Congressman Tim Ryan To Be Graduation Speaker

The Honorable Tim Ryan, a distinguished member of the U.S. Congress known in Washington, DC as the “meditating Congressman,” will present the 2017 commencement address.

Congressman Ryan, who has been a strong public proponent of meditation, is helping to bring the Transcendental Meditation technique® and other evidence-based modalities to government leaders on Capitol Hill. He has organized twice-weekly meditation sessions for staff and members of Congress, which he calls “the quiet time caucus.”

He is also working with the David Lynch Foundation to make the Transcendental Meditation technique accessible to all veterans through funding from the Veterans Administration.

Congressman Ryan has represented Ohio’s 13th district since 2003. He is a leading voice for promoting college affordability, expanding renewable energy, and enhancing access to healthcare.

As part of his healthcare agenda, he has worked to move federal subsidies away from highly processed foods. His 2014 book The Real Food Revolution promotes health through better eating.

Commencement is on Saturday, June 24, at 1:00 pm in the Golden Dome. Congressman Ryan will be presented with a Doctor of Laws honoris causa degree in recognition of his lifetime of public service.

All members of the campus community are welcome to attend.

Campus Landscaping Continues, with $10,000 Grant for Trees and Plans for Creek Area

Approximately 100 additional trees will be planted the weekend of April 22 & 23, thanks to a $10,000 grant from Alliant Energy. And wide-ranging plans for a more park-like campus landscape include cleaning up the creek area and planting fruit and nut trees.

The April planting will include white pines, London planetrees (a sycamore hybrid), and disease-resistant elms.

The new trees will be planted around the Punj Tennis Center east of campus, as well as along the south side of Badget Drive (which runs from the Recreation Center to B Street) and along the south side of Zimmerman Boulevard (which runs along the north side of campus between Utopia Park and the “Frat” residence halls).

“This will make a nice entry onto campus and will re-establish trees

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
that have died,” said Tom Brooks, vice president of operations and author of the grant proposal.

This is the third such grant from Alliant, and April’s planting will bring the total to approximately 240 new trees in the past two years.

Mr. Brooks said the tree project will continue into the future, with plans to do a planting of fruit trees and a planting of nut trees. While a location hasn’t been determined for the fruit trees, the nut trees may be planted in the very fertile low-lying field south of Badget Drive near the intersection with B Street.

In addition, MUM Trustee Toby Lieb has been focusing on making the Crow Creek area in the center of campus more attractive and sustainable. She has had trees and shrubs planted, and staff member Dan Wasielewski has been removing dead trees.

Once the area has been cleaned up, Ms. Lieb will begin experimenting with willows and native grasses along the creek to protect against erosion and make the area more attractive.

After she has a sense for what works, she and others hope to come up with a comprehensive master plan for the former pond areas.

The tree planting April 22 & 23 will be supervised by Trees Forever, which administers Alliant Energy’s Branching Out grants program.

Volunteers are invited. The sessions will begin at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Volunteers will meet at the Punj Tennis Center on the east side of campus.

Mr. Brooks said that many trees on campus have died as a result of old age, pests, and disease, and very few trees had been planted since the 1990s.

“Trees make a much nicer campus environment,” he said. “When you walk through campus, it’s more interesting and park-like. Plus, the trees provide shade in the summer and the pine trees help protect from the wind in the winter.”

Members of the MUM tree committee include Ken Daley, Mr. Wasielewski, Mr. Brooks, Dale Divoky, Alex Green, Chet Breed, Steve McLaskey, and Bob Koczela.

Drug-related deaths fell by 30.4% nationwide during the period 2007–2010, yet another confirmation of the benefits of the Maharishi Effect – and now the third study to be published on the results of research on the Invincible America Assembly.

A study a year ago found a reduction in homicide and violent crime, and a study published last month found a reduction in motor vehicle fatalities and other accidental deaths. Two additional studies have been accepted for publication.

The study, published in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine (JACM), found that during the four-year period 2007 through 2010 this upward trend in the rate of drug-related deaths was interrupted by a highly significant shift to a greatly reduced, flatter trend. As a result, the drug-related fatality rate was reduced 30.4% relative to the 2002–2006 baseline average. The researchers estimated that 26,425 drug-related fatalities were averted by the significantly reduced trend in fatality rates.

The probability that the reduced trend in rates of drug-related fatalities could simply be due to chance was reported to be 3.1 in 10 billion.

During 2007–2010, the size of the group practicing the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi® programs on campus and in Maharishi Vedic City was above or near 1,725 participants, the size predicted to have a positive influence on the US quality of life. This predicted threshold represents the square root of 1% of the US population.

“It’s a bold claim, but there are now 14 peer-reviewed studies that suggest that one’s individual consciousness is directly connected to an underlying, universal field of consciousness, and that by collectively tapping into that field through Transcendental Meditation, we can have a positive effect on the environment,” said lead author Michael Dillbeck.

According to coauthor Ken Cavanaugh, the researchers were able to rule out alternative explanations, such as unemployment and national economic conditions, increased public and professional medical awareness of the hazards of opioid painkillers, and sales of painkillers.

