

Inclusion advocate from Dow to keynote regional MLK event

An advocate for creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace globally will serve as the keynote speaker during the ninth annual Great Lakes Bay Regional Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at Saginaw Valley State University.

Karen S. Carter, the chief inclusion officer for The Dow Chemical Company, will deliver her address Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m. in the Malcolm Field Theatre for Performing Arts. The event is free and open to the public.

As Dow's first chief inclusion officer, Carter is tasked with driving Dow into the forefront of global industries that integrate diversity and inclusion as a key element of the company's growth strategy.

Carter has more than 20

years of experience with Dow. She previously held the position of North America commercial vice president of Dow packaging and specialty plastics. In that role, Carter was a member of the global business leadership team responsible for the profits of a division of Dow worth more than \$18.4 billion in sales. She was responsible for developing and driving business strategy.

Active in a number of community-minded organizations, Carter is a member of the Board of Directors for Kids' Meals, a Houston-based nonprofit organization that delivers free, healthy meals to children in need. She also remains an active member of The Links, Inc., a nonprofit that serves

the Houston community by providing educational, civic and intercultural activities.

For her innovative leadership contributions, Carter was profiled by the website fortyover40.com on its Forty Women to Watch Over 40 list in 2014. Her work has been published in the Journal of the American Health Information Management Association and featured in The Huffington Post, as well as MORE Magazine.

Carter completed a bachelor's degree in marketing at Howard University and a master's degree in international business at DePaul University.

She joins a prestigious list of keynote speakers featured during the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Celebration at



Karen S. Carter

SVSU, most recently former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder in 2017.

In addition to Carter's keynote address, the program will include the presentation of regional scholarship awards by the Bay Area, Midland Area and Saginaw community foundations to high school seniors who have embodied Martin Luther King's ideals.

Officials also will announce the winners of the Drum Major Award at the event, which recognizes people whose community involvement in the Great Lakes Bay Region serves to advance King's vision.

The event is sponsored in part by Dow; the Bay Area, Midland Area and Saginaw County chambers of commerce; the Bay Area, Midland Area and Saginaw community foundations; local chapters of the NAACP; Delta College; SVSU and many others. A full list of sponsors is available online at www.svsu.edu/mlk.

For more information about the event, please contact SVSU's Office of Diversity Programs at ext. 4068.



At the conclusion of his keynote address to graduates, Rob Vallentine composed a "selfie" with Provost Deborah Huntley during Commencement exercises Friday and Saturday, Dec. 15-16. Vallentine, who serves as both the director of Global Citizenship for Dow as well as president and executive director of The Dow Chemical Company Foundation, emphasized to the graduates the importance of identifying one's purpose in life. He noted that their experiences at SVSU and after graduation will help define those causes that are important to them. Vallentine completed a bachelor's degree in marketing at Southeast Missouri State University and a Master of Business Administration at Drake University.

Jay Scott

Associate Professor of Biology

Jay Scott graduated from SVSU in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in biology and an ambition to pursue a career as an educator. But the goal he had in mind was blunted by the thought that the chances of accomplishing it were unlikely.

"I knew I wanted to work here at SVSU," the Ontario native said, "but I never thought I would have the opportunity to do so."

For his postgraduate studies, Scott completed a Ph.D. at Queens University in Canada and finished postdoctoral fellowships at the University of New Mexico and the University of Iowa.

Then, defying his own pessimism, Scott saw a job opening at his alma mater. He returned to SVSU in 2012, this time as a member of its faculty. "There was an emotional connection to this place, but I also really appreciated the kinds of opportunities we offered here," he said. "Those opportunities benefited me when I was a student, and I wanted to provide those opportunities for other students."

As an undergraduate, Scott said the experience offered by SVSU in laboratories and in research projects gave him an advantage over his peers at the postgrad level. As a student lab technician, he worked closely with faculty members — many who now are his colleagues — on research. The résumé boosted his credibility as a postgrad student. "A school can see your transcript and GPA, but when you're going into the biomedical sciences like I was, they really appreciate it when you have been in an environment like this," he said. "That helped me a lot."

