achieved the LEED ID+C (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, Interior Design & Construction) Platinum certification, the highest possible from the U.S. Green Building Council. The council uses LEED certification to designate the world's greenest, energy-efficient and high-performing buildings. TowerPinkster provided architectural design and engineering services to **Locus Development**, which owns the building at 4 E. Fulton St. and led the rehabilitation effort. **Pioneer Construction** was the general contractor. **Interphase Interiors** and **Haworth Inc.** supplied the office furniture and workspace equipment in the office. "Many of our clients look to us to design green buildings, so when designing our new Grand Rapids office, it only made sense for us to lead by example," said TowerPinkster President and CEO Arnold Mikon. TowerPinkster leases the entire second floor (7,488 square feet) of the building located on the southeastern corner of Fulton and Division, which accommodates 35 employees with room for future growth.

WORTH NOTING

-A **Western Michigan University** student and a recent WMU graduate designed a phone app to help visitors of the Kalamazoo Blues Festival, which was held Thursday through Saturday (July 10-12), in downtown Kalamazoo. The phone app for Android phones helped people find their way around the festival, get information about performing artists, and know who was going on stage. It included artist biographies and performance times as well as maps showing important points of interest, including stages, bathrooms and the beer tent. The app was designed by **Adam Nolan**, a computer information systems major from Kalamazoo, and **John Cook**, an ebiz marketing major from St. Joseph who graduated in December. The app is **available at play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.kvba.kvba_fest_2014**.

At the Watercooler — includes the widest variety of general interest business announcements, everything from trade industry awards to staff recertifications. Things that might be included: awards; notices of recognition from an industry trade association; election to a local, regional, state or national business organization; significant changes in business hours; the change of a business location.

Also included are announcements of new businesses in our readership area. With some zigs and zags, that runs from Allegan County in the north, to the Indiana border in the south, and from the Lake Michigan shoreline in the west to just the other side of the Calhoun County border in the east. We require the name of the enterprise, its location, a brief description of the business it conducts, the name(s) of the owner(s) and, where applicable, its hours of operation.

Please send information to **dfavorit@mlive.com** and **ajones5@mlive.com**.

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