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Grand Valley State University

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FORUM

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Published by University Communications



Climate survey results in, next steps detailed

Preliminary results from the 2015 myGVSU Climate Survey showed that 87 percent of members of the Grand Valley community reported feeling “comfortable” or “very comfortable” living, learning and working on campus.

Jesse Bernal, vice president for Inclusion and Equity, discussed results during a March 2 meeting in the Kirkhof Center. A summary of the preliminary findings from the November climate survey is posted online at www.gvsu.edu/mygvsu.

Bernal called the participation from students, faculty and staff members overwhelming and an immense success. The overall survey participation rate was 42 percent, compared to a national average of 28 percent, and 27 percent for the 2011 Grand Valley climate survey.

While nearly 90 percent of the overall community reported feeling comfortable, 75 percent of people of color, and 59 percent of people who identified as transgender said they were comfortable or very comfortable on campus.

Bernal said a full survey report will be available in mid-March. The independent consultant, Amber Gonzalez, will visit campus later this month to meet with action teams.

“We want to look even deeper into the data with action groups for students, faculty and staff,” Bernal said.

Faculty and staff members who are interested in participating in an action group can send an email to mygvsu@gvsu.edu. Bernal said he expects recommendations from the survey to be discussed this fall.



Photo by Jess Weal

Jesse Bernal, vice president for Inclusion and Equity, discusses preliminary results from the 2015 survey during a March 2 meeting in the Kirkhof Center.

Across Campus

Cook Leadership Academy seeks nominations for fellows

The Hauenstein Center’s Cook Leadership Academy is seeking nominations from faculty and staff members for students to join the 2016-2017 cohort of CLA fellows.

The CLA offers students opportunities for leadership and professional development, mentorship, networking, and exclusive engagement with community leaders, nationally recognized policy makers, and thought leaders.

Nominations are welcome for Grand Valley undergraduate and graduate students of any discipline and any academic year. Nominated students should be enrolled for at least one semester of next academic year, and should exhibit a combination of academic achievement, active involvement in the campus or another community, dedication to the public good, a passion to lead, and a commitment to personal growth.

Submit nominations by March 14, using the online form at www.hauensteincenter.org/nomination.

Questions about the CLA can be directed to Chadd Dowding, program manager, at x17087 or dowdinch@gvsu.edu.

Students earn scholarships for passports

Three students earned scholarships to purchase passports, the first step to a study abroad experience.

Vanessa Blackburn, a sociology major, Jaedah Pickens, psychology major, and Alita Reneau, marketing major, used their scholarships to apply for passports during the February 23 fair, sponsored by the Padnos International Center.

PIC joined with TRIO Student Support Services and Sophomore Academy to provide passport scholarships; it’s the second year scholarships have been offered to students who participate in TRIO or Sophomore Academy programs.

Blackburn and Pickens will participate in a study abroad program in Ghana, Reneau will participate in a program that divides time between Oman and United Arab Emirates.



Photo by Alissa Lane

Vanessa Blackburn, left, and Alita Reneau hold signs for their study abroad programs. They, along with Jaedah Pickens, earned scholarships to apply for passports.

Reneau said she’s excited for the opportunity for new experiences in a different culture. “It will be a good experience to go outside of my comfort zone,” she said.

What's Ahead

Kaufman Institute event focused on welcoming refugees

Interfaith organizations in West Michigan are coming together for an event aimed to create a more positive narrative about refugees coming to, and residing in the U.S.

Sponsored by the Kaufman Interfaith Institute and 50 other organizations, "Welcoming Refugees: Do Unto Others" will take place Tuesday, March 8, at 7 p.m. at Cathedral Square located in the Catholic Information Center in Grand Rapids.

Officials from the City of Grand Rapids, Bing Goei, from the Michigan Office of New Americans, and representatives from Bethany Christian Services, Lutheran Social Services and Welcoming Michigan will discuss local refugee programs. Refugees will share their stories of settling in West Michigan.

