

Fall 2009

# Grand Valley Magazine, vol. 9, no. 2 Fall 2009

Grand Valley State University

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FALL 2009

# GRAND VALLEY

MAGAZINE



Laker Marching  
Band suits up



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## GRAND VALLEY MAGAZINE

Feature stories are also online at  
[www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine).

On the cover:

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

Plumed hats belonging to members of the  
Grand Valley Marching Band add regalia to  
their uniforms. Read about the band, camp  
and the upcoming football halftime shows  
on page 14.

On these pages:

*photo by Bernadine Carey-Tucker*

Pictured is a teapot belonging to Curtis  
Dean Smith, associate professor of Chinese.  
Smith discovered the art of tea making as a  
student in Taiwan. Read more on page 38.



*The Grand Valley Magazine* is printed on paper  
manufactured with electricity in the form of  
renewable energy (wind, hydro, and biogas), and includes a  
minimum of 10% postconsumer recovered fiber. Trees used  
to manufacture this paper are certified from sustainably  
managed forests.



## Dear Editor:

I got a chance to check out the new Web look for *Grand Valley Magazine* ([www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine)). That's pretty amazing! Easy to navigate and use; you guys keep up the good work!

Wow, how Grand Valley has experienced such ambitious growth and expansion through the years. When I attended, 30 years ago, it was a small college in a farming community. I still vividly remember those miserable winters walking across campus when you couldn't even see several feet in front of you.

**Arie P. Noordsij, '80**  
Port Richey, Florida

I hope you don't mind another letter of appreciation on Brian Bowe's great article on Cabbage Crik ("Cabbage Crik rides again," Spring 2008). When I turned the page to find that article, it was like I had just stepped into a time machine and was magically transported back to my days at Grand Valley State College.

I think I was just a little shy of giddy as I read about all the places that the Crik played back in those days as I said to myself, over and over, "Hey I saw the band play there. I was at the concert when they opened for the unknown Jimmy Buffett! And I was there too when they took the night away from Pure Prairie League."

The article was great and I really enjoyed the pictures too. It was a really fun trip down memory lane.

**Bob Cayia, '76**  
Valparaiso, Indiana

*(The following was first sent to Barbara Roos, associate professor of communications)*

I am so amazed and impressed with all you have done for the film and video department. Reading the article ("Film industry discovers Michigan," Summer 2009) made me want to go through the program all over again! You have made such a name for the school and I am proud to say I was your student.

Thank you for all you taught me and congratulations on your continued success at GVSU!

**Krista (Wieland) Yetzke, '89**  
Grand Haven, Michigan

### Letters to the Editor can be mailed to:

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or sent via e-mail to: [gvmagazine@gvsu.edu](mailto:gvmagazine@gvsu.edu).

Please include your name, class year (if applicable), hometown and phone number (not for publication). Letters are subject to editing.

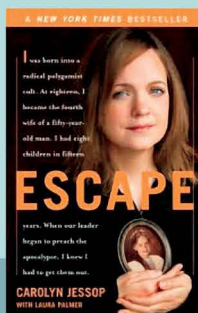
## Bookmarks

Looking for a good book? Check out these recommendations from Grand Valley staff members:

### *Escape*

(Broadway Books, 2008)  
by Carolyn Jessop

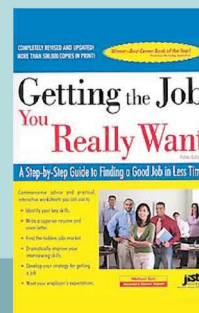
This true story takes readers into the world of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and into the role of a plural wife. The author, who with her eight children escaped a life of polygamy, will draw readers into the abusive culture of the FLDS. Sue Sloop, Work Life consultant, said she was struck by the fact that the polygamist lifestyle is not often on today's radar as a form of domestic violence and cruelty to children.



### *Getting the Job You Really Want*

(JIST Publishing, 2007)  
by Michael Farr

In today's job market the tendency to conduct Internet job searches is prevalent, though not as effective as person-to-person contact. Ginger Lange, associate director of Career Services, said this book offers "down and dirty advice" on elements of effective job searches, with a focus on result-oriented methods and tools.



### *The Age of Innocence*

(various editions since first published in 1920)  
by Edith Wharton

Professor of Writing Catherine Frerichs now has more time for reading after stepping down from her position as director of the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center in August. She recently re-read this satirical novel about late 19th century New York society. "This time, I was struck by the nuances in Wharton's descriptions of the people who live in this stifling world," she said. "The ending was as powerful for me now as it was when I first read it 40 years ago."





## Naming ceremony honors VanSteeland

When retired vice president Ronald VanSteeland spoke at the dedication of a living center that bears his name, he addressed the future Grand Valley students who will live there.

“To those who will follow, I hope you will enjoy, appreciate and even treasure your Grand Valley experience as much as I have treasured mine. If you give Grand Valley your all, it will repay you many times over,” VanSteeland said.

South Living Center was renamed the Ronald F. VanSteeland Living Center during a ceremony on September 15. VanSteeland served Grand Valley for 35 years before retiring in 2001. Speaking at the ceremony, President

Thomas J. Haas said it offered the opportunity to honor “the service and commitment that Ron made with his family to this great university.”

VanSteeland’s fiscal leadership helped build the financial backbone of the university that has been ranked as one of “America’s 100 Best College Buys” for 14 consecutive years. “We’re really building on what he has contributed with his service,” Haas said. “We’re building on his legacy.”

President Emeritus Arend D. Lubbers talked about the more than three decades that he and VanSteeland worked side-by-side. Lubbers said it was appropriate to have a building named for VanSteeland because of the instrumental role he



photo by Amanda Pitts

Ronald VanSteeland laughs during a speech at a dedication of a living center in his honor. VanSteeland served Grand Valley for 35 years.

played in the construction of the university’s facilities. “I don’t think there is any university that received more for its money

than Grand Valley when it came to construction of buildings, and a good deal of credit for that goes to Ron,” he said.

## Partnership between U-M, GVSU will benefit health professions students

Grand Valley and the University of Michigan established an Early Assurance Program in which U-M students completing their undergraduate studies at the School of Kinesiology can be admitted to Grand Valley’s master’s degree program in occupational therapy.

The program will become effective in the fall 2010 semester; applicants meeting requirements will be assured admittance to Grand Valley’s OT program. The program will accommodate up to three qualified U-M students annually; at the end of the two-year agreement, there will be six U-M students enrolled, or 12 percent of the total number of students enrolled.

The agreement was signed in September at the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences.

Grand Valley Provost Gayle R. Davis said partnerships such as this will improve the environment for higher education in the state. “We’re saving resources and money,” she said. “Through these joint ventures, students from all the academic programs that are housed within this building can come together in shared experiences that will help enrich their education.”

Teresa Sullivan, provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs at U-M, explained that while U-M does not offer an occupational therapy program, “Our students can benefit from the strong program at Grand Valley.”

“This agreement will allow them to seek out a graduate school in our state and allow us to keep our students in Michigan,” Sullivan said.



photo by Amanda Pitts

Teresa Sullivan, U-M provost, signs papers with GVSU President Thomas J. Haas that formalize an early assurance program between the two universities.

Sullivan was accompanied by Gregory Cartee, professor and interim dean of the School of Kinesiology; and Patricia Van Volkinburg, academic program coordinator.

Jean Nagelkerk, vice provost

for Health at Grand Valley, called the caliber of Grand Valley and U-M students superior. “We’re providing essential services and leadership to the state through this partnership,” she said.



## Campus mourns death of dean

Oliver Wilson, dean of Multicultural Affairs at Grand Valley, died August 31, following a three-year battle with cancer. He was 44.

Wilson was named dean of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in 2003. Prior to that, he worked for Grand Valley's Admissions office and had served as its associate director of minority recruitment. He joined Grand Valley's staff in 1997.

Wilson left an indelible mark on Grand Valley's campus, and served on a number of committees dedicated to inclusion. He helped establish the Professionals of Color Lecture Series, bringing national speakers to campus to share their stories of career success or triumph over personal adversity; co-chaired the Team Against Bias and was instrumental in establishing the university's bias incident protocol; advised numerous student organizations; and served on

the Intercultural Awareness Council, Diversity Assessment Committee, and others.

President Thomas J. Haas said he was saddened by the news and for the loss of a friend. "Oliver's guidance has really helped us create a better atmosphere, a better culture for inclusion and acceptance of diversity in the most positive way at Grand Valley," said Haas.

During a campus memorial service in October, Haas announced that the Freshman Academy, a comprehensive support program for first-year students from underrepresented high schools, will be renamed for Wilson.

Bart Merkle, vice provost and dean of students, said Wilson had a "phenomenal impact" on Grand Valley's students. "He related very well to students in so many positive ways," Merkle said. "Oliver never wavered in his belief that students and



file photo

Oliver Wilson, right, with Darius Mathis, Jim Schaub, Cicely Tyson and Rod Schaub during a narration recording for the Grand Valley documentary film, 'Up From the Bottoms: The Search for the American Dream.' Wilson died in August; the university renamed the Freshman Academy in his honor.

other people he worked with can accomplish more than they think is possible. He was very student focused and passionate about education and how it can transform lives and open doors."

Gayle R. Davis, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, said: "He understood the academic side of the university and this knowledge, combined with his huge heart for his students, motivated and encouraged them to

succeed. I will miss him, as will our whole campus."

Wilson earned a doctorate in educational leadership from Western Michigan University, a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in business education, both from the University of Wyoming. While at the University of Wyoming, Wilson, a native of Chicago, played basketball for the Cowboys.

## Nursing welcomes first doctoral class

The Kirkhof College of Nursing welcomed its first doctoral students in August. KCON Dean Cynthia McCurren said the class of 20 students met enrollment expectations. She added that the cohort includes students with extensive professional background and several who recently earned a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Kathryn Speeter has worked at Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services in Grand Rapids for 20 years. She hopes to open her own mental health clinical practice, and said she enrolled in the program "because of the evidence-based practice and applied research we'll be doing."

Stacey Smith earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Grand Valley in December and now works at Sunset Home Services. She is interested in rural health care. "I wanted to go straight through to get a doctorate because the opportunities are limited once you move away from larger cities," Smith said.

Nursing students with bachelor's or master's degrees in nursing are eligible to enroll in the DNP program. The BSN to DNP will involve approximately 90 credits hours and 1,000 clinical hours; for master's degree students, enrolling in the MSN to DNP program will mean



photo by Bernadine Carey-Tucker

Students in the Kirkhof College of Nursing's first doctoral class stand with faculty members in the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences.

about 40 additional credits and 400 clinical hours. Visit the KCON Web site at [www.gvsu.edu/kcon](http://www.gvsu.edu/kcon) for more information.

(See page 12 for more on the DNP program.)



## Global travels help staff members enhance services to students

By literally broadening their horizons, three Women's Center staff members hope to enhance their services to Grand Valley students.

Director Marlene Kowalski-Braun, Associate Director JoAnn Wassenaar and Assistant Director Ashley Nickels each traveled to a different part of the world last year. Kowalski-Braun said that their trips "highlight different universal themes around women's experiences."

"By traveling, we can bring back what we learned and share with our students and help them develop a global experience," Kowalski-Braun said. She was selected to attend the HERS-South Africa Academy in Cape Town, a leadership academy focused on improving the status of women in higher education in South Africa.

Wassenaar received a grant from the Padnos International Center to visit the University of Oslo, in Norway, one of Grand Valley's partner institutions. Nickels planned a community service trip and traveled by herself to Guatemala to volunteer in a domestic crisis shelter and help in Spanish immersion classes.

In Norway, Wassenaar visited with faculty and staff

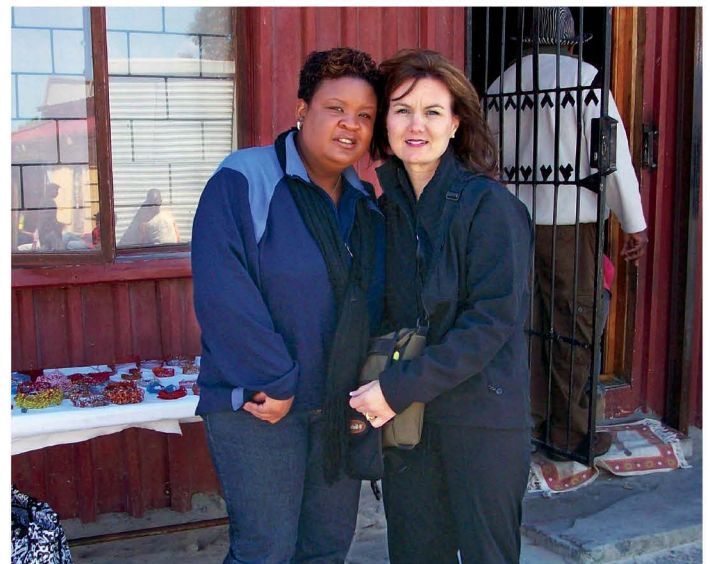
at the university to learn about that country's numerous family-friendly policies, like the generous maternity and paternity leave plans. She said: "I was able to experience first-hand their family and work life and how the university and national policies enhance family life at home. It's definitely apparent that what they're doing is working well there."

Nickels said the various trips fit well with the professional roles of the staff in the Women's Center. "We are role modeling the need for global perspectives in teaching and learning, while looking specifically at the needs of women in the world," she said.

The Women's Center and the Women and Gender Studies program are in midst of planning a study abroad opportunity for students.

*photos courtesy of the Women's Center*

Staff members in the Women's Center each traveled abroad last year in an effort to enhance their services to students. At top, JoAnn Wassenaar, left, stands with Grand Valley colleague Connie Ingham in Bergen, Norway. Marlene Kowalski-Braun, right, stands with Makeba Clay, a Princeton University staff member, during a trip to South Africa.



