Planetarium director honored
By Kathy Quirk, University Relations

Jean Creighton has loved astronomy since she began watching the night skies as a child growing up in Greece.

For the past 10 years, she’s been sharing the thrill of learning about stars, planets and other heavenly bodies with thousands of visitors as the director of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s Manfred Olson Planetarium.

And on June 9, the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents recognized her efforts with the 2017 Regents Academic Staff Excellence Award during its meeting in Milwaukee.

“It is very exciting to get recognized at a system level,” Creighton said.

As director of the planetarium for the past 10 years, Creighton has increased attendance to more than 10,000 annually. Last year, 13,000 visitors came to the planetarium’s school and group programs and regular shows including AstroBreaks, Friday Night Shows, Stargazing and other special events, such as watching a solar eclipse (Aug. 21). She has also developed new programs in collaboration with other departments, and community organizations. Last year alone, she gave 350 presentations.

And, in 2014, Creighton was one of 24 educators chosen to fly on NASA’s largest moving observatory at 45,000 feet, the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA).

She sees her role as an educator and communicator about science and astronomy.

“I’m really excited to share my knowledge with people, but I think a lot about how to deliver the content so it’s understandable and exciting at the same time, without dumbing it down. I think there’s a very fine balance in giving people the elegance of the idea without bogging them down with details,” Creighton said.

Beyond introducing thousands of young students to astronomy, Creighton’s work has benefited the department and the university in a number of ways, said Prasenjit Guptasarma, chair of the Physics Department.

“Just to have a planetarium on campus that is run by a PhD astrophysicist makes a difference,” Guptasarma said. “She can answer high-level questions from knowledgeable adults about current exploration and discovery in the field.”

Continued on page 10
UWM Seismology Center contributes to national earthquake research

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

On June 14 at 2 a.m. central time, a 6.9-magnitude earthquake rocked the small Central American country of Guatemala. Over 2,700 miles away, the UWM Seismology Center registered the shaking.

The Seismology Center is literally a hidden gem on the UWM campus, tucked away in a vault beneath Lapham Hall. Surrounded by thick layers of concrete to isolate the sensitive equipment from the traffic of a bustling city, the Center boasts a seismometer sensitive enough to detect vibrations on the order of microns – movements in the earth thinner than a sheet of paper. The equipment constantly feeds data that show, 24/7, exactly what is going on beneath our feet.

Detecting seismic waves

The Center marks its 45th year on the UWM campus this fall. For the past 16 years, it’s been Brett Ketter’s domain. A senior information processing consultant in the Geosciences Department, and a UWM Geosciences alum, Ketter monitors and maintains the Center’s equipment, recording each time an earthquake occurs. Depending on its strength, he’s picked up quakes from the other side of the world.

“I think the record is about 11,999 miles away. So literally, the absolutely opposite end of the world from where we are,” Ketter said.

The seismic vault beneath Lapham Hall is cool and quiet. In its center stands a huge concrete pillar that descends 25 feet beneath the ground. Scattered around are relics of seismology past – analog machines that use old-fashioned ink and paper to record vibrations in the earth. Those have been made obsolete by digital detectors that relay second-by-second data to Ketter’s computer.

The digital reader that rests atop the pillar is also connected to a GPS unit that uses satellite data to constantly check the time. By measuring how quickly vibrations are traveling through the earth, Ketter can determine where an earthquake originated and how strong it was.
Alumna lands feminist librarian dream job

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world with almost 900 miles of shelving and more than 33 million books in 460 different languages.

Working there has been Meg Metcalf’s dream job ever since she was 17 and working the reference desk at a Border’s Bookstore near her home in southeastern Wisconsin. When the time came, she began looking at colleges that had a strong Library and Information Science program that would still allow her to take interdisciplinary classes.

She found UWM, along with the Master of Arts in Women’s and Gender Studies/Master of Library Science coordinated degree program. The combined graduate degree draws elements of each discipline to teach students how to manage information and technology related to Women’s and Gender Studies.

“I think Women’s Studies and Library Studies go together so well,” Metcalf said. “I’ve always been a feminist … and Women’s Studies is interdisciplinary. You can do so much with it.”