Douglas Kindschi, director of the Kaufman Interfaith Institute, said the major theme of the event, "do unto others," represents caring for strangers, which is a fundamental principle in nearly all religions and religious texts.

This event is free and open to the public, but registration is requested and can be completed online at catholicinformationcenter.org or by phone at (616) 459-7267.

VAGTC will host annual automotive symposium

A Toyota executive will be the keynote speaker at the 17th West Michigan Automotive Suppliers Symposium, hosted by the Van Andel Global Trade Center.

The event will be held Thursday, March 10, from 8 a.m.-noon, in the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium.

Keynote speaker Deb Schroeder, purchasing general manager at Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America, will begin her presentation at 11 a.m.

Other speakers include Chris Hall from Motus Integrated Technology, Noel Cuellar from Primera Plastics, and Mike Wall from IHS Automotive.

To register or for more information, visit www.vagtc.org or call x16811.

Urban planning expert to give campus, community lectures

A Columbia University professor and author will give campus and community presentations Monday, March 14, on gentrification in urban neighborhoods.

Lance Freeman, professor of urban planning at Columbia, will give a campus presentation at 3 p.m. in the Mary Idema Pew Library, multipurpose room. This event is LIB 101 and 201 approved.

He is the author of *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up* and has published articles on residential segregation, urban sprawl and neighborhood change. He has taught at the University of Delaware and worked as a researcher for Mathematica Policy Research, a social policy research firm in Washington, D.C.

Freeman will present, "Whites Moving into Black Neighborhoods: Gentrification or Advent of an Integrationist Era?" at 6 p.m. at the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium. A reception will begin at 6 p.m., followed by a lecture and panel discussion at 6:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

The community presentation is sponsored by several campus departments and the City of

Grand Rapids. For more information, contact Jill Craig, Office of the President, at x12183 or craigji@gvsu.edu.

Event will celebrate department name change

To represent a growing commitment to sustainability, the Geography and Planning Department has officially changed its name to Geography and Sustainable Planning.

"The name change is driven by our curriculum development and very strong commitment to sustainability, which is very prominent in the content of all geography, and urban and regional planning courses that we offer," said Elena Lioubimtseva, department chair.

To celebrate the department's new direction, there will be an open house Tuesday, March 15, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Kirkhof Center, Pere Marquette Room.

The event will provide attendees with a glimpse into educational and career opportunities in geography, sustainability science, global development, and environmental and urban planning.

George Heartwell, community sustainability coordinator for the Office of Sustainability Practices in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, will give a presentation at the event.

For more information about the open house, visit gvsu.edu/geography or call x13065.

The department offers a geography major and minor, a minor in geographic techniques, and certification opportunities in sustainable urban and regional planning, and geographic information systems.

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Other publications by University Communications include:

Grand Valley Magazine, which is published quarterly for the university community. Visit its website at www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine.

Visit Grand Valley's online publication, GVNNow, at www.gvsu.edu/gvnow, for daily news updates and video features.

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



Football players register with donor program

Members of the Laker football team registered to be bone marrow donors and potentially save a life during a Michigan Blood event March 1 at the football practice building.

Darcie Beebe, mother of outside linebacker Colin Beebe, approached head coach Matt Mitchell with the idea of registering players last fall. Beebe is a transplant coordinator for Spectrum Health Cancer Center.

The registration process was simple: players swabbed the insides of their cheeks and filled out a questionnaire. Donors are then entered into a database and contacted if they match a patient.

A Michigan Blood representative said volunteer donors are in high demand, as a suitable match for a patient who needs a transplant is found outside that patient's family 70 percent of the time.

Before registering, players heard from Grand Rapids resident Perry Cheatem, who underwent a stem cell transplant in June after suffering from T-cell lymphoma. Cheatem, 47, said the transplant was life-changing.



Photo by Valerie Wojciechowski

Laker football players swab their cheeks during a bone marrow registration event March 1 at the GVSU Football Center.

"It's life-changing as to how I think and how I live each day," he said.

Spectrum Health Cancer Center is the only adult blood and marrow transplant program in West Michigan. Donors are needed for adult and pediatric programs.