## Federal stimulus funds help researchers study nanotechnology

Grand Valley's School of Engineering received a \$200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for support of a project to help integrate nanotechnology into undergraduate engineering and science education.

The project is under the direction of professors Lihong (Heidi) Jiao and Nael A. Barakat.

Nanotechnology — which works with materials that are so tiny they are not be visible to the human eye — is increasingly significant, Jiao said. It is used in more than 800 products on the market, she said.

"It is so important to society. It's used in medicine, cosmetics, photovoltaic cells and electronics. It's everywhere," Jiao said. "We need to teach

our students before they graduate how to work with nanotechnology and how to work with nanoscience.

Jiao said the grant will help develop a two-course sequence that will serve as the core of the program. One course will teach the fundamentals of nanotechnology, and the other will teach advanced nanosystem engineering. It will also help

provide summer research and senior-level projects, as well as educational opportunities for K-12 students and educators.

The grant was funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. (Read more research news on page 30.)



# Seidman legacy will continue at Grand Valley

It was appropriate that on the day the Grand Valley community gathered to remember founder L. William Seidman, an announcement was made that his legacy will continue at the university.

President Thomas J. Haas announced that Richard and Helen DeVos made the lead gift to launch efforts to construct a new building for the Seidman College of Business. The announcement was made on September 11 at the Seidman memorial, held in the Performing Arts Center on the Allendale Campus. Seidman died May 13 at age 88.

“Rich and Helen would like to do something directly memorializing Bill and holding up the Seidman legacy very high, and with high hopes, to keep the

memory of Bill Seidman and his accomplishments alive,” Haas said.

DeVos, co-founder of Amway, also spoke at the memorial service. “We are honored to contribute to this old tradition of keeping this school good and helping make it better,” DeVos said. “Plans are underway for this tribute and honor to him.”

More than 600 people attended the service. Tom Seidman welcomed the audience and said the only regret he had was that his father was not there. “He would have enjoyed this more than anyone else in the room,” Seidman said. “He loved being with his friends and family, and as much as anything, he loved Grand Valley.”

Many stories and memories were shared that recalled Seidman’s service to his



photo by Amanda Pitts

Richard DeVos, co-founder of Amway, announces a gift in memory of L. William Seidman at a memorial service in September on the Allendale Campus.

country, his family and the work that helped establish Grand Valley. President Emeritus Arend D. Lubbers said his life changed when Bill Seidman came to Iowa to recruit him as president for this new

college in West Michigan.

“When his life touched you, yours changed,” Lubbers said. “His lifetime of good deeds will always be with us.”

Other speakers included Birge Swift Watkins, former national investor outreach director, FDIC/RTC and former staff assistant to President Ford; Roger Porter, IBM Professor of Business and Government, Harvard University; and Sue Herera, founding member of CNBC and co-anchor of “Power Lunch.”

Porter recalled that he traveled with Seidman to Washington in 1977 when Seidman helped establish the Washington Campus Program, which would become a central location for college students across the country to learn and study with the country’s top leaders. Grand Valley was included in that pilot project and continues to send students today.

In the 1960s, Seidman helped galvanize local support for the establishment of a public four-year university in West Michigan. He would later call establishing Grand Valley one of his greatest accomplishments.



The Faculty Woodwind Quintet performs at the memorial service.

photo by Amanda Pitts



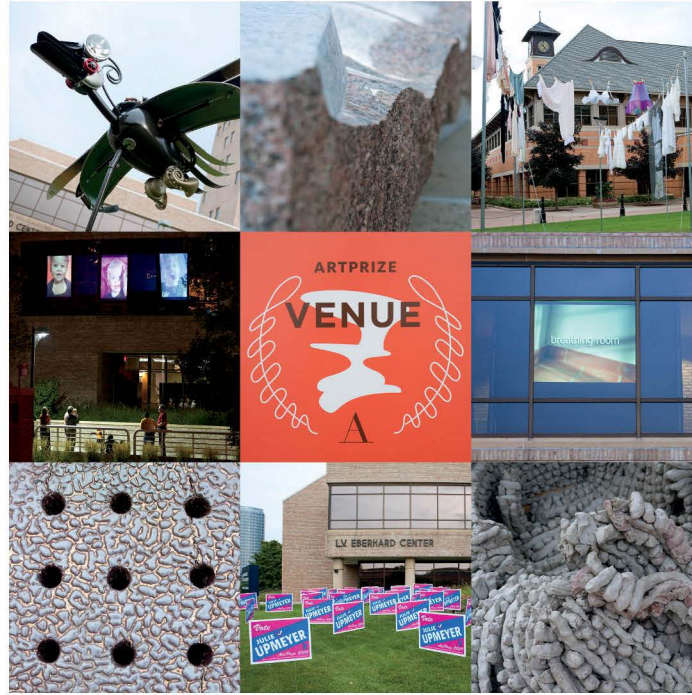
# Grand Valley links to ArtPrize

Many artists with links to Grand Valley participated in the international ArtPrize competition in Grand Rapids.

The work of 10 artists, including faculty and alumni, were exhibited at outdoor sites on the Pew Grand Rapids Campus, near the Meijer Public Broadcast Center and the DeVos Center courtyard. Additionally, student, faculty and alumni works were exhibited at other ArtPrize venues throughout Grand Rapids. ArtPrize was a two-week event that drew international, national and local artists who installed art at venues throughout a designated downtown area.

The DeVos Center also served as a voting location. Through social media, art patrons were asked to vote “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” for each piece of artwork. Voters narrowed the 1,200 pieces to 10 after the first week of the competition.

Henry Matthews, GVSU director of Galleries and Collections, said, “I have seen these kind of important art and cultural events bring significant changes to places like Venice, Kassel, Muenster, Miami, Chicago, and many others around the world, so it



photos by Amanda Pitts

Pictured clockwise from upper right: ‘Airing Dirty Laundry’ by Maggie Annerino, ‘Breathing Room’ by Deanna Morse, ‘Parallel Communication’ by the Contemporary Ceramics Association, ‘Campaign’ by Julie Upmeyer, ‘Blocks’ by Andrew Tankersley, ‘Giggling Babies’ by Kim Roberts, ‘Soft Tail Goose’ by John Schwarz and ‘Great Lakes Bench’ by Fritz Olsen.

is exciting for me to see what it might do for West Michigan.” Plans for next year’s Art Prize are underway.

The overall winner was New

York artist Ran Ortner, who received \$250,000 for his work “Open Water No. 24,” a nine-foot oil painting of waves.

## University sees record enrollment

Grand Valley officials announced another record enrollment for fall 2009. Total enrollment stands at 24,408 — up 2.2 percent from last fall. This is the 27th year in a row in which Grand Valley enrolled more students than the year before.

Grand Valley’s fall 2009 freshman class has an average GPA of 3.53 and an average ACT score of 24.0, which will likely keep Grand Valley’s freshman quality rank in the upper quartile of Michigan’s public universities.

“I am especially pleased with the increase in transfer students from community colleges as well as the growth in graduate students,” said Vice Provost Lynn McNamara Blue. “Across the board, students and their families recognize Grand Valley for its personal attention and commitment to teaching excellence.” Blue added that Grand Valley’s freshman-to-sophomore retention rate is third-best among the state’s 15 public universities.

## Longtime faculty members remembered

Hugo Salazar, longtime Grand Valley faculty member and the university’s first baseball coach, died in late January at his home in Florida. He was 79. Richard Veazey, associate professor of accounting and taxation, died October 4 at age 68.

Salazar joined Grand Valley’s faculty in 1965 as a Spanish teacher after earning a master’s degree from Michigan State University and a bachelor’s degree from Alma College. While at Grand Valley, he

took many student groups on study abroad trips to Spain and Mexico. He also helped establish a Foreign Language Day for area high school students. Salazar was the first baseball coach at Grand Valley, leading the team in 1968. He retired from Grand Valley in 1995.

His wife, Professor Emerita Laura Gardner Salazar, was a member of Grand Valley’s communications faculty from 1965-2000. Salazar’s family and the Modern Languages

and Literatures Department have established the Hugo Salazar Scholarship, which will support Spanish majors who are interested in studying abroad. For more information, contact the University Development office at (616) 331-6000.

Veazey began working for Grand Valley in 1979, and celebrated 30 years of service to the university in early September.

Last fall, Veazey established a scholarship that will help

accounting students who are pursuing master’s degrees get into the field faster. At that time, Veazey said establishing the scholarship was important, as he noticed how difficult it was for students to combine a work schedule and accounting classes.

Veazey earned a bachelor’s degree from Ferris State College, master’s of business administration from Central Michigan University, and a doctoral degree from St. Louis University.



# Grand Valley earns top national rankings

Grand Valley received the highest “green” rating among Michigan’s colleges and universities, according to an annual report by the Princeton Review. It was also ranked in several other national reports, and the Seidman College of Business was named among the nation’s best choices for business schools.

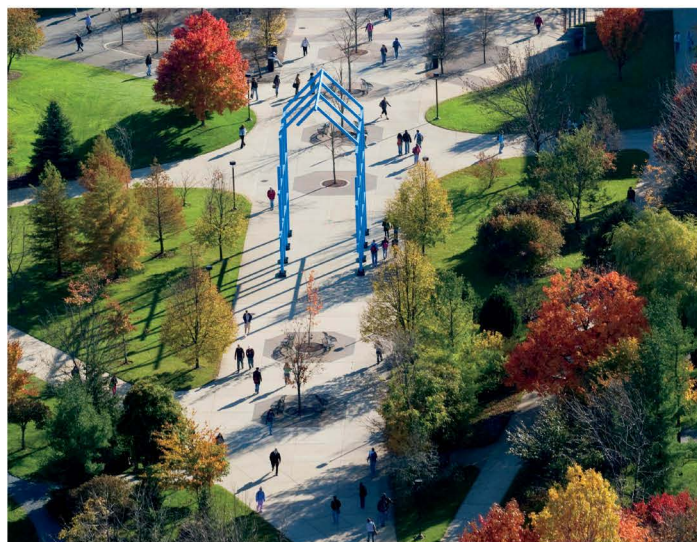
The Princeton Review, known for its reports concerning institutions of higher education, conducted its second annual Green Ratings report of 697 institutions in the United States. The rating is based on a scale of 60-99, considering the institutions’ environmental friendliness, policies and academic offerings. Grand Valley received a rating of 98; other state universities with rankings were Michigan State University (93), Western Michigan University (92), and

University of Michigan (89).

The university was also ranked the top “up and coming” institution in the Midwest by *U.S. News & World Report*. For its annual “Best Colleges 2010” publication, *U.S. News & World Report* asked the experts who respond to its annual peer assessment survey to identify schools that fit the profile of up-and-coming institutions.

For the fourth straight year, Grand Valley was selected as one of “America’s Best Colleges” in the same report. Grand Valley ranked 36th in the “Best Universities — Master’s” category. For the 14th year in a row, the university has been named one of “America’s 100 Best College Buys” by Institutional Research and Evaluation, Inc. in Georgia.

Seidman College of Business was listed in the *Best 301 Business Schools: 2010 Edition*



file photo

Pictured is an aerial view of the south end of the Allendale Campus. Grand Valley continues to earn national recognition, most recently for its commitment to sustainability.

by Princeton Review. The Princeton Review compiled information for the book from

surveys of 19,000 students attending 301 business schools from across the country.

## More veterans enrolling in Grand Valley under new GI bill

Grand Valley was among the colleges and universities listed by a magazine as being “military friendly” and doing the most to embrace U.S. veterans as students.

The magazine *GI Jobs* released its list, 2010 Military Friendly Schools, on August 17; it lists the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools that make it easy for veterans to enroll, have supportive programs for veterans and military spouses, and recruit and retain veterans as students.

This news comes when more veterans are enrolling in colleges using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which was enacted on August 1. The bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of service on

or after September 11, 2001.

John Koch plans to use the tuition benefits to earn a master’s degree in social work from Grand Valley. Koch served in the Army with the Judge Advocate General’s Corps as an attorney. He earned a law degree from the University of Nebraska, but seeks a social work background in order to eventually find a job to assist veterans programs.

After serving in Iraq, Koch was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, where many veterans recuperate from injuries. “I developed a sense of how much we need to take care of these people while I was at Fort Hood,” Koch said. “The Army is good at keeping people alive and helping them recover from their injuries, but how do we help them adjust to

life after the Army?”

Lisa Migazzi, ’03, served in the Coast Guard for four years; she continues to serve as a reservist in Grand Haven. The Grand Rapids resident is using the new GI Bill to cover tuition for the Graduate Teacher Certification program at Grand Valley; she had used the Montgomery GI Bill.

“Budgeting was the key with the old GI Bill, because it didn’t cover the cost of books, parking or household expenses,” Migazzi said. “The new bill offers peace of mind to veterans who want to go back to school since it covers tuition and gives eligible veterans a housing and book stipend.”



John Koch



Lisa Migazzi

Steven Lipnicki, director of Pew Student Services, said about 100 veterans enrolled at Grand Valley before the start of the fall semester. The university has created a Veterans Network of faculty and staff members who are knowledgeable about veterans issues; a Web site was also created, [www.gvsu.edu/veterans](http://www.gvsu.edu/veterans).



# University has new look in image campaign

People in West Michigan, the Detroit area and in Chicago are taking a new look at Grand Valley, thanks to the university's new image campaign, which kicked off in early October.

Centered around the word "Grand," messages such as "A Grand Value" and "A Grand Adventure" will appear on billboards and bus signs, as well as in television, print and Web advertisements throughout the fall and spring. All of the ads and signs will direct viewers to a new Web site, [www.GrandValue.net](http://www.GrandValue.net). Rhonda Lubberts, assistant vice president for Institutional Marketing, said the campaign will help support admissions representatives as they visit high schools and speak to prospective students.

