



**Empower.Connect.Serve**

***2017 Student Awards Ceremony***  
***Sunday, April 23rd***  
***2:00 pm***

Downing Student Union Auditorium  
Western Kentucky University

# **2017 Student Awards Program**

## *Welcome and Recognition of Special Guests*

### *Presentation of Awards*

Department of Psychological Sciences  
Department of Physics & Astronomy  
Department of Mathematics  
Department of Geography & Geology  
Department of Engineering  
Department of Computer Science  
Department of Chemistry  
Department of Biology  
Department of Architectural & Manufacturing Sciences  
Department of Agriculture

### *Concluding Remarks*

### *Reception, DSU 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Atrium*

### **Special Thanks to the 2017 Student Awards Committee Members**

Stephen King (Agriculture)

Jarrett Johnson (Biology)

James Gary (Computer Science)

Pat Kambesis (Geography & Geology)

Doug Harper (Physics & Astronomy)

Shahnaz Aly (Architectural & Manufacturing Sciences)

Carnetta Skipworth (Chemistry)

Bob Choate (Engineering)

Mikhail Khenner (Mathematics)

Amy Brausch (Psychological Sciences)



## Department of Agriculture

*Dr. Linda Brown, Department Chair*



### **The Elmer Gray Outstanding Graduate Student Award**

#### **Elizabeth Ashley Blessinger**

*An alum of the WKU Dept of Agriculture, Elizabeth Blessinger is continuing with a Master of Science degree. She was an Agriculture Ambassador and participated in the 2015 and 2016 Alltech Innovation Competitions. During the summer of 2016 Ashley designed and completed a research project in conjunction with Ball Horticulture, examining pepper cultivars and how they produce in our region. Excelling in her course work and completing internships with Bernheim Arboretum and Research forest prepared Ashley to begin working as a Senior Horticulturalist at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center after graduation.*

### **Outstanding Senior**

#### **Tara N. Watkins**

*Tara Watkins is an Honors College senior from Frankfort, KY who will graduate in May with dual degrees in Biochemistry and Agriculture, with an emphasis in Agronomy. She has worked in the WKU Biotechnology Center for 3 years, served as an Agriculture Ambassador for 2 years, and was awarded a prestigious Noble Foundation Summer Research Scholars in Plant Science internship in summer 2016. This summer Tara will enter Michigan State University's Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Biotechnology program to pursue her PhD as an MSU Plant Sciences Fellow.*

### **Outstanding International Agricultural Student**

#### **Huy Tran**

*During his educational experience at WKU, Huy Tran has proven to be a talented international student, demonstrating high motivation and dedication for active learning. When given an assignment, Huy constantly strives for excellence in terms of content, quality, and meeting deadlines. His accomplishment in relation to coursework only scratches the surface of his academic ability. Huy quickly grasps difficult concepts, diligently works to exceed expectations, and usually can be seen with a smile on his face. He hopes to someday return to his home country of Vietnam to contribute to the production of high quality agricultural products.*

### **Outstanding Agribusiness Student**

#### **Lindsay T. Ratliff**

*Lindsay Ratliff graduated Magna Cum Laude in December 2016 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture (Agribusiness concentration) and a minor in Political Science. Not only was Lindsay a superior student in the classroom, but she was also active in several organizations—serving as an Agriculture Ambassador and Chapter President of Alpha Delta Pi sorority, Epsilon Delta chapter. Since graduating, she has been substitute teaching and plans to attend law school.*

## **Outstanding Agricultural Education Student**

### **Thomas Poole**

*Raised in Logan County, KY, Thomas Poole is a junior in the Agriculture Department, concentrating in Agricultural Education. He served 2 years as an Agriculture Ambassador, has been President of the WKU Agricultural Education Society for 2 terms, participated in multiple internships with the KY FFA Association and the KY Poultry Federation. Thomas spends summers working for the KY Dept of Education at the KY FFA Leadership Training Center. Planning to graduate in May 2018, he desires to become a secondary school agricultural educator with goals to encourage his future students to meet their full potential, become productive members of society, and remain lifelong learners.*

## **Outstanding Agronomy – Plant Science Student**

### **Kirsten Banks**

*Kirsten Banks focuses her agriculture education in Agronomy Plant & Soil Sciences and is active in the department's Agronomy Club, most recently serving as President. She enjoys being a member of the WKU Collegiate Soil Judging Team for the opportunity to study soils in various locations throughout the United States. A recipient of a national/international academic scholarship and a national FFA scholarship, Kirsten appreciates her Agronomy education and professors for preparing her to work in this area. Graduating in May, she has secured a full-time position with a local agronomic company.*

## **Outstanding Agronomy – Soil Science Student**

### **Perri Pedley**

*After completing an Associate of Arts degree from Owensboro Community & Technical College, Perri Pedley began coursework for her Bachelor's degree in fall 2016, concentrating in Agronomy Soil Sciences. She received a national FFA scholarship, transfer student scholarships, and a departmental scholarship. Last summer she he was chosen for a Pathways Internship and will continue the internship this summer. Perri has been active on the WKU Collegiate Soil Judging Team in the past 2 contests and will have her final contest this fall. She enjoys the opportunity to study soils in different locations throughout the United States that being a member of the soil judging team allows. She appreciates her education and professors here in the Agronomy for preparing her well for her career. Perri plans to work for the USDA-NRCS after graduating in December.*

## **Outstanding Animal Science Student**

### **Steven Green**

*A senior at WKU, Steven Green found his love for Agriculture at an early age. He credits being raised on a commercial cow-calf operation that added registered Hereford cattle in 2008 as a source of his passion for the Hereford industry. To this end, Steven serves as a director and fundraising chair of the National Junior Hereford Association. He plans to expand his herd with high performing genetics to offer easy flushing cattle that are maternally sound and efficient, while working towards a production sale. Steven aspires to continue his education at the Auburn Univ. College of Veterinary Medicine, ultimately specializing in Veterinary Embryology. These goals will support expansion of his cow-calf operation and allow him to serve other cattle producers.*

