In the early 1800s, John Grunhagen emigrated from Germany to the United States, settled in Milwaukee and bought five acres of land in the city. In 1849, he began selling burial plots on his acreage in conjunction with a cemetery association. The area became known as Grunhagen’s Cemetery, a final resting places for the area’s German Lutherans.

But in 1871, the cemetery association defaulted on its mortgage and the City of Milwaukee, eager to develop the area, ordered the burial ground to close and its occupants to be moved. Houses, churches, and businesses sprang up. Grunhagen’s Cemetery faded from memory until all that remained were a few photos archived in the Milwaukee Public Library.

An excavation begins

Roughly 144 years later, Patricia Richards, an Associate Scientist at UWM and Associate Director of the university’s Cultural Resource Management (UWM-CRM) program, is wearing a neon construction vest and a white hard hat as she looks over a dusty lot on North 13th Street in early August. In an L-shaped pit before her, UWM graduate students and professional archaeologists are sitting in the dirt, carefully brushing grit away from skeletons half-embedded in the ground.

As it turns out, photos were not all that remained of Grunhagen’s Cemetery. In fact, at least 55 bodies remained, graves that weren’t removed when the city gave the order.

Richards is in charge of the cemetery’s excavation. She and the Cultural Resource Management program were hired by Guest House of Milwaukee, a homeless shelter just off of Highway 43. Guest House wanted to expand its building into the lot next door and asked CRM to be on hand when it broke ground to ensure that it didn’t disturb anything beneath the soil – like a graveyard.

“They were pretty sure that there wasn’t going to be anything here, because, as you can see, we’re standing in the basement of a house,” Richards says, pointing out the dimensions. “(But) we ran into burials in the wall, burials underneath here. They poured a cement foundation here over burials that were intact.”

UWM-CRM was founded in 1974 and has operated as a contractual arm of the Anthropology Department ever since. The program helps public and private agencies comply with the National Historic Preservation Act on the federal level and Wisconsin State Statute 4440 on the state level, which obligates state agencies to take into account the effect any building project might have on local resources.

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Anthropology PhD candidate Marcus Schulenburg sifts through dirt, looking for bone fragments, as he helps to excavate the long-forgotten Grunhagen’s Cemetery on North 13th Street in Milwaukee. Photo by Troye Fox.
Meet UWM’s newest president
By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Mike Sportiello is a busy guy. A third-year student at UWM with a double major in Chemistry and Philosophy, Sportiello is also the Content Director for TEDxUWMilwaukee and was just elected to his position as the Student Association President. He has some big ideas about the changes he’d like to see for students at UWM, and what it means to be a voice for higher education.

What drew you to UWM?
I choose UWM for the vibrant research opportunities we have, especially for undergraduates. It was really easy; the second week of school, I just asked a professor if I could work in his lab and he said yes. (Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry) Alan Schwabacher and I have been friends ever since. It’s been quite the experience.

What is the Student Association, and why did you run for president?
The Student Association is the student government here. We’re here to enrich the lives of students through advocacy, representation, and the funding of student activities. We have a lot of really amazing projects going on. We’re working on developing a co-curricular transcript so we can incentivize students to get more involved in campus, so when future employers look at your transcript, they’re not just seeing Bio 101 but they’re seeing your true involvement from an officially-recognized university standpoint. We’re doing a lot of work with expanding internship and co-op opportunities. We also have a big part in the up-and-coming sexual assault prevention push that our campus is going to make. We’re hoping to start a pilot within the next year for some bystander intervention training within the residence halls.

(I decided to run for president because) we have a lot of student leaders on campus, but they’re really disparate and disconnected. I think one of the things we could benefit from is enhancing the student experience by realizing that we’re all leaders, not only of our individual organizations and friend groups, but really for the university and the city as a whole.

I also love interacting with a million different people every day and it’s fun getting to know everyone.