Feedback on the campaign is welcomed and comments can be sent via the Web site. Lubberts said any tweaks will be made to the campaign before ads appear again in the spring. She added that while the campaign timing supports admissions, the messages elevate — and benefit — the entire university community.

"We need to tell the Grand Valley story to remind people — and tell new people — why GVSU is different and how they can benefit from being



photo by Amanda Pitts

(Top) Staff members from Institutional Marketing hand out t-shirts with the new image campaign to students.

educated here," Lubberts said.

Lubberts said the most highly rated source of information for parents and students continues to be word-of-mouth. "Faculty, staff, students, and alumni are all the most effective Grand Valley ambassadors," she said. "This new campaign will give them great messages to share."



## Environmentally friendly lighting company comes to MAREC

Fledgling startup company Logical Lighting Systems LLC plans to take high efficiency, environmentally friendly lighting options beyond America's living rooms and into

its malls, hospitals and office buildings. The company has moved into business incubation space at Grand Valley's Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center.

The move to MAREC, in Muskegon, provides Logical Lighting Systems and its two employees access to on-site lab facilities for product testing and evaluation, meeting and office space, as well as Grand Valley's business consultation and support services.

Arn Boezaart, interim director of MAREC, noted that research shows that more than 70 percent of all lighting in commercial buildings will be LED-based by 2030 — along with municipal street lighting and other outdoor lighting.

Logical Lighting Systems Company CEO Jason Jespersen said that while public attention has focused on residential conversion from incandescent and florescent lighting to more efficient sources, his company

will address the potential for energy and cost savings in workplaces and public spaces. He said office buildings, malls, hospitals and other public buildings account for 51 percent of total energy consumption of lighting in the U.S.

"This presents us with an enormous opportunity to leverage smart technologies, like LED lighting, to put a real dent in energy inefficiencies," Jespersen said.



## Professor establishes scholarship to aid doctoral nursing candidates

Grand Valley's Kirkhof College of Nursing welcomed its first doctoral students in August, and a caring supporter is helping new students take advantage of the program.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice will produce candidates who can hold joint appointments in clinical or academic settings. The combined roles will enable them to have a greater impact on improving health care systems and hands-on care. Jean Martin, associate professor of nursing, not only helped get the program off the ground, but also created a scholarship for doctoral candidates who are interested in child and adolescent health issues.

"Nurses prepared at this level will have extraordinary opportunities to be a part of the solution," Martin said.

The DNP is Grand Valley's second clinical doctoral program; physical therapy graduated its first doctoral students in 2007.

The Martin scholarship provides support during an especially rigorous course of study that takes two years for post-master's students to complete, and four or five years for post-bachelor's degree students.

President Thomas J. Haas said Martin's generosity not only supports students but it supports Grand Valley's position as a leader in nursing education in West Michigan. Grand Valley is the only university in the region to offer a DNP program. Haas added that a scholarship gift is a tremendous return on the investment made.

"Higher education is our community's best lever for a better future," Haas said.

"Through the 5,000 students involved in our programs for health sciences, we are the state's largest provider of health care professionals. This new investment in the Doctor of Nursing Practice supports a key professional role that can have a great impact in transforming health care."

Martin, a native of Holland, Michigan, earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Michigan, master's degree in maternal-child nursing from Boston University, and doctoral degree from Rush University in Chicago. In 2002, the Michigan Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners named her Pediatric Nurse Practitioner of the Year. She returned to West Michigan in 1977, and began working at Grand Valley in 1995.

"I was impressed not only by how much Grand Valley has grown in size, but also in quality. It's a place I really wanted to invest in, and investing in the future of nursing care is very important to me," Martin said.

Jaclynn Lubbers is the first recipient of the Martin scholarship and a member of the DNP's pioneer class. She said she is grateful for Martin's support, both financially and as a mentor.

As an undergraduate at Hope College, Lubbers met Martin through a clinical rotation and became inspired to switch her focus to pediatric nursing. Lubbers earned a master's degree in nursing from Grand Valley in 2000 and taught as an adjunct professor. Returning to Grand Valley for her doctoral degree was the natural choice, she said.

"I chose Grand Valley because of the tremendous faculty," she said. "I knew they would put



photos by Amanda Pitts

Jean Martin, left, poses with Jaclynn Lubbers, the first recipient of a scholarship that Martin established for doctoral nursing students.



President Thomas J. Haas signs scholarship papers with Martin during a reception in September in the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences.

together a top quality program that would help me take the next step professionally."

Linda Scott, professor of nursing and associate dean for KCON graduate programs, said, "The DNP

will allow professional nurses to successfully address the increasing complexity of health systems, effectively translate research into practice and policy, and improve quality of patient care."



## Health professions program bolstered by gift

**P**eter Renucci, once a professional soccer player, built a thriving business in West Michigan that provided reliable health care testing and analysis for other companies. When Renucci sold Continental Bio-Clinical Labs, he and his family continued to be a stakeholder in the area's health care community.

In August, Peter and Patricia Renucci continued their support of health care education at Grand Valley by establishing two scholarships: the Peter P. Renucci Family Clinical Lab Sciences Scholarship, and the Peter P. and Patricia R. Renucci Clinical Lab Sciences Scholarship.

Students who earn degrees in Clinical Laboratory Science assist physicians during the care, diagnosis, and treatment of patients. Their work is often critical in the diagnostic process. They can work in a variety of settings, from hospitals and clinics, to research facilities, public health institutions or pharmaceutical labs. The program is growing and admits about 30 students annually.

Peter Renucci said establishing the scholarships serves as a way to remember the people who worked for him at CBC Labs. "Health care is a



photos by Amanda Pitts

The Renucci family is pictured; back row, from left, Ann Marie and John Renucci, Paul and Jennifer Renucci. Seated are Patricia and Peter Renucci.

business, but it's more about helping people," said Peter Renucci. "Pat and I felt that Grand Valley does an excellent job in preparing students to enter a field that is so important to us."

Roy Olsson, dean of the College of Health Professions, which houses Clinical Lab Science, said the Renuccis'

gift "ensures that there will be a steady supply of the skilled health care professionals that local institutions require to help take care of all of us. We're very grateful for this legacy of support."

Maribeth Wardrop, vice president for Development, said that Peter Renucci took an interesting path to success. Peter Renucci immigrated to Chicago from Italy and "only knew two words in English: Coca-Cola."

"He went from limited English to becoming a successful entrepreneur," Wardrop said.

"Peter played professional soccer in Italy and the U.S., but it turned out he was even better at building a business."

Renucci has also served on the boards for the Blodgett Butterworth Health Care Foundation and the DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation. Peter and Pat were lead donors for the Renucci Hospitality House, on Spectrum Health's downtown campus, and they have supported building additions for DeVos Children's Hospital.

"Pat and I felt that Grand Valley does an excellent job in preparing students to enter a field that is so important to us."

— Peter Renucci







## The Laker beat goes on — by Mary Isca Pirkola

Their presence is felt long before they ever step foot in Lubbers Stadium.

Whistles tweet and a rhythmic beat permeates the campus each August, as early preparations for the new season begins. One false step or missed directive can send the whole team into turmoil in front of an audience of thousands. Welcome to marching band.

During band camp, held just a few weeks before the first home football game, the members of the Grand Valley Marching Band spend an intense week learning new music and their

drills, as critical as any athlete's.

"We do four shows plus the pre-game show and then a compilation show, so you're really looking at six shows," said John Martin, the new associate director of bands and director of athletic bands.

Martin, who is completing his doctorate of music arts degree at the University of Southern Mississippi, has written the drills and arranged much of the music for this year's halftime shows. Striving to diversify each performance, the season includes a '60s show, a Halloween theme, a jazz

program, and classic cartoons — think Bugs Bunny and friends.

"If you want to be colloquial, the marching band is on the front porch of the university because of its visibility," Martin said. "They are ambassadors in a sense, as well as providers of entertainment for athletic events. There's also the *l'esprit de corps*, the spirit of the team, working together as one, just like the football team."

Director of University Bands Barry Martin (no relation to John) has seen it all during a dozen years directing the Grand Valley Marching Band.

"When you take a look at the marching band, you see a real cross-section of the university, a melting pot of students," said Barry. "Participants are freshmen through seniors, with varying degrees of ability. Some are excellent marchers who have trouble with the music. Others do well with the music, but find it difficult to play and march at the same time. We've had a few students every year who have never been in a marching band before, so are taking this opportunity?"

The week-long band camp, held at the end of August, is a



“When you take a look at the marching band, you see a real cross-section of the university, a melting pot of students.”

— Barry Martin  
director of university bands

team effort by Barry, John, and Ted Bazany, assistant director of bands. They spend intensive hours each morning and evening teaching and rehearsing the marching drills outdoors.

The director, perched in a 25-foot tower, sets the pace of the rehearsal. The directors on the ground, including the two drum majors, divide the field into quarters, each taking a section to do cleaning drills. These might include correcting a glitch in a diagonal line of marchers, or improving the arc of a curve. Then there are the phasing issues — trying to coordinate the movements between the marching band’s brass, woodwinds, percussionists and the flag movements of the Color Guard.

Afternoons are spent indoors helping students learn and rehearse their music. Smaller instrument sections meet early in the day, and then later, all 150-plus band members rehearse together. Somehow, during this limited time each year something magical happens, and they become a cohesive group all working together toward the same goal — to do their best and provide an exciting and entertaining program.

Carlos Sanchez is a freshman trumpet player who spent four years in the marching band at Lee High School in Wyoming. “This is a lot harder; the marching drills cover a larger area and with much quicker movements,” he said.

“Still, I like the challenge and the opportunity to add movement to my performance, which you don’t get to do in other types of bands.”

Brittany Carney played piccolo for four years and spent one year as a drum major at Orchard View High School in Muskegon. She joined the Grand Valley Marching Band this year, her junior year as a music education major. “I found out I know many of the other band members from my other music classes,” she said.

One of the biggest misunderstandings about marching band is the idea that you need to be a music major to participate. “That’s absolutely not true,” Barry said. “Currently we have members from 55 different degree programs, which makes it really special for me. We see music majors in all of our other music classes, but this is a really fun opportunity to see the nursing or engineering or chemistry majors and really get to know them as well.”

Another common misunderstanding, especially for freshmen, is that they won’t have enough time to do this. While the directors concede that it is a lot of work, they exclaim that it is very doable. They try to limit rehearsal time because they realize students’ primary purpose is to work on their degrees. They also make sure the students are keeping up with their academic work.

“These are kids that may have

*photos by Amanda Pitts unless noted*

(On page 14) Weeks of marching drills and rehearsals pay off as the Grand Valley Marching Band performs for a packed stadium of Laker fans at the first home football game on September 12.

(Center photo) Band camp is a team effort by students and three faculty members. Barry Martin is pictured conducting; John Martin and Ted Bazany confer in the background.



*photo above and below by Elizabeth Lienau*







photo by Amanda Pitts

spent seven, eight, nine years practicing on an instrument — what a great way to continue that,” John said. “Some kids even play more than one instrument, so it’s also an opportunity to try something new. College is about balance. Whether being in a music group, an athlete, or in a sorority or fraternity or other club, students do need a break from their other types of work.”

Marching band is actually taken in fall semester as a tuition-free, one-credit class that can count as an elective. Students also receive a modest cash stipend at the end of the season for their commitment and service to the university. Since 2001, that commitment has included out-of-town championship games.

Each year’s Homecoming game includes performances by the alumni band. “As a young university, we didn’t start the marching band until 1977, so we don’t have a huge number of alumni. We do get a nice turnout, including people from the very first band, who come back every year,” Barry said.

Alumni Band members perform Grand Valley’s alma mater, “Hail to Thee Grand

Valley,” with the current band during the pre-game show. They also play from the stands during the game, and then a number of them play during the halftime show. “We teach them the music the same day as the game, so it’s pretty fast, but fun,” said Barry.

One of the most special aspects Barry said is watching the students transform. “Come that first performance, you still see some deer-in-the-headlights looks, but by the end of the first performance the band has really jelled and they have worked hard, but had a lot of fun.”

John agreed and said, “It’s all about watching the kids grow. Like every team, they work hard and go out and do their best, that’s all we expect.”

For a complete schedule of marching band performances at this season’s home football games visit [www.gvsu.edu/marchingband](http://www.gvsu.edu/marchingband).

Above: During an intensive week-long band camp, students brave the August heat in a campus parking lot marked to resemble the football field.

At right: Regal uniforms add to the pageantry of marching band performances.



photo by Elizabeth Lienau





photos by Bernadine Carey-Tucker

# Coming to America

—by Brian J. Bowe

## Sisters from Yemen set stage for family’s link to Grand Valley

**O**n a cold winter day in 1998, four young sisters enrolled in Lincoln Elementary School in the small Michigan town of Coldwater. As recent emigrants from Yemen, they spoke no English and were just coming to terms with a new culture. But when their father, Abdulelah Alsoofy, spoke to the school secretary, he said, “These four girls are going to go to college.”

Now, those four Alsoofy sisters — Petra, 23; Bilquis, 22, Kaifa, 21; and Saltana, 20 — are all making their mark at Grand Valley. The youngest of

10 children, the sisters are the first members of their family to pursue higher education. They’ve immersed themselves in Grand Valley life, both inside and outside the classroom. All four are active in Grand Valley’s Muslim Students Association, and they were honored by the Office of Student Life during the “I Am Grand Valley” campaign, which recognizes student leaders nominated by fellow students and faculty members.