## **Outstanding Floriculture Student**

### **Megan Capps**

*Megan is a senior in the Agriculture Department with one more semester to go. She began work as a freshman at the WKU Floral Design Training Center in the Spring of 2014, and has become an excellent floral designer and floral shop salesperson. She will earn a minor in Floral Design and American Sign Language, and has contributed her skills to the WKU Horticulture club. During Agriculture-faculty-led study abroad courses in both Ireland and Ecuador Megan was amazed at the floral shops and production of fresh cut flowers in those countries.*

## **Outstanding Horticulture Student**

### **Linda Aguazul Cruz**

*A graduate of the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Math and Science, Linda Aguazul Cruz has traveled in Taiwan, China, Ecuador, and Ireland. Last summer she was a horticulture intern at the Smithsonian Gardens in Washington DC, and has worked at the Baker Arboretum, WKU Farm, the Office of Sustainability and a number of farms and gardens around Bowling Green. Her future plans include natural farming and extensive travel across Latin America and Japan. After graduation Linda will manage a farm in Caneyville, KY.*

## **Outstanding Turfgrass Management Student**

### **Landon South**

*Landon is a senior in the Turfgrass Management program at WKU. He completed internships at Vaquero Club in West Lake, TX and The Club at Harbor Shores in Benton Harbor, MI. This course is a Jack Nicklaus signature design course where the Senior PGA Championship has been held on three occasions and is the site for this event in 2018.*

*He currently serves as an assistant superintendent at The Club at Harbor Shores.*



## Department of Architectural & Manufacturing Sciences

*Dr. Greg Arbuckle, Department Chair*



### **Outstanding Graduate Student in Engineering Technology Management**

#### **Eric Rohr**

*A native of Watertown, Wisconsin, Eric Rohr graduated from Ottawa University, Milwaukee, WI in 2007 with a BA in Business Administration. He joined the U.S. Army in 2010 and served for 5 ½ years as a 12T Geospatial Surveyor. Eric was selected for the Army's Green to Gold Active Duty Option 2-year Graduate Studies program. He is currently a Graduate student in the AMS Program working toward a Master in Engineering Technology Management degree and a Commission as an Army Intelligence Officer.*

### **Outstanding Senior in Manufacturing Engineering Technology**

#### **Keith T. Ressor**

*Keith Ressor grew up on a small farm in Hardin County Kentucky and followed his mother (Education) and brother (Mechanical Engineering) to The Hill for his undergraduate education. His father taught him that hard work and getting dirty isn't a bad thing! He has always been interested in learning how things work and how they can be improved.*

### **Outstanding Senior in Architectural Sciences**

#### **Caleb Sloan**

*Caleb Sloan's interest in architecture began in the third grade when challenged to sketch his dream home. He held summertime construction jobs, but this past summer he worked for the National Park Service's Historic American Buildings Survey. The project included documenting the historic Baggage and Dormitory building on Ellis Island to be archived in the Library of Congress for permanent record. A member of the WKU Army ROTC program, Caleb will be commissioned at his May graduation. He will serve in the National Guard while pursuing a full-time architecture career. Caleb enjoys fly fishing and photography, activities that have led to interesting travel destinations, and allow creative expression. His design philosophy reflects his love of the outdoors.*

## **Outstanding Senior in Computer Information Technology**

### **Terence Martin**

*Prior to beginning his studies in the Computer Information Technology program at Western Kentucky University, Terence Martin earned an AAS degree in Networking and Communication Systems from Pellissippi State Community College. He now works for US Cellular as an Operations Center Technician, performing overnight maintenance on billing and infrastructure systems.*

## **Outstanding Senior in Construction Management**

### **Caleb LaGrange**

*Caleb LaGrange is a senior construction management student from Oldham County, Kentucky. He is the construction supervisor for the WKU Habitat for Humanity Campus Chapter. Following graduation, Caleb will be working at Calhoun Construction Services in Louisville and is engaged to be married this summer.*

## **Outstanding Senior in Industrial Vocational Education**

### **Candace Kruse**

*Candace Kruse is a 2007 graduate of Hancock County High school, and earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College in 2011. She teaches at Hancock County High School where she sponsors the FBLA team, coordinates the school yearbook program, and is active with students and colleagues in extra-curricular events, sports, clubs, and the school's social media platforms. In the classroom, she helps students execute authentic projects with clients from the local community, encourages technology related careers, and helps students prepare for competitions and industry certifications.*



## Department of Biology

Dr. Bruce Schulte, Department Head

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### **Outstanding Biology Graduate Student**

#### **Meghan Parsley**

*A well-rounded student, Meghan Parsley's strengths encompass research, teaching, service, and outreach. Her conservation genetics research is cutting-edge and her approach has generated approximately 150 million sequence reads. She is investigating how the genomes of an endangered salamander species have changed in response to increases in temperature over the past three decades. Meghan is poised to make a vital contribution to our understanding of adaptive evolutionary change in wildlife populations in response to global climate change. As a teaching assistant, Meghan is described as competent, a diligent worker, and a role model for other teaching assistants. Meghan serves as President of the bioggraduate group and frequently volunteers her time to area schools and local community groups. Graduating in May with a Master's Degree in Biology, she is exploring PhD programs and biology-related job opportunities.*

### **Dillard/Hoyt Graduate Scholarship\***

### **Outstanding 1<sup>st</sup> Year Graduate Student**

#### **Cassandra Scalf**

*Cassandra Scalf is a hardworking student who "hit the ground running" her first year at WKU. She has already started interpreting and analyzing the first part of her thesis research, with the help of the KBRIN bioinformatics team, which involves transcriptomic responses of zebra finch to immune challenge (specifically, in spleen and hypothalamus). Cassandra developed a unique method to effectively separate the nucleated red blood cells from white blood cells in zebra finch, which will play an important role in the next part of her thesis. Her plan is to assess gene expression in red blood cells of zebra finch exposed to bacterial lipopolysaccharide, which could provide a major breakthrough for bird screening in evaluating responses to pathogens in the wild. This summer she will be assisting members of the Ashley lab on several projects in Alaska involving the circadian rhythm of arctic breeding songbirds.*

### **Outstanding Biology Teaching Assistant**

#### **Aiste Dobrovolskaite**

*Aiste Dobrovolskaite is a dedicated, enthusiastic teaching assistant who developed excellent presentation and review materials for her laboratory classes. Her students consistently give her high marks for teaching abilities, giving helpful feedback, and making sure the class understands a topic before moving forward. She engages her students, interacting in the lab classes to make sure they do experiments correctly and understand the concepts. Aiste also takes time to share her experience as a grad student and a researcher with students who are interested in pursuing various research opportunities at WKU. She will graduate with a Master of Science degree this spring and will continue her education this fall at the University of Central Florida's Biomedical Sciences PhD program.*