As president, you’ve become a voice for other students through open letters and editorials throughout Wisconsin. What made you take on the role?
This is, as everybody here knows, an interesting time for UWM for a number of reasons, one of them being the recent budget announcements. In a very interesting way, it started a dialogue nationally for a lot of different people about the way higher education works. … Students are oftentimes left out of the conversation. I was really happy to step in to lend the voice that often is unheard at a time when it is asked for and wanted.

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Women’s Studies to social justice
By Sarah Vickery, Letters & Science

Mandy Potapenko has a deep and abiding love for the city of Milwaukee and its residents. It’s why she wants to do whatever she can to make the community healthier and safer in her new role as the Director of Milwaukee’s Community Justice Council. It’s the latest job in a career dedicated to helping people working for, and caught up in, the Milwaukee County’s justice system.

Potapenko graduated from UWM in December 2007 with a Bachelor’s degree. It was in fulfilling the requirements of her Women’s Studies major that she discovered her passion for helping others.

“Women’s Studies required me to complete a 90-hour internship prior to graduating. I chose what was then the Task Force on Family Violence, which is now Sojourner Family Peace Center, in their restraining order clinic,” Potapenko said. “My Women’s Studies degree really exposed me to the nonprofit community in Milwaukee. Prior to, I had never really thought about working in nonprofits.”

Her internship experience helped net her a job even before she graduated. After she walked the stage, Potapenko started with an organization known as Justice 2000, now Justice Point. Potapenko was a case manager working with individuals who, while released from jail to await their criminal hearings, had to attend classes, drug treatment, or other counseling. They met with Potapenko regularly, who reported on their progress to the District Attorney and judges.

After two and a half years, Potapenko made the switch to the private sector where she worked for an insurance agency setting up policies for nonprofit organizations. The lure of working with the actual nonprofits proved too strong, and within 10 months, Potapenko was back working with community justice organizations – this time with Safe and Sound (www.safesound.org), a nonprofit working with law enforcement to strengthen neighborhoods.

“I was provided office space at District 3’s police station and worked with a group of officers that can be best described as a neighborhood problem-solving team,” Potapenko said. “I worked as a liaison between law enforcement and residents, as well as stakeholders and other organizations, working to build relationships around community safety.”

In addition, Potapenko served as a point of contact between the police department and neighborhood residents who, for whatever reason, felt uncomfortable talking with police. She also worked with the DA’s office to find creative ways to shut down drug houses and other illegal activities by targeting the houses’ code violations or declaring certain properties a nuisance.

Potapenko’s team has been recognized across the country for their innovative ways of addressing neighborhood disorder. On Aug. 18, it was announced that her team at the Milwaukee Police Department is one of two finalists for the prestigious Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem Oriented Policing.

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Violence involving young people in Milwaukee gets plenty of media attention. The good news – that people all over the city are working for positive change – doesn’t always get as much attention, said Robert Smith, associate vice chancellor for Global Inclusion & Engagement at UWM and Associate Professor of History.

Smith is one of many who are working quietly in partnership with city leaders and others to make policy changes and mentor young people of color.

For example, in collaboration with Larry Miller, vice president of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Smith helped write a “Black Lives Matter,” resolution, which Miller introduced and the board approved. The resolution committed Milwaukee Public Schools to renewed efforts to create safe places for dialog and support, and to making changes around policing, discipline and curriculum to strengthen the role of schools as centers for community support.

Smith also has been mentoring a group of young black men at Wauwatosa West High School, meeting with them to discuss their issues and concerns.

West’s principal, Frank Calarco, thanked UWM for the partnership in a letter to Chancellor Mark Mone:

“Simply put, this has been the best ‘intervention’ that I have been a part of in my 25 years of education. Although I used the term intervention, Dr. Smith uses a pro-active approach to help these young men realize how much potential they have.”

Smith is quick to point out that he is only one of many people working on these urgent issues. “There is a lot of great work being done across the city.”

That work involves people of all races and cultures. The school board resolution called for setting up an advisory council of community members, parents, educators and students to help review and create curriculum and policy related to issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement.

