



# Transformations

**Anthropology Graduate Student Conference**

*Accessibility*



Saturday, March 4th, 2023  
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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Wayne State University  
Anthropology Graduate Student Organization

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Purdy/Kresge Library  
Kresge Auditorium and Kresge Library 1st Floor  
5265 Cass Ave, Detroit, MI 48202



**WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Department of Anthropology

# Welcome

The Anthropology Graduate Student Organization (AGSO) is pleased to welcome you to the 2023 *Transformations* Graduate Student Conference!

## Schedule of Events

TIME	EVENT
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Registration
10:00 - 10:15 AM	Opening Remarks: John Cardinal AGSO President
10:15 - 10:30 AM	Welcoming Remarks from the Chair: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski
10:30 - 11:15 AM	Archaeology Panel
11:15 - 12:00 PM	Communication Panel
12:00 - 1:00 PM	LUNCH
1:00 - 2:00 PM	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Katherine M. Kinkopf Assistant Professor of Anthropology California Polytechnic State University, Pomona
2:00 - 3:00 PM	Ontologies Panel
3:00 - 3:45 PM	Health Panel
3:45 - 4:00 PM	Closing Remarks

# General Information

## Check-in/Welcome

Upon arrival at the conference, please check-in at the table past the entrance of the library main doors off Gullen Mall. You will receive the conference program and will be directed towards complimentary refreshments.

## Presentations

Panels will have three to four presenters. Each presentation will be 10 minutes long with 5 minutes for questions and feedback. All PowerPoint presentations should be loaded onto the designated laptop *prior to the beginning of the session* for efficiency. AGSO board members will moderate each panel to facilitate the Q&A and ensure timely progression between presenters.

## Lunch

Lunch will occur on your own. For those of you unfamiliar with campus, Wayne State has a few food selections on the first floor of the Student Center directly next to the Purdy/Kresge Library: Starbucks, Panda Express, Quickly Boba, etc. There are also several off-campus options within a five- to ten-minute walk of the library: Ima, Midtown Shangri-La, Common Pub, The Potato Place, and more.

## The Conference

*Transformations* is an annual graduate conference hosted by the Anthropology Graduate Student Organization (AGSO) on Wayne State's campus. This year's conference recognizes that accessibility is an important aspect of everyday life as it affects us and all of those around us. *Transformations* will promote conversations about accessibility which will encourage and enrich anthropology and its allied fields in the active mission of engaging in discourse and analysis, as well as supporting accessibility for all. By viewing accessibility through an anthropological lens, we allow for a deeper understanding of the various barriers facing issues of access across cultures. This perspective will generate nuanced discussions that are required to address and resolve these issues.

### **Keynote Speaker: Dr. Katherine M. Kinkopf**

Assistant Professor of Anthropology, California Polytechnic State University, Pomona

AGSO is proud to welcome Dr. Katie Kinkopf as our keynote speaker for the 2023 *Transformations* conference. Dr. Kinkopf is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Geography and Anthropology at California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. She received her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley in Anthropology. Additionally, she is the co-President of the Access and Disability Alliance Group, and a specialist in historical bio-archaeology, human skeletal biology, critical disability studies, and institutions of care and incarceration in the United States and Europe (Italy).

## **Keynote Speaker: Dr. Katherine M. Kinkopf, Presentation**

*Liberating Disability in Anthropology Research and Praxis*

1:00 - 2:00 PM (Kresge Library Auditorium)

How can we liberate the study of disability from the clutches of biomedicine? In this talk, Dr. Katie Kinkopf will start by addressing the fundamental question, “what is disability?” and progress to highlight the role of critical disability studies in transforming anthropological research and praxis. She outlines a method of “thinking with disability” to narrate disability experiences in the past, build capacity amongst disabled anthropologists, and heal ableism’s wounds in the discipline.

## **Archaeology Panel Abstracts**

10:30 - 11:15 PM (Kresge Library Auditorium)

Moderator: Patrick Dear

### **Archaeology and Community: The Importance of Public Archaeology**

*Casey Carter, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

My research interest is related to public archaeology and how it is essential to engage people in the archaeological work happening in their communities. For a long time, Archaeology has been a profession somewhat separated from the view of the general public, seemingly by design. When most people think of Archaeology or Archaeologists, their first thoughts are commonly about popular media references such as Indiana Jones or faraway places like the pyramids of Egypt. There appears to be a general lack of interest and awareness of archaeology happening close to home. Engaging the public in archaeology will serve to improve the public's access to these projects and the history that occurred in their communities. In marginalized descendant communities, public archaeology can help re-connect the people to their history and ancestors. Community support of archaeology is essential to the security of both archaeology as a profession and archaeological sites in the United States.

