

# The Bridge:

Bridging The Gap Between Today and Tomorrow

Vol. 20 Issue 6

Grand Valley State University  
Educational Support Program

March 2009

## You are Cordially Invited to the Annual Educational Support Program Banquet

It's hard to believe, but the end of the year is nearly upon us. With the warm weather and anticipation of summer comes one more great tradition. . . .the ESP Annual Banquet!

Join ESP for the 2009 Annual Banquet in the Alumni House on Friday, March 27th between 12:00pm and 1:30pm.

The Annual Banquet is a special tradition in ESP, one in which the ESP staff is able to honor the hard work and commitment of the students in the program. We would like to honor YOU and all that YOU have done to make yourself, and our program, a great success this year.

This year, ESP will transform the Alumni House into a Hawaiian luau – complete with tropical music, Hawaiian food, and leis for all that enter.

In addition to the FREE FOOD and PRIZES, we will be recognizing graduating students, students with the most improved grade point averages, students with the highest grade point averages, and the ESP professor of the year. We will also honor, for the first time in program history, one ESP student who will receive a very special award, ESP Student of the Year!

**By: Melissa Selby-Theut**



## Graduate School Financial Aid: What's Available?

Getting free assistance for graduate school can be tricky. The federal government does not offer the grant programs (like the Pell grant) to students going on for a master's or PhD program. However, there are still ways to get free money to pay for graduate school.

### Graduate Assistantships:

A graduate assistantship is a wonderful way to get 50% to 100% of your graduate studies paid for. A graduate assistantship serves two purposes:

To provide graduate students with part-time, paid work experiences in their field of study, and allow them to expand and/or apply their discipline knowledge and skills under supervision.

To provide faculty and/or university staff assistance in carrying out special projects or other assignments that require the advanced discipline skills of graduate students.

A common myth is that students can only apply to a graduate assistantship within their graduate program-not true! Many students cross disciplines. For example, GVSU's Financial Aid Office has hired students from Physical Therapy, Computer Science, College Student Affairs, School Counseling, and Biostatistics. When you are hired into a position, you agree to work for a specific number of hours each week in return for free or reduced tuition expenses, as well as a stipend. To find a graduate assistantship, check the college's student job board and the Admissions Office. Also, contact the department you will be majoring in.

### Fellowships:

A fellowship is a significant source of funding for graduate school. Oftentimes a student's tuition, housing, and books are covered and sometimes a stipend is given. In return, the student must complete a specific program. Some fellowships will require research and a presentation of your findings at the end of a specified time.

There are 2 types of fellowships: portable and institutional. Portable fellowships can typically be utilized at the institution of the student's choice. Institutional fellowships are awarded at a specific college or university and can only be utilized in their program. For additional information look at: <http://www.gradschools.com/Article/Graduate-Fellowships/1676.html>,

[www.gradschools.com/Article/Graduate-Fellowships/1676.html](http://www.gradschools.com/Article/Graduate-Fellowships/1676.html),



### Scholarships:

The rules of scholarship searching are the same for graduate school as they are for undergraduate. You must begin your search for graduate scholarships early-typically the year before you are going to begin graduate studies. Some good websites to review are: [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com), [www.brokescholar.com](http://www.brokescholar.com), [www.srnexpress.com](http://www.srnexpress.com). Be sure to also check with the college you are planning to attend-many will have scholarships specific to graduate students.

### FAFSA

Even though the FAFSA won't award you free assistance, many scholarship and fellowship applications require you to complete the FAFSA to determine your financial need. Be sure to apply by the application deadline! [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

### Final Tips:

The best advice is to start your search early and be organized! Create a spreadsheet of the types of aid you are going to apply for, their deadline date, what information is going to be required, and where to find the application. Remember if an application requires letters of recommendations to ask for those letters **at least 2 weeks** before it must be turned in. Academic transcripts can also take time so be sure to give yourself time for those as well.