And while the Black Lives Matter movement is used to frame the concerns, the issues that need to be addressed also involve Latino, Hmong, LGBT and other groups of young people, according to Smith and Miller.

“We framed the resolution around Black Lives Matter, but we see the connections with other long-standing issues affecting young people,” they wrote in the resolution. These issues include inequality, lack of opportunity, little recognition of unique cultures, discipline policies, and the need to reverse the “school-to-prison” pipeline that impacts so many.

Smith’s involvement at Wauwatosa West grew out of annual summits for young black men that UWM has held for the past three years.

Wauwatosa West teacher Rebecca Kirchman, who advises the school’s Black Student Union, brought a group of students to the 2013 UWM summit. After meeting Smith, she asked him if he’d be willing to mentor interested African-American male students at West. The program there is voluntary, and offers the students a safe, confidential place to talk about everything from becoming a man to sexuality to integration to academics.

“It’s a really meaningful program that we would not have been able to do without his volunteer help,” Kirchman said.

Like many teens, the 20 students in the group have mostly chosen their role models from sports or entertainment figures. But working with Smith has helped expand their ideas of what their futures can be.

“You have expanded my mind and vision in amazing ways,” one wrote in a thank-you note.

Another wrote: “I want to be just like you. Thank you for being a role model.”
Alison Donnelly, Associate Professor of Geography

Degree: PhD in Environmental Studies from Trinity College Dublin.

Previous Position: Research Assistant Professor at Trinity College Dublin.

Focus: My research area explores the impact of climate change on plants and animals in the wild. In particular I am interested in how rising temperature impacts phenology – the timing of leaf-out, bird migration and insect emergence. It is first necessary to establish that temperatures have risen over the past few decades and then to establish if this temperature increase is impacting our native plants and animals. Once temperature begins to rise in spring, buds develop into leaves, birds migrate, and insects emerge. As climate change causes warmer spring temperature, these activities occur earlier in the season. As expected, not all species respond to warming at the same rate and if birds arrive before insects emerge, then their food source will be limited with negative consequences for the bird population. Therefore, since many organisms are interdependent, warming temperatures can disrupt these delicately balanced relationships in a very complex way. My interest lies with disentangling and understanding these relationships.

Goals for the year: I hope to complement and enhance research and teaching activity in the Geography Department at UWM. One of my goals is to apply for research funding and generate academic output of international standard.

Fun fact: I love to travel and have lived in Australia, the UK, and France, and I have recently moved to Milwaukee from Ireland.

Timothy O’Brien, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Degree: PhD in Sociology from Indiana University.

Previous Position: Assistant Professor of Sociology at University of Evansville.

Focus: My work bridges sociology of science, sociology of law, political sociology, and sociology of religion. That sounds like a pretty disparate group of areas, but I think ultimately what I’m interested in are things like knowledge, different kinds of knowledge, different kinds of authority, different kinds of expertise. And so by looking at science and religion and politics, I’m really interested in seeing how expertise and authority really show up in these places.

Current projects: I’m working in two parallel tracks right now. One of my projects looks at expert witnesses in courts and essentially looking at the social construction of expertise as it happens in a legal system. That’s one project. On a parallel track, I’m looking at the intersection of science and religion and how people make sense of what’s authoritative knowledge and in what context does knowledge count as ’expert’ or legitimate.

You can imagine that people have pretty strong opinions on that one.

Why UWM: I really enjoyed my time at Evansville, but it’s a much smaller university. It’s only about 2,500 students. Honestly, the teaching focus there really trumps the research focus in a lot of ways, and I really do enjoy both aspects of the job. The opportunity to do research at a much higher level was one of the reasons that I wanted to come to UWM.

The other big reason as far as teaching goes, there’s a graduate program here. I like working with graduate students and I just didn’t have that opportunity at the smaller school in Evansville.