In fact, it was the Women’s Studies portion of her degree that landed Metcalf at the Library of Congress. She completed both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in 2012 and 2015, respectively, at UWM, and applied with the Library of Congress on a whim. She was stunned when they called with a job offer.

“They had just lost their Women’s History specialist, so having a Women’s Studies degree put me ahead of the pack,” Metcalf said.

Officially, Metcalf is a reference librarian in the Main Reading Room and the Library’s Women’s, Gender, and LGBTQ+ Studies Specialist and Recommending Officer. It’s a long title to match the long list of her job duties – but she takes pleasure in each one.

She’s not only responsible for assisting researchers and acquiring new materials for her section, but Metcalf is also tasked with creating displays and highlighting the pieces of the Library’s Collection that deal with her area of expertise. On any given day she might arrange for a writer to give a presentation at the Library, or she might give a lecture on early feminist periodicals. This year she helped plan the Library’s display to recognize Pride month in June and also hosted an LGBTQ History workshop. In January, she was elected chair of the LC-GLOBE, the Library of Congress staff group for LGBTQ+ employees and allies.

Her favorite exhibit that she has worked on, though, brought women’s history to life in an extraordinary way.

“I was asked to put together for a congressional event a display of Rosie the Riveter and working women of World War II,” Metcalf said. “They did an Honor Flight. All of these remaining Rosie the Riveters, women who worked in war production, came in. … A lot of them were in wheelchairs. They were getting their picture taken and all coming up to my display and talking about it, saying ‘I remember this, and I remember that!’ That was an early exhibit of mine, and it was pretty special.”

The job isn’t without its frustrations. The federal government tends to move at one pace – slowly – so it can take some time for Metcalf to make changes to her department or get new programs approved. There’s also the added challenge of learning about all the materials in her section. There are thousands of them, and after two years on the job, Metcalf is still discovering new books, ephemera, and other media tucked in the stacks. She also establishes new collections, and she worked this past year to create a zine collection at the Library. Metcalf did an exhibit on LGBTQIA+ Zines when she worked as an intern at the UWM Libraries, which was inspired by her time with the Queer Zine Archive Project in Milwaukee.

But, she added, exploring the collection is a pleasure. It’s exactly what she’s wanted to do ever since working behind the Border’s Bookstore counter.

“I think about that all the time. What if young Meg knew that I work in the Library of Congress? She would be so excited,” Metcalf said with a laugh. “I wanted a library job, but I wanted it to be feminist in form or relating to women in some way, because that’s really my passion. This is like magic.”
Econ grad persists – and lands her dream job

By Josie Corby, University Relations

In January 2017, Linh Pham took part in what can best be described as “speed dating for economists.” Navigating a sea of potential employers, she scored 11 quick interviews. But she didn’t receive a single offer.

“At the time, I felt like it was the end of the world,” said Pham, who graduated from UWM in May with a doctorate in economics. “I was doubting myself, but my adviser told me to keep trying … You have to move on.”

She did. And her persistence paid off. Shortly thereafter, Pham was offered her dream job, a tenure-track faculty position at the University of Central Oklahoma.

“There were two moments where I knew I would make it through my PhD. The first was my publication in a really good journal,” said Pham. “The second was getting a job offer that I really liked.”

Pham’s research interests include how to incentivize the development of solar panels and wind farms, and she is particularly intrigued by how the developing world interfaces with green technology. But day-to-day, Pham loves the practical way economics can be applied to almost any decision.

“Economics is about weighing the cost and benefits of different options and choosing the one with the highest benefit,” said Pham. “It helps people make good choices.”

Pham, who attended UW-LaCrosse for her undergraduate degree, wanted to stay in Wisconsin for graduate school. The small class sizes and daily face-to-face interactions with her professors are what attracted Pham to UWM. She developed a strong cohort of peers, and in her second year her network expanded to include her adviser, Itzi Lazkano, assistant professor of economics.

“One word cannot describe Itzi,” Pham said. “She really goes out of her way to help me. Not only as a student and researcher... She really cares about my well-being.”

Lazkano was equally as impressed by Pham, whom she describes as “one of the best students we have had in the program.”