## **Outstanding Biology Undergraduate Student**

### **Shelby Wade**

*Shelby Wade is self-motivated, having written a manuscript based on scanning electron microscope (SEM) work performed at WKU using samples collected in the field in South Africa that is currently in press at the journal Mammalia, with all revisions complete. The remainder of her thesis is based on light microscopy techniques and will be a diagnostic key to hairs of African mammals for field use. She also analyzed prey selection by mega-predators to be used in developing offtake quotas for prey species on the reserve. She presented the SEM part of her work at WKU REACH Week last year and the rest at the Midwest Ecology and Evolution Conference in March 2016. Shelby has been accepted into several Doctor of Physical Therapy programs.*

## **Outstanding Biodiversity Center Student**

### **Jessica Johnson**

*Jessica Johnson is an excellent student and a hard worker who is a Biology and Environmental Health double-major, focusing her research on the effects of herbicide exposure on larval amphibians. She has found the active ingredient, glyphosate, has little effect on larvae, but the other ingredients in common herbicides can severely reduce growth and survival. In recognition of the quality of her research, Jessica was awarded a FUSE grant and was awarded the Gleason Award for excellence in undergraduate research by the Biology Department in 2016. Jessica presented her results at the WKU REACH conference, and in New Orleans at the Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists. She will defend her honors thesis this Spring, and ultimately intends to pursue future study in environmental science graduate programs.*

## **Outstanding Biotechnology Center Student**

### **Millicent Ronkainen**

*After completing the WKU Genome Discovery and Exploration course, Millicent Ronkainen did an excellent job of representing her classmates at WKU during the annual Science Education Alliance-Phage Hunters Advancing Genomic and Evolutionary Science Symposium that took place in June 2015 on the Janelia Farms research campus of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. She received a FUSE grant in 2016 to support her Honors thesis research on the molecular characterization of a mutant phage that overcomes a growth restriction imposed by certain E. coli host strains. Millie has earned accolades for the quality her research and presentation skills from the Kentucky Academy of Science and the Kentucky-Tennessee branch of the American Society for Microbiology. In addition, her contributions to the ongoing genome annotation efforts at WKU have been recognized by her co-authorship on the published genome of bacteriophage "Badger".*

## **Dr. Dan Skean Award for Outstanding Microbiology Student**

### **Pamela J. Tackett**

*Pamela Tackett is passionate about microbiology. Her enthusiasm for the subject and her desire to learn more are apparent through participation in the Microbiology Club, and her excellent performance in the Pathogenic Microbiology course. Pamela was often observed in the lab after class time, recording results and mastering techniques such as the gram stain. She always puts forth extra effort to ensure academic success and is dedicated to microbiology as a subject in her chosen career.*

## **Larry N. Gleason Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research**

### **Nathan Powers**

*Nathan Powers is a gifted student who is bright, hard-working, and driven. His research has demonstrated the involvement of a very important signaling pathway, the JAK/STAT pathway, in the development of air sac primordia (a structure analogous to the human lung) in fruit flies. Nathan is a student in the Biology Department's JUMP program, so he is simultaneously finishing both his final year of undergraduate education and his first year of master's coursework. Nathan intends to pursue a PhD upon completion of his Master's Degree at WKU.*

## **L.Y. Lancaster Award for Excellence in Pre-Medical Studies**

### **Katlyn Clark**

*An excellent and well-rounded student, Katlyn Clark is a member of the Alpha Epsilon Delta national honor society and is the current Microbiology Club secretary. She was selected as a College Rural Scholar by the University of Louisville School of Medicine Trover Campus and traveled to Nicaragua on a medical brigade as part of the WKU chapter of Global Bridges. Katlyn assisted Dr. Jarrett Johnson's research group in collecting field samples in California last summer. Katlyn will graduate with her bachelor's degree in May. She will begin her first year of medical school later in the summer, having been accepted at the University of Louisville School of Medicine. Katlyn plans to pursue a career in rural medicine.*

*\*Award made through the efforts of the College Heights Foundation.*



## Department of Chemistry

*Dr. Stuart Burris, Department Chair*

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### **WKU Freshman Chemistry Award**

#### **Joseph McIntyre**

*Joseph McIntyre began his course of study with an impressive score on the ACS Standardized exam given to incoming freshman chemistry students. Currently he is pursuing a degree in Biology with intentions of attending medical school. Joseph is involved in numerous extracurricular activities and is a fine example of a hardworking, gifted individual with excellent character.*

### **WKU Organic Chemistry Award**

#### **Erik Mikulcik**

*Erik J. Mikulcik is an outstanding Chemistry and Agriculture double-major student who plans on attending professional school after graduation from WKU. He demonstrates high talent in the study of organic chemistry with exceptional achievements on the national ACS standardized exam.*

### **ACS Division of Organic Chemistry Undergraduate Award in Organic Chemistry**

#### **Jason Thomas**

*Jason Thomas is dedicated toward the challenging study of organic chemistry with exceptional achievements, notably in organic chemistry research. Coming to WKU from Las Vegas, NV, he will be a first-generation college graduate. Jason plans to attend the University of California San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences to pursue a dual Pharm.D/Ph.D degree.*

### **WKU Analytical Chemistry Award**

#### **Konnor Jones**

*Konnor Jones is a JUMP (BS/MS) chemistry student who is in his fourth year of the five-year program. After completion of his Master in Chemistry degree, he plans to attend a doctoral program to study physical chemistry. He wishes to use his degrees in a career studying aerosol particles at a national lab.*

### **ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry**

#### **Nicholas Coffey**

*Nicholas Coffey has excelled in his studies here at WKU. He performed at the top of his class in analytical chemistry both in lecture and laboratory courses. He is pursuing a double major in Chemistry and Biology with plans to attend medical school. In addition to being an excellent student, Nicholas has also found time to be a member of WKU's varsity football team.*