Fun fact: I like to rock climb, which is kind of an obscure hobby.
Ionel Popa, Assistant Professor of Physics

**Degree:** PhD in Physical and Analytical Chemistry from University of Geneva, Switzerland.

**Previous Position:** Associate Research Scientist at Columbia University, New York.

**Focus:** The molecules in our body have evolved to respond to force. The lack of adequate experimental techniques has limited our understanding of how the mechanical environment gets integrated in the day-to-day operation of our body. I am interested in using single molecule techniques to study the proteins that operate in vivo under force, such as the proteins in muscles. I like to build my own instruments, to write the computer programs needed to control these instruments, to engineer and synthetize protein constructs specifically designed for single molecule experiments, and to develop theoretical models that can accurately characterize the obtained data.

**Interesting fact from research:** One of the proteins that I have worked with at Columbia University, called titin, seems to be the elastic computer of all our muscles. This protein is composed of several hundreds domains which can unfold and refold under force, effectively changing the elasticity of our muscles in response to their activity.

**Goal for year:** I would like to establish a multidisciplinary laboratory that focuses on understanding the mechano-biology of proteins at single molecule level, to develop new instrumental tools to study the dynamics of protein mechanics and to have fun doing it. Furthermore, I would like to establish a new class that introduces scientists and engineering to computer programming tools.

**Fun fact:** During my PhD in Switzerland I started taking ski classes and on my second class I was assigned by mistake with the advanced skiers. I had to go down a black slope in the Alps with very little skills, and I managed to survive. Sometimes life is about taking chances. Ever since, skiing has become my favorite sport.

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Aragorn Quinn, Assistant Professor in Foreign Language and Literature

**Degree:** PhD in Japanese Literature from Stanford University.

**Previous Position:** PhD candidate at Stanford University.

**Focus:** I look at political theater between 1868 and World War II. It was this time of modernization in Japan. They were bringing in these Enlightenment notions of liberty and revolution. They were changing their government over from a shogun to a modern state and asking, what does this mean for us? In a European context, these things are odd and different. Do they apply to us? What does it look like if we try to bring them into Japan?

**Why Japanese:** For my BA program in theater design, we had to learn world theater history. Japan has this really sophisticated theater tradition, but my school didn’t have a Japanese program. (After graduation) I was in Chicago (working for theaters) and thought, I don’t want to do what I’m doing for the rest of my life. I’d never to been to Japan and I was young and single, so why the heck not? So I went to (Japan). I ended up in not very good theater town, but it was a great place to learn Japanese.

**Classes and goals:** I’ll be teaching a subtitling class in the fall. … And then, I think starting in the spring, I think I’ll be able to start plowing my own field and plan my own classes. There isn’t much of a literary bent to the classes that are offered here, and I’d like to bring some more literature into the classes, and performance as well.

**Fun fact:** I got my MA in Boston, and I was there in 2004 when (the Red Sox) broke their curse after 89 years. When I was in San Francisco, it was the first time (the Giants had) ever won the World Series in San Francisco. I’m kind of thinking that I should get a bonus from the Brewers for moving here.
New Faces of Letters & Science

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Shevaun Watson, Associate Professor English and Director of Composition

Degree: PhD in Rhetoric and Composition from Miami University of Ohio.

Previous Position: Assistant Professor and Director of Composition at UW-Eau Claire.

Focus: My research areas are pretty varied. I have scholarship in what’s called writing program administration, so that involves things like writing assessment, writing centers, and also professional development – writing across the curriculum and … writing in the disciplines. Those are my real “comp” areas of specialty. I (also) study the history of rhetoric, and specifically the history of African American rhetoric. My new book project is on the politics of remembering and the rhetorics of public memory in relation to the tourism industry.

Latest project: One of my publications that just came out is related to the tourism industry in Charleston, South Carolina and the really problematic ways in which African Americans and the history of slavery are presented to tourists. I think a lot of people want to go to Charleston and think its a really lovely place. ... [but] the tourism industry there is much more fraught than people understand. ... As a rhetorician, I want to investigate the ways that places make arguments to the public about the past. My current book project takes up these issues in relation to Charleston specifically.