Now Scott enjoys returning the favor for his students. He said it's a thrill to watch them grow as scientists, through both success

and failure. "You have to have the freedom to make mistakes," Scott said. "How you respond to those mistakes is important to your development as a student. I experienced that when I was in their shoes."

Scott plans to expose his students to such experiences by enlisting their help in his latest research project, which recently received an injection of funding. In December, he was one of two educators to receive the Braun Fellowship, which supports his research with \$37,500 over the next three years.

Scott's research will involve examining metabolic syndrome, characterized by an increase in body weight, fat accumulation, inflammation, and altered metabolism. These symptoms have proven to lead to an increased risk of diabetes, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

With the help of a group of student research assistants, Scott will examine the signs of metabolic syndrome induced by diets with varying macronutrient ratios and work to determine if diet-related changes in physiology are modified by the exposure to environmental contaminants. He hopes the study expands science's understanding of how dietary components lead to disease states, and helps to identify whether environmental contaminants in food are independent risk factors for disease.

Scott eventually hopes to author a paper publicized in an academic journal. Along the way, he also plans to present — along with his students — on their findings at conferences. The experience, he hopes, will inspire his students in the way he was inspired during his undergraduate years.



Brady Crandall

Web Developer • December Staff Member of the Month

Brady Crandall is hard at work, allowing himself little time for interruption. "I haven't even been to the new Panda Express yet," he said of the recently-opened restaurant within walking distance of the Information Technology Services web developer's office tucked away inside SVSU's south campus complex. He is part of a team dedicated to developing and expanding the university's web presence. It's a hefty task considering that website content is constantly evolving to meet the changing demands of technology and society. "There's a lot of work to be done," he said.

Crandall said he "sort of fell into" his career. In high school, he realized his penchant for technology, and built a desktop computer for gaming purposes "just for the fun of it." After graduating from Frankenmuth High School in 2010, he enrolled at SVSU unsure of what degree to pursue. "I knew I wanted to work with and help people," he said.

In 2012, he began working as a student employee in the Information Technology Support Center, where he largely helped with computer hardware issues. At about this time, he decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in computer science. "My undergraduate experience was a blast," Crandall said. "I met a lot of great people."

The small, friendly environment at SVSU suited Crandall, and when he was offered a full-time job with Information Technology Services a few months before he graduated in 2016, he accepted gladly. While his job involves working in web environments, the ever-changing functionality of the Internet and evolving demands of its consumers means Crandall must keep up-to-speed with his

industry's necessary skill sets. And the hodge podge of academic practices at the university means he must use that skill set to develop applications that appeal to users with different interests and understandings. "I get to tackle a variety of issues," he said. "I work with interesting people, helping them with their web needs."

Sometimes, his job responsibilities are meant more for universal purposes. Among Crandall's most substantial recent projects was his work in developing a program that allows designated SVSU users to send mass emails across campus. The email blast system replaced an older, less-functional program.

The job involved entering names and emails, then separating those emails into categories that allow users to send messages to specific groups on campus. For instance, users can send emails to all students in general, or break down that category further by emailing registered students or admitted students. The web program also allows users to email faculty, staff, administrators as well as smaller subset groups for each.

"Creating the mail list was a real challenge," Crandall said. "We wanted to create something that would stand on its own. It was a lot of work."

Crandall also was heavily involved in developing a calculation program on the website that allows prospective students to calculate their total costs — including tuition and fees — before enrolling in classes. He collaborates with faculty, staff and students largely on the phone or email from his shared office space in the south campus complex, an especially distant walk from the campus Panda Express during the winter months.



SVSU professors to use Braun Fellowship to study signs of metabolic syndrome, managing patient flow in health care

Jay Scott, associate professor of biology, and Danilo Sirias, professor of management, have been awarded SVSU's Braun Fellowship.

Scott intends to continue investigating the influence of dietary fats, carbohydrates and contaminants on health and disease. Sirias plans to produce case studies regarding the management of patient flow in health care environments.

