GVSU Highlights: The Wildly Exciting Education Conference Celebrating Outstanding Education The First 50 Years (1964-2014): Moving Toward a Wildly Exciting Future

Sally Hipp  
*Grand Valley State University*

Jacque Melin  
*Grand Valley State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/colleagues](http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/colleagues)

Part of the [Education Commons](http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/education Commons)

**Recommended Citation**  
Hipp, Sally and Melin, Jacque (2015) "GVSU Highlights: The Wildly Exciting Education Conference Celebrating Outstanding Education The First 50 Years (1964-2014): Moving Toward a Wildly Exciting Future," *Colleagues* Vol. 12: Iss. 1, Article 18. Available at: [http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/colleagues/vol12/iss1/18](http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/colleagues/vol12/iss1/18)
The Wildly Exciting Education Conference

Celebrating Outstanding Education

The First 50 Years (1964-2014): Moving Toward a Wildly Exciting Future

By Sally Hipp and Jacque Melin, GVSU Faculty

Photography By Bernadine Carey

The Wildly Exciting Education Conference, held at Eberhard Center on August 11, 12, and 13, 2014, served as the event to open the 50th anniversary year-long celebration for Grand Valley State University’s College of Education. This conference is a biannual conference designed to inspire excellence in education by bringing renowned presenters to West Michigan educators. This year’s presenters were Dr. Robert Marzano, Kevin Honeycutt, Sylvia Rosenthal Tolisano, and Mike Fisher who focused on making education more relevant to 21st century learners. Over 400 teachers and administrators attended the conference.

As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, the College of Education (COE) honored excellence among GVSU COE alumni who have become teachers and principals by presenting them with the Laker Blue Apple Award. Superintendents and principals from public, charter, and parochial schools throughout the West Michigan area were contacted and asked to nominate teachers and/or principals who exemplified excellence in their schools. Nominees were reviewed by GVSU COE professors and selected by the 50th anniversary committee to receive the award.
The following teachers and principals were the first to receive the Laker Blue Apple Award:

- Jenny (Yonkman) Bangma, teacher at Creative Technologies Academy
- J. Peter DeWitt, teacher at Catholic Central High School
- Eric Fey, teacher at West Michigan Aviation Academy
- Jason Grubaugh, teacher at Plainwell High School
- Tom Hosford, principal of Rockford Freshman Center
- Audra Kowalski, teacher at Bryon Center Charter School
- Tricia McPheron, dean of students at Forest Hills Eastern Middle School
- Jaymie Perry, teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School
- Sara Sposaro, teacher at Zinser Elementary
- Christopher Stabile, teacher at East Grand Rapids High School
- Mark VanderKlok, teacher at Alpine Elementary
- Colleen Waite, teacher at Ottawa Hills High School

We hope to continue this tradition of honoring excellence among GVSU COE graduates as an important way to recognize the wonderful work teachers and administrators are doing each day as they serve 21st century learners.

**College of Education Mission:** We develop quality educators to teach, lead, and serve in local and world communities.