

Submitted by: Margaret E. Winters, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Informational Report

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Students who attend one of Michigan's three research universities in the University Research Corridor (URC) are more likely to live in the state after graduation than students who don't attend one of the schools, according to a study released in May. The University Research Corridor, which consists of Wayne State University, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, also ranks at or near the top of many of its peer university clusters. The report revealed that in-state and out-of-state students alike were 60 percent more likely to live in Michigan 10 years after graduation, and 19 percent more likely to live in Michigan a year after graduation than students who didn't graduate from one of the three schools.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Math Corps, a Wayne State-based math program noted for raising the test scores of middle school participants has expanded to Philadelphia. The program, which is equal parts academic enrichment and mentoring, was created by Wayne State's math department. A few years ago, Philadelphia-based math instructor David Shen was inspired by a documentary about Math Corps. So, he flew to Detroit to learn the Math Corps model, resigned from his former job, and devoted time and resources to get the program off the ground in Philadelphia.

Wayne State University's College of Education will train new teachers to work in Detroit schools as part of the new TeachDETROIT initiative launched this summer. The college is recruiting current undergraduate students and candidates with a college degree to participate in the teacher residency program. Jennifer Lewis, professor and director of TeachDETROIT, said the program stresses cultural competence as a prerequisite to working in urban schools. TeachDETROIT also prepares teachers for ambitious academic work with children of color. "The revitalization of Detroit must also include a revitalization of the education system," Lewis said. "To achieve this, institutions must train quality teachers who are prepared to work with students from diverse backgrounds."

FACULTY

Wayne State University Law School Distinguished Professor Robert Sedler donned a commencement gown and regalia in June in Russia after being named an honorary professor at Ural State Law University in Yekaterinburg. The ceremony took place during the ninth session of the Euro-Asian Juridical Congress in Yekaterinburg, where Sedler presented two papers. He was an honored visitor at the Russian law school in 2007, 2009 and 2010. In 2009, Ural

State Law Professor Marina Lomovtseva was a Fulbright Scholar at Wayne Law. “I’ve had a long history of involvement with Russia,” Sedler said. “I’ve written a couple of articles on American constitutional law that Marina translated in Russian for their journals. Now I go to Russia for the eighth time. Receiving the honor is reflective of Wayne Law’s involvement with the international legal community.”

STUDENTS

Staff from the Office of International Programs recently completed recruiting trips to Brazil, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Over three days of organized student fairs in Saudi, more than 160 potential students visited with staff from Wayne State’s English Language Institute and alumni, who helped as interpreters and talked to students about their own WSU experience. In winter term 2015, 235 Brazilian, 151 Saudi and six Omani students enrolled at WSU.

The College of Engineering and Blackstone LaunchPad hosted HackWSU, a 24-hour hackathon for high school and college students in May. During the 24 hours, students wrote web-based software, created mobile apps or designed computer programs addressing a need or innovation of choice. The event was open to all current university and high school students, who worked in teams to compete and showcase their skills, and to learn more about software development. Participants were able to work through the night and advised to bring pillows and sleeping bags to the event held at the WSU Engineering Center.

Sydney Machesky, a senior majoring in public relations and theatre, finished first in the nation in persuasive speaking during the 2015 National Forensic Association National Championship Tournament held in April at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Machesky outperformed 150 other persuasion students with a speech spotlighting the inattention given to the growing problem of missing Native American women in the United States. As a whole, the Wayne State debate team finished first in their division and seventh in the nation – the highest national ranking in the team’s history in competition against 68 other universities.

Dustin Chandler’s 4-year-old daughter, Carly, loves to swing. But, as she gets older, he feared this simple pleasure would be taken away since the swing can only handle 25 pounds. Carly suffers from the rare neurological condition CDKL5. Her disabilities make it impossible for her to use a traditional playground swing. Five Wayne State University freshman engineering students and an industrial design student created a swing that can accommodate Carly as she grows. “The Wayne State group of students really took an interest in it. They’ve been great, they deserve all the credit,” Chandler said. “It’s a neat thing. It’s hard to describe that feeling to know they’re so committed to helping people they’ve never met. It’s something special.”