“[Pham] is creative, independent and has a great balance between doing independent work that she believes in and teamwork,” said Lazkano.

Pham strongly believes in service work, and this allowed her to fully engage with the campus community. Among other activities, she tutored for Upward Bound and volunteered with the Golden Key International Honour Society.

Pham plans to continue volunteering at University of Central Oklahoma, where she will begin her faculty position. She is excited by the new opportunities, but she will miss UWM.

“The professors were great, my friends who were also graduate students in my department were very supportive,” said Pham. “[I will miss] being a part of the whole community at UWM.”

American Indian studies grad sees a responsibility to others

By Matthew Wamser, University Relations

At 31 years old and with an 8-year-old son, James Flores has been a nontraditional student. That’s a challenge, but he has faced down plenty of hurdles to getting his college degree: He grew up in inner-city Milwaukee, a member of the Oneida Nation. And his father died young, which spurred him to pursue the possibilities life can offer.

But in May, he became the first in his family to graduate from college.

Flores graduates from UWM with pride and high expectations for himself. He plans to use the knowledge gained at UWM to help his community and to build a better life for his son.

Why did you decide come to UW-Milwaukee?

“I originally transferred from the Milwaukee Area Technical College in 2013. UWM has an American Indian Student Services office, so I had advisers specific to my cultural background who helped me get tribal funding. I also liked that UWM has an American Indian studies program. When I started taking American Indian studies courses, I knew that it was my calling. It’s a cross-disciplinary program, so I learned about archaeology, anthropology, sociology, political science and ethnobotany. As a member of the Oneida Nation, the courses I’ve taken here have helped me with my identity and have helped me to share my culture with others. American Indian history isn’t just for American Indians, it’s for everyone. It’s part of America’s history.”

What opportunities have you had at UWM?

“My academic background helped me get an internship. I met the Milwaukee Public Museum’s curator of anthropology through a class, and she encouraged me to apply for an internship. When I got it, I worked on Native American programming, and I learned to contextualize and handle artifacts.

Continued on page 6
Alumna tracks D.C.’s sexual health

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Sociology and Psychology alumna Sabrina Nettles works to improve the sexual health of the people of Washington, D.C. through her job as an HIV/AIDS/STD Investigator with the D.C. Health Department. Photo courtesy of Sabrina Nettles.

Sabrina Nettles has one request: Please get yourself tested for sexually-transmitted diseases, even if you think you have nothing to worry about.

“You don’t need to be promiscuous to get an STD, or HIV/AIDS. I think a lot of people are of the mindset that only ‘bad’ people or drug-users or promiscuous people (get HIV),” Nettles said. “But it can happen to anyone, and it’s not shameful. … It does not mean that there’s something wrong with you or that you’re a bad person.”

Nettles would know; she is an HIV/AIDS and STD investigator for the Washington, D.C. Health Department. She is responsible for working with clinics and doctors’ offices to identify and track patients with HIV/AIDS and other STDs diagnoses. Using that data, she and her colleagues can work to identify at-risk populations and target particular groups for education and treatment.

It’s a big job, one that never crossed her mind while she was growing up near Milwaukee. Nettles is the first in her family to attend college. She entered the workforce for a few years after high school before enrolling at UWM as a nontraditional student. There was a definite learning curve, she said, but she’s never regretted her decision to attend college or double-major in Sociology and Psychology.

“What I really liked about Psychology and Sociology is that you can use those to go on to further education in a lot of different ways. They do provide a good backbone to move into a lot of different careers,” Nettles said.

Much of her research at UWM centered around health psychology and sexual health work. After she graduated in 2009 and completed a stint with Americorps, Nettles began searching for more jobs in the sexual health field. She landed a public health fellowship with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Washington, D.C. where she worked with the D.C. health department. After her fellowship ended, she stayed on and began her work as an HIV/AIDS investigator.

In Washington, D.C., gay men and communities of color are the groups primarily affected by HIV and AIDS. The city has one of the highest HIV rates in the country, with around 2 percent of the population carrying a diagnosis.

That number is high, but it’s actually down from nearly a 3 percent rate just five years ago when Nettles started working. The health department and more doctors and clinics have been engaging in additional outreach, educational efforts, and other measures to bring those numbers down.