Petra is, in some ways, the high-energy ringleader of the four. She is a political science and social studies double major

with education and Middle East studies minors. She served as president of the Muslim Students Association last year and works as an Arabic tutor. Next year she will serve as general secretary of both the statewide and the national Model Arab League. She is also a fellow in the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies’ Peter Cook Leadership Academy, an experience that she has found transformative.

“It made me realize that there’s something big out there for me if I want to pursue it. I don’t know what it is, but it feels as if

Back row from left, Bilquis, Saltana, Petra and Kaifa stand behind their parents, Abdulelah and Safiah Alsoofy.





photo by Bernadine Carey-Tucker

Saltana Alsoofy calls the Children's Enrichment Center her 'happy place.'

I can do something important," Petra said. "It really pushed me to focus on being more professional and work on taking advantage of the opportunities that are out there for me."

Bilquis is majoring in sociology with a psychology minor, though she was uncertain of her direction at first.

"I switched it so many times," Bilquis said, listing a diverse string of interests that includes health professions and art. "I had a hard time distinguishing between what I wanted to do and what my family expected of me," she said. She works in the Office of Multicultural Affairs and is an active member of the student group To Write Love On Her Arms, which raises awareness of topics like depression and suicide.

Bilquis is usually described as the quiet one of the four. She and Petra are especially close, and their different personalities work in tandem.

"Whatever we're fighting for or whatever we're trying to do, it's almost always the same thing. And if you've got one person doing all the yelling for you, it works," Petra said.

Kaifa is a sophomore social work major. "I wanted to do something involved with helping people," she said. "In Coldwater, I volunteered a lot, doing translations at the hospital and for the WIC program." She's starting her second term on Student Senate and is vice president of the Muslim Students Association.

Saltana called Kaifa "a dreamer" adding, "She has goals and visions of what she wants to accomplish, sometimes you can say they're over-the-top."

Saltana is a student in the Frederik Meijer Honors College, majoring in accounting with a minor in psychology. She works at the Children's Enrichment Center on campus. "I love it there," she said. "It's my happy

place, because I love little kids." She is also serving a second term on Student Senate.

Kaifa described Saltana as someone who "likes to get things done — especially when it comes to her school work. It drives me crazy, because that's totally not me. She's like, 'I have to get this done, I have to get this perfect and I have to figure out my life right now!'"

For the four sisters, their journey to Grand Valley began far away, on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

## Coming to America

The Alsoofy family hails from a small village in Yemen of 3,000 people, but they also have a deep connection to the United States.

"My dad has been a U.S. citizen since the early '70s," Petra said. "He would go back and forth. He would stay here for a couple years, go back for a couple months. The last time he went back to Yemen, my grandma was really old, and she asked him not to go back to the States until she died."

That last visit stretched to 13 years, a period in which Safiah, their mother, had her four youngest children. Since Abdulelah spent so much time overseas, Petra's birth was the first he witnessed. Because of that, Petra said he took a special interest in her development. "I was always with him," she said. "He would take me to work. I don't ever remember being around the house."

When it was time to start school, their protective mother worried about them and insisted that Petra and Bilquis start the first grade together, even though they are a year apart. Two years later, Kaifa and Saltana likewise started school in the same grade. Because of that, the four of them are frequently mistaken as two sets of twins.

By the late '90s, Abdulelah decided to bring his family to the U.S. to improve their living conditions. The move was a big adventure for the young girls.

"It was a totally different environment," said Kaifa, who was 9 years old at the time. "We never saw snow before in our lives. We didn't know anyone, we didn't know the language, we didn't know anything. Zero. It was really hard. That was the only thing I didn't like at the beginning, but that's also what made me work harder to learn English faster. I hated to think that people were talking around me and I had no idea what they were saying."

Saltana echoed that sentiment. "The hardest part was talking to people. Right when I got to school I wanted to befriend people and talk to them, and I couldn't do that unless I knew the language. That was a great motivation for me to learn the language, but that was hard for me — wanting to do it faster than I could," Saltana said.

For Petra, the move brought special responsibilities. "When we came to the U.S., my mom was sick and needed to come here for medical assistance," she said. "My dad was working all the time, and because my mom was sick and my dad was out of the house, I had to become the adult in the house and sort of watch over my sisters — although we're the same age. I kind of skipped my teenage years and went into adulthood right away."

Over time, four of the six older Alsoofy siblings also immigrated to the U.S. — three of them settling in Michigan.

## Life at Grand Valley

As Petra and Bilquis finished high school, Petra said she knew she wanted to pursue higher education. "All I knew was that I wanted to continue with school," she said. "I didn't care where. I didn't care how I got there, I just knew I had to go."

But at first, their father was torn between two cultures. On the one hand, he wanted his daughters to become educated; on the other hand, because of his traditional Yemeni family values,





he had a hard time accepting his young daughters leaving home. It was up to Bilquis and Petra to convince him.

“We were the first two who fought for what we wanted, and Petra was the one who presented our ideas to the parents. I call her my fighter girl,” Bilquis said.

Petra and Bilquis began the process of filling out applications and making campus visits. They looked at University of Michigan-Dearborn and Michigan State University before falling in love with Grand Valley. “Everyone felt really comfortable,” Petra said.

In the fall of 2006, Petra and Bilquis moved to campus and lived in the Women in Science and Engineering Living Center. “It was not just a transition for me and Bilquis, it was a transition for our parents,” Petra said. “It was their first time sending their girls away from home, so finding someplace that had an all-women dorm was very important to them.”

Right away, Petra immersed herself in campus activities. “I did a little bit too much,” she said. “I think that’s my personality — I like to do a lot. And coming to a university that has more than 260 organizations, I couldn’t keep myself from saying, ‘Oh, I want to do this, and that, and everything else.’”

Kaifa said that when she and Saltana followed two years later, they benefited from the trail blazed by their sisters. As first-generation college students, they had to figure out how much to get involved. “I

think we each built that among ourselves,” Kaifa said. “Petra and Bilquis were the first ones to start getting involved in high school — being in organizations and clubs and doing community service. Saltana and I built on it. Our dad and mom supported us, but we built it ourselves.”

The sisters weren’t the only ones who found themselves immersed in Grand Valley culture. Once Abdulelah and Safiah had a quartet of daughters at Grand Valley, they decided to follow them to Allendale. “They said, ‘It doesn’t make sense for each of you to rent your own place,’” Petra said.

Moving back home after two years of autonomy proved tough at first for the independent-minded Petra. “I got really comfortable doing my own things,” she said. “We had to compromise a little bit. They’re always asking us, ‘Why are you doing so much? Are you going to change the world?’”

## Culture Shocks

The push and pull between protective parents and students who are just finding their independence is nothing new, but for the Alsoofys there is a cultural component. The sisters are in a unique position in which they are fully American, yet

still fully Yemeni. They all agreed that the reality of that has its upsides and downsides.

“I think it depends on each situation,” Saltana said. “Because with each culture you have things you can and can’t do. As of right now, I guess you could say we’ve got it pretty balanced. We still have our culture and we can go back home, but we’re here and we can be involved. We can be part of the greater community but still maintain our individuality.”

Saltana said being comfortable in both Arab and American settings can have good and bad points. “For example, when you’re in Arab settings, you don’t put your feet on the table — it’s considered rude,” she said. “I would notice things like that. I wouldn’t take them personally, because it’s a different setting, a different environment, but I would notice them.”

More problematic, she noted, is when people who are unaware of Islamic dietary restrictions and provide food at events that contains pork — like pepperoni pizza, for example.

But all of the sisters



Bilquis, Petra and Kaifa (pictured in photos from left) Alsoofy are all active on campus.

agreed that they like being a resource to help further cultural understanding.

“I feel like everyone should be exposed to something different and be able to sit next to someone from a different culture or a different religion — someone not like you — and still be comfortable,” Saltana said. “I want to be approachable and make it comfortable for people. I want them to feel like, ‘It’s OK, you can ask me whatever questions you want.’”

Kaifa agreed, adding: “I actually like it when people ask me, rather than assuming things about me. It all depends on how you present yourself. The media is always going to say things but you have the chance to prove that wrong, because you’re the one representing your religion and yourself. Whatever I do reflects on me and my religion as well.”



# GVSU Police Academy

— by Dottie Barnes

## Setting the bar for law enforcement education



**They are different** than they were 16 weeks ago. They stand straighter, are more confident, and are well-trained and ready for service. They are graduates of the Grand Valley State University Police Academy.

"They wouldn't be here if they weren't worthy," said Frank Hughes, interim director of Grand Valley's School of Criminal Justice.

About 30 students take part in the police academy each year. They're chosen for their academic excellence and personal integrity. "It takes a special kind of student to complete the intense, 16-week training," said Julie Yunker, director of the police academy. "This unique training goes above and beyond what the state requires. Often the recruits are putting in 12-hour days." Those days can include classroom instruction, physical training, scenario training, defense tactics practice and inspections.

Along with classroom

instruction on a variety of topics, recruits will spend more than 50 hours on a firing range in preparation for a state mandated test that covers more than marksmanship. They will also spend more than 35 hours on driving courses and will eventually have to drive the course without hitting any cones in a prescribed amount of time.

Recruits can be seen marching in formation around the Allendale Campus as part of their 40 hours of physical training. "Physical training includes military drills which teach our recruits many things," said Yunker. "It teaches self-discipline, how to work as a group, confidence and attention to detail."

Grand Valley's Police

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

Recruits stand at attention while GVSU Police Academy Director Julie Yunker performs an inspection.





photo courtesy of GVSU Police Academy

Recruits receive scenario training as part of their 16 weeks of instruction.

Academy was established 35 years ago and is housed in the College of Community and Public Service. The program is certified by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and prepares students to take the MCOLES licensing exam. Grand Valley has the highest pass rate in the state and a majority of graduates are employed in the profession within a year.

The academy's foundation remains its philosophy of a well-rounded, liberal education that teaches people to think critically. "Police officers are trusted by the citizenry to deal with problems that arise when we're not at our best," said William Crawley, associate dean of the College of Community and Public Service. "Besides being educated on the latest laws, they must know how to problem solve, critically think through situations, and know how to interact with folks in terms of crisis."

Crawley said the success and stellar reputation of the academy are attributed to several things. "The program is successful because of the cadre of instructors. We have

instructors with hundreds of years of experience among them in various areas of law enforcement," he said. There are 60 instructors; most are licensed law enforcement officers working in the field they teach; the remainder are criminal justice professionals and educators.

"Our program is committed to the professionalism of law enforcement," Hughes said. "I tell my students who are thinking about joining the academy that I will hold them to a higher standard in the classroom." About two-thirds of recruits come from Grand Valley's undergraduate programs and will complete their bachelor's degrees at the end of the summer program. Other recruits must have an associate's degree to apply.

Michael Dean, a sociology major from Muskegon, graduated from the academy in August and said he knew when he was in high school that he wanted to be a police officer. "I had a teacher who was a police officer and that's how I became interested in the field," Dean said. "I knew Grand Valley's program would be difficult and challenging, but it has a

great reputation. I enjoyed it."

Fellow recruit Lindsey Moorehead, a native of Grand Haven who was named recruit commander, said the program was demanding but gratifying. "What I've learned in the academy will help me in every aspect of my life. I plan to move up in the ranks of my profession and the academy has prepared me to do that," she said.

A successful recruit will show good communication and listening skills, but

character is considered most important. "You gain knowledge through the academy, but character and work ethic are most important," said Hughes. "This will make or break you as a police officer."

Hughes spent 25 years with the Michigan State Police before retiring in 1998 as post commander in Mt. Pleasant. He said: "Character applies to any job, but especially for a police officer. Often times you're dealing with



photo courtesy of GVSU Police Academy

Recruits practice defense tactics and will also spend more than 50 hours on a firing range, more than 35 hours on driving courses and participate in 40 hours of physical training.



the worst humanity has to offer. Character cannot be overemphasized. Recruits must learn that they're not just a crime fighter, they're part of the community — a majority of the job is providing service."

Crawley said it is a special kind of person who gravitates to the structure of the academy and the profession. "You have authority, but not power; it's a position of service," said Crawley. "I think you have to believe that what you do does matter, does make a difference. People don't tend to get into policing for the money. They get into it because they believe their life experiences give them something to offer."

Tim Groenhof graduated from the academy in August. In high school, he was part of a ride-along program with the Holland Police Department. "That's when I knew I wanted to be a police officer," Groenhof said. "I knew I wanted to serve my community and Grand Valley's academy has the prestige and reputation of producing recruits that can do the job."

Graduates of Grand Valley's Police Academy are serving communities all over the state and nation. Jon Hulsing, who presides over the 20th Circuit Court in Grand Haven, graduated from the academy in 1985. "It was demanding, both physically and mentally," said Hulsing. "The instructors demanded and expected perfection and that was good. It helped prepare me to handle emotionally charged situations as a police officer and helped me develop empathy for the people and situations I deal with now in my current position. In our profession you're not allowed to have a bad day; you can't bring your personal issues to the job or the system suffers. Our job is public service."

Allegan County Sheriff Blaine Koops graduated from the academy in 1976 and served as its director from



photo by Amanda Pitts

1988-89. "It is the greatest academy in the state. It was an extremely valuable experience for me," said Koops. "The academy builds leaders. Not law enforcement leaders, but community leaders. The liberal education piece that Grand Valley provides is so important to what we do. It is the cornerstone of what you get out of the experience. It helps us relate to our community on a deeper level."

While Grand Valley's academy is rigorous, it is designed to help recruits achieve success. A mentoring program matches each recruit with a law enforcement officer from the community. The academy also uses all educational and life experiences to transform recruits from student, to cadet, to law enforcement professional.

"I think the biggest transition for them is to mature very quickly, to get a sense of confidence but not cockiness," said Hughes. "I can close my eyes and remember the day I graduated; my father pinning the badge on me. He was an immigrant from Scotland and I remember seeing the sense of pride he had."