## **Disabled Archaeologists Exist: Unnecessary Practices and Social Regulations of Field Schools**

*Anastasia Woody, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

Archaeological field schools have long been a required part of any archaeologist's education. They are the place where books and lectures are transformed into hands-on experience, learning, and training. Though archaeological field schools have been branded as physically demanding experiences, many students with aspects of physical accommodations still participate. The questions regarding accessibility within field school practices, therefore, focus on the unchanging practices, social regulations, and other aspects of field schools that those without disabilities rarely think of. This paper examines the current practices in place at both university field schools and the practices of government organizations training future archaeologists through first-hand experience and topical literature review. The issues discussed in this paper only follow field schools and training policies, not CRM or professional archaeological work policies. The analysis of this question of accessibility and the practices in place at university and government level field schools shows that even though there are many efforts for inclusion and understanding taking place, there are still unnecessary regulations in place that hinder and discourage those with physical disabilities from pursuing the field of archaeology.

## **Accessing the Development of Early Detroit: Fort Lernoult in the Nineteenth-Century**

*John Cardinal, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

This paper will explore both the historical texts associated with Fort Lernoult in Detroit, Michigan, revealing how the interpretation of a site can change through time and among perspectives, as well as analyzing the accuracy of the piles by examining the presence and location of tree nails recovered during the excavation. The remains of Fort Lernoult, also known as Fort Detroit and Fort Shelby, were excavated in the early 1960s as a salvage operation during a high-rise construction project in Downtown Detroit. By Spring 1963, the remaining soil was removed using heavy equipment and deposited at nearby Fort Wayne into piles associated with stratigraphic information, where archaeologists continued to sift through the artifacts. Built by the British garrison during the American Revolution, the fort survived the great fire of 1805, and was surrendered during the War of 1812, before being transferred to the city in 1826 and subsequently dismantled.

# Communication Panel Abstracts

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM (Kresge Library Auditorium)

Moderator: Anastasia Woody

## **Voice of the Voiceless**

*Patrick Dear, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

My research intends to convey the importance of facilitated communication (FC) with non-verbal autistic individuals. Participant observation will be detailed between an adult subject and an adolescence subject along with their respective families. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the necessity of having a form of communication, as some government entities do not acknowledge that FC is actually the voice of the autistic individual, because they consider FC as a “pseudoscience” akin to that of the ideomotor effect. Just as well, the scientific community does not merit FC as a valid technique. Other examples that utilize FC will also be addressed, such as the negative and positive outcomes.

## **Multidisciplinize your Practice: Using multiple approaches to rethink collaboration and inclusion**

*Stacey Markel, Ph.D. Student (Wayne State University)*

The word collaboration usually implies cooperation between two or more people. But could we expand its semantic messaging to include cooperation between things, ideas, or even scholarly disciplines? I am doing just this with my dissertation project. I am collaborating with people, but also with different ideas, approaches to data, and ways of being in the world: I am examining historical documents, using linguistic, historical archaeological, and micro-historical analysis, in concert with Native Knowledge Systems. My goal is to activate multiple lines of inquiry (Antczak & Beaudry 2019), allowing me to verify and broaden insights. My approach is inspired by core principles of the Anishinaabeg and other Indigenous groups, who insist that language, history, material traces, and even the influence of non-human spiritual beings cannot be disassociated (Kroskirty 1996, Atalay 2006, Corbiere 2019). Anthropologists seem resistant to or fearful of stepping out of our scholarly silos to try to triangulate data from multiple angles. Let’s be brave. Let’s bring together other ideas in creative “assemblages of practice” (Antczak & Beaudry 2019) that allow us to animate insights and past or present lives that would otherwise remain obscure, even inaccessible. In other words, if we re-envision collaboration, it can be deployed productively to rethink accessibility—accessibility as physical and also ethnohistorical access. We can then unmute those subaltern voices that have been excluded from dominant socio-historic narratives, making multivalent collaborations a powerful tool indeed.

## **Ontologies Panel Abstracts**

2:00 - 3:00 PM (Kresge Library Auditorium)

Moderator: Casey Carter

### **The Power of Autoethnographic Inquiry: Understanding Belonging and Personhood at Open Mic Events in Detroit, MI**

*Mariah McClendon-Smith, Ph.D. Student (Wayne State University)*

In considering the topic of autoethnographic inquiry, this paper supports the perspective of Dr. Layla Brown-Vincent who argues that autoethnography is a Black feminist methodology. From her view, Black feminist autoethnography means using Black women's lived experiences, intersectional struggles, and observed connections to other oppressed peoples to theorize strategies for liberation. As a Black woman poet and Detroiter, my preliminary research at open mic events in Detroit is focused on how Black women's personhood is shaped through embodied storytelling. The performance of music and poetry led me to think about how Brown-Vincent's view of autoethnography applies to my own work. Thus, my research puts autoethnographic inquiry to praxis demonstrating how this methodology can yield rich academic insights for historically marginalized populations and how such an approach can specifically contribute to theorizations of empowerment.