“We can see these programs in action … knowing that the information is being used to help this community that has been shunned for a long time,” Nettles said. “The information we’re gathering is being used to help the community I’ve been living in and working in.”

The job is not without its challenges; there is still a huge stigma surrounding HIV, AIDS, and STDs. Many doctors are reluctant to hand over their patients’ sensitive information to the government, and many people are reluctant to get STD testing in the first place.

But that’s a mistake, Nettles says, especially because some STDs don’t present any symptoms. Many people might not know that they’ve contracted chlamydia or gonorrhea without testing, and can carry it for years without showing any signs. It doesn’t mean they’re dirty or promiscuous; it’s just the nature of the infection, she said. And if she can help even one person avoid a diagnosis, all the better.

“I think the most rewarding part of the job is when we can see our efforts working,” she said.
Passings

Dr. Ahmed Mbalia, Senior Lecturer Emeritus in the Department of Africology, passed away on July 3, 2017. Dr. Mbalia began at UWM in 1988 and taught until his retirement in 2011. He spent his retirement with his family including his wife and colleague Dr. Doreatha Mbalia, also an emeritus member of the Department of Africology. His students remember him fondly and many have gone on in Milwaukee and elsewhere to start organizations that help people of African descent. Some of these individuals are part of Running Rebels, Campaign Against Violence, Urban Underground, and more. He served as a member of the board of directors for several Hispanic and African organizations/institutions throughout the city, including the Aurora Weier Community Center, and was co-founder of "Africans on the Move," a community organization that has existed in Milwaukee since 1988.

Karen Brucks, Associate Professor Emerita of Mathematical Sciences and former Associate Dean of the Natural Sciences, passed away recently. Karen touched many different areas of campus and many people through her teaching and service work in STEM education and campus space planning. She will be greatly missed by her colleagues, and we extend our deepest condolences to her family.

William Pavelchik ('69, MS Urban Affairs) passed away on July 17, 2017. Bill was retired from a 30-year career at the Department of Housing and Urban Development – a job that led him and his family to destinations throughout the southeast part of the country. He was an active volunteer in the community and is survived by his wife, two sons, and nine grandchildren.

May 2017 Graduation Profiles

A Support for Undergraduate Research Fellows grant also gave me the opportunity to study the cultural component of agriculture at the Tsyunhehkwa organic farm on the Oneida reservation. I researched the traditional method of growing beans, corn and squash together on an earthen mound. I also learned about traditional corn drying techniques, which the farm uses alongside modern dryers. My professors and I presented our research at the American Society for Ethnohistory's 2016 conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

What are you planning to do after graduation?

I have moral obligation to spread what I've learned at UWM and positively affect my community. Education is the basis for any free society. People that don't have higher education are restricted socially, politically, economically and geographically.

I want Milwaukee to have an American Indian community center or a local Native American history museum. Other cities have these, so Milwaukee should, too. American Indians need to remember their history. We have gaming rights and tax exemptions because our ancestors signed treaties with the U.S. government. As their descendants, we have to keep retelling those stories.

What's it like being a first-generation college graduate?

First-generation college students are examples for future generations. Escaping poverty takes generations. Some families have stories where college is the norm, where the parents have already been to college and where people have meaningful careers. It's a phenomenal story, but it's also a transgenerational process.

It started with my mom encouraging me to focus on my schooling. Now that I have my degree, my son, William, will have more opportunities. He won't have to worry about poverty while he works to get through school. I want higher education to be the norm for my grandchildren. I want them to believe that higher education is achievable, because their parents and grandparents went to college before them.
People in print


Laurels and Accolades

Liam Callanan (English) was named the 2017 recipient of The George W. Hunt, S.J., Prize for Excellence in Journalism, Arts & Letters. The Hunt Prize recognizes the finest literary work of Roman Catholic intelligence and imagination. http://bit.ly/2sUwUGg

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies’ annual Latin American Film Series was hailed by M Magazine as Milwaukee’s Best Alternative Film Festival in the publication’s June edition.