Goals this year: I’m working on a first-year writing textbook that’s focused on writing in the disciplines and has a lot of new approaches to teaching information literacy and research skills to first-year students in that composition classroom. I’m hoping to have a full draft of that book by the end of the year and I’m going to try out some of my own new material in composition classes. I’m teaching English 101 in the fall.

UWM ties: I did my Master’s in Rhetoric and Composition at UWM from ’97-’99, so I’m really excited to have the opportunity to come back. I never thought that would happen. I have missed Milwaukee desperately since I left. I love the lake and the public access to the lake area. There’s so many neat neighborhoods and so much has grown since I’ve been here.

Women’s Studies to criminal justice

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Potapenko’s work and dedication to Milwaukee’s communities made others take notice. Two months ago, she was asked to step into her new role as Director of the Community Justice Council. The mission of the Council is to ensure interagency collaboration to create a more fair, efficient and effective justice system for Milwaukee County. She now oversees eight subcommittees, each dedicated to a facet of criminal justice, like mental health, programs and interventions, community engagement, and more. In addition, she reports to the Council’s executive committee, whose members include District Attorney John Chisholm, Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke, Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn, County Executive Chris Abele and Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett.

Her first order of business is to coordinate partners for the Safety and Justice Challenge award from the MacArthur Foundation that the CJC was awarded shortly before Potapenko came aboard. The grant will help the CJC examine data generated by Milwaukee’s justice system to find ways to reduce the over-reliance on jails for non-violent offenders who could be safely monitored and/or rehabilitated in a community-based setting.

“One of the areas we have found a need for additional community resources is for individuals with mental illness. For example, with this MacArthur grant, we’re taking a look at how we could better intervene with those individuals, possibly before they enter the system,” Potapenko said. “Additionally, we are working with the police department on opportunities to get community services as opposed to relying on the jail, or possibly doing additional screenings for individuals when they are in the jails to further determine need.”

It’s a big job, but Potapenko’s up for it. She’s also encouraging of other Women’s Studies majors, especially those who are wondering about their career prospects. “My advice would be to be creative with it, and never be afraid to reach out to other individuals to ask how they got where they are or ask for that mentorship,” she said. “Being able to connect with someone who can connect you to others – I think that’s one of the most rewarding pieces of the work that I’ve done, is be that connector.”
Urban Studies proves to be invaluable human resource

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

When it comes to her job as the Director of Human Resources for St. Francis Children’s Center, Kristin Stieger serves a tiny clientele – size-wise, at least. She oversees a vast network of employees who carry out St. Francis’ mission to provide services and education for children with autism and other developmental delays.

“The staff here are just so committed to the work they do. They’re completely dedicated to the children that they’re working with and their families,” Stieger said. “Finding and keeping the right people is tricky. We hire as much for fit and attitude. ‘Are you committed to our mission’ is just as important as the transcripts and technical skill.”

Human Resources is an unconventional career track for someone who graduated with a Master’s degree from the Urban Studies program in 2006, but Stieger also earned a graduate certificate in Nonprofit Management. That’s no surprise; she has a history of service, starting with a stint in the Peace Corps following her undergraduate graduation from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities.

“I was an agriculture and beekeeping volunteer in rural Paraguay,” Stieger said. “We set up a cooperative general store in the community where I worked so that they could have fresh produce and fresh food all the time. We also started a co-op of women who were raising chickens so that they could generate income by selling eggs.”

After her Peace Corps stint ended, Stieger moved to the Paraguay capitol and continued her work with community development with a different international organization. She eventually moved on to Brazil, where she opened an Internet café catering to local students and travelers in early 2000 before the days of Wi-Fi and 4G coverage.

Eventually, though, she found it time to return home to Wisconsin, where she discovered the Milwaukee Idea Economic Development Fellows Program, a program run through the UWM Consortium for Economic Opportunity that ties work with community-based organizations to graduate studies. Stieger aimed right for the Urban Studies courses, inspired by her time in the Peace Corps.

“I had been working in Asuncion, Paraguay. I was really fascinated by the economic and community development that was taking place,” she explained. “It’s interesting to me, the way cities evolve and how people organically form communities and hierarchies based on cultural values and need.”

