

Colleagues

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Letter From the Editor

Clayton Pelon
Grand Valley State University

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Grand Valley State University
510 Eberhard Center
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Phone: 616.331.6240
Fax: 616.331.6422

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The Importance of Art



Art has always been a part of my life. As a trained pianist and music major, art in all of its forms has inspired me with its innovation, willfulness, and daring. A sculpture, painting, or a dynamic musical piece can rearrange one's reality and lead to solutions to complex problems or roadblocks in life. The articles "Art for Our Sake," "Growing Up in Your Right Mind," and "Liberal Education Sparks Success" all build the case that art is essential to the human experience and our future as a visionary society.

At GVSU, we pride ourselves on our focus

on liberal education which ensures that students are exposed to diverse thoughts and forms of communication. As educators find themselves faced with increasing emphases on accountability, standardized testing and performance based outcomes, the arts hold a unique potential for thinking about teaching and learning. Producing graduates that have a critical and adaptive problem solving approach improves the teaching profession and increases the educational capacity of our communities.

We, in the Grand Rapids area, have been lucky to experience the creation of form and beauty on a whole different level with this past year's ArtPrize. I have never seen a prior event attract and inspire a community like this. The Eberhard Center, the College of Education's home, was filled with excitement as exhibits were placed in and around the building, the Grand River, and across the city. ArtPrize integrated art into our everyday life, broadening our knowledge of self and other, uniting our thoughts and feelings.

In closing, I would like to mention the retirement of a cornerstone of our creative educational community, Dr. Loretta Konecki. Her dedication and bold ideas led the College of Education and our students through enormous growth and achievement. From NCATE success to the creation of the Graduate Teacher Certificate program, Dr. Konecki will be a muse for the next generation of COE faculty. 🍷

Elaine C. Collins, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education

Letter From the Editor

Even though it says College of Education on the front of this magazine, it is amazing how many people in other parts of GVSU and the community have helped with this issue. I think you will enjoy their insights as well as the contributions of our COE faculty and staff.

Colleagues is on a streak with our second national award from APEX. It is always wonderful to have an outside group recognize quality. I hope you think this issue is up to the same standard.

This issue was inspired by the Boston Globe article and some of the current headlines about school reform and budget cuts. Hopefully the value of art education is not lost amidst all of

the talk and our society can figure out a way to pay for our children's quality education.

Finally, one of the most valuable classes I ever had was my middle school art class with my teacher Karen Lambert. Besides my significant difficulty with the spinning wheel (I was really trying but pieces kept flying in random directions, *Ghost* made it look way to easy), I learned principles of color and design that have served me well and laid a foundation for my career. What if I had never had that class? 🍷

Clayton Pelon
Editor-in-Chief