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Grand Valley State University

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Grand Valley Forum

Monday, May 2, 1983 Vol. 7, No. 33

Grand Valley State College

FRINGE BENEFIT COSTS RISING; BENEFITS HAVE ALSO INCREASED

Grand Valley now spends an average of \$5,734 per employee annually for fringe benefits, says Tom Butcher, assistant to the personnel officer. Over the past eleven years, according to Butcher, GVSC employees have seen a steady improvement in their fringe benefits; at the same time, GVSC's total annual expenditures for benefits have more than quadrupled and the average fringe benefit cost per employee has more than tripled.

In addition, Butcher says, the percentage of the institution's operating budget allocated for fringe benefits has been increasing. For example, in 1971-72 fringe benefit costs totalled nearly 8.2 percent of GVSC's operating budget of nearly \$9 million. For 1982-83, these costs are expected to total 11.3 percent of a \$28.5 million budget.

Butcher cites several factors which have contributed to increased benefit costs, including inflation, a dramatic rise in health care costs, greater employee use of benefits, and legislative changes in social security, worker's compensation, and unemployment compensation rates.

In addition, he says, the cost to employees for dependent health insurance coverage has not increased during the past five years, although the institution's costs for this coverage have risen significantly during that time.

Health insurance, retirement, and social security contributions are the three most expensive fringe benefit costs to the institution, Butcher

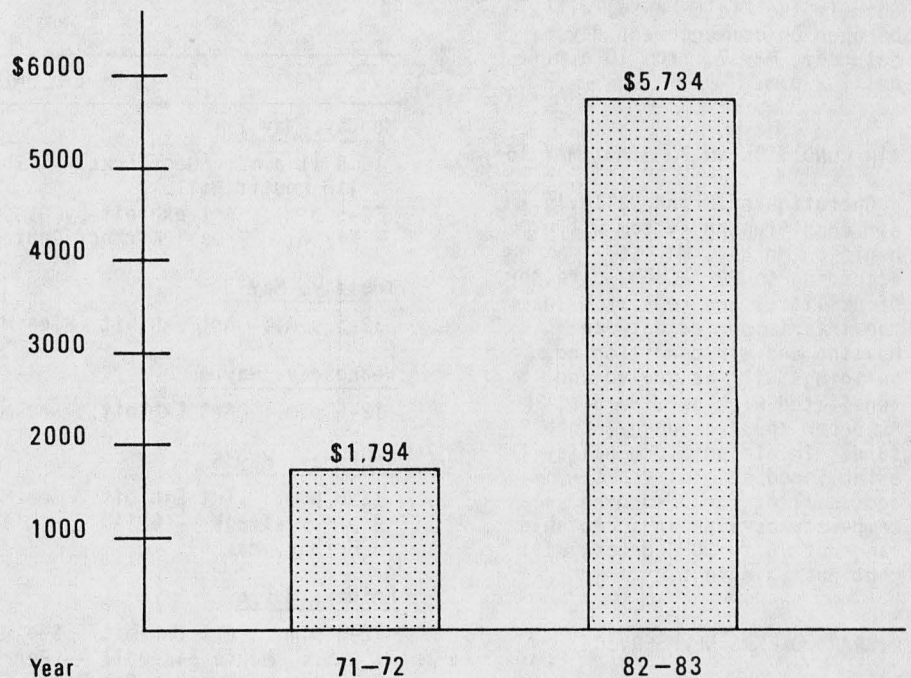
says. They amount to more than 85 percent of the total fringe benefit costs, while worker's compensation and unemployment compensation account for more than 8 percent.

Improvements in benefits since 1971-72 include the addition of dental insurance for employees and their families; increased health insurance coverage and maximum policy limits; improvements in long-term disability coverage; the

addition of prescription drug coverage; the option to enroll in a Health Maintenance Organization; and an increase in the number of tuition-free courses in which employees may enroll.

"Fringe benefits can no longer be considered incidental additions to an employee's regular wages," Butcher says. "They have become a significant component of each employee's total compensation package."

Fringe Benefit Cost Per Grand Valley Employee



STUDENTS CREATE MACE FOR USE IN COMMENCEMENT PROGRAMS

Grand Valley's 1983 commencement exercises, scheduled for Saturday, May 7, will see the beginning of a new tradition for the institution -- the use of a ceremonial mace.

The mace is a heavy, often spiked, ornamental staff which originated in the Middle Ages in England as a protection for officials taking office or opening court. Since the sixteenth century in England and colonial days in America, it has been used not for protection but as a symbol of authority and office.