Stieger did her community work with Menomonee Valley Partners, an organization that aims to encourage economic, social, and ecological growth in the Menomonee Valley in Wisconsin. At the same time, she was working a part-time job at Patrick Cudahy, a bacon supplier. The job fulfilled her desires to work with a diverse population and use her Spanish language skills, and when she graduated, she ended up in the company’s HR department as their Corporate Recruiter.

Her Urban Studies background proved useful.

“At a place like Patrick Cudahy, there is great diversity. You have such a cross section of the community: there are Latinos, African Americans, recent Hmong and Eastern European immigrants, and the socio-economic diversity is just as broad. It’s a microcosm of all of the population and economic development research that you’ve done in Urban Studies,” she said.

Eventually, Stieger left and served in the YMCA’s human resources department before landing at St. Francis. She’s in her element in the nonprofit world, where employees are chosen not only for their technical skills but also their drive and passion to help others succeed. Stieger has that same drive and passion.

“I think that HR kind of gets a bad rap as the policy-makers or the rule enforcers. My goal, right now, as an HR person, is to completely dispel that status. I just want to provide exceptional customer service because my customers are these incredibly talented and committed employees,” she said.
Upcoming Events

Sept. 4-Oct. 9
Planetarium show: Science & Cinema. Fridays from Sept. 4-Oct. 9. 7 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Learn about the technology featured in cinema that we take as every-day reality. Tickets are $3. [http://bit.ly/1uDnBD]

Sept. 8
Art Exposé. 1 p.m. Mitchell 154. Gallery staff or an Art History professor present for one hour on a rarely-seen piece from the UWM Art Collection. [http://bit.ly/1PqiYYt]

Sept. 9
The Ferguson Conjuncture: Why the Humanities Matter Now. 4:30 p.m. 4th Floor Conference Center, Golda Meir Library. George Lipsitz, University of California-Santa Barbara, delivers a talk on #blacklivesmatter. Cosponsored by the Comparative Ethnic Studies Program, History Department, Africology Department, Center for Twenty-First Century Studies, Cultures and Communities Program, Urban Studies Program, Phi Beta Kappa, and College of Letters and Science. [http://on.fb.me/1NqLsDY]

Sept. 10
Study Abroad Fair. 9 a.m. Student Union Concourse. Explore international academic and internship opportunities available through UWM. Sponsored by the Center for International Education Study Abroad Office. [http://bit.ly/1KoOYbh]


Sept. 18

Sept. 28
Master in Human Resources and Labor Relations: 28th Annual Melvin Lurie Prize Ceremony. 7 p.m. Heft Center. MHRLR presents annual awards. [http://on.fb.me/1Lpgiff]

Laurels and Accolades

UWM’s chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national Political Science honor society, was recognized as one of just four best chapters in the U.S. among colleges of similar size by Pi Sigma Alpha’s national office.

Diane Reddy (Psychology) was selected for a 2015 Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)/Brightspace Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning. This international award recognizes educators for their innovative and student-centered approaches to teaching and learning. Reddy was honored at the STLHE Annual Conference and at Brightspace’s FUSION Conference in June.

PhD candidate Gabriela Alejandra Nagy (Psychology) was selected to receive a $10,000 scholarship through the 2015 Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee (HPGM) Advanced Degree Program. Nagy was honored at the 2015 Annual Meeting held on Aug. 21 at the Pfister Hotel.

