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Forum

A Newsletter for the
GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
Community

Monday, February 21, 2000

Volume 24, Number 27

History Prof Embraces African Cultures

When Steeve Buckridge talks about his adventures in Africa his face brightens. As a history scholar, the Grand Valley State University assistant



professor spends much of his spare time traveling and doing research in the African interior, where he can witness unique cultures first hand.

Buckridge, who joined the History Department in 1998, is teaching

courses on the history of South Africa and Africa before 1870 this semester. He specializes in pre-colonial and colonial Africa and also British Caribbean history.

Buckridge says immersing himself in different African cultures contributes to making him a better teacher. "My experiences on the continent allow me to share directly with my students," Buckridge says. "The bottom line is it helps me be a more effective teacher when I can bring my experiences to the classroom and broaden my students' horizons. I'm not just talking about things I've read but I'm talking about things I have experienced myself."

Originally from Jamaica, he earned his undergraduate degree from Barry University in Miami and his master's degree from the University of Miami. He received a Ph.D. in African History and Caribbean history from Ohio State University.

An avid traveler who has been to more than 40 countries, Buckridge spent some time in Mali during his month-long stay in Africa last summer. "Mali is one of the poorest countries on the face of the earth," he says, "but the cultures are alive and well. For me it was fascinating to go to places like Timbuktu and Djenne, ancient cities that we've heard of or read of but very few westerners go there because they are so far away. It was amazing to spend time in the Sahara Desert with the Tuaregs, a nomadic people who still practice a form of slavery."

"I go into the interiors where I can see African cultures at their best. It's rough and very adventurous. I live with families in the villages and never travel as a tourist. I am interested in seeing old Africa alive and well, to see how people live their lives, how they practice their culture, and how they cope with changes."

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Across Campus

Faculty and Staff Top Last Year's Giving

The 1999 GVSU Faculty and Staff Campaign, led by co-chairs Mary Seeger, dean of Academic Resources and Special Programs, and Professor of Political Science Bill Baum, finished on a high note as Grand Valley employees and retirees combined to donate \$217,434 to GVSU endowments and other funds. The final total eclipses the record set in the 1998 campaign by \$22,352.

More GVSU faculty and staff members contributed than ever before, with 747 making contributions during

1999. Retirees added a record \$17,991, and adjunct employees contributed another \$7,935 to the effort.

This is the sixth year that President Lubbers has offered a dollar-for-dollar match during the campaign. The grand total includes more than \$95,000 in matching funds, earned by gifts to designated endowment funds from interest earned but undistributed from the university endowment.

"The work of the Campaign Cabinet is very much appreciated," said Campaign Coordinator Kent Fisher. "These volunteer faculty and staff members were most helpful in reminding their

colleagues of the campaign and stimulating positive response toward the record campaign total."



President Lubbers collects a "Donut Dollar" from Judy Story, from the Development Office, during the donut dollar redemption on January 31.





The GVSU Forum is published by the Office of University Communications every Monday when classes are in session and biweekly during the summer. The submission deadline is Tuesday noon. Send publication items to Kathleen Adams, editor, c/o the FORUM cc:Mail box. From off campus, email forum@gvsu.edu. Telephone: 616-895-2221. Fax: 616-895-2250. Visit FORUM ONLINE on the World Wide Web at: www.gvsu.edu/

Faculty and staff members can find an online "Sketches" submission form on the Web Site.

Across Campus

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Upgrades Will Allow Faster Flow of Information

In response to growing Internet use at Grand Valley, the university has ordered the following upgrades, according to Bob Fletcher, vice provost of Information Technology. First, the Internet connection will expand from its current 10-megabits-per-second rate to 45 megabits per second. The anticipated completion date for this upgrade is February 28. Secondly, 100 dial-in modems will be added to the 305 currently installed in Grand Rapids. "Twenty of these additional modems were installed in Grand Rapids on February 10," said Fletcher.

The Holland modem pool will be expanded by 15 modems. "The exact installation date is unclear because of the volume of business being conducted in the telecommunications industry," said Fletcher. "We hope that the installation will be completed by March 31."

Additionally, to accommodate the opening of the Richard M. DeVos Center, a second fiber optic cable between the Allendale and Grand Rapids campuses has been installed. "The new cable will allow us to set up two 1,000-megabit-per-second connections between the two campuses," Fletcher said. This cable will replace the current single 16-megabit connection.

Because two independent cables that take different routes will be used, it will reduce the chances of network outages due to cable cuts. The new fiber optic cable also provides additional capacity for future growth.

WRI to Begin Rogue River Watershed Project

GVSU's Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute will begin a two-year effort this month to prepare a management plan for the Rogue River watershed.

"The goal is to develop a watershed management plan to provide direction for local units of government within the watershed," said Rod Denning, WRI research associate. "We want them to recognize that the Rogue River is an important resource."