The USA National Phenology Network’s (USA-NPN) Start of Spring maps and tools has received the 2017 Outstanding Achievement Award from the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation. Mark D. Schwartz, Distinguished Professor of Geography, is the co-founder of USA-NPN. This award recognizes the project’s contribution to the field of renewable natural resources and its role in disseminating information and engaging the public.
Alumni Accomplishments

Ashley Falzetti ('06, MA Philosophy; Certificate in Women’s Studies) was one of just 10 emerging faculty leaders named a 2017 Nancy Weiss Malkiel Scholar by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. The award supports junior faculty who are engaged in research focusing on contemporary American history, politics, culture, and society, and who are committed to the creation of an inclusive campus for underrepresented students and scholars. [http://bit.ly/2qNPn8U]

Amanda Joy Kohal ('99, BA, Clinical Psychology; '05, MS, Educational Psychology (School of Education)) will take over as the administrator on Sept. 1 at Lasata’s Senior Living Campus in Ozaukee County. Kohal previously worked as the Lasata assistant administrator since 2011.

Michael McCrea ('94 PhD, Clinical Psychology) is one of the principal investigators of an international $2.6 million study funded by the National Football League to study the role active rehabilitation strategies in concussion management. [http://bit.ly/2tqEzP0]

James McDonald ('81, MS Anthropology) was named provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at the University of Montevallo in June. He previously served as the dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Southern Utah University. [http://bit.ly/2srgmnq]

Michael M. Smith ('95, Master of Human Resources and Labor Relations) was named the new vice president, secretary, and general counsel of Church Mutual Insurance Company in Merrill, Wis.

John Monnier ('78, PhD Chemistry) was elected to the National Academy of Engineering and will be promoted to Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina this fall.

Darrell Newton ('81, MA English) joined UW-Eau Claire in July 2017 as the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. He had been the Associate Dean in the Fulton School of Liberal Arts at Salisbury University. [http://bit.ly/2v0Lsbr]

Kristin Cramer ('88, BA Italian) has joined EdEvals as Senior Evaluator and Director of Marketing. Kristin has extensive experience in foreign credential evaluation as well as marketing, graphic design, and communications. Prior to joining EdEvals, she worked in foreign credential evaluation at Educational Credential Evaluators for ten years, then held various marketing positions for 19 years.

Save the date for "Looking at Earth"

Thanks to the Space Age, we are the first generation of human beings to see the Earth as a whole. Astronaut and Earth scientist Kathy Sullivan will take us on a stunning tour of our planet as seen by astronauts and give us a glimpse into how earth observing satellites improve everyday life on earth.

Join us for this very special guest as part of Homecoming Week and the Dean’s Distinguished Lecture in the Natural Sciences. Dr. Sullivan was the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) from 2014 to 2017, a former astronaut, and the first American female to walk in space.

In addition to her NOAA and NASA roles, she has also been President and CEO of the Center of Science & Industry in Columbus, Ohio; inaugural Director of the Battelle Center for Mathematics and Science Education Policy in the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University; and Chief Scientist at NOAA where she oversaw research and technology for projects ranging from climate change to satellites and marine biodiversity.

Tuesday, October 3, 2017 • 7:00 pm • UWM Union Ballroom • FREE
Ticket information to be announced soon
In the Media and Around the Community

Bettina Arnold (Anthropology) made her international film debut in June. She was interviewed for a documentary film on the Iron Age Celts of west-central Europe in 2016. The premiere showed at the Louvre in Paris and played for a seven-day broadcast on the French/German television channel ARTE afterward. [http://bit.ly/2sfn7sw](http://bit.ly/2sfn7sw) Arnold also presented two public lectures entitled "The Past on Tap: Feasts and Fermented Brews in Ancient Europe" at the J. Paul Getty Museum’s Bacchus Uncorked program on July 15 and 16, 2017. The program included a recreation of an Iron Age beverage inspired by content analysis from our excavations in Germany produced by Santa Monica Brew Works. [http://www.getty.edu/museum/programs/lectures/the_past_on_tap.html](http://www.getty.edu/museum/programs/lectures/the_past_on_tap.html)


UWM researchers are redesigning a drug compound created by James Cook (Chemistry & Biochemistry) to treat anxiety without causing dangerous side effects, MedGadget reported. [http://bit.ly/2tuInQc](http://bit.ly/2tuInQc)