## **WKU Physical Chemistry Award**

### **Hunter Sims**

*Hunter Sims' long-held interest with drug synthesis aspires his pursuit of a PhD in pharmaceutical sciences. In this year's physical chemistry course, he has consistently excelled in both theory and laboratory work. He believes the physical chemistry knowledge he has attained over the past two semesters is vital to his future career plans, since the pharmaceutical realm relies heavily on applications such as using computational methods to discover new drugs.*

## **ACS Division of Inorganic Chemistry Undergraduate**

### **Award in Inorganic Chemistry**

#### **Dana Biechele-Speziale**

*Dana Biechele-Speziale is an ACS-certified Chemistry and Chinese double-major who excels in Inorganic Chemistry classrooms. She conducted research on inorganic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and physics and presented her research results at local and regional conferences. She is currently working in Dr. Zhang's lab studying the solvent effects on the reactivities of different electron-rich and electron-poor substitute-derived manganese (V)-oxo corroles. Dana studies the environmental and agricultural advantages of Hugelkultur ("Hoogle culture") in Dr. Grove's lab. She aspires to attend law school and apply for a PhD in analytical chemistry, with plans of working in environmental or patent law.*

## **WKU Outstanding Senior in Chemical Education Award**

### **Hannah Gossett**

*Hannah Gossett is a senior with majors in Chemistry and Science/Math Education. She has worked diligently in the chemistry stockroom for the last two and a half years. Hannah is truly passionate about chemistry and being an educator. She not only has a desire to share her love of learning with her students but also wants to be a positive influence in their lives. Her drive and enthusiasm will continue to allow her to accomplish great things both in and outside the classroom. Hannah is unable to attend the awards ceremony because she is participating in an international student teaching program in Italy.*

## **Nell Skean Outstanding Laboratory Assistant Award\***

### **Mica Redlin**

*Mica Redlin is pursuing a degree in chemistry and plans to become a high school chemistry teacher. She has served as an outstanding teaching assistant in multiple sections of Chemistry 106 and Chemistry 121. She enjoys spending time with her two children, Devin and Avery, when not in school.*

## **American Institute of Chemists Outstanding Graduating Senior in Chemistry Award**

### **Courtney Cruse**

*Courtney Cruse is working with the USDA on identifying antibiotics in agricultural samples with subsequent correlation to bacterial antibiotic resistance. She is highly valued as an instructor of freshman chemistry major labs in our department. Courtney will attend graduate school and study analytical chemistry in the fall.*

## **Outstanding Chemistry Major Award**

### **Frankie Wallace**

*Frankie Wallace is an outstanding student in every academic arena. Under the mentorship of Dr. Matthew Nee, Frankie has worked since Spring 2014 to expand the applicability of Raman spectroscopy as an analytical tool for monitoring reactions. He served as the president of the WKU Chemistry Club, and has been involved in groups working with local schools to encourage student excitement for science. He intends to pursue a career in academic medicine and to apply the critical thinking skills he learned in the chemistry lab to problem solving in modern medicine.*

## **Nell Skean Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award\***

### **Ali Abdulrheem**

*As a graduate teaching assistant, Ali Abdulrheem guides his students to achieve excellence, while supporting his fellow graduate students, and sharing his passion for teaching chemistry. He is graduating with his master's degree, and plans to return to Kuwait as a teacher. He will do great things with his students.*

## **American Institute of Chemists Outstanding Graduate Student Award**

### **Haleh Jeddi**

*Haleh Jeddi has been an outstanding performer in the classroom, research, and teaching laboratory, and department service. She coauthored one peer-reviewed paper, received one research grant, several scholarships, and made numerous award-winning professional presentations. So far, Haleh has been accepted into PhD programs from three reputable institutions (Duke, Ohio State, and University of Georgia).*

## **Carl P. McNally Fellowship**

### **Ka Wai Kwong**

*Ka Wai (Gary) Kwong is a motivated, high-performer who shows great potential in conducting cutting-edge research. He worked hard to develop a deep understanding of his thesis research that focused on biomimetic oxidations by metalloporphyrin and metallocorrole complexes. Gary's effort resulted in six peer-reviewed publications and numerous presentations of his research. He also trained other students in the research lab and served as the lead Teaching Assistant in Organic Chemistry II labs. Gary defended his thesis and graduated in December, 2016 and currently lives in Hong Kong.*

*\*Award made through the efforts of the College Heights Foundation.*



## **Outstanding Graduate Student in Computer Science**

### **Yi Pan**

*Before coming to WKU, Yi Pan worked as a software engineer for 4 years in China. Desiring to continue learning the newest technology of computer science, he enrolled in the master's program at WKU. Yi has worked as a Graduate Assistant for 1.5 years and especially enjoys the many new friendships made in the department. He values the accumulated knowledge and experiences that have prepared him for future positions. After graduation, Yi plans to continue his work in software development.*

## **Outstanding Senior in Computer Science**

### **Connor Brooks**

*Connor Brooks has greatly enjoyed his experiences at WKU and learning from each of the professors in the Computer Science department. He is looking forward to pursuing a PhD in Computer Science at the University of Colorado, Boulder.*

## **Outstanding Junior in Computer Science**

### **Steven Owen Young**

*Steven Young is a junior from Bee Spring, Kentucky.*

## **Outstanding Sophomore in Computer Science**

### **Peter Harlan**

*Peter Harlan has been greatly impacted by WKU's community of remarkable teachers who challenge him and provide resources essential for success. He credits numerous visits with Professor Abumuhfouz to teaching him more about the field of computer science. Peter has worked in the WKU store, joined WKU ROTC and is currently an RA at Barnes Campbell residence hall. He is majoring in Computer Science with a minor in Applied Statistics.*

## **Outstanding ACM Student**

### **Trevor Brown**

*Trevor Brown is grateful to be honored with this award, and thanks God for the gift of his abilities and life. He credits his family for instilling values of faith and work ethic. Trevor appreciates Dr. Michael Galloway and other members of the Cloud Computing Research Lab and his colleagues at WKU's IT center for deep friendships that shared work experiences create. Trevor became involved in the ACM student organization during his freshman year, and is the current Vice President. In Fall 2016, he assisted with planning and hosting of WKU's first ever hackathon--Hack The Hill. Trevor is part of the JUMP program, and is on-track to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science in Spring 2018 and a Master's degree the following year. He aspires to work as a software engineer or system administrator in Bowling Green or his hometown of Russellville.*

