From the Dean

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From the Dean…

Welcome to another edition of the Seidman Business Review (the “Review”). As the new global economy presents new challenges to all West Michigan’s businesses, the Seidman College of Business continues to provide cutting-edge, relevant, and real-world commentary focused on sharing existing and emerging business knowledge, legislation, and innovations, in ways that are relevant and compelling for West Michigan businesses and other public and private organizations.

Grand Valley State University and the Seidman College of Business are especially proud to provide to this community significant resources of intellectual, cultural, and social capital, especially in light of the history of the University, and its founding by a group of business leaders. During its brief history Grand Valley has fulfilled very well its promise to the West Michigan community in the best sense of the expectations of those founders. The Review continues the fulfillment of that promise.

Again, this edition begins with West Michigan economic and commercial real estate forecasts for 2007 and a performance review of West Michigan’s regional stocks. It also includes articles addressing a number of other very timely topics—from the challenges of accommodating disabilities, to powerful healthcare trends, to education’s importance to the economy, to the projected expansion of retail markets.

Seidman’s faculty experts excel at both teaching and applications-based research and implementation—as confirmed and highlighted in our recent reaffirmation of AACSB International accreditation. Accordingly, I hope you find this edition of the Seidman Business Review as informative, enlightening, and useful as ever. Moreover, I urge you to peruse the “Panel of Experts” on the last page of this issue. Perhaps you can utilize Seidman’s faculty expertise to improve your operations and facilitate your business and management initiatives.

—H. James Williams
Dean, Seidman College of Business

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Hari Singh, Ph.D., and Nancy Boese, M.B.A.
The West Michigan economy has been in a process of consolidation and modest growth. How is the business confidence for 2007? What are the projections for employment and sales for 2007? Find out what Grand Rapids area executives think.

5 Commercial Real Estate Outlook for 2007
Matt Williams, CCIM, Vice President, Grubb & Ellis/Paramount Commerce
The commercial real estate market in greater Grand Rapids faces many challenges and opportunities. The retail, office, and industrial markets are in different phases of transition and growth. Find out which sectors of the commercial real estate industry are projected to expand rapidly in 2007.

9 West Michigan Stock Returns
Gregg Dimkoff, Ph.D.
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11 Six Powerful Healthcare Trends That Impact Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance
Jeff S. Rubleski, M.B.A., Regional Sales Manager, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
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17 Accommodating Disabilities in Grand Rapids
Suzanne M. Crampton, Ph.D., John W. Hodge, Ed.D., Kinfu Adisu, Ed.D.
Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has been problematic and expensive for employers and public organizations. However, for Grand Rapids to be a “cool” tourist-friendly city, finding ways to provide this kind of accommodation might be critical. Find out how reports in the Grand Rapids Press and legal challenges are shaping this debate.