Ben Kissel (’06, BA Political Science) spoke with Milwaukee Record ahead of his upcoming performance at Turner Hall, touching on subjects from stand-up comedy to serial killers. [http://bit.ly/2sm5hJi](http://bit.ly/2sm5hJi)


Behind user manuals and other complex guidebooks are technical writers like Rebecca Smiltneek (’12, BA English), who was featured in the Sheboygan Press for her technical writing acumen. [http://shebpr.es/2uDaB7L](http://shebpr.es/2uDaB7L)


After 70 days on the Appalachian Trail, Lauren Groh (’12, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) hit the 700-mile mark and shared her experiences with WUWM. [http://bit.ly/2ta0Os0](http://bit.ly/2ta0Os0)

Jim Reinartz, director of the Field Station, talked with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about ways the public can experience the Cedarburg Bog. [http://bit.ly/2uaQUak](http://bit.ly/2uaQUak)

Milwaukee’s Poetry in the Park’s 2017 lineup included expressive readings from Maurice Kilwein-Guevara (English) and Peter Burzynski a graduate student in English. [http://bit.ly/2tF2DNM](http://bit.ly/2tF2DNM)

Maria Viall (’04 BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) was profiled in Milwaukee Magazine for her holistic nutrition consulting business. [https://www.milwaukeemag.com/meet-maria-viall-nutritionist-holistic-perspective/](https://www.milwaukeemag.com/meet-maria-viall-nutritionist-holistic-perspective/)

Mike Westendorf (Innovative Weather) talked with WUWM about "possibility" vs. "probability" as it relates to weather forecasting. [http://wuwm.com/post/severe-weather-analysis-matter-probabilities#stream/0](http://wuwm.com/post/severe-weather-analysis-matter-probabilities#stream/0)

William Holahan (Economics) co-authored an editorial published by Urban Milwaukee on the dangers of the balanced budget amendment being proposed by the Wisconsin Assembly. [http://bit.ly/2uD8dB7](http://bit.ly/2uD8dB7) He also co-authored an editorial that appeared in the Montgomery Advertiser on block grants and Medicaid. [http://on.mgmadv.com/2vCxEEk](http://on.mgmadv.com/2vCxEEk)

Matthew Janzen (’12, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) was a featured speaker at the Karl... Continued on page 11
A successful planetarium is a critical component of UWM’s successful research enterprise because the broader impact of research on the community has become increasingly important to funding agencies, he added.

“Just to have a planetarium on campus that is run by a PhD astrophysicist makes a difference,” Guptasarma said. “She can answer high-level questions from knowledgeable adults about current exploration and discovery in the field.”

A successful planetarium is a critical component of UWM’s successful research enterprise because the broader impact of research on the community has become increasingly important to funding agencies, he added.

“The most important mission of our planetarium is education and outreach. Jean has put an enormous amount of work and time into making that happen,” Guptasarma said.

**A change in career path**

Creighton’s original career plan was to become a researcher and professor. A career counselor told her she needed better eyesight to become an astronomer, so she studied physics at the University of Athens, earned a master’s degree from Saint Mary’s University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and a doctorate in astrophysics from the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada. After doing post-doctoral research on star formation at Caltech, she began teaching astronomy at UWM in 1999.

When asked to serve as the planetarium’s interim director, she was initially reluctant, she said. But when she started interacting with the public and school groups, she found she really enjoyed the work.

“I thought this is what I am made to do and this is what I should be doing. So, I was thrilled when the department unanimously selected me,” Creighton said. “I couldn’t do what I’m doing without the help of my staff. As a team, we work together and continuously consider how to improve everything we do.”

Creighton has many goals for the planetarium’s future. Her plan is to increase attendance to 20,000 annually by 2022 and increase the number of programs being done in collaboration with campus and community groups.

Right now, for example, she is working with Robin Mello, assistant professor of theater, to develop a play, “The Sun’s Disappearing Act,” around the solar eclipse that emphasizes science, history and culture. That type of collaboration is a unique aspect to being on a university campus.

“You have all these experts on all these fields in close proximity,” she said.

