

Colleagues

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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Outing raises scholarship monies

Professor Al Ten Eyck was tenacious on the tee, but the team consisting of Eric Sherman, Bob Boudreau, Scott Hoover and Phil O'Connell took first-place honors in the 1997 School of Education Golf Outing at The Meadows.



Professor Al Ten Eyck studies his drive.

The event raised monies for both the Faite Mack Scholarship and Joe Reid Scholarship funds.

The fourth annual School of Education Golf Outing at The Meadows is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 1998, at 9 a.m. Be sure to mark your calendars now.

A quarter century of service

Four School of Education faculty members have entered their 25th year of teaching teachers how to teach.

A quarter century's worth of congratulations are in order for Ram Chattulani, Ph.D., Antonio Herrera, Ph.D., Faite Mack, Ph.D. and John Wissink, Ph.D.

Graduates honored

The School of Education at GVSU honored its outstanding graduates for the 1996-97 academic year.

Undergraduate honors for Teacher Education went to Martin Alexander, who earned his B.S. in Psychology and Special Education.

Three honors were awarded for Advanced Studies in Education.

Honored were Barry Olson, who earned an M.Ed. in General Education; Elizabeth Baker, who earned an M.Ed. in Reading/Language Arts and Nicole Colman, who earned an M.Ed. in Special Education.

FACULTY/STAFF PROFILE GVSU SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

JOSEPH FISHER, Ph.D.

Age: 29

Position: Assistant Professor, Special Education

Years at GVSU: 2

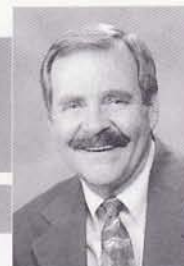
Notable: Came to GVSU from the University of Kansas; Initiated Faculty Study Group for campus faculty and school district educators; Received Council for Learning Disabilities 1997 Outstanding Researcher Award.

Quotable: "If one works hard and is committed, anyone can succeed!"



ON THE COVER: Susan Sieracki, left, brings a creative and upbeat style of teaching to her students at Godfrey Elementary School. Joe Allen, a 1997 Grand Valley State University graduate, is looking forward to putting his training into practice in a classroom setting. M-TEC, meanwhile, is preparing tomorrow's teachers with some innovative program offerings.

ROBERT HAGERTY DEAN'S CORNER



MORAL SCHOOL COMMUNITIES: A 21st CENTURY PRIORITY

There is a yearning across the country to provide our teaching institutions with a larger moral dimension. That growing hunger for a commitment to social and moral betterment is more than simple nostalgia. It is a profound and anxious desire to arrest decay.

For over a decade, every Gallup poll has asked parents whether or not schools should teach morals. The number of "yes" responses from parents with school-aged children has risen from 45 percent in 1987 to 67 percent in 1996.

Values provide the foundation on which this country was built. Honesty, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, integrity and caring are at the heart of good character.

Children today face an extremely challenging social environment. They experience growing economic disparity, increasing incidents of violence and abuse, a sense of disenchantment with government and a narcissistic preoccupation with self. It leaves them feeling hopeless, helpless and powerless.

Such feelings undermine the ability of children to help others, to trust others and to see meaningful possibilities for their own future. Today's young people are easily seduced by a material culture that promotes instant gratification. The violence they see around them — as well as what they observe in the media — desensitizes them to their own suffering and the pain of others.

Adults must help schools become moral communities where students can experience the importance of values on an everyday basis. Their future — and our future — depends on it.

Making these types of learning environments commonplace will take a concerted effort by the local school community and citizenry at large.

Principles For A Moral School Community

A moral school community collaboratively develops, clearly states, and celebrates core moral values. Members of the school community can develop mission statements, codes of responsibility and shared moral values.

To encourage students to practice living these values, schools can provide time for peer leadership, cross-grade tutoring and caring for those in need. Schools can encourage students to create and display posters, art work and essays on responsibility, empathy and self-discipline, while engaging in rituals that display caring. Service and caring can be recognized and celebrated in regular class settings.

Children — especially adolescents — often see the contradictions in values that adults live by. Although we cannot erase all those contradictions, we can help model moral behavior by developing codes of conduct for our own work as teachers, administrators, school board members, parents and even custodians.

Students develop skills in goal setting, problem

solving, cooperation, conflict resolution and decision making. They can also develop their social skills and values through modeling, direct instruction, experience and continual practice.

There are many ways to accomplish these goals both inside and outside of the school walls. They include empowering students in decision making processes to provide exposure to the practice of democracy; setting consequences and rewards for the way they handle self discipline; providing outlets for community stewardship; and implementing a mentor program with at least one caring adult for each child.

Instilling Values For The Common Good

Young people are increasingly hurting themselves and others. They are less and less concerned about contributing to the welfare of their fellow human beings.

Transmitting values has always been the work of civilization. A society needs character education to both survive and thrive.

As we stand on the threshold of the 21st century, educators should be making a wholehearted commitment to developing moral school communities.

Moral education is a cornerstone for a democratic society, because democracy is government by the people themselves. People must care about the rights of others and the common good. They must be willing to assume the responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

It shouldn't be a question of whether or not schools should teach values, but rather which values schools should teach and how well they will teach them.

For those of us at Grand Valley State University involved in preparing the next generation of teachers for public schools, the questions of teaching moral values are relevant. Those individual schools and school districts that successfully create moral school communities will attract the very best of this new generation of teachers. These teachers will be seeking out school districts where they will be supported in making a difference in the lives of young people.

Historically, three social institutions have shared in molding our values: the home, the church and the school. In taking up character education, schools are returning to their time-honored role of helping students grow into productive adults and good citizens.

Robert Hagerty, Ed.D., is in his second year as Dean of the School of Education. Dean Hagerty came to GVSU in 1992. Prior to that time, he served as Superintendent of Ionia Public Schools, and in numerous capacities in Michigan schools as teacher, building administrator and central office administrator. He is the author of "The Crisis of Confidence in American Education" (1995).