## **Fruit of the Loom Computer Science Awards\*\***

### **Jing Peng (graduate student recipient)**

*Jing Peng is glad to be studying for a Master's Degree at WKU. He especially enjoys WKU because teachers here are patient and professional, and students are friendly and eager for knowledge. After graduation, Jing plans to work in program coding or IT.*

### **Jared Prince (undergraduate student recipient)**

*Jared Prince's experience at WKU has been very interesting and rewarding. All of his Computer Science professors have been impactful in creating his success at WKU, and Dr. Ziegler has been especially helpful in his role of Honors Thesis advisor. Jared will be returning to WKU in the Fall as a Computer Science Graduate Student, after which he hopes to enter a career in CS research.*

*\*\* Awards made through the generosity of the Fruit of the Loom Corporation.*



## Department of Engineering

*Dr. Stacy Wilson, Department Chair*

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### **Award for Academic Excellence in Civil Engineering**

*In recognition of outstanding academic achievements in the Civil Engineering program at Western Kentucky University.*

#### **Cory Smith**

*Cory Smith is a graduating senior in Civil Engineering. He is a captain on the Steel Bridge Team, President of the WKU Student Chapter of the American Society of Engineers, Vice President of the KY-Gamma chapter of Tau Beta Pi, and maintains an excellent GPA.*

### **John Russell Award in Civil Engineering**

*In recognition of the civil engineering student who best exemplifies John Russell's vision of students actively engaged in the practice of engineering at Western Kentucky University.*

#### **Megan E. Jones**

*Megan Jones is being awarded for her dedication to the Civil Engineering Concrete Canoe team. Out of the 25 years that WKU has participated in this event, Megan has played an important role for the past five. Beginning in the Spring of 2013 as an endurance paddler, Megan has shown great passion for the canoe team. For the 2016-2017 year, she took on the challenges of being the team captain, accomplishing goals that seemed impossible during the incorporation of Domestic Waste Sludge Powder into the concrete mix. Megan's time and effort has not gone unnoticed and we are honored to present her this award.*

#### **Jason Matthew Klein**

*Matthew Klein has been the driving force in the design and fabrication of the 20-foot steel bridge. Having well over 250 hours on the project, he is a vital member of the project. Matthew will be attending graduate school in the Fall of 2017 with a focus on geotechnical engineering.*

### **Cody Mahan Award for Academic Excellence in Electrical Engineering**

*In recognition of outstanding academic achievements in the Electrical Engineering program at Western Kentucky University.*

#### **Aaron Hall**

*Aaron Hall will graduate in May with a major in Electrical Engineering and minors in Mathematics, Construction Management, and Systems Engineering. Aaron will be moving to Lexington, KY and working as an Electrical and Building Engineer for N3D Consulting Group. He plans on becoming a licensed professional engineer and eventually taking over and expanding his father's electrical contracting company, Diamond Electric.*



## **John Russell Award in Electrical Engineering**

*In recognition of the electrical engineering student who best exemplifies John Russell's vision of students actively engaged in the practice of engineering at Western Kentucky University.*

### **Patrick Stewart**

*Patrick Stewart has been involved in Western Kentucky University's engineering program throughout his undergraduate studies. He has participated in the IEEE club and this spring competed in the IEEE SoutheastCon robotics competition. He has also served as an Engineering Ambassador for the past year. Patrick currently works at EMCC in the Center for Research and Development and will be pursuing a career in robotics after graduation.*

## **Most Outstanding Junior in Electrical Engineering**

*In recognition of exceptional accomplishments in the Electrical Engineering Program at Western Kentucky University.*

### **Thomas Everson**

*Thomas Everson plans to graduate in 2018 with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and a minor in Mathematics. He is currently a research assistant in the WKU Energy Systems Lab. After graduation he hopes to pursue a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering. Thomas was a recipient of the Most Outstanding Sophomore in Electrical Engineering award in 2016. He is also a past recipient of the Ogden Foundation scholarship, the Ogden Foundation Research scholarship, and the Logan Aluminum Scholarship.*

## **Most Outstanding Sophomore in Electrical Engineering**

*In recognition of exceptional accomplishments in the Electrical Engineering Program at Western Kentucky University.*

### **Ben Wright**

*Ben Wright is from Auburn, Kentucky and is continuing coursework in the area of Electrical Engineering.*

## **Evan McCasland Award in Mechanical Engineering**

*In recognition of significant professional growth and demonstrated accomplishments exemplifying the mission of the Mechanical Engineering program at Western Kentucky University.*

### **Nathan S. Lasley**

*At his start at WKU during the fall of 2010 through the Gatton Academy, Nathan struggled to find his place in STEM. In the fall of 2012 he started down the path of Mechanical Engineering. While on that path, Nathan has taken advantage of the opportunity of having so many impactful mentors available. In May 2014 he began an internship experience for Bridgestone that allowed him to work for 14 months putting his classroom studies on hold to gain hands on experience. Nathan began working in the Thermal Fluids Lab at WKU with Professor Robert Choate in the fall of 2015 where he also obtained a FUSE Grant to conduct research in building science and building information modeling. Nathan is now employed at both the Thermal Fluids Lab at WKU and New Mather Metals located in Franklin, KY where he began working as an intern in May 2016. He plans to continue working at New Mather Metals after graduation and will sit for the Fundamentals of Engineering exam in July of 2017.*

## **John Russell Award in Mechanical Engineering**

*In recognition of outstanding academic and professional achievements in the Mechanical Engineering program at Western Kentucky University.*

### **William D. White**

*William is a homeschool graduate and a member of Living Hope Baptist Church where he serves in welcome and missions ministries. He is a member of Tau Beta Pi and Arts Alive where he serves on the Siloam team and in summer youth camps. He enjoys piano, rock climbing, flying, and Jacobball. Will seeks to use his engineering and piloting skills in the mission field. Post-graduation work may include advanced engineering work or missionary flight school at LeTourneau University in Longview Texas.*



# Department of Geography & Geology

*Dr. David Keeling, Department Head*

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## **Outstanding Geoscience Graduate Student Award**