A smaller but important initiative is to set up systems so people can order tickets in advance. “Some people drive a good distance to be here, and you can’t do that if you aren’t sure you’re going to get a ticket. That will be a real boost to us,” Creighton said.

**Improvements planned**

Also on the drawing board: improvements to the equipment and location for the Stargazing programs, scholarships for those hardworking student helpers and, maybe eventually, a new building to accommodate more visitors.

Meanwhile, she’ll keep bringing the joys of space to adults and children.

“To bring people that opportunity — to get people excited about space — is a big privilege I have,” Creighton said. “I can’t imagine a better job.”

**UWM Solar Eclipse 2017**

The Manfred Olson Planetarium invites the community to come view the partial solar eclipse that will be 86% visible from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on August 21, 2017. Maximum visibility of the partial eclipse will be at 1:18 p.m. Events include live music from Sheboygan band The BelleWeather; arts and crafts; opportunities to see the eclipse through telescopes; and more. An alternative plan of viewing a live feed of the eclipse inside the planetarium is available if weather doesn’t cooperate. The celebration will be held on the UW-Milwaukee campus next to the Kenwood Interdisciplinary Research Complex (KIRC) on 3135 N. Maryland Ave.

“This is our biggest event of the year,” said Planetarium Director Jean Creighton. “We are putting a lot of our time and energy into sharing this rare event with the community in a way that is fun for everybody.” The eclipse is the first to hit the mainland United States in 26 years. In Milwaukee, the moon will cover up 86% of the sun. On its way through the country it will travel from Oregon to South Carolina and touch 14 states on its way to the Atlantic Ocean. The next solar eclipse in North America will take place in April 2024.
All about earthquakes

Earthquakes can occur along any crack in the earth’s tectonic plates – not just at the boundaries where plates meet. That’s why even the Midwest, which is nowhere near any plate boundaries, can occasionally get earthquakes, though they’re rare. The last earthquake to shake Milwaukee occurred in 1947.

“Some of the stuff we get here in the upper Midwest might be associated with what we call ‘glacial rebound,’” Ketter said. “Ten thousand years ago, you had this massive amount of ice, miles thick, covering this entire region. You take away all of that weight and then the earth slowly comes back up. When it does that, there are all these creaks and groans.”

Despite the sophisticated detection equipment, there’s no way to predict when and where an earthquake will occur. The only thing scientists can do is measure it afterward – but there’s a wealth of knowledge in those measurements.

Seismology Center research

The UWM Seismology Center may be small, but every bit of data that it picks up is added to the files in the National Earthquake Information Center, a national repository of earthquake data in Colorado.

“The seismologists are interested in this neck of the woods because we are so far from earthquakes,” Ketter said. “They’re interested in how the energy travels under areas that aren’t affected so much by earthquakes. Geophysics is the one way we have to look at the inside of the earth without actually having to go there. By having all of this information as to how earthquakes travel under this neck of the woods, it gives us a better picture of what’s going on.”

Most of the eastern United States, including Wisconsin, lies on a bedrock foundation that transfers seismic energy with very little impediment. When there’s an earthquake in the east, the seismic waves can travel for, and be felt for, hundreds of miles. Compare that to a region like Los Angeles, which lies in a geologic basin. The unconsolidated sediments beneath the city act like a big bowl of Jell-O, shaking and vibrating in a constrained space.

By analyzing and comparing earthquake data from across the country, scientists gain better understanding of the composition of the earth and how it’s constantly changing.

“That’s the ultimate goal for having these massive data sets,” Ketter said. “They use what’s called ‘tomography’ – the same sort of thing as an MRI. They take all of this data and create this 3-dimensional picture of what’s inside the earth. We play a small part of that, along with thousands of other seismic stations around the world.”

In the Media and Around the Community

Junginger Memorial Library in Waterloo, Wis., where he discussed his newly published book, “State of Craft Beer.” Matthew toured more than 100 breweries throughout the state to research the craft beer industry’s influence on the state and the people behind the beer.


Doug Stafford and Alexander Arnold (Chemistry and Biochemistry) were featured on Milwaukee and Green Bay’s NBC affiliate for their work developing a new type of non-opioid based pain medication. http://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/uwm-pain-pill-could-mean-less-need-for-opioids