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## Grand Valley Forum, volume 034, number 12, November 16, 2009

Grand Valley State University

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# FORUM

**A NEWSLETTER FOR THE GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY**

Published by News & Information Services



## Students surveyed understand liberal education

A survey designed to gauge student opinions of their education showed that current students had many positive things to say about Grand Valley and that they understand the value of a liberal education.

Researchers wanted to follow the 2004 student survey that was conducted as part of the Claiming a Liberal Education initiative. Last winter, researchers held focus groups with undergraduate students and collected 95 student surveys.

Diana Pace, associate dean of students, said results showed that students are more serious about their education than the 2004 group. Pace conducted the survey with Catherine Frerichs, former director of the Pew Faculty and Teaching Learning Center, and FLTC staff members Kurt Ellenberger and Tamara Rosier.

“The results said students are more aware that they need to take responsibility for their education,” Pace said.

Frerichs, who retired as director of FTLC in August, said she was surprised at the depth of what students said about what constituted

learning. Frerichs relayed a remark from a student who said, “I used to think that being a good student meant getting good grades. Now I think it’s being able to reflect and say what you have learned.”

Pace also said students indicated they want more interaction from their professors in the classroom and fewer electronic presentations. “They desire more active learning,” she said. “I think the novelty of PowerPoints has worn off, and the students said they don’t appreciate faculty members who rely on them too much.”

Students were also polled about diversity on campus and researchers found that students were more globally aware than students who were polled in 2004. More students in the 2009 survey mentioned



*File photo*

Students surveyed last winter said they understand the value of a liberal education. The survey was a follow-up to a 2004 survey that was conducted as part of the Claiming a Liberal Education initiative.

the value of studying abroad and the need to become more global in their studies.

Students were mixed in their opinions when asked about Grand Valley’s efforts related to

*continues on page 3*

## Across Campus

### Majors Fair draws hundreds

More than 430 students attended the fourth annual Majors Fair, held November 4 in the Kirkhof Center.

The fair is sponsored by the Advising Resource Center, Advising Council and the Alumni Office. It offers students an opportunity to network with faculty and staff members, and alumni about choices for a major and advice on careers. Organizers said this year, in particular, a big focus of the fair was to improve time-to-graduation rates and reduce a student’s financial burden.

In addition to all academic departments, other participating departments included Financial Aid, Padnos International Center, Student Life, Counseling and Career Development, and Career Services.

Kathleen Underwood, director of Women and Gender Studies, said: “What was really exciting about the fair was watching students come into



*Photo courtesy of Susan Proctor*

Shontaye Witcher, left, from Disabilities Support Services, stands with Jennifer Edwards, a 2001 graduate, at the Majors Fair, held in the Kirkhof Center. More than 430 students attended the November 4 event.

the Grand River Room with some trepidation and seeing their enthusiasm grow as they wandered about, talking to faculty from various programs. By the time they left, most had a fistful of brochures and smiles on their faces.”

### New Web site targets Grand Valley retirees

A new Web site was developed to strengthen communications and services to emeriti and retired faculty and staff members.

The site, [www.gvsu.edu/retiree](http://www.gvsu.edu/retiree), features upcoming events of interest to retirees, directory and helpful links to resources on- and off-campus.

Campus departments wishing to invite retirees to an event can send an e-mail to Human Resources, [hro@gvsu.edu](mailto:hro@gvsu.edu), and it will be added to the Upcoming Events section.

# Across Campus

## Presidential Service Learning Scholars announced

Nine faculty members were honored as Presidential Service Learning Scholars during a reception on November 11 in the Kirkhof Center.

They are Melissa Baker-Boosamra, liberal studies; Charlene Beckmann, mathematics; Kevin den Dulk, political science; Julia Mason, women and gender studies; Diane Rayor, Classics; Marilyn Vander Werf, nursing; and Danielle Wiese Leek, communications.



Photo by Bernadine Carey-Tucker

Faculty members who were named Presidential Service Learning Scholars are pictured with Provost Gayle R. Davis and President Thomas J. Haas following a reception in the Kirkhof Center.

Faculty members are nominated by their department chairs and chosen for incorporating service learning into their current curriculum.

This program is sponsored by the Community Service Learning Center, Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence, and the Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership.

## SSD: new name, same focus

For the past 14 years, Grand Valley has staged an annual event to showcase the best student academic work. This year, Student Scholarship Day will have a new name: Student Scholars Day.

The name change was instituted to combat occasional confusion over

the nature of the event. "It's still very focused on student work, but the new name takes away any ambiguity about what the purpose of the day is," said Susan Mendoza, director of Integrative Learning in the College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

This year's Student Scholars Day will be April 14, in several venues across campus. Registration will begin on January 25 and ends February 12. More than 600 presenters participated in last year's event.

