



Richard G. Bowker

Few activities are more central to the spirit of WKU than the scholarly and creative activities of our faculty and students, past and present. The rich diversity of their professional contributions reflects the spectrum of talent and expertise found in our educational community. In the following pages, you will find eight articles and four research briefs. Passion for the discipline, engagement in the enterprise of discovery, and a sense of contribution to society are expressed differently in the diverse disciplines, but nonetheless these important attributes characterize each of the WKU scholars in this magazine.

With his issue of the *Scholar* you will note a subtle change in name, but not in purpose. The new title *WKU Scholar* reflects our increasing contributions to the national and international communities of scholars as outlined in “Challenging the Spirit,” the strategic plan of the University. Still, the goal of highlighting a few of the many remarkable scholarly and creative contributions of our academic community remains the same.

Choosing outstanding examples from many choices can be difficult. In his 1870 Report to the Buffalo Female Academy, Mark Twain describes the difficult task of choosing two student essays to honor. With humor (and uncharacteristic tact), he gives the students some advice on their work and offers his hope for a time when “...the question with committees will not be which composition to select for first prize, but which one they dare reject.”

That is essentially the problem our Faculty Scholarship Council faces as it considers potential articles for the *WKU Scholar*. From perhaps twenty suggestions and nominations, members vote in several rounds to reduce the list to eight stories. It is enriching and interesting to participate in this process, but difficult to settle on so few choices.

Of his favorite student essay, Mark Twain offered: “It is a composition which possesses, also, the very rare merit of *stopping when it is finished*.” Good advice, and I will take it. Read on and enjoy the articles.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard G. Bowker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'k'.

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