"I felt a great sense of accomplishment ... that I had physically met the challenges. It really was a great feeling. The profession is not for everybody. It's as rewarding as you want it to be."

"The liberal education piece that Grand Valley provides is so important to what we do. It is the cornerstone of what you get out of the experience. It helps us relate to our community on a deeper level."

— Sheriff Blaine Koops



photo courtesy of GVSU Police Academy

Recruit commander Lindsey Moorehead (above) takes notes during classroom instruction. Recruits also receive defense tactics training during the 16-week academy.





## Regina McClinton

associate professor  
of biology

Regina McClinton, who specializes in plant cell biology, said she fell in love with science in junior high. "I remember when I started learning about genes, and I thought, 'Well, this is just crazy,' and from then, my curiosity was funneled in this direction," she said.

*photography by Adam Bird*



# Early Alert

— by Mary Isca Pirkola

## *fosters student success*

Dana Munk noticed one of her students was failing in class, but also remembered him as someone who had failed a previous class of hers.

“I had chatted with him in the previous class and was under the impression he was going to get help,” said Munk, associate professor and assistant chair of movement science. “When I approached him in

the new class, he confided in me that he was failing all of his courses. I couldn’t convince him to seek the help he so desperately needed because he was concerned it would appear as a detriment on his record, which is not even true.”

Instead, she did the next best thing. She initiated an intervention by contacting an Early Alert advisor, who

then contacted the student. Munk encourages other faculty members to view an Early Alert referral as a powerful resource to help struggling students.

The Early Alert and Student Success Program, which began four years ago, is part of the university’s commitment to fostering undergraduate student success. The program offers a variety of new initiatives, such as referrals, but also complements existing programs at the Advising Resource Center and elsewhere on campus.

“Our students are coming from a culture where they don’t want to be labeled as different, or stand out from the crowd, so it may be very hard for them to ask for help,” said Leijhi Koval, director of the Early Alert and Student Success Program. “The Early Alert referral process allows faculty and staff the opportunity to initiate intervention for any student who might be struggling with academic or personal issues. We’ve designed the referral process to protect the student’s privacy and have provided an easy online referral form. Referrals can also be made by simply picking up the phone and calling our offices.”

Research in this field has found that the earlier struggling students — freshmen in particular — are identified and provided help, the better their chance of success. The

university actively tracks mid-semester and end-of-semester reports on all students with a grade point average below the 2.0 needed to meet academic standards. Advisors from Early Alert and across the university then reach out to this group, inviting them to make an appointment.

“Many times students will come in saying they are on academic probation and after discussing their situation learn that it is much worse than that. They are in threat of academic dismissal,” Koval said. “We work very hard with them in developing a strategy to get them back in good standing.”

### Divide and conquer

The Early Alert and Student Success Program provides an umbrella of services, including the referral process. Another element, Secondary Admit Assistance, was added to complement the longstanding Graduation Persistence Assistance program. Each program part addresses specific needs for a wide range of students.

When Early Alert advisors first meet with students, they work together to identify the true source of problems and develop an individualized assistance plan. One assessment tool helps to identify barriers

### Checklist to Identify Barriers to Success

- Lack of academic preparation for the coursework
- Ineffective time-management
- Course was more difficult than I was prepared for
- Focused on social life rather than school
- Poor study habits
- Poor test-taking skills
- Lack of motivation
- Health issues
- Missed too much class
- Did not understand college policies/options
- Personal crisis
- Problems with roommates/friends/family
- Transportation problems
- Work got in the way
- Financial difficulties
- Childcare concerns
- Lack of clear career goals
- Lack of support
- Sought tutoring too late

source: *Early Alert and Student Success Program*



to success through a series of questions about work and activity schedules. It also includes a list of more than a dozen possible factors that may have affected their performance, from poor study habits or difficulty of coursework, to transportation problems or health issues. Some otherwise good students struggle with severe test anxiety, while others have trouble with noise or other distractions in the room.

“It most often is more than one issue that is giving them difficulty, and this helps to clarify and identify them,” Koval said. “They might not even realize what the issues are until we try to articulate them, and looking at a checklist prods them to consider if these areas are causing them problems.”

Once hurdles are identified, the second part of each student’s individualized assistance is the development of a success plan: a specific task list or to do list to follow.

“They aren’t done all at one time. It is an ongoing process with short-term and long-term goals,” said Koval. “We point them to the resources available for their particular needs and encourage them to keep coming back to add the next step to help them continue to improve.”

A student who wished to remain anonymous wanted to share her experience with GPA services, in order to encourage other students to seek help. “I was the first in my family to attend college and didn’t know what to expect,” she said. “I came in not knowing what I wanted to study and didn’t have much focus. My grades were slipping and I didn’t know why. Even after I selected psychology as my major, I still kept slipping until, in my junior year, I was in danger of academic dismissal. I started doubting that I was college material and thought about dropping out, but then attended a GPA workshop given by Jackie Rautio (an Early Alert

program advisor). She gave me hope and the realization that I wasn’t the only one struggling.”

Support for this student included personal sessions at the Counseling Center and the tools to learn the study skills she had not developed in high school. She learned how to take better notes in class, and how to study so that she could retain the material not just for an exam, but after. By stopping in a couple of times a week, she also had the element of accountability to keep her going. “Early on I realized that these people really wanted to see me succeed — it wasn’t just a job they were doing,” she said. “I had my best semester ever and am so happy now I know

how to continue to succeed.”

Academic progress has been tracked for students who participated in GPA advising services and met with an advisor at least three times during Fall 2008 or Winter 2009 semester. Of these students, 79 percent and 62 percent, respectively, returned to good academic standing after that semester.

“That’s significant,” said Koval, “and depending on whether they are freshman or sophomore standing they could, for example, move from the jeopardy of academic dismissal to instead being on probation, giving them some time to improve their grade point average. We provide not only a safety net, but



“She saw me as an individual and understood my goals and concerns and was able to direct me toward a wide range of services.”

— Amy Yik, student

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

Leijhi Koval, director of the Early Alert and Student Success Program, collaborates with academic advisors, faculty members and other campus offices to get students connected to whatever services they need. On page 24 is a checklist, one of many tools available online for students.

some valuable tools to help get them back on track.”

## Secondary Admit Assistance

Another area of assistance is support for students interested in secondary admit programs, such as nursing, education and engineering. Students who are not meeting the grade





“An Early Alert referral is a powerful resource for faculty to help struggling students.”

— Dana Munk,  
associate professor of movement science

point average requirement are identified and provided resources at several points in their academic careers.

“Many of these programs allow students to declare their major in a pre-program, such as pre-nursing, pre-engineering, pre-computer science information systems,” Koval said. “Others requiring secondary admit without a pre-program, such as athletic training and social work candidacy, still require students to meet admission criteria.

“We try to serve both sets of students, those trying to keep on track to be admitted and those who met the criteria for admission yet are now having difficulty.”

Among the Early Alert students who sought secondary admit assistance through the Advising Resource Center last year, 512 students had already declared a major. Koval credits that high number to the fact

they work collaboratively with the other advisors to keep everyone informed.

“It is really nice to have a partner to work with the students who are struggling,” said Jean Barry, an associate professor of nursing. “The assistance provided helps us as well as our students.”

Nancy Giardina, assistant vice president for Academic and Student Affairs, cited a university-wide academic advising self study that gave 10 recommendations. She said: “One of the recommendations was to create advising centers for all of the colleges, so students, no matter what their major, could seek help. So now what we are working on is better communication among all of these centers, and how that should flow. All the advisors on campus are working toward the same goal — the student’s success.”

Giardina stresses that Early

Alert advisors collaborate with others, from academic advisors and faculty, to other student service offices, such as Housing or Multicultural Affairs. “When a student walks in the door looking for help, we don’t want to turn them away by telling them to go elsewhere,” she said. “We want to get them started with the services they need and ultimately lead them back to their academic area. We need to continue to close the loop. It isn’t an either/or, academic versus personal advising, but a continuum of services.”

Student Amy Yik chose to share her story in hopes of encouraging other students. As a freshman she battled depression and feelings of isolation. “I commuted to school and did not build social connections on campus,” she said. “It was not long before my GPA reflected my struggles.”

Yik also wanted to participate in sorority life, but her low

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

Jackie Rautio, an Early Alert program advisor, discusses the variety of services available to students.

GPA did not comply with Grand Valley’s requirements. After Connie Dang, director of Multicultural Affairs, introduced her to the Early Alert Program, Yik met with Koval.

“It was one of the best decisions I ever made in college,” said Yik. “Instantly we were able to connect on a level I didn’t know was possible. She saw me as an individual and understood my goals and concerns and was able to direct me toward a wide range of services. I am no longer on probation and became co-founder of an Asian interest sorority group. I challenge other students to take advantage of the Early Alert Program and other Grand Valley Services to reach their dreams.”

For more information about the Early Alert and Student Success Program, call (616) 331-2379, or visit [www.gvsu.edu/earlyalert](http://www.gvsu.edu/earlyalert).



## Zelenka strokes closer to Olympics after summer with elite rowers

— by Michele Coffill

Looking only to stay in shape and meet new people, Sarah Zelenka signed up for Grand Valley's rowing team as a freshman. That seemingly small step five years ago began a path that could lead Zelenka to the Olympic stage.

After graduation in December, Zelenka will move to Princeton, New Jersey, where she will begin training with the U.S. women's Olympic rowing team. The invitation to train with the national team came after Zelenka's performance at the Under-23 World Championships held in the Czech Republic in July.

Zelenka is the first woman from Grand Valley's club team to make the national team in preparation for the Olympics or World Championships. Two Laker men have rowed for U.S. teams: Barry Klein was an alternate at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, and Dana Schmunck earned a silver medal at the 2002 World Championships in Switzerland.

After a summer training camp in Princeton, Zelenka was picked for the women's four without coxswain boat. Her other teammates were varsity rowers from Harvard, University of Michigan and University of Wisconsin. The team won the final at the world trials in early July and secured a spot on the national team headed for the Czech Republic.

"Coming from a club sport, I think some people would view me as being at a disadvantage because we don't have the resources a varsity sport has," Zelenka said. "But our program is based on the schedule of a

varsity program and our coaches have experience with that."

Head coach John Bancheri agreed it's rare for a club sport athlete to be picked for a national team, but added that Zelenka's practice times on the indoor rowing machine and her determination speak volumes about her skills. Her transformation to an elite rower started during her junior year, he said.

"You could really see her scores improve on the ergometer and in the weight training sessions," Bancheri said. "Much of that comes from being dedicated enough to put in second workouts outside of the required practice."

Zelenka's national reputation was also boosted after she helped Grand Valley's women's varsity team win the prestigious Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia in May over other NCAA Division I competitors.

Competing at Worlds, Zelenka's boat qualified for the finals by finishing second in an earlier heat. Zelenka understood that the competition would be tough, but said she was surprised during the first day's heats.

"I was still a little shocked after the first race; we got killed," said Zelenka, a native of Itasca, Illinois. "But it was good and we changed some things and were able to make it to the grand finals." During the final race, the U.S. boat finished 2 seconds behind leader Belarus for sixth place.

Zelenka, a health professions major, said the experience was unforgettable. "It was such a tremendous time. We stayed at



photo by Amanda Pitts

Sarah Zelenka will begin training with the U.S. women's Olympic rowing team in January. She is pictured in Grand Valley's crew team boathouse.

the same hotel, ate together and took a shuttle back and forth from the course," she said. It was her second trip overseas; the first was with Grand Valley rowing, when the team competed in the Henley Royal Regatta last year in London.

In January Zelenka will focus on training with the national team and trying to secure a spot on the 2010 team that will prepare for the World Championships in New Zealand. If she is successful next year, the 2012 Olympics in London become more of a possibility.

It's a far cry from her initial rowing experience. "When I

first started, it was so foreign to me. I remember thinking that we were so far away from the dock and I have no idea what I'm doing," Zelenka said. At that time, she was training at 5:45 a.m. with the varsity team rather than the novice class because of conflicts with her academic schedule. Bancheri said most freshmen would have lasted a day or two on that schedule.

"Not Sarah. She was on time and never missed a practice," he said. "She watched the same video of the rowing stroke every morning and had the will to improve that any coach would appreciate."





# JIM BACHMEIER

With decreases in state funding and increases in operating costs, most people would not want Jim Bachmeier's job. As vice president for Finance and Administration, Bachmeier's job is to pay Grand Valley's bills and manage its assets. He has worked at Grand Valley since 1995 and started his current role in 2006. Bachmeier took time to explain details of the state budget and give a fiscal outlook for the university to *Grand Valley Magazine's* Michele Coffill.

**GRAND VALLEY MAGAZINE:** What is it about accounting and finance that appeals to you?

**JIM BACHMEIER:** The part of accounting that appeals to me is that you understand what's going on in an organization by following the flow of funds, and the flow of funds has a great deal of impact on what an organization chooses to do.

In the traditional sense, people think of accountants with the green eyeshades on doing the number crunching, but it really can and does evolve into the prioritization of helping people understand how much things cost and how much we have available. It seems that financial people are better at asking the questions that help people prioritize.

But — having said that — never let financial people set the priorities of an organization.

**GVM:** Why do you say that?

**JB:** We might just do the things that are the cheapest, not the things that are worth doing. But while financial people can't set the priorities, they have to make sure that the priorities are being set.

**GVM:** Given today's economy, do people say that they are glad they don't have to do your job?

**JB:** They might! It's hard for me to say that because I love what I'm doing; I always have. I can't wait for the sun to come up some mornings.

To be able to take these varying topics, and we have many of them at a university, and digest them down to something that can be prioritized in a fiscal way allows you to learn about things you might not get exposed to. So it's really an interesting job.