## Check 'Forum' Web site for back issues

Grand Valley's faculty and staff newsletter has an updated Web site, [www.gvsu.edu/forum](http://www.gvsu.edu/forum).

The site features an archive, page-by-page scroll, links to Web addresses mentioned in stories, and a link to submit a Faculty or Staff Sketch. Let us know what you think; send an e-mail to [forum@gvsu.edu](mailto:forum@gvsu.edu).

## Alumnus takes position as new security director

Russell Wolff started his job as the new director of security for the Pew Campus and Regional Centers on November 2. Wolff worked for the Meridian Township Police Department near Okemos for 26 years and recently retired from the department as assistant chief of police.



Russell Wolff

Wolff earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Grand Valley in 1979 and said he is thrilled to be back at the university. "I am truly excited to give back to a place that has given me so much," said Wolff. "My professors taught me things that carried me through my entire career. I was influenced by the kind of people they were and the qualities they demonstrated in class."

Wolff said he and his wife plan to move to West Michigan after their daughter graduates from high school in June.

## FORUM Volume 34, Number 12

The GVSU Forum is published by the News and Information Services Office. The submission deadline is Tuesday noon. Send publication items to Michele Coffill, editor, [c/o\\_forum@gvsu.edu](mailto:c/o_forum@gvsu.edu). Telephone: 616-331-2221. Fax: 616-331-2250.

Faculty and staff members can find an online "Sketches" submission form on the Web at [www.gvsu.edu/forum](http://www.gvsu.edu/forum).

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## GVNOW

To see video features and daily campus news, visit Grand Valley's online publication, GVNow, at [www.gvsu.edu/gvnow](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvnow).

## GRAND VALLEY MAGAZINE

Grand Valley Magazine is published quarterly for the university community. Visit its Web site at [www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine).

Grand Valley State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.

## GVFaces

### Jim Seufert, laboratory safety specialist, CLAS

After years of working in government and corporate environmental compliance, Jim Seufert works behind the scenes to keep Grand Valley labs safe. He is the laboratory safety specialist for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"I oversee safety policies and procedures for what you're doing in the lab, not the lab itself," Seufert said.

Originally from Indianapolis, Seufert earned a degree in environmental science from Purdue University. He worked as an environmental health specialist for Hamilton County Health Department in Indiana for two years, then held a similar position for the Kent County Health Department.

He transitioned into the corporate sector as manager of regulatory compliance for Universal Forest Products, Inc., a manufacturer and distributor of wood and wood-alternative products company.

After 10 years, Seufert said it was time for a change. "I had come to the limit of my growth at Universal Forest Products and wanted something different. I felt that the challenges in a university setting would be more exciting

and rewarding than habitually filling out paperwork," he said.

Seufert began working at Grand Valley in January. He said he was pleased with the university's sustainability policies.

"Having spent nearly 15 years trying to convince others to work safely and with minimal impact to the environment, I was pleasantly surprised to see the great reception people have given me here at Grand Valley," said Seufert. "I am very happy with the respect people have for health, safety and pollution prevention."

He said that he hopes to become a point of contact for faculty members and students who need assistance or advice with environmental safety, and would like to become a resource when occupational health or safety challenges arise.

When he is not working at Padnos Hall, he spends time with his wife and his three young boys. He also enjoys skiing and mountain biking.



Jim Seufert



## What's Ahead

### Padnos International Center holds passport fair

Students, faculty and staff members can apply for a passport during a passport fair sponsored by the Padnos International Center.

The fair will be held Wednesday, November 18, from 1-5 p.m., in Lake Ontario Hall, room 130.

Participants are asked to bring proof of U.S. citizenship (previous passport, birth or naturalization certificate); driver's license or Michigan state ID; and checkbook, as two separate checks will be needed for processing.

Photos can be taken at the fair for \$2. Participants must present their Grand Valley ID card. For more information, call the Padnos International Center at x13898.

### Entrepreneurs to compete at GVSU

Top student entrepreneurs from four area colleges will compete for cash prizes at Grand Valley in the first regional Idea Pitch competition.

The event is hosted by Grand Valley's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and Seidman College of Business, in partnership with Cornerstone University, Aquinas College and Davenport University. The event is set for Thursday, November 19, from 7-9 p.m. in the Loosemore Auditorium at the DeVos Center.

The judges for the event are Rick DeVos, entrepreneur and founder of ArtPrize, Spout.com, and TheCommon.org; Danny Beckett, president and CEO of Spearia, a Web design and marketing firm based in Comstock Park; and Brent Hawkins, founder of Infusion Marketing.

The 11 competitors won competitions at their own schools. They will make 90-second pitches, which will be analyzed by a panel of judges based on the quality of their idea and presentation. The first place prize is \$2,000, second place is \$1,000, and third and fourth places are both \$500.