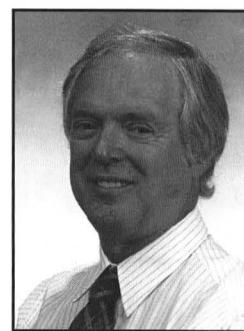
The project is funded by a \$135,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In the first phase of the project,

WRI researchers will develop a management plan for the watershed. A second phase, depending on additional funding, would involve implementation of the plan. Denning said the plan may address storm water drainage issues, zoning, and growth planning.

The Rogue River is a highly prized, nationally recognized trout stream, located in one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in Michigan. The river's watershed covers 167,625 acres and shares its boundaries with five counties - Kent, Ottawa, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Newaygo.

GVSU Survey Shows Small Business Confidence At Record High

The smallest firms in west Michigan are expressing a record level of confidence for their businesses next year.



Tom Dandridge

The latest quarterly survey of small business confidence, conducted by the Center for Entrepreneurship at Grand Valley State University, expressed a confidence level of 80 percent for next year, the highest since the quarterly confidence index began in June 1997. More than 300 businesses with fewer than 25 employees received the recent survey, and 87 responded.

Tom Dandridge, director of the Center for Entrepreneurship, noted that 75 percent of the businesses responding to the January survey do not expect to hire additional employees in the next six months. Of those who do expect to hire, the average anticipated employment increase is 24 percent.

"These are very small firms," Dandridge points out. "The average company has fewer than five employees, and some employ only one person."

He added that all of the small firms planning to hire will look locally for employees. Most, 81 percent, will seek referrals from existing employees. Other recruiting tools indicated were newspaper ads (55%), trade associations (34%), recruit-

Across Campus

ing at colleges (29%), and use of the Internet (23%).

Finally, 42 percent of the small businesses surveyed expected sales to increase in the next six months. The average projected sales increase is 15 percent.

"Overall, these projections present a picture of continued optimism and expectations of stability, not dramatic change or growth for this very signifi-

cant portion of the economy," Danbridge said.

On-line Survey Asks For Feedback

Grand Valley's Health Recreation and Wellness Services is doing a second online interest survey. It is located on the main page of the Campus Wellness Web site at www.gvsu.edu/wellness/

"Please take 10 minutes of your time to provide us your valuable feedback on facilities, programs, and services in the Fieldhouse," says Brenda Reeves, associate director of Health, Recreation and Wellness. Participants who complete and submit the survey before March 3 will be entered into a raffle for a \$50 University Bookstore gift certificate.

Coming Events

Open Meeting with Accreditation Teams Planned

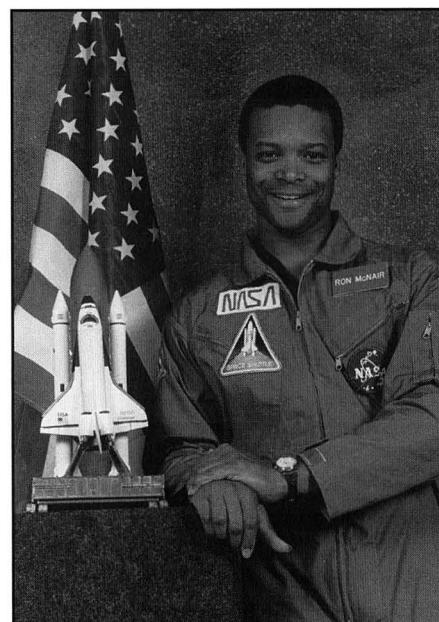
The School of Education site visit by the accreditation teams from the National Council for Accreditation for Teacher Education and Michigan Periodic Review and Program Evaluation organizations is taking place from February 19-23.

The teams, who are scheduled to meet with numerous groups and individuals from campus and the community, will be available for an open meeting on Tuesday, February 22, for anyone who could not meet with the team or anyone who wishes to speak further with team members. They will be available from 1:30-2:30 p.m. in 308 Padnos Hall. No appointment is necessary.

Arts at Noon Series Features Theatre Group

The Mixed Blood Theatre Company returns to the Louis Armstrong Theatre stage at 12 noon on Thursday, February

24, with a new work, "Black Eagle," the story of African American astronaut Ronald McNair.



Shawn Hamilton, as Ronald McNair, stars in "Black Eagle."

History Prof Embraces African Cultures

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Buckridge hopes to eventually become involved with an exchange program to West Africa and the Caribbean. He would like to see more students and faculty get a taste of the cultures there.

"It's important for students to study African history," he says. "It helps African American students understand their roots and heritage. And it's not only important for African Americans but for everyone to understand and recognize the richness and the legacy of the African presence in the Americas."

Theatre Group Offers Look At Millennium

Grand Valley faculty, students and alumni who are part of an avant-garde theatre group called Attention Deficit Drama will offer alternative perspectives on the turn of the millennium.

"Million Monologs for the Millennium" will be presented February 24-27 at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts. All shows are at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for non-members, \$8 for UICA members and students.

"The show consists of a series of interrelated monologs developed around themes related to the millennial event," says Bob Mayberry, assistant professor of English and author of one of the monologs. "The monologs vary in length from two to 20 minutes."

Other writers include Denise Stephenson, director of Grand Valley's Writing Center, and GVSU graduates John Rich and Jeremy Schliewe. Actors include GVSU graduate Patrick Pellow and student Teresa Okrazewski.