**GVM:** The university has made a commitment to constructing LEED-certified buildings; that's not always the cheapest option. Is it a good option from a financial point of view?

**JB:** It's really about value and priority. LEED-certified buildings cost a little more up front, but have a lower life-cycle

cost. Therefore, LEED-certified buildings are better and cheaper over the long run. As it turns out, good environmental sense is also good economic sense.

**GVM:** Why have tuition costs at colleges across the country climbed much higher than inflation rates?

**JB:** While expenses to run a university have gone up by approximately inflation, or a little more than double in the past 25 years, what has most changed is who is paying the cost. Twenty-five years ago, the state paid three-quarters of the cost and students paid one-quarter. Today, those roles have reversed, with students and their families now paying three quarters of the cost. So families are paying three times the share on a number that is twice as big. This explains a six-fold increase in tuition over a time period that the university only doubled its costs of operations.

Colleges are not spending so much more than ever; it's just a different source of who pays. The good news is that the state can't go lower than zero. The outlook for tuition is that it is going to increase at slower rates in the future.

**GVM:** From a historical perspective, why has Grand Valley been among the lowest-

funded state universities?

**JB:** Grand Valley has received lower funding for years, and it's not some deep east-west political conspiracy. There has never been an enrollment formula for higher education in Michigan like there is for K-12 education. Essentially, the funding for universities is set on last year's funding, given a percentage or two increase or decrease.

The state has increased Grand Valley's funding for the past 15 years by a higher percentage than any other university in the state. However, they never fully recognized our growth. We are still underfunded because we used to be a small place. The short answer is we got bigger, others didn't, and we didn't get extra money. We received more state appropriation per student 25 years ago than we receive today.

**GVM:** The news from Lansing is that state funding to universities could dwindle to nearly nothing in a few years. Are you making projections for several years down the road?

**JB:** I have projections through 2014. The good news is we're going to be able to pay the bills no matter what happens in Lansing. The one beauty of not getting as much state funding is when they take it back, they



don't take as much back. While I believe state support may decrease in the coming years, I do not believe it will go to nearly nothing. However, I have modeled such a scenario.

**GVM:** Why is Grand Valley on such solid financial footing, compared to other universities?

**JB:** It starts with the common vision of President Arend Lubbers, Ron VanSteeland (former vice president for Finance and Administration) and Glenn Niemeyer (former provost). They shared a common vision of what this university could and should be, and collectively, they figured out how to make it that.

Each one was focused on his part of the task. They communicated extremely well, which kept them to their solid vision, and their vision was right. It was right for the time and it was right for this university. We're pretty much still on that path and that says a lot for how right they were. They chartered a good course. Today's management has adapted that course, but retains the values of fiscal integrity. West Michigan fiscal conservatism might also come into play.

**GVM:** What advice do you have for parents of students in high school, or younger, on how they can afford to pay for college tuition?

**JB:** They have to understand that education is a long-term asset, and one that will be paid over a longer time period. It's a partnership between the parents and the student. This partnership will be longer than four years, and ideally, I would hope they would have saved part of the cost prior to entering college. They also have to understand that they will probably be paying for it after graduation, maybe even for 10 years or longer. Given that, I do have some tips on

how to minimize the costs.

**GVM:** Yes, please share!

**JB:** Students should get their degree done in four years, maybe four and one-half. Get in, get out. I would also tell them to live on campus and don't bring a car, although the cheapest option would be to live at home. But when we talk about value, we want to talk about campus life, and to be active on campus you have to be in the middle of it.

A car is a luxury in most of the world. It's a luxury that a 19-year-old college student may not be able to afford. More than half of our freshmen leave their cars at home. The last advice I would give is that students should also get a part-time job on or near campus.

**GVM:** What financial advice do you have to share with students?

**JB:** Throw away every credit card application that comes in the mail. As a young college student, you don't have to establish credit yet. By the time you are a senior, it might be time to start establishing credit.

**GVM:** Should college students be required to take a course in personal finance before they graduate?

**JB:** I think it should be required at the high school level. Yes, it would be very helpful to college students, but if I say they need a required finance course, someone else would say they need a required political science course, and before you know it, they wouldn't be able to graduate quickly. It should be offered and made available, but not required.

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

**Jim Bachmeier, vice president for Finance and Administration, stands outside Zumberge Library. His advice to students on trimming colleges costs: finish your degree in four years.**





# Researchers study challenges of wind turbines near Lake Michigan — by Dottie Barnes

Four Grand Valley faculty members received a grant to explore the potential trade-offs associated with locating wind power facilities in coastal areas of Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties. The team received \$139,912 from Michigan Sea Grant to examine the issues surrounding wind farms, which include environmental, social, economic, aesthetic and policy concerns.

Erik Nordman, coordinator of the Natural Resources Management Program and principal investigator, said the goal of the project is to help educate communities about wind energy development. “By combining science and public participation, our integrated assessment of wind energy will

empower citizens and local governments to make informed decisions about wind energy facilities in their communities,” Nordman said. “Our project will enhance local capacity to manage the trade-offs associated with wind energy development, and will help Michigan achieve its renewable energy target in a manner that is environmentally, economically and socially appropriate.”

The study is in response to the Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act passed by the Michigan Legislature last year. It calls for energy providers to get 10 percent of their power from renewable sources by 2015; currently, 2-3 percent comes from renewable sources.

Paul Isely, chair and associate professor of economics, said

wind power is currently the most cost-effective way to achieve the new state standards. Isely and Hari Singh, professor of economics, conducted a recent study on the economic impacts of wind power and found that as many as 5,000 new jobs would be created in Michigan. “Another benefit is a reduction in health care costs because, as we move toward renewable energy sources, pollution is reduced,” Isely said.

The team for the current study also includes John Koches, senior program manager at Annis Water Resources Institute, and Kurt Thompson, AWRI research associate. Members of Grand Valley’s Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center will serve as advisors for the project.



photo by Amanda Pitts

Grand Valley researchers will explore the benefits and challenges of locating wind power facilities in coastal areas of Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties.

The findings of the study, expected to be complete in May 2011, will be available to government representatives, environmental advocates, business groups and residents.

## Study finds soup kitchen food high in fat and sodium — by Dottie Barnes

A study of meals served at three soup kitchens in the Heartside District of Grand Rapids showed that the foods were high in fat and sodium, and low in calcium.

The research team assessed the nutritional value of the food served at God’s Kitchen,

Guiding Light Mission and Mel Trotter Ministries.

“Food providers in the Heartside area asked us to conduct this study because they were concerned their food might be contributing to chronic diseases of their patrons and, in turn, higher health

care costs,” said Lisa Sisson, assistant professor of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Working with Sisson were Debra Lown, assistant professor of biomedical sciences; Suzan Couzens, affiliate professor of nursing; and five Grand Valley students.

Students collected 41 meals that included a wide variety of items like pastas, meat, chicken, bread, potatoes, green beans, corn and desserts. Computer analysis was used to evaluate the food’s nutritional value. Sisson said, on average, the food met nutritional goals for B vitamins and many minerals, but was high in fat and sodium.

“It’s recommended that total percent of calories from fat should be between 20 and 35 percent,” she said. “Our results were between 34 and 41 percent.” Sisson said the foods were also high in saturated

fat and sodium, supporting what was suspected.

Michael Merren, director of food services for Mel Trotter Ministries, said the study has inspired the mission to provide healthier meals and they have already made changes to increase calcium and fiber.

The results of the study were presented to the Kent County Essential Needs Task Force Food Subcommittee, along with a list of recommendations. “The kitchens have many barriers to overcome to make these changes. It’s recommended that more fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products should be served and empty-calorie foods, such as doughnuts, should be reduced,” said Sisson.

She also recommends more training and education be provided to those donating and preparing the food.



Grand Valley researchers found foods served at Heartside soup kitchens were high in fat and sodium, and low in calcium.



# Recent graduate creates scholarship for computer science students

Just four years out of college, Eric Maino, '05, didn't think he was yet in the position to fulfill his goal of creating a scholarship to help young Grand Valley computer science students.

But Maino, a software development engineer for Microsoft, learned that it wasn't as difficult as he thought to institute a scholarship. He leveraged his company's matching gift power to begin the Eric Maino Community Technology Award Endowment in October.

"I realized that even if I start slow and the fund can only affect one or two students early on, I'd have the opportunity to witness how those students develop, rather than wait until I'm in the position to make a larger impact," said Maino.

Maino, who works for Microsoft's Visual C# Team, decided to make his first scholarship gift during October, which is "Giving Month" at Microsoft. He set a personal goal of funding the scholarship's minimum endowed level in order to begin making awards within three years.

Maino credits his success to the relationships he established with professionals in the computing industry. Through his scholarship, he hopes to encourage and acknowledge students who exhibit

exceptional networking and relationship-building skills, in addition to academic knowledge.

Maino is a remarkably driven person. He said his determination is fueled by an inherent curiosity that was evident even when he was a young boy who dreamed of being an inventor.

As a kid, he regularly dismantled household electronics just to see how they worked. Sometimes he would take apart the family computer, requiring a repairman to put it back together. Maino said he would watch the repairman closely and ask questions, eventually becoming proficient at it himself. While in high school, he got a job at a local computer company but said he still wanted to know more about the technology.

After high school, he enrolled in Michigan Technological University's computer science program and discovered a love for computer programming. "I started out behind my fellow classmates because I hadn't taken any programming classes in high school, but I invested a lot of time to master the fundamental concepts and began to excel," he said. "I could invent things for people. I really enjoy giving people the ability to do things they need or want through software."

Maino spent two years at



file photo

Eric Maino, '05, is a software development engineer for Microsoft. A few years after graduating, Maino created a scholarship for computer science students.

MTU but was unable to find an internship in the Upper Peninsula. He landed a summer internship at a burgeoning technological consulting firm, now Analysts International, in Grand Rapids. Company executives were so impressed with Maino's work that they offered him a job. While in Grand Rapids, he took a class at Grand Valley.

"The professors at Grand Valley were very open and willing to help me truly understand the subject matter and solve problems," said Maino. He transferred to Grand Valley and continued working as a technology consultant. He built a strong network of industry experts and then connected them to GVSU's student computer club.

Maino was named a Microsoft Most Valuable Professional in 2004 and 2005. The program recognizes industry leaders as valued customers who provide feedback on

cutting-edge software.

By the time Maino had graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2005, he had four promising job offers, and at the top of the list was a position with Microsoft. He moved to Seattle and now builds a software suite for coders who develop software. Maino also travels to recruit employees for Microsoft and meets with engineers. He tries to return to Grand Valley annually to speak with students and faculty members.

Paul Leidig, professor and director of the School of Computing and Information Systems, said Maino demonstrates how curiosity can spur opportunities. "He is never afraid to ask the questions that challenge assumptions and achieve a better understanding," Leidig said. "As an alumnus, he continues to support and challenge students to reach further than required."

## Do you know how helpful scholarships are?

- More than 70 percent of Grand Valley's full-time students receive some form of financial aid.
- Of those meeting financial guidelines, only 64 percent have their needs fully met.

For more information about how to establish a Grand Valley scholarship, visit [www.gvsu.edu/development](http://www.gvsu.edu/development). Contact (616) 331-6000 or [giveto@gvsu.edu](mailto:giveto@gvsu.edu).



## Alumni Association honors outstanding graduates

The Alumni Association held its annual Young Alumni and Alumni Service Awards luncheon on October 3 and honored three outstanding Grand Valley graduates.

Kevin Michael Schmitz, '06, received the Young Alumni Award, which was initiated in 2008 to recognize recent graduates who are making outstanding contributions to society, and whose accomplishments and careers reflect favorably upon Grand Valley. Steven V. Carlson, '78, and David W. Radel, '02, were presented with Alumni Service Awards, recognizing their outstanding service to the university.

All three recipients were recognized by President Thomas J. Haas during the Family Weekend Laker football game.

Schmitz, who earned a bachelor's degree in photography, is an advertising and editorial fashion photographer in Los Angeles and New York. As principal founder of Kevin Michael Schmitz Photography, he photographs magazine

spreads, fashion lookbooks, advertising campaigns, fine art pieces, documentary spreads and album covers. He is branching into celebrity fashion photography. His high-profile work has been published in national and international magazines.

Carlson is vice president of military customer management for GE Aviation. He has served Grand Valley in a multitude of ways since earning a bachelor's degree in marketing in 1978. As a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, Parent and Family Association Advisory Committee, and the *Shaping Our Future* Alumni Champions Committee, Carlson has set an example of loyalty, energy, and service to the university.

Radel also earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and works as sales and operations manager for Triton Technologies, Inc. He regularly participates and



Kevin Michael Schmitz, '06



Steven V. Carlson, '78



David W. Radel, '02

volunteers at alumni events, and plays a vocal leadership role in young alumni programming. Radel is a founding member of the Young Alumni Council and also serves on the Alumni Champions Committee, providing leadership and

support to *Shaping Our Future*. Radel was recognized for his strong commitment to the future success of Grand Valley, and his outstanding example of alumni leadership and pride.

### Nominations sought

Do you know alumni who are accomplishing great things at home, in the community or workplace? Recognize their great work by nominating them for the

2010 Distinguished Alumni or Young Alumni Awards! Nominations will be accepted until January 9, 2010.

For nomination criteria, visit the Web site:

[www.gvsu.edu/alumni/awards](http://www.gvsu.edu/alumni/awards)

## Alumni golfers raise funds for students

Nearly 300 alumni and friends participated in three golf outings held this summer at the Meadows Golf Course; they combined to raise more than \$7,000 to support Grand Valley students.

The annual Sleep Inn & Suites All-Alumni Benefit Golf Outing was held July 11 with proceeds to benefit the new Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons through the *Shaping Our Future* Campaign.