Christine Larson (Psychology) received a 5-year R01 grant, “Acute neurocognitive-affective predictors of chronic post-trauma outcomes,” from the National Institute of Mental Health. In this project, she and her collaborators will collect neuroimaging and other assessments within two weeks of experiencing a traumatic event in order to identify predictors of long-term post-trauma distress, such as PTSD and depression.
People in print


Video Stories

Global Studies major Justin Misiora found a "family of choice" among his classmates at UWM and, despite growing up in Illinois, thinks of Milwaukee as home. https://youtu.be/z_baXkRhVWU

Communication major Akeem Springs found a home on the UWM basketball team, and in the city of Milwaukee itself. https://youtu.be/xrt3E5RxN4Y
In the Media and Around the Community

Alcoholism is a complicated disease to both live with and treat, which is why PhD candidate V. V. N. Phani Babu Tiruveehula (Chemistry) and his supervisor James Cook (Chemistry)’s research into a new compound to treat it has made headlines on Medical Daily (http://bit.ly/1Us5Y6i) and MedicalXpress. (http://bit.ly/1PqCxxU). They presented their work at the 250th National Meeting & Exposition of the American Chemical Society on Aug. 19.

Adam Wickersham ('05, BA International Relations) gave insight into Wisconsin’s growing health-tech app industry in a WisBusiness.com article as CEO of the start-up company RaceTorch LLC. http://bit.ly/1NKH3o6

Colin Scanes (Biological Sciences) spoke at the fifth annual Center for Food Animal Wellbeing Symposium on Aug. 6. http://bit.ly/1Ky5z3Da

PhD candidate Avery Edenfield (English) and Fredrik O. Andersson (Nonprofit Management) published an article in Nonprofit Quarterly discussing nonprofit governance. http://bit.ly/1UFOvsT

The UWM Cultural Resource Management program and its employees, including John and Patricia Richards (Anthropology) and several graduate students, caused quite a stir among Milwaukee residents as they excavated old burials from a forgotten cemetery. They made headlines on WTMJ Radio (http://bit.ly/1NAFnuZ), WISN news (http://bit.ly/1ixOn6C), and in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (http://bit.ly/1Dz5t7X). You can read our take on their work on Page 1 of In Focus.

Carl Mueller ('67, BA Russian) was profiled for his interesting and varied career paths in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. http://bit.ly/1DiRdd

Robert Graziano (Geosciences) captivated audience members at the Pitch Project, an art gallery in Milwaukee, when he delivered a talk connecting Wisconsin geology to the gallery’s photographic exhibition of pyrite suns, a phenomenon unique to the mineral pyrite. http://bit.ly/1JfrskK

Jeffrey Sommers (Global Studies and Africology) was called to Washington, D.C. in early August to help prepare the new U.S. Ambassador to Latvia, Nancy Pettit, for her assignment in an increasingly turbulent region impacted by the Russian conflict with Ukraine.

WUWM Radio called on Tim Ehlinger (Biological Sciences) to explain the potential environmental impact of Waukesha’s proposed pipe to discharge treated water. He worries that discharged pharmaceuticals may negatively affect people, animals and aquatic plants. http://bit.ly/1OR0UqQ

Alumni Accomplishments

Nicole Hirsch ('11, BA Communication and Political Science) was named one of the 2015-16 National Soccer Coaches Associations of America’s 30 Under 30 out of more than 500 applicants. Hirsch is the assistant soccer coach at UW-LaCrosse. As part of her award, she will receive a $1,800 educational scholarship and will be a guest at the NSCAA convention, as well as two other NSCAA educational events. http://bit.ly/1NAFOt6

Marc Boucher ('93, BA History; '96 MA History) was appointed Director of Lake Superior State University’s Kenneth Shouldice Library. http://bit.ly/1LnX7jy
Can you talk about your experience with TEDxUWMilwaukee?

The idea is that (speakers) have an idea worth sharing. We bring speakers to campus (to deliver TED talks). Last year, we had people came all the way from Austin, Texas; to Iowa; to four streets away. This year we’ll have just as wide and diverse a crew. This is really valuable not only for the students but also the community. When we have impactful ideas being spread, everybody benefits – especially when they come to such an interesting city with a host of problems but also a host of hard-working, innovative people.

I had the privilege of working as the content director so I got to work with the speakers and coach them throughout the summer both this year and last year to get their talks ready and prepare them.

Do you sleep, ever?

Nope!

And you’re busy with academics as well. What got you interested in chemistry research and why did you approach Dr. Schwabacher?