Benefits Bulletin

- Monday, March 27 - St. Mary's Mobile Mammography Unit, Allendale campus.
- TIAA-CREF visit, individual appointments available, March 16-17 - Allendale campus, March 16 - Grand Rapids campus.
- Fidelity visit, Individual appointments available, April 3-4 - Allendale campus, April 4 - Grand Rapids campus.

Calendar of Events

General Events

All activities on Allendale Campus unless otherwise noted.
Arts hotline: (616) 895-ARTS.

Mon., Feb. 21

- 11 a.m.: Special convocation honoring Pamela K. Withrow sponsored by the School of Criminal Justice. CDC. Call x3585 for more information.
- 1-2 p.m.: Student Employee Training Session. Muskegon River Room, KC.
- 3-4:50 p.m.: SIS Training. Call Marcia at x3327 to register. 112 HRY.
- 4:30 p.m.: Campus Wellness instructional clinic. "Swing." Dance Studio, FH. Call x3659 to register.
- 6:30-9 p.m.: Black History Month. "Soulfest," hosted by the Black Student Union. KC.
- 8 p.m.: Artist-Faculty Series. Michael Bowman, trumpet; Martha Bowman, bassoon; and special guest Sarah Bowman, oboe, in a concert of chamber music. LAT, PAC.

Wed., Feb. 23

- 12 noon: Campus Wellness Stress Management Series, "Conflict Resolution." 204 STU.
- 1 p.m.: Career Planning & Counseling Center Seminar. "Time Management," with John Zaugra. 204 STU. Call x3266 for more information.
- 3 p.m.: Career Planning & Counseling Center Seminar. "Helping Others To Help Themselves," with Mary Jo Thiel. Last of 2 sessions. 204 STU. Call x3266 for more information.
- Thurs., Feb. 24**
- 12 noon: Arts at Noon Series. The Mixed Blood Theatre Company, "Black Eagle." The story of Ronald McNair, African-American astronaut. LAT, PAC.
- 2 p.m.: Career Planning & Counseling Center Seminar. "Career Planning & Decision Making," with John Zaugra. Last of three sessions. 204 STU. Call x3266 for more information.

Fri., Feb. 25

- 8-10 a.m.: Millennium SE Software Training. 511 EC. Call x3238 to register.
- 9-10:50 a.m.: SIS Training. Call Marcia at x3327 to register. 112 HRY.
- 2-4 p.m.: Millennium SE Software Training. 116 HRY. Call x3238 to register.
- 9 p.m.: Black History Month. "Soul Train." Sponsored by Black Student Union and Alpha Phi Alpha. KC.
- Sat., Feb. 26**
- 8 p.m.: Music Department Concert. High School Honors Strings Concert. LAT, PAC. For information x3484.
- 9 p.m.: Black History Month. "Unity in the Community Celebration." Sponsored by the Office of Minority Affairs. KC.

Sports

Sports Hotline: (616) 895-3800. Game times subject to change.

Thurs., Feb. 24

- 5:30 p.m.: Women's Basketball at Saginaw Valley State University. University Center.
- 7:30 p.m.: Men's Basketball at Saginaw Valley State University. University Center.

Fri., Feb. 25

- TBA: Men's Tennis. Grand Rapids City Tournament.

Sat., Feb. 26

- TBA: Men's Tennis. Grand Rapids City Tournament.
- 11 a.m.: Indoor Track & Field. GLIAC Indoor Track Championships at GVSU.
- 1 p.m.: Women's Basketball at Northwood University. Midland.
- 3 p.m.: Men's Basketball at Northwood University. Midland.
- Sat., Feb. 26-Sun., Feb. 27**
- TBA: Softball at University of Southern Indiana. Evansville, IN.

Faculty and Staff Sketches

Douglas K. Chung, professor of Social Work, conducted a Christian spiritual healing survey, part of a multi-stage research project. The survey, which was co-sponsored by the School of Social Work and the Grand Rapids Area Center for Ecumenism, was designed to explore the existence and perception of Christian spiritual healing among church members. The survey determined that 82 percent of west Michigan pastors felt that they had personally witnessed spiritual healing and 86 percent believe that it happens in their congregations. In the next phase of the study, Chung will interview people identified by the pastors as Christian healing facilitators and people who have experienced spiritual healing.

In the News

Erika King, professor and chair of Political Science, was interviewed on January 17 by WOOD Radio about the Michigan Senate campaign. On January 21, she was interviewed by FOX 17 about the Holland vote on Internet filters, and on January 24 by WOOD Radio about the Iowa caucuses. On January 28, King was a guest on the WGVU Morning Show to discuss President Bill Clinton's final State of the Union Address. On January 31, she was interviewed by the *Holland Sentinel* and on February 1, by WOOD TV about the upcoming Internet filter vote in Holland. On February 1, WZZM TV taped King's media and politics class as the students discussed the New Hampshire primary. King was interviewed on February 9 by WOOD TV about Steve Forbes' decision to drop out of the GOP nomination contest.