The July 18 Football Alumni Reunion Golf Outing celebrated the era of Jim Harkema, head Laker football coach from 1973-82. Funds were raised in support of the Laker football endowment.

The August 4 Corky Meinecke Golf Outing, held annually in memory of the 1977 Grand Valley graduate and Michigan sports writer, raised money to benefit his memorial scholarship for current students.



photo by Dan Watts, '79

Pictured, from left, are James Davis, Peter Whitehead, '03, Jeffery Weatherall, '78, and Kent Fisher, '91.



## Theater alumni return to campus

United Stage, the performance theater group of Thomas Jefferson College, returned to Grand Valley for a reunion August 5-8.

The performers, including former United Stage instructor Bob Moyer, attended workshops that culminated with a performance reminiscent of their college days. TJC was one of Grand Valley's cluster colleges.

Their performance, "United Stage Revisited," was

preceded by a wine and cheese reception that drew nearly 80 fellow TJC and William James College alumni, many who haven't seen each other in more than 30 years.

Attendees came from all over Michigan and from as far as California, Arizona, North Carolina, Louisiana, Florida, New Jersey and Illinois. They plan to host a similar reunion during Grand Valley's 50th anniversary celebration in 2010-11.



photo by Adam Bird

United Stage theater group members give a command performance for former classmates during a Thomas Jefferson College reunion in August.



photo by Heather Dixon, '05

Josh Heyboer, '98, gives advice to young alumni about buying a house for the first time during an event hosted by the Young Alumni Council.

## Young Alumni Council hosts 'Life 101'

Nearly 100 alumni got life lessons on June 24 during a workshop hosted by the Young Alumni Council.

"Life 101: What You Didn't Learn in College" was a fun and informative workshop with experts leading sessions on balancing work and personal life, buying a house for the first time, and creating and managing a budget.

The workshop, held at the Pew Grand Rapids Campus, was the most popular Young Alumni event held to date. Participants enjoyed time to network and socialize, and listen to presentations from alumni speakers. Podcasts of all "Life 101" sessions are available for download at [www.gvsu.edu/alumni](http://www.gvsu.edu/alumni), click on "News & Media."

## Moving crew welcomes students

A record number of alumni volunteers returned to campus on August 25 to help incoming freshmen move into their living centers. Nearly 80 alumni volunteered to

welcome new students and their families, offer a helping hand and some advice to the new Lakers. Volunteers were treated to breakfast, lunch and chair massages.



photo by Amanda Pitts

Pictured from left are move-in volunteers Angela Smith, '06, Kristie Roszkowski, '06, Cassie Pease, '08, and Andy Crosby, '09.



## Chapters, Clubs and Events



### Night at the Whitecaps

A crowd of 75 alumni and guests enjoyed a barbecue and watched the West Michigan Whitecaps take on the Peoria Chiefs from their seats in the private Centennial Securities Upper Dream Deck. Graduates came from as far as Seattle for the event that ended with post-game fireworks.

*photo courtesy of West Michigan Whitecaps*



### GVDC Summer Reception

The Washington D.C.-area Alumni Club held its annual summer reception on the veranda of the Potomac Strategic Development Company on June 23. From left, Matt Mansfield, '99, club president David Yonkman, '98, and Kevan Chapman, '02, were among attendees that included new graduates in the area, Vice President for University Relations Matt McLogan, and several student interns.



### Austin Club

Austin Alumni Club members braved 105-degree temperatures to watch the Round Rock Express beat the Iowa Cubs on June 27. Attendees represented a broad range of graduates, from the second graduating class in 1968 through the class of 2007. Pictured, from right, are Austin Club Leader Alison Randall, '98, with son Sagan, Kristen Pierce, '07, Rob Johnson, '07, and Mike Randall.

*photo courtesy of Allison Randall, '99*

## Lakers march in Cherry Festival Parade

More than 110 Lakers showed their Grand Valley pride at the 2009 Cherry Royale Parade, during Traverse City's 83rd National Cherry Festival on July 11.

It marked the second alumni march at the festival. Earlier in the week, alumna Angela Saylor, '08, was crowned National Cherry Queen.

Participants started the day with breakfast at Grand Valley's

Traverse City Regional Center, then were bused to the parade route for the march. Members of the Alumni Association joined the Laker Pep Band, cheer and dance teams, Louie the Laker, faculty and staff members and friends to hand out Laker tattoos, merchandise and candy. The Grand Valley contingent was cheered along by chants of "Let's Go Lakers" as they walked the parade route.



Pictured are some of the Lakers who walked the parade route during the Traverse City National Cherry Festival.



From left, Tim Crouse, '81, Chris Lyonnais, '00, Felicia Hasal, '02, bring school supplies to children at Camp Blodgett in Grand Haven.

## Young Alumni volunteer at Camp Blodgett

Grand Valley alumni shared dinner and played games with 100 campers at Camp Blodgett in Grand Haven on July 27.

The Young Alumni Council provided back-to-school supply bags for each camper, and volunteers donated supplies for the camp's

after-school programs. Camp Blodgett's mission is to give children the knowledge, tools and desire to be successful in school and in life.

Find alumni volunteer opportunities online by visiting [www.gvsu.edu/alumni](http://www.gvsu.edu/alumni) and clicking on "Volunteer."



## CAREERS

## 1970s

**MARY J. (DODGE) DEBOER, B.A., 1970**, joined Grand Valley's special education department as field coordinator after retiring as a teacher for Grand Rapids Public Schools.

**THOMAS M. HERINGTON, B.A., 1975**, is a realty specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**THOMAS J. RADEMACHER, B.S., 1978**, writer for the *Grand Rapids Press*, received the National Society of Newspaper Columnists' top national award in the general interest category.

## 1980s

**TOM REED, JR., B.S., 1980**, was named the first naturalist for Northern Michigan University's campus ministry in Marquette. He is also project leader for the Zaagkii Project.

**LORIE M. (RIETMAN) WILD, B.S.N., 1980**, graduated from the Johnson and Johnson Wharton Fellows Program in Management for Nurse Executives.

**TIMOTHY M. BREED, B.S., 1981**, is a board member for the Tulip Time Festival in Holland.

**LINDA (MUELLER) SCHELLENTRAGER, B.S., 1981**, is communications manager for the Adoption Network Cleveland in Cleveland, Ohio.

**GREGORY A. SUNDSTROM, B.P.A., 1983**, was named Grand Rapids city manager. He had

worked as chief services officer and acting deputy city manager for Grand Rapids.

**FLORA B. (BEENE) JOHNSON, B.S., 1988**, is pursuing a doctoral degree in communication studies at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**JOSEPH "CHIP" L. JOHNSTON II, B.S.W., 1989, M.S.W., 1997**, was promoted to executive director of Manistee-Benzie Community Mental Health Services in Manistee. He had worked as director of customer and provider services.

## 1990s

**DOUG D. WALDIE, B.S., 1990**, was named chief operating officer at Crum Manufacturing Inc. in Waterville, Ohio. He earned a master's degree in organizational leadership from Lourdes College in Sylvania, Ohio.

**DAVID S. DONNER, B.B.A., 1992**, was promoted to regional sales manager at Master Chemical Corp. in Perrysburg, Ohio. He has been with the company for eight years.

**JENNIFER L. THOMAS, DPM, B.S., 1992**, opened her own practice in Dallas, Texas. She has been a podiatric physician and surgeon for 12 years.

**AUDRA H. (LOUSIAS) VAZ, B.S., 1992**, joined Florida Atlantic University as assistant development officer.

**ROBERT B. SMITH, B.B.A., 1993**, is assistant vice president and mortgage loan officer

for Byron Bank in Grand Rapids. He had worked for City Federal Mortgage.

**JAMES (JIM) CLAYTON RYAN III, B.B.A., 1994**, was named vice president and director of corporate strategy for Old National Bank in Evansville, Indiana.

**KATHLEEN J. BOLTON, B.B.A., 1995**, joined Glanbia Nutritionals as trade show and marketing specialist.

**GARY R. BURMEISTER, JR., B.A., 1996**, is marketing and public relations coordinator for the Holland Museum.

**NICHOLAS CEGLAREK, B.S., 1996, M.ED., 1999**, is superintendent of Hudsonville Public Schools. He had been superintendent of Fruitport Schools.

**KELLY S. (VAN'THOF) CUROW, B.S., 1996**, was promoted to family independence manager for the Michigan Department of Human Resources.

**ERMA J. (STARR) GORDON-GIBSON, B.A., 1996**, wrote a book, *Whoever You Are, Wherever You Are, It's Okay*.

**SCOTT D. KNOLL, B.S., 1996**, is partner and principal owner and operator of Prairie Risk Partners.

**JASON C. MARVIN, B.B.A., 1997**, was named partner at Plante and Moran PLLC in Grand Rapids. He had been an associate for the firm.

**AARON C. RADELET, B.A., 1998**, joined Hilton Hotels Corp. as vice president of global communications and public relations.

## 2000s

**DAVID S. RAPP, B.S., 2000**, is vice president of land acquisitions for Neal Communities in Florida.

**JOLENE ROSSETER, B.A., 2000**, earned a master's degree in integrated marketing communications from Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois.

**WENDY J. OHST, M.P.A., 2001**, retired as Muskegon County's employment and training manager after 37 years of service with the county.

**KIMBERLY D. BARNHILL, B.B.A., 2002**, joined Carolinas Healthcare System in Charlotte, North Carolina, as financial services and cash manager.

**NODDEA L. MOORE, B.A., 2002**, was voted Staff Member of the Year by Aquinas College students.

**JENNIFER K. (MACLEAN) CUNNINGHAM, B.A., 2003**, earned a direct commission into the U.S. Navy Reserves as public relations officer. She continues to work as communications and public relations manager for the Air Zoo in Portage.

**JUSTEN A. NAUGHTON, B.A., 2003**, wrote and directed a movie, *RiffRaff*.

**CARRIE A. NYMAN, M.ED., 2003**, is principal of L'Anse High School in L'Anse.

**JOHN R. OTTERBACHER, B.A., 2003, M.S., 2005**, produced a movie, *RiffRaff*.



## Web Calendar Upcoming Events

Get details on all upcoming alumni events and register online!  
[www.gvsu.edu/alumni/events](http://www.gvsu.edu/alumni/events)



**IAN P. REED, B.A., 2003**, is associate director of White House Operations in Washington, D.C. He had worked for the Obama-Biden presidential transition team and Obama for America. He earned a master's degree from DePaul University.

**LATTISHA A. (SCOTT) BATES, B.S., 2004**, is assistant professor of sociology for the University of Cincinnati. She earned a doctoral degree in sociology from Arizona State University.

**PAUL D. COOK, B.S., 2004**, is a post-doctoral research fellow at Vanderbilt University. He earned a doctoral degree in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**CHRISTINE R. CARLSON, B.A., 2005**, is a kindergarten teacher for Tacony Academy Charter School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**TIMOTHY A. BUYS, B.B.A., 2006**, is staff accountant for Crowe Horwath in Springfield, Illinois.

**ISAAC J. HERRICK, B.A., 2006**, is head coach of the men's rugby team at Davenport University.

**MELINDA J. NIENHOUSE, B.S., 2007**, works as a community clerkship assistant for Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine.

**ASHLEE M. SLEVA, B.S., 2008**, was named to the president's list at Baker College, where she was accepted into the physical therapy assistant program.

**SARA J. BLACK, M.ED., 2009**, is band director for Tekonsha Community Schools.

**KATHRYN L. BYLENGA, M.ED., 2009**, is residence hall director for Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut.

**NATHANIEL P. ENGLE, M.P.A., 2009**, is program manager and county representative for Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.

**CHAD R. ERWIN, B.S., 2009**, is a group services and box office manager for the Grand Rapids Griffins.

**ERIC E. HORSFORD, B.B.A., 2009**, is a retail leader development program trainee for Meijer Inc.

**JULIE K. RABIDEAU, B.A., 2009**, is a paraprofessional for Lighthouse Academy in Kentwood.

**MICHELLE M. SABOURIN, B.S., 2009**, is a fourth-grade teacher for the Texas City, Texas, Intermediate School District.

## MARRIAGES 1990s

**VICTORIA L. WEBB, B.S., 1991**, and Joseph Korsak on August 21, 2009.

**KATHLEEN J. BOLTON, B.B.A., 1995**, and Andy Kaun on July 11, 2009.

**EHREN E. DOLLBERG, B.B.A., 1995**, and **KRISTINE L. KNOX, B.A., 1997, M.ED., 2004**, on August 8, 2008.

## 2000s

**RUBEN MUNOZ, B.S., 2000**, and **ADRIANA (FLORES) MUNOZ, B.S., 2003, M.P.A., 2006**, on May 9, 2009.

**NICOLE L. BERGMAN, B.A., 2001**, and Joseph Infante on April 4, 2009.

**CORY R. KASPRZYK, B.M., 2003**, and Jessica Finch on June 13, 2009.

**JENNIFER K. MACLEAN, B.A., 2003**, and Brent Cunningham on March 21, 2009.

**DANIEL D. SKRZYPCHAK, B.B.A., 2005**, and **KELLY L. SNYDER, B.S.W., 2006, M.S.W., 2008**, on May 30, 2009.

**CARRIE S. TONN, M.ED., 2005**, and Mark Demske on July 11, 2009.

**BETHANY K. LADUKE, B.B.A., 2006**, and Lee Heerspink on March 14, 2009.

**JACQUELINE S. PERSKI, B.S., 2006**, and Ethan Wiers on October 11, 2008.

**JOSHUA A. MCDONALD, B.S.N., 2007**, and **ANGELA M. BLOOD, B.S., 2007**, on July 25, 2009.

**KYLE B. NORG, B.B.A., 2007**, and **JAMIE M. MICHIELSON, B.S., 2008**, on May 30, 2009.

**ZACHARY S. RANGEL, B.S., 2007**, and **KIMBERLY C. JACOBSEN, B.S., 2007**, on August 15, 2009.

**LISA J. VERBURG, B.S., 2007**, and Stephen Hansen on August 15, 2009.

**HEIDI M. WALTERS, B.S.W., 2007**, and Aaron Nienhuis on April 3, 2009.

**ASHLY S. KOCHANSKI, B.M., 2008**, and Mitchell Neumann on June 19, 2009.

**MANDI E. SMALLWOOD, B.S., 2008**, and Robert Quigley on March 14, 2009.

**REBECCA WIZOREK, B.A., 2008**, and David Witter on August 16, 2008.

## BIRTHS 1990s

**JOHN R. KOWALSKI, B.S., 1992**, and wife Heather announce a daughter, Hannah, born June 30, 2009.

**GEORGE A. JONES, B.B.A., 1994**, and **KAREN J. (GILL) JONES, B.S., 1994**, announce a son, Christian

Donovan, born May 19, 2009. Christian was welcomed by siblings Kira and Kristen. The family resides in Livonia.