Seidman College of Business Dean H. James Williams applauded the regional cooperation that launched the competition. "The regional collaboration of West Michigan business programs has been working together on a number of higher education business projects

to support and promote entrepreneurship in the region, especially among college students across our institutions," Williams said. "We hope this event will become an annual celebration of student entrepreneurial enthusiasm and competence."

### Dance concert will feature eclectic mix

Students from the Grand Valley Dance Ensemble will be featured in an eclectic concert during two performances, set for November 20-21, at 8 p.m., in the Performing Arts Center Dance Studio.

Seven pieces will be performed during the approximately one-hour concert. Variety is a given, with each piece choreographed by one of three Grand Valley dance faculty members and three guest artists.

"We hope these performances will not only showcase the talent of our students and the choreographers, but also provide a new perspective on how dance is changing," said assistant professor Shawn T Bible, who organized the concert. "Dance celebrates the joy of movement and can be interpreted any way you want."

The event is open to the public and free. The multi-faceted performance will feature modern dance, jazz and ballet along with a diversity of music. Affiliate professor Calin Radulescu will pair the very fun, French and flirtatious music of Edith Pilaf with a very contemporary ballet piece, while guest artist Samm Shelton, from Wayne State University, draws from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" to accompany her ballet.

Guest artist Heather Vaughn-Southard, from Albion College, pairs the energetic and rhythmic music of Sonny Rollins with a

jazz dance piece. Amy Cova, who teaches at the University of Michigan, choreographed a modern dance piece, "Transitions."

Bible has set two pieces for the concert. "Rush," is about people in a hurry and features sporty costumes, including knee pads. Another piece follows the passage of a child growing into a woman, with four sections and music changing from the ambient piano of Franz Liszt, to the modern techno and pop/rock.

Mary Lohman, who also teaches at Grand Valley, has choreographed a contemporary ballet set to the jazz samba music of Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz.

### Lakers ready for playoff football

The Lakers, ranked No. 2 seed in Super Region 3, will host the winner of the Minnesota State vs. Hillsdale game on Saturday, November 21, at Lubbers Stadium.

Grand Valley is making its ninth straight appearance in the NCAA DII playoffs. GVSU is 24-4 in the playoffs since 2001 with four NCAA DII national championships and five title game appearances.

For playoff football ticket information, visit the Laker Athletics Web site at [www.gvsulakers.com](http://www.gvsulakers.com) or call 331-3200.

### Weight challenge held through Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness is sponsoring a six-week weight challenge that will help participants stay accountable for weight management during the holiday season.

"Hold it for the Holidays" will run November 23-January 4. The challenge provides faculty and staff members who participate with incentives to stay within two pounds of their initial weight.

Private weigh-ins will be held at the start and finish of the challenge. To register, visit [www.gvsu.edu/seminar](http://www.gvsu.edu/seminar).

Cost to participate is \$10, which will be returned for those who managed their weight goal. For more information, call Lindsey Des Armo at x12215.



GVSU Dance Ensemble members include Courtney Sammut, Elizabeth Kelley, Danielle Perkins, Karly Dierkes and Caitlin Younker.

## Survey gives 'good snapshot' of overall student body

*continued from page 1*

diversity. Some students said Grand Valley is a diverse campus and they have learned a great deal from that exposure. Others felt the university needs more diversity.

Researchers were pleased that Claiming a Liberal Education initiatives established after

the 2004 survey appeared to have met their intended goals. These initiatives include strengthening the advising program, emphasizing liberal education during summer orientation, tying co-curricular programming to in-class learning, and revising faculty orientation for a greater focus on liberal education.

Pace said she hopes faculty and staff members will review highlights of the 2009 student focus group study. "It gives a good snapshot of what our students are like. The more we know about our students, the better the results for everyone will be," she said.

Highlights from the survey are online at [www.gvsu.edu/dos](http://www.gvsu.edu/dos) and click on "GVSU Pulse."

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## General Events

### Mon., Nov. 16

7:30 p.m.: Theater presents “Night of Singing by Manley Pope.” CDC. Call x12300 for more information.

### Tues., Nov. 17

Noon: Work Life Connections hosts Divorce Support Group. 2264 KC. Call x12215 for more information.

Noon: Women’s Center hosts “Mean Girls, Real Boys.” Holland Meijer Campus. Call x12748 for more information.

### Wed., Nov. 18

9 a.m.- 6 p.m.: Laker Lore Audiotaping. 2227 KC. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/lakerlore](http://www.gvsu.edu/lakerlore) to RSVP.

Noon: Arts Series at Noon presents Jacqueline Leclair, oboe. CDC. Call x13484 for more information.