### **Accessing External Funding: Decoding the African-American Cultural Entrepreneurial Environment**

*Nakim Edmond, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

It's every founder's dream to grow their company to a billion dollar "unicorn" level, but only a small fraction of startups reach such realms of capital. In that small fraction more than usually, African Americans are not the ones at the helm. Outside of the few mythical companies, the substantial gap, the lack of representation of African Americans in startup entrepreneurship, and their lack of access to external finance remains glaring. The goal of this paper is to adopt the framework applied by Chowdhury & Maung (2020) in their cross-country study to "test whether and how cultural values that either support or hinder people's autonomy, self-efficacy, and risk-taking motives for entrepreneurial activities explain cross-country variation of entrepreneurship" in order to measure "how supportive a culture is toward entrepreneurship to explain why some countries are more entrepreneurial than others". In applying Institutional Theory to anthropology and entrepreneurship, the focus will be centered on informal institutions that affect cultural acceptance, and a cultural environment that supports entrepreneurship endeavors - in turn maximizing accessibility to external finance. The aim is to draw parallels in efforts to arrive at new insights that might advance theory and research.



## **Funerary Barriers**

*Aleah Edwards, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

In recent years, many companies have begun attempting to make unique funerary practices accessible to the public. From your remains being turned into diamonds to being decomposed, there are so many new options for you and your loved ones to choose while making end of life decisions. Many of these options are safer for the environment and allow families to feel that their loved one has been treated in the way that they deserve. While many appreciate these options, legislation has made many of these options illegal in most states. This legislation tends to come up even though, according to the National Funeral Directors Association, 60.5% of people would be interested in green burial for reasons including environmental impact and cost. Michigan legislature states that families must purchase the services of an individual licensed to practice mortuary science in the state and that the individual responsible for the care of the family member's funeral must have the individual buried or cremated. In this presentation, I will explore why these laws have been set into place and how individuals have tried to increase the general public's availability to access unconventional funerary practices in Michigan.

## **Health Panel Abstracts**

3:00 - 3:45 PM (Kresge Library Auditorium)

Moderator: John Cardinal

## **How Educational Infrastructure Limits Disabled People from Accessing Institutions**

*Brittney Eastin, AGRAD Undergraduate (Wayne State University)*

I will discuss the impacts that typical urban infrastructures have on disabled peoples. These infrastructures are limiting in several aspects; sensory, socially, weight limits, and ambulation. There is a common struggle in communities of disabled peoples having frequent run ins with materials that were not designed with their limitations in mind,. There has been a long running theme of educational intuitions having physical barriers for entry (i.e. large, grandiose and heavy entry ways). One's environment, especially that is socially constructed, severely impact peoples with disabilities. My presentation will also discuss the issue of accessibility through the experience of people having an invisible disability with their spatial surroundings.

## **Breaking Linguistic Chains: The Dangers of Pathologizing Language in Schizophrenia**

*Patience Williams, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

This paper analyzes the effects of a schizophrenic diagnosis on a person's relationships and sense of self. Schizophrenia is widely considered the most devastating mental disorder, and those who receive this diagnosis are often given limited opportunities and a poor prognosis. This analysis aims to answer the following question: How might a pathologizing language in terms of schizophrenia amplify symptoms and reify labels? To address this question, first-hand accounts from individuals who self-disclose their diagnosis on YouTube will be incorporated alongside an extensive literary review. Results show that the normative way of diagnosing schizophrenia in Western society may negatively impact individuals' future lives. The schizophrenic label is often toxic for those who receive it. Further ethnographic work on the consequences of diagnostic labels may serve to encourage mental health professionals to abandon labels for a more inclusive, holistic treatment method for schizophrenia.