Good luck!

By: Vicky Powers



## Fall 09 Registration

*Don't delay*, schedule an appointment with your ESP advisor to discuss your course selection options for Spring/Summer 2009, Fall 2009, and Winter 2010. The courses will be available at 7 a.m. on the day you are eligible to register. Your class standing is based on the number of credits you've earned plus the number of credits you are attempting in winter 2009. Your exact registration date is based on the first letter of your last name and class standing.

Registration Schedule:

**All graduate levels:** March 17

**Senior: 85+ credits earned**

last name A-L March 18

last name M-Z March 19

**Junior: 55-84 credits earned**

last name P-Z March 20

last name A-G March 21

last name H-O March 24

**Sophomore: 25-54 credits earned**

last name F-K March 25

last name L-R March 26

last name S-Z March 27

last name A-E March 28

**Freshman: 0-24 credits earned**

last name T-Z March 31

last name A-D April 1

last name E-J April 2

last name K-N April 3

last name O-S April 4

By: Marnie Parris-Bingle

## Need Financial Aid for the Spring/Summer?

Thinking about taking classes this spring and summer, but not sure where to start? Or maybe you have considered taking spring/ summer classes but were concerned about the cost? GUESS WHAT?! THERE IS STILL AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET FINANCIAL HELP!! Grand Valley has a website, and the only thing you have to do is follow the procedures to get spring / summer aid. However, in order to be considered for financial help, you do have to be a FULL TIME STUDENT (6 credits for spring/ summer) and you

must have previously filed a 2008/2009 FAFSA. Here are the steps to the Financial Aid website, then just follow these instructions...

1. Go to website [www.gvsu.edu/financialaid](http://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid)
2. Where it says "Financial Aid for Summer" click on **more information**
3. Read everything in that page since it includes VERY important information
4. If you are eligible for Spring/Summer Financial Aid, then proceed to **Spring/Summer Supplemental Application**
5. Fill out the basic information

If you have any questions, you can also contact the Financial Aid department at 616-331-3234 or email at [finaid@gvsu.edu](mailto:finaid@gvsu.edu)

By: Briseyda Reyes

## ESP will be feeling the love in April at our cultural trip

February is a month that is known for making people feel the love. However, ESP is making sure that our participants will feel the love all the way into April. Join Marnie Parris-Bingle, the peer mentors, and other participants on April 4, 2009 when we travel to the Detroit Opera House. At the Opera House we will see "The Elixir of Love"— is an Italian opera that tells the story of a shy Nemorino trying to win the heart of the beautiful Adina with the help of a 'love potion'. Before traveling to the Opera House, you'll be able to enjoy a wonderful lunch at one of Detroit's premier Italian restaurants, Café Roma! Be on the lookout for an email and postcard about this lovely trip. Sign-up information to follow!

By: Andrea Walker



## Upcoming Events

### ESP

Annual Banquet  
Alumni House  
Friday, March 27, 2009  
12:00 am - 1:30 pm  
FREE to Participants

Elixir of Love  
Detroit Opera House  
Saturday, April 4, 2009  
FREE to Participants

### GVSU

The Dark Knight  
Kirkoff Big Screen  
March 16-21, 2009  
10 am, 2 pm, 7 pm, 10 pm  
FREE

Drag Queen Show  
Kirkoff Center  
March 26, 2009  
7:00 pm

### Grand Rapids

White House in Miniature  
Gerald R. Ford Museum  
Until May 24, 2009  
Mon - Sun 9:00 am—5:00 pm  
Student with ID \$5.00

Blooming Butterflies  
Fredrick Meijer Gardens  
March 1– April 30, 2009  
Mon, Wed - Fri 9:00 am - 5pm  
Tues 9:00 am - 9:00 pm  
Sundays 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
Student with ID \$9:00

**By: Melanie Straub**

### ESP Staff Directory

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### The Bridge

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Check Us Out on the Web!  
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