### **Dolly Na-Yemeh**

*A native of Ghana, Dolly Na-Yemeh worked as a graduate assistant and instructor while completing her M.S. Degree in Geosciences with a graduate certificate in GIS. After obtaining a B.Ed. degree in Social Scientists (with a specialization in Geography and Economics) at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana, Na-Yemeh taught for two years before earning a Master's Degree in Geography from the University of Cape Coast. Dolly did a number of scholarly presentations during her time at WKU. These include presentation the WKU Student Research Conference, the Association of American Geographers Annual Conference, and the Annual Conference of the Kentucky Academy of Sciences where she earned top honors for her research on Synoptic atmospheric conditions, land cover, and equivalent temperature variations in Kentucky. She plans to enroll in a PhD program starting Fall 2017. She intends to keep doing research, be an advocate for women's empowerment, and to work towards the alleviation of poverty in the world.*

## **L. Michael Trapasso Outstanding Meteorology Senior Award**

### **Isaac Bowers**

*Isaac Bowers is a WKU Honors College student from Aurora, IN, studying Meteorology and Geographic Information Science, and preparing to defend his Honors Capstone Experience/Thesis. As a freshman, Isaac participated in the Climate Change Challenge, a study abroad program across Northern Europe that surveyed the science of and reactions to climate change in European states. As a junior, he presented an oral paper at WKU's Student Research Conference and was selected to participate in Dr. Josh Durkee's annual Storm Chase Field Methods course. Isaac hopes that focusing his Honors Capstone Experience/Thesis on the Storm Chase as a Capstone Experience will provide the WKU Meteorology Program another recruitment tool. He is interested in careers in private forecasting and GIS applications in meteorological fields.*

## **Ronald R. Dilamarter Outstanding Geography Senior Award**

### **Rachel A. Kaiser**

*Rachel Kaiser is a senior JUMP student majoring in Geography and Environmental Studies, with a concentration in karst geoscience and water resources. She is a member of Phi Sigma Pi Honors fraternity, has interned at the Center for Ohio River Research and Mammoth Cave, works as a biology dept. lab prep, tests samples at HydroAnalytical water analysis lab, and has completed two conference presentations. Rachel studied abroad in Iceland during the summer of 2016 and plans to return this summer to complete an internship. Currently she is working on a FUSE research grant in partnership with the City of Bowling Green on Limestone Lake and water quality. Rachel has been the recipient of the Red Towel Scholarship, Geography program scholarship, The Dr. James Leslie Davis Scholarship, the Dr. Woodall and Avo Taylor Scholarship, the Student Government Association Study Abroad Scholarship, the World Topper Scholarship, and has earned WKU President's List distinction. She will continue to bring her positive, fearless, confident nature to WKU as a Geoscience graduate student.*

## **Syed Reza Ahsan Outstanding GIS Senior Award**

### **Kate Love**

*A native of Madisonville, KY, Kate Love is majoring in Geography and Environmental Studies while obtaining a minor and certificate in Geographic Information Systems. She has been a Fellow at Project Grow for two years and a member of the Horticulture Club. Kate has worked as a GIS Lab Assistant and a Horticulture Intern at the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest. She received a FUSE grant to complete research assessing the biological and economic impact of Emerald Ash Borers at the Baker Arboretum using GIS. Kate will combine her education in Environmental Studies and GES with her experiences in Horticulture in her career.*

## **Judson Roy Griffin Outstanding Geology Senior Award**

### **Bonnie McCallister**

*Bonnie McCallister is a nontraditional student who lives in Owensboro, KY. She is an exceptionally hard worker who found a way to balance her full-time schedule as a geology major with her life in Owensboro as a mother and business owner. She has contributed significantly to laboratory instruction in the Geology program and is well-liked and respected by the G&G faculty and staff. She is looking forward to a Summer 2017 field experience in Iceland and to working after graduation in the environmental sector with a focus on sustainability issues.*



## Department of Mathematics

*Dr. Bruce Kessler, Department Head*

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### Outstanding Graduate Student Award

*Awarded to a graduating Master of Science degree student*

#### **Aykut Arslan**

*Under the guidance of advisor Dr. Ferhan Atici, Aykut Arslan first gained research experience at WKU, and has been encouraged by Dr. Atici on other projects. These research experiences distinguished Aykut's PhD applications, and led to several offers of Fellowship and Teaching Assistantship positions from highly competitive universities. Aykut plans to attend the University of Southern California to pursue a PhD in Mathematics.*

### Henry M. and Zula G. Yarbrough Award in Mathematics\*

*Awarded to an outstanding graduating mathematics major*

#### **Jacob S. Menix**

*Jacob Menix has loved problem-solving since he was young. His coursework in the Mathematics Department has cultivated this love for problem solving into a deeper interest in mathematics and mathematics research. Jacob plans to continue his education in a PhD program and aspires to become a university professor.*

### Pauline Lowman Memorial Secondary Education Award\*

*Awarded to an outstanding graduating secondary education mathematics major*

#### **Andrea M. Jenkins**

*Andrea Jenkins planned on pursuing a degree in Middle Grades Mathematics, but through the encouragement of family, friends, and Math Department mentors, will graduate as a Mathematics major. She credits Dr. Hope Marchionda as the example of the type of teacher she desires to become. Andrea will begin work on a Master's Degree in math along with Education and Administration. She is not able to attend the ceremony because she is participating in a study abroad program.*

### Outstanding Middle Grades Education Award in Mathematics

*Awarded to an outstanding graduating middle grades mathematics education major*

#### **Christine Burkeen**

*Christine Burkeen's list of amazing teachers through her school years serves as an encouragement to become a teacher herself. She has been in the Big Red Marching Band color guard and part of the SKyTeach Program. After graduating in May, Christine would like to get a teaching job in the Warren County area and will continue her education in a Master's program.*

## **Hugh F. and Katherine A. Johnson Award in Mathematics\***

*Awarded to an outstanding third-year mathematics major*

### **Andrew Davis**

*Andrew Davis is an alum of the Gatton Academy and chose to continue his collegiate education at WKU. He thanks Dr. Bruce Kessler for opportunities to participate in research and for inspiring him to pursue a research career in higher education. Andrew plans to attain a PhD in mathematics and teach at the university level while performing research.*

