

Submitted by: Keith E. Whitfield, Provost

Informational Report

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

A significant gift from the organization Kids Without Cancer is bringing together Detroit's major players in childhood cancer research in an innovative initiative using zebrafish to identify the genetic and environmental factors that may lead to the development of childhood leukemia. Acute leukemias are the most common form of childhood cancer in industrialized countries. Kids Without Cancer, founded by a group of parents whose children received cancer treatment at Children's Hospital of Michigan, have committed \$356,000 to researchers at Wayne State's School of Medicine. The financial support will result in the creation of a new zebrafish aquatic housing system in WSU's Integrative Biosciences Center (IBio) and support of 10 years of pediatric cancer research.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Wayne State Law School has been recognized as one of the best law schools in the nation for bar exam preparation by The National Jurist. Wayne Law is the only law school in Michigan recognized among the 40 law schools named by the publication. Wayne Law's overall July passage rate, which includes those retaking the test, was 75 percent, 9 points higher than the state average of 66 percent. "Wayne Law is committed to helping students succeed in law school and pass the bar exam," said Interim Dean Lance Gable. "Our programs are designed to provide additional bar support, using diagnostic exams to predict areas that students should focus on as well as free programs to enhance essay writing skills."

FACULTY

Child welfare experts from the Wayne State School of Social Work have received approximately \$330,000 to assist with the development of a state-of-the-art training program to help adoptive and foster parents care for older youth with complex emotional needs. Assistant Professor Angelique Day, Associate Professor Debra Patterson and Associate Professor Stella Resko received funding from the child welfare agency Spaulding for Children, which will develop the training in partnership with three other child welfare organizations. The Wayne State faculty will identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes that foster adoptive and kinship care providers need to care for adolescents with moderate to severe behavioral health challenges. The competencies they identify will be part of a national training curriculum to help provider parents understand and manage high-risk behaviors, poor academic performance and peer conflicts.

If 2016 was enough to stultify you into a state of acedia and make you long for the bucolic days of youth, have no fear — the Wayne State University Word

Warriors may lift your spirits. As part of its initiative to draw attention to some of the English language's most expressive yet neglected words, the Word Warriors released its annual list of the year's top 10 words that deserve to be used more. "The English language has perhaps more words in its lexicon than any other," says Jerry Herron, dean of WSU's Irvin D. Reid Honors College and a member of the website's editorial board. "By making use of the repertoire available to us, we expand our ability to communicate clearly and help make our world a more interesting place. Bringing these words back into everyday conversation is just another way of broadening our horizons."

STUDENTS

A recent article in *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, reviews data from WSU's Graduate School Student Lifecycle Project that tracked career outcomes of Ph.D. alumni over a 15-year span. The study highlighted in the publication reveals surprising results specific to WSU graduates and in line with national trends. While it is commonly assumed that a Ph.D. leads to a tenure-track position at a research university, many post Ph.D. paths lead to industry, entrepreneurial, government and nonprofit careers. This information has implications for the design of new and existing programs to best support the career success of graduate students.

Two Wayne State undergraduates are teaming up to harness the power of social innovation on campus. Sophomores Kavya Davuluri and Limi Sharif created OptimizeWayne, an organization that provides workshops, mentoring and funding to get ideas up and running. Davuluri said that projects go from ideas to reality during the Social Innovation Challenge, a five-month journey where "optimizers" come together with members from the community. First, monthly workshops bring together entrepreneurs and thought-leaders from the community to lead action-based sessions. Monthly milestone reviews are then held for optimizers to sit in small-group settings with community-based mentors who provide honest feedback about a project's progress. It all culminates in a spring showcase where teams and individuals present their projects to a panel of judges in hopes of receiving \$5,000 in funding.

Apple Store editors have made their picks for the best apps, music, and movies for 2016, and MySwimPro, an application co-founded and led by 2013 Mike Ilitch School of Business graduate Fares Ksehati, has been named Apple Watch App of the Year for 2016. MySwimPro is the top fitness application for competitive swimmers in over 150 countries and the first swimming application designed for the Apple Watch. It helps swimmers achieve their goals by delivering customizable workouts, instructional videos, and advanced analytics for training.