## **Accessibility through Interdisciplinary Fieldwork**

*Ehimare Arhebamen, MA Student (Wayne State University)*

ADA compliance is accessibility that puts disabled individuals on the same social standing as able-bodied individuals through technology. Being an anthropologist with a disability, it led me to learn skills in other fields outside of anthropology to work in technical spaces and understand the language of the work and tools that are used in their fields of study. In this paper, I describe how my internship taught me how invaluable accessibility is. I learned how to code and program electronics during COVID and these skills were used to further create "accessibility" through the ease of everyday tasks. Because I have worked in medical settings as a pharmacy technician for over 5 years and was a former physician assistant student, I also understand the medical and biological necessity of these types of tools. Using these skill sets allowed me to intern with Wilson Adaptive Technologies. WAT's work is creating technologies for disabled individuals. Prototypes we are developing are modular showers with electronic interfaces that can be given voice commands remotely and ensure that the individual is allowed personal autonomy and ease while in use. A website helps "replace" any limb or facility that an individual does not have or enhance existing ones to give them the same experience an able-bodied individual might have online. Doing all this work lets me combine my skill sets with an anthropological lens and help people dealing with biological issues that affect them on a socioeconomic level. Working with WAT has allowed me to further understand how important accessibility is in today's world and economy.

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# **SPECIAL THANKS TO ANTHROPOLOGY FACULTY AND STAFF!!**

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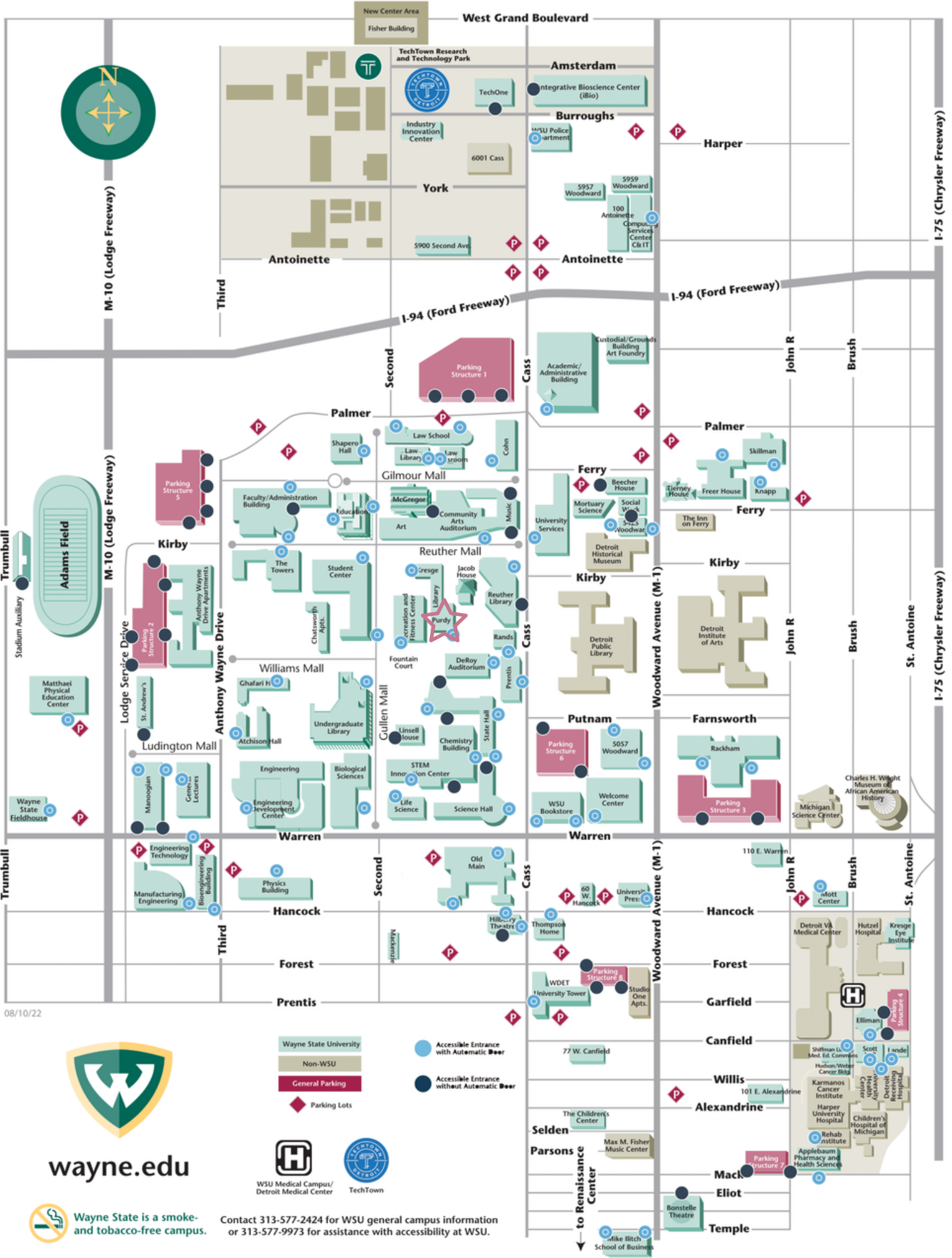
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08/10/22



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