Noon: Allendale Toastmasters. 1142 KC. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/toastmasters](http://www.gvsu.edu/toastmasters) for more information.

1 p.m.: Padnos International Center hosts Passport Fair. 130 LOH. Call x13898 for more information.

1 p.m.: Excellence Series: “What Advisors and Administrators Need to Know to Better Assist Students with Disabilities.” 123 CHS. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/seminar](http://www.gvsu.edu/seminar) for more information.

2 p.m.: NACADA Webinar. “Advising Undecided / Undeclared Students for

Success.” AH. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/advising](http://www.gvsu.edu/advising) for more information.

3 p.m.: Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Workshop. “Developing a Teaching Portfolio.” 302E DEV. Call x13498 for more information.

### Thurs., Nov. 19

7:30 a.m.: Grand Rapids Toastmasters. University Club Room, DEV. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/toastmasters](http://www.gvsu.edu/toastmasters) for information.

9 a.m.- 6 p.m.: Laker Lore Audiotaping. University Club Room, DEV. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/lakerlore](http://www.gvsu.edu/lakerlore) to RSVP.

Noon: Office of Multicultural Affairs Diversity Brownbag Series. “Racial Profiling – Myth or Fact?” 1240 KC. Call x12177 for more information.

Noon: Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Workshop. “Developing a Teaching Portfolio.” 2259 KC. Call x13498 for more information.

Noon: Work Life Connections hosts Alzheimer’s Support Group. 2242 KC. Call x12215 for more information.

3 p.m.: Donna Larson’s Retirement Party. 308 Padnos. Call x12495 for more information.

7:30 p.m.: Theater Performance. “Rent.” LAT, PAC. Call x13510 for more information.

### Fri., Nov. 20

7:30 p.m.: Theater Performance. “Rent.” LAT, PAC. Call x13510 for more information.

8 p.m.: Fall Dance Performance. Large Dance Studio, PAC. Call x13484 for information.

11 p.m.: Theater Performance. “Rent.” LAT, PAC. Call x13510 for more information.

### Sat., Nov. 21

7:30 p.m.: Theater Performance. “Rent.” LAT, PAC. Call x13510 for more information.

8 p.m.: Fall Dance Concert. Large Dance Studio, PAC. Call x13484 for information.

8 p.m.: Music Concert. GVSU Chamber Orchestra. CDC. Call x13484 for information.

### Sun., Nov. 22

3 p.m.: Music Concert. Perugino String Quartet with Kathryn Stieler. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 47 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids. Call x13484 for information.

8 p.m.: Music Concert. Bandorama featuring the GVSU Laker Marching Band. LAT, PAC. Call x13484 for more information.

## Sports

### Mon., Nov. 16

7 p.m.: Women’s Basketball hosts Drury University.

### Sat., Nov. 21

1 p.m.: Women’s Basketball hosts Kentucky Wesleyan College.

TBA: Football hosts NCAA DII playoff game.

7 p.m.: Basketball hosts Cornerstone University.

## Faculty and Staff Sketches

### Sketches

**Deanna Morse**, professor of communications, had her film, “Breathing Room,” screened at the Sodak Animation Festival in South Dakota. It was chosen as a Special Selection for the Anchorage International Film Festival. Her film, “Forced Perspective: Odessa,” was screened at the State Theatre in Traverse City.

**Susan Proctor**, assistant director of Alumni Relations, received a gold award from Pride of CASE V for “Alumni Volunteers – Growing a Greater Grand Valley,” in the Best Volunteer Engagement category.

**Steve Nizielski**, associate professor of biomedical sciences, gave a presentation, “Exercise Training in Aged Rats Alters the Expression of Genes Regulating Adipose Cell Proliferation and Lipid Metabolism,”

at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Obesity Society in Washington, D.C.

**Mindy Kalinowski Earley**, assistant director of Alumni Relations, received a silver award from Pride of CASE V for “Young Alumni Programming,” in the Best New Alumni category.

**Patricia Videtich**, professor of geology, gave a presentation, “A Hands-On, Field-Based Earth Science Program for Inner City, Middle School Students,” at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

**Bopi Biddanda**, associate professor at the Annis Water Resources Institute, gave a presentation, “Exploring Lake Huron’s Groundwater-fueled Ecosystems,” at the West Michigan Regional Undergraduate Science Research conference held at Van Andel Institute.

### In the News

**John Kilbourne**, professor of movement science, was interviewed by the *Washington Post* and *Corpus Cristi Caller Times* for stories about research on using exercise balls during class.

**Elena Lioubimtseva**, associate professor of geography and planning, was interviewed by WGVU about Grand Valley’s new environmental studies minor.

**John Schmit**, associate professor of communications, was interviewed by WXMI-TV and the *Grand Rapids Press* for stories about his film, “Lake Invaders: The Fight for Lake Huron.”