This is where it gets real nerdy. Get ready.

There’s a man by the name of Carl Zimmer. He works for National Geographic and he wrote a book called Microcosm about my favorite organism, the *E. coli*. He talks about the evolutionary history and all the cool things *E. coli* can do that no one ever thought they could or that no one would ever think they would. One of the really interesting things, in my opinion, is the way antibiotic resistance works within *E. coli* and a host of other organisms. Antibiotic resistance is something that has come to the forefront but will come even more to the forefront in the next decade as we as a society continue to prescribe antibiotics in the way that we do, in a way that is not good for the longevity of human kind.

I was really interested in chemistry research, and somebody told me (Dr. Schwabacher) was good about working with undergrads. It was weird at first because the grad students were like, ’He’s never taken organic chemistry. He’s a second-week freshman. He’s probably going to kill himself. Let’s not give him anything too explosive.’

I joke. But within a few weeks, they realized that I was, just like a number of other undergraduate students, passionate about conducting research here. When we put in the hours, we can really participate and add to the value of the research that’s going on.

What’s next after graduation?

I’m pursuing my MD. I’m interested in doing Doctors Without Borders, I think. Something graduate or medical is the plan right now.

For students with questions about the Student Association or getting involved on campus, contact Sportiello at sportie3@uwm.edu.
Cemetery excavation
continued from page 1

UWM CRM was on hand in 2006 to excavate the Old Catholic Cemetery on 22nd Street in Milwaukee and in 2013 when Froedtert Hospital broke ground for a new building and found an unmarked cemetery below.

In fact, says Richards, there are about 70 of these “forgotten cemeteries” in Milwaukee County alone. Now it's Grunhagen’s time to be remembered.

A delicate process

The archaeologists and graduate students are wielding shovels, sifting through dirt and gently uncovering old bones. Most of the burials were adults, but the crew found six juvenile graves in a separate section of the cemetery.

“What we aim to do is expose the remains in place and to do so without damaging them,” Richards says. “There are a variety of things that we learn about orientation related to burial program. … Did you cross the hands over the chest or by the side? Does the person have something in their hands? Can you tell if they were put in a coffin that was actually made for them, or were they put in a coffin that was too big or too small?”

The coffins have all rotted away, but there are the occasional rusted coffin nails in the dirt, adds Anthropology PhD candidate Marcus Schulenburg. He was an emergency hire by CRM for an excavation beneath a Lake Winnebago road in 2009 and has worked for the program since. On this day, he’s gently using wooden tools to chip away dirt from a femur. There’s a lot you can learn from bones, he says, gesturing to the ones laid out before him.

“As far as we know, it’s an adult. … We know they were young-ish, but (had) some dental problems. There’s a very large cavity. They would have had toothaches during their life,” he says. “This looks like a suspender clip that we’ve got, which is pretty neat to find. … They were buried with their arms crossed. It was a traditional Christian burial. The head is oriented to the west.”

After the dig

UWM’s Anthropology lab is where all of these bones are destined, once they’re uncovered and photographed. There, students and professors will clean and analyze them.

“The analysis involves determining the age of the individual at death, the sex of the individual, anything more that we can say about life ways. Did they have any trauma? Was there any disease that we can see that reflects itself in the osteology of the individual?” says Richards. “Then we prepare a report that includes the osteology. … The report goes to the state of Wisconsin Historical Society. The director of the State Historical Society opens up a dialogue regarding final disposition of the burials.”

The Historical Society could elect to rebury the bodies elsewhere, or the bones may stay permanently at UWM for curation in the Anthropology Lab.

Either way, Richards says, they’ll try to identify the remains as best they can. There are no cemetery records or surviving gravestones, so the process will be difficult. It all comes down to a sense of respect, she adds.

“The people who do this kind of work … don’t do it because they’re going to get rich or get famous. They do it because they have a sense of respect for, and need to honor, folks in cemeteries like this,” she says. “Each of these people was buried and loved by a family member. We really feel strongly that that’s what we’re trying to somehow honor (and) protect.”