Third IA Assembly Study Finds Reduced Drug-Related Fatalities
Company Donates Tools to Organic Agriculture Program

Students in the new program in regenerative organic agriculture are enjoying using approximately 30 new hand tools donated in January by Iowa tool manufacturing company Wilcox All-Pro Tools, including a variety of short- and long-handled digging trowels, weeder, soil scoops, and soil sifters.

The students have been using them to plant beds in the Sustainable Living Center's arboretum and to seed flats for the upcoming season.

“We’re excited to expose students, not only to regenerative agriculture, but also to the larger context of local production, such as Wilcox Tools, which are made in Montezuma, Iowa,” said Professor A. Thimmaiah.

The donation came about as a result of farm Manager Kris Johnson and assistant manager Dan Harvey meeting owner Mitch Hermiston at the Practical Farmers of Iowa annual conference. Following the conference they contacted Mr. Hermiston and invited him to visit the Sustainable Living Center and to learn the details of the new program.

“He was elated to learn about the program and brought tools to donate,” Mr. Harvey said. “He was excited to get tools into students’ hands and to receive feedback.”

Wilcox tools have been a staple in the gardening and treasure-hunting worlds since 1977, and have been touted by many big-name companies.

“The design of the tools has not changed since the beginning, with the same one-piece stainless steel construction,” Mr. Hermiston says. “Backed by a lifetime guarantee to never break, the tools last a lifetime.”

He was recently approached by a customer who had had his model 250 trowel for 33 years.

Mr. Hermiston recently purchased the company with the goal of getting the product into more users’ hands so they can have the enjoyment of a great tool that does not break.

Last block the students took the soil science course taught by Francis Thick of Radiance Dairy, Jim Schaefer of Soil Technologies Corporation, and Sam James of the Sustainable Living Department. Next block will be biodynamic agriculture with Dr. Thimmaiah before students head out to the field for the remainder of the season.

Professor Beaufort to Lead Art Tour of Spain in June

Matthew Beaufort, Associate Professor of Humanities, will lead an art tour of Spain June 14–22, showcasing the architecture of Gaudi, the pioneering art of Dali, Picasso, and Miro, and world-class museums of Renaissance, Baroque and 19th century art, with an optional pilgrimage beforehand to famous sacred sites in Europe.

“Matthew showed me new worlds I never would have seen on my own,” said Mary Kay Miller, a previous tour participant. And Claire Staffieri said, “It was truly a transformative experience.”

For more information, contact Mr. Beaufort at mbeaufort@mum.edu.

Four Accounting Students Receive XBRL Certification

Four students in the MBA in accounting recently received word that they have passed the XBRL Foundation exam and will be certified in the Extensible Business Reporting Language, which is a growing international standard for reporting and communicating financial data.

In some ways similar to a computer language, XBRL has been a reporting requirement of the US Securities and Exchange Commission since 2011.

The four students are Rasoul Nowrooz (Iran), Ankbayar Sukhmaa (Mongolia), Melkam Haile (Ethiopia), and Sylvenous Atem (Cameroon).

“Students with this certification are more attractive to companies because many organizations now want accounting staff that can perform data conversion to XBRL instead of outsourcing the task,” said Professor Andy Bargerstock.

MUM’s MBA Accounting program also gives students hands-on experience with XBRL conversion software.

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MUM Online: New Short Course on Ecocities

A new six-lesson online course on ecocities taught by renowned ecological city planner Richard Register is now available at https://www.mum.edu/mum-online/short-courses/ecocities.

The non-credit course is aimed at those interested in the place of cities and towns in history, and how they can be designed and reshaped to continue serving human social, cultural, and economic purposes. Rather than damaging nature, eco-cities contribute to the health of everyone.

Mr. Register, a popular guest speaker at MUM, is the author of several books and was founding president of Urban Ecology and founder and past president of Ecocity Builders (1992–2014).

The trend toward ecocities is accelerating, including pedestrian centers, bicycle culture, and the move from suburbs back to neighborhood and downtown centers to avoid commuting.

Architectural features include passive solar design, green walls and rooftops, gardens and social areas, bridges between buildings, and car-free streets and areas.

Other features covered in the course include the steps being taken toward more sustainable, healthier, and more friendly spaces than those dedicated to the demands of automobiles, asphalt, and energy-intensive transport.

This course provides the nuts and bolts of making the transition into ecological and social health. It explores topics such as technologies of building and supplying renewable energy, nearby food production, public and personal transportation other than by car, and restoration of natural areas.

The course comprises six video lessons discussing the principles and scope of ecocities. Each lesson has three video segments of approximately 15 to 20 minutes each. Once registered, viewers have access to the course for six months to one year. The cost is $49.

Lesson 1 for this course (as with all MUM Online short courses) is available at the URL above for free.

MUM Ranked #2 for Nontraditional Students

The website BestColleges.com recently named the 25 best colleges for nontraditional students and ranked MUM as #2. See tinyurl.com/gux8w6r.

Other schools in the ranking are Evergreen State, St. Johns, Antioch, Colorado College, and Brown University.

Schools listed provide an alternative learning environment, and ranking was based on statistics, expert opinion, and student surveys.

AccreditedSchoolsOnline.org also recently listed MUM among the schools in Iowa with the best online offerings.