Each will receive research support grants totaling up to \$37,500 over the next three years to further their scholarly and professional activities. Funds may be used for research expenses, equipment, travel and/or other related support.

Scott has studied metabolic syndrome, characterized by an increase in body weight, fat accumulation, inflammation, and altered metabolism. These symptoms have proven to lead to an increased risk of diabetes, stroke, and cardiovascular disease.

Through his latest research, Scott plans to examine the signs of metabolic syndrome induced by diets with varying macronutrient ratios and work to determine if diet-related changes in physiology are modified by the exposure to environmental contaminants. This study should increase understanding of how dietary components lead to disease states, and help to identify whether environmental contaminants in food are independent risk factors for disease.

Through other grant-supported research, Scott has previously investigated related topics such as cardiovascular disease. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the cardiology division of the Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa. An active researcher, Scott has written 12 scholarly articles and given 19 invited scientific presentations.

Scott joined the SVSU biology faculty in 2012. He completed his bachelor's degree at SVSU, where he played on the baseball

team. A native of Ontario, Scott completed his Ph.D. at Queen's University.

As a result of his research, Sirias plans to publish three teaching case studies on the topic of managing patient flow in different health care environments. The three areas he will examine are primary or specialist care, admitted patients, and operating rooms. Sirias will outline the most common difficulties associated with each environment, as well as offering strategies to address the problems detailed throughout the case studies and suggestions for how the material should be taught.

Sirias has prior research experience on the topic. In 2015, he presented "A Proposed Framework to Determine Chokepoints Preventing Better Patient Flow in Emergency Departments," to the International Academy of Business and Public Administration Disciplines. Sirias has received six prior grants -- four of which were through SVSU -- in order to fund research related to labor force, coordination in health care systems, virtual education and management techniques.

Sirias joined the SVSU management faculty in 2001. He completed his bachelor's degree in industrial engineering at the National University of Engineering in Nicaragua. Sirias then completed a master's degree and a Ph.D. from the University of Memphis.

Established in 2005, the Braun Fellowship program was created through a \$1.5 million endowment from the Saginaw-based Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation. Administered by the Saginaw Community Foundation, the program's purpose is to recognize the exceptional accomplishments and potential of select SVSU faculty and staff. It is named in honor of Ruth Braun and her late husband, Ted.

Professional Profile

- **Julie Commerford**, visiting assistant professor of geography, published a paper titled "Regional variation in Holocene climate quantified from pollen in the Great Plains of North America" in the *International Journal of Climatology*.

- **Monika Dix**, associate professor of modern foreign languages, published a paper titled "Textuality and its Material Display in the *Taime-dera jikkai-zu byobu*" in *Proceedings of the Association of Japanese Literary Studies (PAJLS)*, vol. 18, summer 2017.

- **Sara Beth Keough**, professor of geography, and **Scott M. Youngstedt**, professor of anthropology, presented a paper titled "Sachet Water in Niamey, Niger: Considering Value in the Commodity Chain" at the 60th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, November 2017 in Chicago.

- **Mike Major**, director of Career Services, recently presented a paper titled "Résumé Research Questions through the Seven Philosophical Foundations of Communication," at the 103rd Annual Convention of the National Communication Association in Dallas. The paper was recognized by the Applied Communication Division with the Top Student Paper Award.

New Cardinals

- **Angela Bublitz**, Graphics Center manager, announced the birth of a son, Evan Matthew Bublitz (7 lbs., 13 oz., 19 in.), Nov. 21.

- **Kylie Jaber**, associate professor of economics, and **Mazen Jaber**, associate professor of marketing, announced the birth of a daughter, Hannah Olivia Jaber (6 lbs., 11.5 oz., 19.5 in.), Oct. 4.

Condolences

- To **Patricia Calahan**, associate professor of teacher education, whose mother passed away Nov. 22.

- To **Luke Voegel**, assistant professor of management, whose father, David Berl Williams, passed away Nov. 28, 2016.

The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU. University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

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