In commencement ceremonies, the mace is carried by a distinguished member of the faculty who usually precedes the entire procession. The placement and removal of the mace from a place of honor signify the opening and closing of the ceremonial session.

The Grand Valley mace, being used for the first time in the 1983 commencement ceremony, was designed by Beverly Seley, associate professor of art, and executed by seven students in her metalsmithing class: Greg

Grand Valley Forum

The Grand Valley Forum is published every Monday by the Public Relations Office. Copy deadline is the Tuesday noon prior to publication. All materials should be sent to Dotti Clune, editor, Public Relations Office, 26 Zumberge Library, GVSC, Allendale, MI, 49401. Telephone: 616/895-6611, extension 222.

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ACROSS CAMPUS

FORUM BEGINS SUMMER SCHEDULE

This issue of the Forum is the last of the weekly issues published during the regular academic year. The Forum is published on alternate Mondays during the summer session. The next issue will be distributed on Monday, May 16.

BOOKSTORE, PRO SHOP, SNACK BAR TO BE OPEN ON GRADUATION DAY

The Main Deck Bookstore and the Galley snack bar in Kirkhof Center, as well as the Laker Pro Shop in the Field House, will be open on commencement day, Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

AIR CONDITIONING TO START MAY 16

Operation of Grand Valley's air conditioning system will begin on Monday, May 16, according to Purl Cobb, director of utilities and repairs. In the interim period between heating and air conditioning, buildings will be cooled and ventilated with outside air, in order to save energy, Cobb said. The temperature policy established several years ago, calling for 78-degree temperatures with an acceptable range of 76 to 80 degrees, will continue in effect.

LIBRARY OFFERS NEW SERVICE

Zumberge Library now offers library users access to the Lakenet data base located in the Lakeland Area Library Network headquarters in Grand Rapids. The data base contains holdings of 65 west Michigan public libraries, according to Library Director Stephen Ford, who says it will be used primarily for interlibrary lending and borrowing but may also be used for other information purposes. The service also allows Grand Valley to query the automated circulation system data base at Western Michigan University, Ford says. Equipment for the dial-up on-line access service, which includes a business micro-computer and related software,

was made available to the library through a federal grant to Lakenet, according to Ford. More information about the new service is available from Zumberge's reference librarians.

JOB OPENING

COT

Field House Equipment Assistant -- Salary range, \$6.10-7.16/hr. For more information, call the Personnel Office, ext. 215.

STUDENTS CREATE MACE

. . . (continued)

Korson, John Lucas, Kim Organ, Christopher Prowse, Dawn Roberts, Carole Taylor and Ted Walker.

Commencement exercises will be held at 11 a.m. in the Field House. Nearly 500 students are expected to participate in the ceremonies, at which University of Michigan President Harold Shapiro will be featured speaker.

Honorary degrees will be awarded to Shapiro, labor leader Owen Bieber, and historian and author Russell Kirk.

- CALENDAR OF EVENTS -

Monday, May 2

- 10 & 11 a.m.: Geoflicks -- "The Role of Coal" and "Oil Well." Free. 118 Loutit Hall.
- 12-5 p.m.: Art exhibit by GVSC student Mike Miesch (through Friday, May 6). Free. Kirkhof Center Art Gallery.

Tuesday, May 3

- 12-5 p.m.: Art Exhibit. See May 2 for details.

Wednesday, May 4

- 12-5 p.m.: Art Exhibit. See May 2 for details.

Thursday, May 5

- 12-5 p.m.: Art Exhibit. See May 2 for details.
- 4 p.m.: Track -- GLIAC Track and Field Championships at GVSC (also Friday, May 6).

Friday, May 6

- 12-5 p.m.: Art Exhibit. See May 2 for details.
- 1 p.m.: Men's Baseball -- Ferris State College at GVSC.
- 3:30 p.m.: Track. See May 5 for details.
- Women's Softball -- Laker Invitational (also Saturday, May 7). For more information, call ext. 259.

Saturday, May 7

- 11 a.m.: Commencement -- GVSC Field House.
- 1 p.m.: Men's Baseball -- GVSC at Saginaw Valley State College.

Sunday, May 8

- 1 p.m.: Men's Baseball -- Mott Community College at GVSC.

Monday, May 9

- Men's Baseball -- Grand Rapids City Tournament (also Tuesday, May 10). For more information, call ext. 259.

Tuesday, May 10

- Men's Baseball. See May 9 for details.