

# Meet the first class of Young Alumni Award winners

CMU graduates have the drive to make a difference. And many do it shortly after turning their tassels at graduation.

To honor the work of CMU's dedicated alumni, the Young Alumni Board recognized some recent graduates who have obtained exceptional achievements in their community and/or workplace.

The Young Alumni Awards have four categories: Distinguished Young Alumni Award, Outstanding Recent Graduate Alumni Award, Young Alumni Service Award and Young Alumni Entrepreneur Award.

Here are the 2011-2012 winners.

## Distinguished Young Alumni Award

This award is presented to young alumni whose achievements in their field or avocation have received favorable recognition, who have received honors from associations or employers, or whose work has proven beneficial to a pronounced segment of society. This is the highest award achievable for young alumni given by the Alumni Association of Central Michigan University.

**Kenneth Anderson, M.S.A. '11**  
Aerial Port Flight Superintendent  
U.S. Air Force, Andrews Air Force Base

"I find myself constantly reaching into my tool bag and pulling out what I've learned from the M.S.A. program. CMU has given me the ability to help fine-tune the engine that drives my organization's success."



**Basil Lyberg, '99**  
Executive Director  
24 Hours of Booty in Charlotte, N.C.

"I owe so much to my education at CMU, which provided me with invaluable opportunities. I will be forever grateful to the many mentors who helped me build a solid foundation and enjoy a career, which impacts the lives of others every day."



## Outstanding Recent Graduate

This award is presented to someone who has graduated within the past 5 years, who has gone above and beyond in the community and workplace.

**Tasha Candela, '05 M.A. '08**  
Business Teacher  
Lake Shore High School in St. Clair Shores, Mich.

"While there are countless aspects that I adore, the personalized connections are my favorite part. Professors like Karl Smart, Susan Steffel or Timothy Brannan pushed me to my limits and made me feel special in classes of more than 35 students. As a current teacher in the Metro Detroit area, I have taken this philosophy seriously and build lasting relationships with each high school teenager."



## Young Alumni Service

This award is presented to alumni in recognition of their outstanding volunteer efforts in service to the community, state, military, country, Central Michigan University or an important social cause.

**Sarah Clark, '99 M.S. '05**  
Contract Dietitian  
Commission on Aging, St. Joseph County

"Getting my education at CMU was one of the best decisions of my life. I gained so many experiences necessary to who I am today. From the professor who took me under her wing to Alternative Spring Break to football games, I learned the value of hard work and fortitude, caring and compassion, and service."



## Young Alumni Entrepreneur

This award is presented to alumni who have created a new business, venture or expanded an existing business.

**Emily Doerr, '07**  
Manager, Small Business Programs  
Detroit Regional Chamber

"Attending CMU as a Centralis Scholar in the Honors Program allowed me to see all that you can get done if you position yourself to not simply be a number or someone who dwells in a place doing the status quo, but instead you push yourself, tackle projects, ask questions, volunteer, take charge, and choose to dwell in a place where change is needed and you can make a difference there. That's the positive attitude I brought with me to Detroit when I moved here more than 3 years ago."



## Experience from Learning

From CMU to now, most important lessons come from involvement

By Marcie Lehr Otteman, '87  
Executive director of alumni relations

Recently I posted the following as a facebook status:

"2012 is shaping up to be the year of experiences with lots of travel plans and events. Instead of buying things, I am going to enjoy these experiences with photos and memories."



While I know this statement is true today, I am amazed to reflect that it was true for me some 25 years ago as a college student.

Now don't get me wrong. I loved a pair of Reebok high tops and some stone washed denim with a Forenza sweater as much as the next co-ed.

As a CMU undergrad, I was all about spending my hard earned dollars to go somewhere with someone and do something.

Even if that experience was a speaker on campus, a student organization's event or an athletic competition.

I was fortunate to learn so many wonderful skills from these experiences – time management, networking, public speaking and much more.

Even though I was going to these events for fun or to gain new experiences with friends, what I really did was hone my skills as a leader and develop the work ethic and attitude that would carry me into my career with the incredible experiences I have had since graduating in 1987 from CMU.

During my years at CMU – both as a student and staff member – I have been humbled to hear speakers like Allen Ginsburg, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Maya Angelou.

I have seen everyone from Spyro Gyra to Ozzy Osbourne to Dave Matthews in concert.

I have listened to senators, congress members and former presidential candidates. I have danced to Zydeco music, been moved by the symphony and cheered with the Marching Band.

And it has been these experiences at CMU that have had the greatest influence on me.

When I talk with current students about their life at CMU, I am not surprised to find their experiences are shaping them in the same way mine did me.

Only their experiences are mind blowing as they travel on \$66 for a week on an alternative break to help AIDS patients five states away or clean up natural disaster sites or help deliver meals to the poor in the Appalachian mountains.

I am truly amazed at their study abroad experiences or hearing about how they start their own nonprofit organizations or win New Venture competitions.

Every day their experiences in and out of the classroom are shaping them, molding them and changing them.

## Calendar

### March

23

**Young Alumni bowling party,**  
7 p.m., Riverwood Resort, Mount Pleasant

24

**Opus XV School of Music gala,**  
6 p.m., Midland Center for the Arts

24-25

**CMU Pow wow,** CMU Events Center

26

**SAA/Career Services Speaker Series,**  
Mount Pleasant campus

28 through April 1

**Central Michigan International Film Festival,**  
Mount Pleasant campus and throughout Mount Pleasant

### April

14

**Scholarship Luncheon,** noon, Student Activity Center

**Threads Fashion show,** CMU Events Center

### May

4-5

**Commencement ceremonies,** CMU Events Center

12

**CMU event at Arizona Diamondbacks game in Phoenix**

15

**CMU Baseball Clash at Comerica Park**

18

**CMU Night at Comerica Park**

### June

15

**CMU event at Great Lakes Loons Game in Midland**

15

**Chippewa Challenge Golf Outing,** Mount Pleasant

20 through 22

**Grandparents U,** Mount Pleasant campus

25

**GLBR Golf Outing,** Apple Mountain in Freeland, Mich.

30

**CMU event at Tampa Bay Rays game in St. Petersburg**

My point is the "things" don't shape, change or mold. Only experiences can do that. At least that is what I have discovered.

So call (or Facebook) some friends and come back to campus for an event. Or plan and cross something off of your bucket list.

Do it now. So you can share your story with us later.

Marcie (Lehr) Otteman

*Marcie M. Otteman*