## **The Pi Mu Epsilon Award**

*Awarded to an outstanding second-year mathematics major*

### **Byron Grant**

*Byron Grant is interested in a career in medical physics, with an emphasis on radiation therapies. He was introduced to this field by his peers in the WKU Mathematics Department. Byron will be working alongside medical physicists at a patient clinic during his summer fellowship.*

## **The Robert C. Bueker Mathematics Award\***

*Awarded to an outstanding first-year mathematics major*

### **Evan Stack**

*Evan Stack is completing his first year at WKU with plans to become a high school math teacher and basketball coach. He is a manager of the WKU Men's Basketball team, and has always been good at math. Evan believes that although math may be difficult, it is a thing of beauty when you work hard to get the right answers!*

## **Fruit of the Loom Mathematics Awards\*\***

*Awarded to exceptional graduate and undergraduate mathematics majors*

### **Van Anh Pham** (graduate student recipient)

*Van Anh Pham is a graduate student pursuing a Master's Degree in Mathematics.*

### **Carson Sawyer Price** (undergraduate student recipient)

*Carson began classes as a physics major, but quickly found a home in the mathematics department due to the engaging and friendly faculty. He is a member of the Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI) fraternity, and plans to obtain a PhD in mathematics and pursue a career in academics teaching.*

*\*Award made through the efforts of the College Heights Foundation*

*\*\*Awards made through the generosity of the Fruit of the Loom Corporation*



# Department of Physics & Astronomy

*Dr. Michael Carini, Department Chair*

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## **Dr. George V. and Sadie Skiles Page Award for Excellence in Scholarship\***

*Awarded to the graduating physics major with the highest academic standing.*

### **Andrew Scott McGuffey**

*Andrew McGuffey, a senior physics major with a mathematics minor, receives the Page Award based upon his outstanding academic record. In addition, Andrew volunteers as an intern for the Bowling Green Medical Center Cancer Treatment Center, where he works on projects including a study of the optimization of planning treatment volume for patients with lung cancer. He received a fellowship in the summer of 2016 from the American Association of Physics in Medicine, which provided support for him to study at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Additionally, Andrew has been active as a physics tutor, then a Learning Assistant in the University Physics Laboratory, and as a student instructor in the Biophysics Laboratory. Andrew will continue his studies next year at Louisiana State University in the field of Medical Physics.*

### **Stefan Matthias Stryker**

*Stefan Stryker, a senior Physics major with mathematics minor, receives the Page Award based upon his outstanding academic record as a WKU student. Stefan participates in research and clinical activities like volunteering as an intern at the Bowling Green Medical Center Cancer Treatment Center where he used 3D printing and CT scans to create prints of patient nose regions to build boluses on for radiation treatment. He has spent two summers as an intern at the University of Kentucky, first at the Health Science Research Lab and then at the Department of Radiation Medicine. In the summer of 2016 he received a fellowship from the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, which provided support for study at the Yale School of Medicine. He has worked as a Physics Tutor and as a student instructor in the Biophysics Lab. Stefan will continue his studies next year as he pursues a graduate degree in Medical Physics.*

## **Dr. Randall Harper Award for Outstanding Research in Physics and Astronomy\***

*Awarded to the junior or senior student with research exhibiting significance, effort, originality, and creativity.*

### **Seth William Harper**

*Seth Harper, a senior with majors in physics and mathematics, works with Dr. Vladimir Dobrokhotoov as an undergraduate research assistant at the WKU Applied Physics Institute. Seth received this award for his work on detecting Hydrogen Sulfide in natural gas, which is important in the area of clean energy provided by fuel cells. Seth worked to develop a safe chamber to mix known concentrations of Hydrogen Sulfide gas and developed a method for calibrating this system. He continues to work at the Applied Physics Institute on this and other projects and plans to pursue a graduate degree in Aerospace Engineering after graduating from WKU.*

## **Dr. Douglas Humphrey Award for Outstanding Service \***

*Awarded to the junior or senior student with a record of service within the department and to science outreach to the community.*

### **Trason Wayne Carter**

*Trason Carter, a senior with majors in Physics and Mechanical Engineering, receives the Doug Humphrey service award because of his longstanding good citizenship in supporting a range of faculty and student activities in the department. Trason presently serves a president of the WKU Chapter of the Society of Physics Student, where he has helped to build the membership and camaraderie of the organization by promoting and supporting physics among the student body. Trason is a regular and willing volunteer assisting the department outreach mission with events such as Physics Olympics and the Science Olympiad. He is presently using his unique background in both physics and mechanical engineering to assist Dr. Steven Gibson with a project to create a radio telescope using a large satellite dish.*

*\* Awards made through the efforts of the College Heights Foundation.*





# Department of Psychological Sciences

*Dr. Kelly Madole, Department Chair*

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## **Academic Achievement Award**

*For Excellence in Academic Work*

### **Catherine M. Luna**

*Catherine Luna is a senior honors student double majoring in Psychological Sciences and Music. She is also a JUMP student in the first year of her Master's in Psychological Sciences. Catherine has been doing research for two years in the Cognition Laboratory under the mentorship of Dr. Sharon Mutter. She is especially interested in the role of music in cognitive development. Catherine has presented research at Posters-At-The-Capitol Conference in Frankfort, KY and the WKU REACH Conference. In addition to her psychology studies, Catherine was a tutor at the Kelly Autism Program and is currently a violist in the University Symphony. Catherine plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in May, and continue with master's work in Psychological Sciences at WKU.*

## **Undergraduate Service Award**

### **Ava K. Fergerson**

*Ava Fergerson is a junior majoring in Psychological Sciences with a minor in Gender and Women's Studies. Her research interests include trauma and interpersonal violence, as well as emotion dysregulation. She aspires to obtain a PhD in Clinical Psychology to become a professor of Psychological Science.*

## **Excellence in Undergraduate Research**

### **Catherine J. Dowell**

*Catherine Dowell is a senior JUMP student, majoring in Psychological Sciences and minoring in Biology. She has done research under the mentorship of Dr. Farley Norman since the spring of 2015. She is especially interested in how aging affects people's perception of 3D shape. Catherine has presented at meetings of the Vision Sciences Society and at WKU's REACH Conference. She is a coauthor of four articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. In addition to research, Catherine enjoys volunteering at the Bowling Green Humane Society. She plans to graduate in May, and continue at WKU to complete her Master's Degree, then enter a doctoral program*