**CAROLINE S. GWALTNEY, B.S., 1995, M.S., 1998**, and husband Geoffrey announce a daughter, Reese Elizabeth, born June 27, 2009. The family resides in Hancock.

**SHEREE J. (KNOLA) JUNGWIRTH, B.S., 1995**, and husband John welcome a son, Elijah John, born May 27, 2009. The family resides in Okemos.

**MARK R. MCKELLAR, B.S., 1996**, and wife Andrea announce a son, Grant Edwin, born June 16, 2009. The family resides in Charleston, South Carolina.

**LUCAS V. GALAVIZ, B.S., 1997**, and **ANNA M. (CNOSSEN) GALAVIZ, B.S., 2005**, announce a son, Grady James, born January 10, 2009. The family resides in Grand Rapids.

**STEPHANIE K. (TIPPETT) OLSON, B.B.A., 1997, M.B.A., 2001**, and husband David announce a daughter, Audrey, born May 1, 2009. Audrey is welcomed by brother Brady. The family resides in Caledonia.

**AMY M. (GRIFFITHS) BLOCH, B.S., 1998**, and **TODD S. BLOCH, B.S., 2000**, announce twins, Gavin Ronald Stewart and Grace Ellen, born October 12, 2008. Gavin and Grace are welcomed by brother Griffin. The family resides in Clinton Township.

**MICHELE R. (CONNELLY) EBMAYER, B.S., 1998**, and her husband David announce a son, Lucas Keith, born January 30, 2009. Lucas is welcomed by brothers Alex and Tanner. The family resides in Marysville.

**MELANIE M. (UHL) ZIEMBA, B.A., 1998**, and husband Samuel announce a daughter, Meghan Rylie, born



July 16, 2009. Meghan was welcomed by brother Caden. The family resides in Kentwood.

**DAVID A. KLECHA, B.A., 1999**, and **TARRI M. (SANFORD) KLECHA, B.S., 2000**, announce a daughter, Alexa Marie, born June 16, 2009. Alexa was welcomed by siblings Anthony and Hannah. The family resides in Cedar Springs.

## 2000s

**DAWN M. (SCHNEIDER) FEDEWA, B.S., 2000**, and husband Jeffrey welcome a son, Sean, born May 26, 2009. Sean was welcomed by siblings Alex and Kenzie. The family resides in Sunfield.

**ELIZABETH (SCHUCHARDT) FELDPAUSCH, B.S., 2000, M.S., 2003**, and husband Paul announce daughters, Rosalia Jeanne and Tessa Elizabeth, born February 9, 2009. Rosalia and Tessa were welcomed by sisters, Anna Grace and Sophia Marie. The family resides in Byron Center.

**DANIEL J. MICHMERHUIZEN, B.A., 2000**, and wife Edith welcome a son, Mario Allen, born May 11, 2009. The family resides in Chicago, Illinois.

**RICHARD DETCHER III, B.S., 2001**, and wife Kimberly, welcome a daughter, Karlee Sue, born July 2, 2009. The family resides in Orlando, Florida.

**ELAINE C. (HOOVER) SPENCER, B.S., 2001**, and husband Matthew announce a daughter, Samantha Kate, born July 31, 2009. Samantha was welcomed by siblings Jacob and Eli. The family resides in Sparta.

**ERIKA L. VAN DYKE, B.S., 2001**, and husband Joshua announce a son, Ian Joshua, born July 1, 2009. The family resides in Grand Rapids.

**SABRINA M. WOODS, B.S., 2001, B.N., 2005**, and her husband John announce a daughter Malia Odessa, born June 10, 2009. The family resides in Allendale.

**ELIZABETH K. (VRUGGINK) FARACI, B.A., 2002**, and **ROBERT A. FARACI, B.B.A., 2004**, welcome a son, Dylan Andrew, born August 12, 2009. Dylan was welcomed by sister Mallory. The family resides in Mishawaka, Indiana.

**COLLEEN P. (MEASDAY) FITZPATRICK, B.S., 2003**, and **SCOTT L. FITZPATRICK, B.B.A., 2003**, announce a son, Kevin Daniel, born April 29, 2009. The family resides in Kentwood.

**AMY D. (MEISTE) TRIGGS, B.A., 2003**, and her husband welcome a daughter, Giselle Krysandra, born May 25, 2009. Giselle was welcomed by brother Jackson. The family resides in Grand Rapids.

**ADRIANNE L. WOLF, B.A., 2003**, and **RONALD J. WOLF, B.B.A., 2003**, announce a daughter, Emerson Rose, born May 20, 2009. The family resides in Dorr.

**ADRIENNE R. (LUBECK) YOCHES, B.S., 2003, M.ED., 2007**, and **MATTHEW R. YOCHES, B.S., 2005**, announce a daughter, Danielle Clare, born August 20, 2009. She was welcomed by brother Samuel. The family resides in Allendale.

**JENNIFER M. BREWSTER, B.A., 2004**, and husband George, announce a son, Carson Jeffrey, born May 11, 2009. Carson was welcomed by brother Cole. The family resides in Fruitport.

**COURTNEY M. (BERENS) KRAKER, B.S.N., 2004**, and husband Aaron announce a son, Eli Benjamin, born May 5, 2009. The family resides in Dorr.

**HALEY C. (BRABO) KADZBAN, B.A., 2006, M.S.W., 2008**, and **MICHAEL A. KADZBAN, B.A., 2006**, announce a daughter, Liana Grace, born March 24, 2009. The family resides in Caledonia.

## IN MEMORIAM

### 1960s

**BEN J. MOCINI**, Grandville, Michigan, B.A., 1968, on May 31, 2009.

### 1970s

**THOMAS E. LASKE**, Baldwin, Michigan, B.S., 1972, on March 24, 2008.

**DAVID J. LOCKWOOD**, Olympia, Washington, B.S., 1974, on July 27, 2009.

**ROGER L. ALLISON**, Muskegon, Michigan, B.S., 1979.

**GEORGE R. MCGAHAN**, Muskegon, Michigan B.S., 1979, on June 11, 2009

### 1980s

**GREG A. SMITH**, Grand Rapids, Michigan, B.S., 1986, on July 11, 2009.

**LAURI L. BRADSTREET**, Columbus, Ohio, B.S., 1987, on August 22, 2009.

### 1990s

**STEVEN J. BOON**, Charlotte, North Carolina, B.S., 1993, M.Ed., 2008, on May 28, 2009.

**PATRICK J. GRANDY**, Kentwood, Michigan, B.S., 1993, on July 17, 2009.

**THOMAS F. OGLIA**, Kalamazoo, Michigan, M.B.A., 1994, on May 25, 2009.

### 2000s

**BRAD C. ROBERTSON**, Allendale, Michigan, B.B.A., 2009, on July 12, 2009.

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# Tea-drinking ritual

## proves meditative for professor

— by Brian J. Bowe

Rooting around his Mackinac Hall office, Curtis Dean Smith searched for the right size teacup.

“There’s a saying that ‘the smaller the cup, the better the tea,’” Smith said. “The cup size actually influences the flavor.”

Smith, an associate professor of Chinese at Grand Valley, is no casual tea drinker. When he studied in Taiwan, he developed a deep love of the drink and the culture surrounding it.

Having located the proper tiny teacups, Smith begins the process of making tea. His office — like his home — is filled with the paraphernalia for the formalized Chinese gongfu (or “kung fu”) style of tea making: tiny clay pots, a bamboo scoop for scooping out tea, bamboo tongs for picking up hot cups, and a wooden box with slats on it for dumping water.

The gongfu style of tea making is also called “old man’s tea,” Smith said, “because only old folks have enough time to make it.”

The time to make it is one thing — the time to enjoy it is

something else. In a gongfu tea service, there are actually two tiny cups — one tulip-shaped, one shaped like a bowl. The tea is poured into the tulip-shaped cup first, and then immediately into the bowl-shaped cup.

The empty tulip cup is then held to the nose to smell the aroma of the tea. “The first step in appreciating the tea is the aroma, and that’s what you have this cup for,” Smith said.

In the second step, the drinker admires the color of the tea. Next, the tea is tasted much like the way an oenophile samples wine — slurping to draw air through the tea and swishing around to let it hit different parts of the mouth. Finally, the fourth stage focuses on the aftertaste (“throat feel” is how the Chinese term literally translates).

That process is repeated over and over — each subsequent steeping changes the character of the tea, and a single pot of leaves can last for a dozen steeps with high-quality leaves.

It’s a ritual that Smith said he finds meditative and calming.

“The whole process of drinking the tea — smelling the aroma, tasting the flavors

— requires you to slow down and become more aware of things,” Smith said.

He frequently drinks tea in his office, starting a pot at the beginning of the day and re-steeping it continually. Smith’s tea consumption from last academic year fills a plastic kitchen trash bag — he’s saving the spent leaves to make a pillow, noting that tea pillows are popular in Taiwan because they are cool and fragrant. He tries to remain mindful to only drink tea when he can stop to appreciate it.

“When I’m in the busy part of the semester, I’ll have less tea,” he said. “To make the tea requires time, and to appreciate the tea requires a certain amount of leisure. I find that if I’m not enjoying it, I just shouldn’t drink it.”

Smith leads several student trips annually to China and Taiwan, which is fortunate for him because the teas that he likes the best are unavailable in the U.S.

“You always need to have a purpose when you go traveling, and usually my purpose is to procure some tea,” Smith said.

Smith’s love affair with tea

began the summer after his freshman year at University of Wisconsin-Madison. He studied Chinese that year and in the summer bought a ticket to Taiwan “without too much foreplanning — I didn’t know where I was going to stay.”

He lived in an apartment in the academic district of Taipei. “There was a tea house right across the road from where I was staying,” Smith said. “Taipei in the summer gets very hot and muggy. One day I went to the tea house because it was air conditioned and I wanted to do some studying.”

When he entered the tea house that day, he knew little about tea. “I never really enjoyed tea before,” Smith said. “When I was young, if I’d get sick my mom would say, ‘Here, have some toast and tea.’ I didn’t know anything other than Twinings.”

He ordered a light oolong tea on that first visit, and the stage was set. “I tried this tea, and I thought, ‘Oh my gosh, this is fantastic.’ Plus the air conditioning wasn’t too bad, either,” he said.

Smith loved both the setting and the beverage and





“The whole process of drinking the tea — smelling the aroma, tasting the flavors — requires you to slow down and become more aware of things.”

— Curtis Dean Smith

said the tea house was “all about refined stillness.”

“It was such a beautiful escape from the city that I started going there as often as I could afford it,” he said. Smith also fell in love with the mountains in Taiwan, and his favorite teas come from the Alishan region of Taiwan. He would travel and visit tea plantations, sharing a cup with the farmers. Holding an aroma cup to his nose, Smith described a cup of high-altitude oolong tea as “a mountain in a cup.”

It is that sensory connection that brings Smith back to a place where he feels deeply connected.

“It’s the whole lifestyle, the whole ambiance,” Smith

said. “I find that when I come back to the United States, it’s a bit more difficult to enjoy the tea they way you do in Taiwan, because you don’t have the whole package. But having the tea can bring the whole package back again.”

Smith’s conversation flows through topics from the production of tea to politics, geography, poetry, history, agriculture, and philosophy — all centered around tea.

“You have all this cultural background to the tea, so as you’re drinking the tea it can bring back lines of poetry from the eighth century. It has a cultural, literary gratification,” he said.

All over the world, different cultures have specific rituals related to tea. Smith said that’s only natural. “To make good tea requires a certain amount of attention, and attention lends itself to ritual,” he said.

Smith said his favorite Chinese poetry talks about the social setting for tea drinking.

“When you talk about tea in Chinese poetry, you’re not talking about the tea,” Smith said. “You’re talking about the moment you’re sharing with another human being. The tea is the excuse. It helps lubricate the conversation, and it can help your creativity.”

Smith earned a doctorate in Chinese literature and

*photo by Bernadine Carey-Tucker*

Curtis Dean Smith pours tea in his Grand Rapids home. He collects teapots — he has around 40 of them.

philosophy from National Taiwan Normal University. He was the first Westerner to receive a doctoral degree in Chinese literature from a Chinese university. Given his expertise in the area, it would seem natural for Smith to do some sort of scholarly work on the subject of tea; but he said he doesn’t have any such interest.

“There are books on tea. I don’t think that we need to write more books about it,” Smith said. “Tea is more about enjoying right now.”





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# GRAND VALLEY and ArtPrize

**Grand Valley** had a strong connection to the inaugural ArtPrize in Grand Rapids; read details on page 9.

*photo by Amanda Pitts*