## **Outstanding Senior**

### **Rilee P. Mathews**

*Rilee Mathews is a JUMP student and a senior majoring in Psychological Sciences with a minor in gerontology. She has been doing research in cognition for 3 years, working under the mentorship of Dr. Shake for 2 years. She is especially interested in studying cognitive aging. Last summer, Rilee was the recipient of the KY NSF ESPCOR Research Scholars Program Grant. This summer, she will be presenting at the IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics. In addition to research, she has been a pharmacy technician for 4 years. Rilee will graduate this semester and continue in the Psychological Sciences Master's Program next semester.*

### **Jasmine R. Ernst**

*Jasmine Ernst is a Psychological Sciences JUMP student with a concentration in developmental science. She has been doing research in the social development laboratory for the past four years with her faculty mentor, Dr. Elizabeth Lemerise. Her research interests include promotion of positive teacher-child interactions and language development in low-income children. Jasmine has presented at the Society for Research in Human Development, the Society for Research in Child Development, and at WKU's REACH Conference.*

## **Outstanding Junior**

### **Jordan A. Gregory**

*Jordan Gregory is a junior in the Psychological Sciences program and an Honors student. She has worked with Dr. Elizabeth Lemerise in the Social Development Lab for 2 years as a Research Assistant. Through this lab, she has presented her work at 2 professional conferences, including the Society for Research in Child Development and the Society for Research in Human Development. In addition, Jordan serves as a student ambassador for the Psychological Sciences department and is currently the Fundraising Executive for an on-campus group which serves young refugees. Over the summer, she worked with adolescents in a Psychiatric Treatment Facility. Next semester Jordan will enter the JUMP program and begin Masters classes, ultimately gaining a joint BS/MS degree in 5 years. After graduation, Jordan hopes to go on to a Clinical Psychology PhD program.*

## **Outstanding Graduate Student Industrial Organizational Concentration**

### **Andrew W. Rowland**

*Andrew Rowland entered the WKU IO Psychology graduate program after earning bachelor's degrees in both psychology and human resources management from Auburn University. He successfully defended his thesis, *The Validation of a Comprehensive Model of Professionalism*, in November 2016. Andrew has served as a Research Methods Lab Instructor and as a Research Assistant on a variety of applied research projects, including Team leader on a service project for the WKU Department of Engineering developing job descriptions and performance management tools for 5 staff positions. He is the author or co-author on 9 technical reports documenting applied research activities. Andrew completed an internship with Louisville Metro Government Civil Service Division where we worked with analysts and the Chief Examiner to develop and validate promotional exams for Louisville Metro Police Officers. Andrew is a member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the Association for Psychological Sciences, and the Society for Human Resource Management. Andrew is in the process of interviewing for jobs in personnel selection, test development and validation, and human resource management.*

## **Outstanding Graduate Student Psychological Science Concentration**

### **Sherry E. Woods**

*Sherry Woods completed her bachelor's degree at Pepperdine University and is now a second-year graduate student in the Psychological Sciences department with a concentration in clinical psychology. Under the mentorship of Dr. Amy Brausch, her research has focused primarily on nonsuicidal self-injury, particularly in adolescent populations, and has resulted in multiple presentations at national and international conferences as well as multiple articles currently under review. This fall, Sherry will be entering the clinical psychology doctoral program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; in the future, she plans to work in academia as a professor and researcher.*

# 2017 Outstanding Graduate Student Ogden College of Science and Engineering

## **Aykut Arslan, Department of Mathematics**

*Aykut Arslan received his undergraduate degree in mathematics from Middle East Technical University, Ankara-Turkey and began the master's program at WKU in the Fall of 2015 to work with Dr. Ferhan Atici. He published his first paper in the mathematical journal of "Applied Analysis and Discrete Mathematics." In summer 2016, he submitted two more manuscripts in the area of his thesis research. Aykut also submitted three manuscripts to the Mathematics Journal in Geometric Topology.*

## **Honorable Mention**

### **Meghan Parsley, Department of Biology**

*Meghan Parsley's strengths encompass research, teaching, service, and outreach. She is poised to make a vital contribution to our understanding of adaptive evolutionary change in wildlife populations in response to global climate change. As a teaching assistant, Meghan is described as competent, a diligent, worker, and a role model for other teaching assistants. Meghan serves as President of the biograduate group and frequently volunteers her time to area schools and local community groups.*

## 2017 Ogden College Faculty Awards

### *Teaching*

**Dr. Nancy Rice (Biology)**

### *Research/Creativity*

**Dr. Amy Brausch (Psychological Sciences)**

### *Public Service*

**Dr. Paul Woosley (Agriculture)**

### *Student Advisement*

**Dr. Jason Polk (Geography & Geology)**

## *The History of Ogden College*



Ogden College was created pursuant to the will of Robert W. Ogden (April 1, 1815-November 10, 1873,) a wealthy farmer and businessman who bequeathed the bulk of his estate for the establishment of an endowed school in Bowling Green to provide free education to young men of Warren County. His executors were designated regents, with power to appoint their successors as well as a Board of Trustees.

Ogden College opened on September 3, 1877, and was formally chartered on March 8, 1878. Its main building was Ogden Hall, formerly the Thomas C. Calvert house and site of the defunct Warren College. In 1922, a donation by C. Perry Snell made possible the construction of another classroom building, dedicated in 1924 as Snell Hall.

Ogden College offered both college and preparatory work, although college-level work was suspended from 1902 to 1904 due to declining enrollment. Ogden's largest enrollment was 162 in 1918. Endowment income, however, became increasingly inadequate to cover expenses, and in 1925, the college failed to achieve the accreditation necessary to allow it to compete with institutions like Western Kentucky State Normal and Teachers College.

On November 19, 1927, Ogden's governing board signed a merger agreement with Western Kentucky State Teachers College, effective January 2, 1928. The Ogden campus was leased to Western and the Ogden name was perpetuated in Western's Ogden Department of Science (now the Ogden College of Science & Engineering.) The endowment was significantly enlarged in 1939 by a bequest under the will of R. C. P. Thomas and continues to be used to provide scholarships and awards to Western students.

*Ogden College of Science and Engineering*

*Western Kentucky University*

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