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**Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence**

**Recognition Luncheon**

**Friday, October 23, 2015**

**11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Alumni House and Visitor Center**

Welcome Frederick J. Antczak

Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Luncheon

Recognition of Honorees Donovan Anderson

Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence Program**

The Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence Program provides an opportunity for units to invite outstanding alumni back to campus to share their post-graduation experiences with the GVSU community. Through the program, our distinguished alumni have the opportunity to share their insights about what constitutes a strong academic preparation for students. We are pleased this afternoon to recognize distinguished alumni from twelve of the units within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and welcome them back to campus.

**2015 Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence Honorees**

Paul Amenta B.F.A. in Sculpture & Printmaking (1995)\*

M.F.A. in Fine Arts (2000)

Christine Amon B.M. in Vocal Performance (2009)\*

M.M. in Vocal Performance (2012)

Nathan Bacheler, Ph.D. B.S. in Biology (1997)\*

Ph.D. in Zoology (2008)

Matthew Cooper, Ph.D. B.S. in Biology (2002)\*

M.S. in Biology (emphasis in aquatic science) (2009)\*

Ph.D. in Biology (2014)

Jaime Curtis-Fisk, Ph.D. B.S. in Chemistry (2004)\*

Ph.D. in Chemistry (2009)

Richard Damstra, J.D. B.A. in Political Science (1996)\*

J.D. (2001)

Ashley Dressel, Ph.D. B.A. in Philosophy (2008)\*

Ph.D. in Philosophy (2014)

Kenneth Games, Ph.D. B.S. in Athletic Training (2009)\*

Ph.D. in Kinesiology (2013)

Michelle LeMieux, D.O. B.S. in Biomedical Sciences & Classics (2009)\*

D.O. in Osteopathic Medicine (2013)

Andrew McCarthy, Ph.D. B.S. in Geology (2000)\*

Ph.D. in Geosciences (2007)

Teague O’Mara, Ph.D. B.S. in Anthropology & Biology (2001)\*

Ph.D. in Biological Anthropology (2012)

Hillery York B.A. in History (2012)\*

M.A. in Museum Studies (2014)

\* Denotes degree obtained from Grand Valley State University

# Paul Amenta

*B.F.A. in Sculpture and Printmaking (1995)\**

*M.F.A. in Fine Arts (2000)*

# Paul Amenta was born in Hammond, Indiana and moved to West Michigan when he was thirteen. He attended Grand Valley State University and received a B.F.A. in Sculpture and Printmaking. After a brief stint in Seattle, Washington and a false start in the graduate program at the University of Indiana at Bloomington, he moved to New York City to attend the School of Visual Arts where he earned an M.F.A. in Fine Arts. He spent eight years in New York and was represented by the Marvelli Gallery. Amenta returned to Grand Rapids in 2006 where he is currently an adjunct professor at Kendall College of Art and Design, teaching courses in the Collaborative Design Studies Department. His creative practice has grown to include organizing and curating large collaborative exhibitions in vacant structures in the Grand Rapids area including the *ActiveSite* projects (07-09), *Michigan - Land of Riches*, and numerous *SiTE:LAB* (2010-present) projects.

# Christine Amon

*B.M. in Vocal Performance (2009)\**

*M.M. in Vocal Performance (2012)*

# Praised for her “sweet, powerful voice”, Grand Rapids native Christine Amon is a mezzo-soprano and proud GVSU alumna. This season, she will make her company debut as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* at Opera Louisiane and will return to Grand Valley State University as a soloist in Bach's *Magnificat*. She was also featured in Opera Memphis' nationally recognized *30 Days of Opera* program this fall, bringing free opera performances each day to the community. Last season, Christine joined the Mary Ragland Young Artist Program at Nashville Opera where she debuted as Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance*. She has sung leading roles in several productions with Opera Memphis during the past three seasons including the title role in *Hansel and Gretel*, the wife in *The Music Shop*, and Pitti-Sing in *The Mikado*. She also created the role of Mitch in the premiere of *The Ghosts of Crosstown*. Other credits include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Giovanna and Paggio (*Rigoletto*), Peggy/Maybelle (Hoiby: *This is the Rill Speaking*) and Gianetta (*L'elisir d'amore*). In 2012, Christine was a finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition hosted by the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music. In addition, she's been awarded first place in the The Beethoven Club of Memphis Young Artist Competition, Opera Grand Rapids Collegiate Vocal Competition, and the Dr. Marjorie Conrad Art Song Competition. Ms. Amon holds an Artist Diploma from The University of Memphis, an M.M. from Bowling Green State University, and a B.M. from Grand Valley State University.

# Nathan Bacheler, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Biology (1997)\**

*Ph.D. in Zoology (2008)*

Dr. Nate Bacheler was born and raised in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where his love of the natural world, especially lakes and rivers, began. It wasn’t until attending Grand Valley State University as an undergraduate that he first became involved in scientific research and learned (from Jodee Hunt and Mark Luttenton, among others) that one could turn curiosity about aquatic ecosystems into a career. After completing his bachelor’s degree, Nate attended North Carolina State University, where he studied native migratory fishes in Puerto Rico for his master’s degree, and subsequently completed a large-scale tagging and telemetry study on an estuarine fish species for his Ph.D. He next moved to Oregon State University for a post-doctoral appointment, collaborating on an NSF-funded project studying the effects of climate change on walleye pollock spawning in the Bering Sea. After a stint as an Assistant Professor of Biology at the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay, Dr. Bacheler returned to the Atlantic Coast to join the National Marine Fisheries Service. There, he serves as a Research Fishery Biologist in NOAA’s Southeast Fisheries Science Center, investigating quantitative aspects of the ecology and management of marine fishes, and coordinating the Southeast Fishery Independent Survey (SEFIS), which uses trap and video data to index the abundance of reef fishes between North Carolina and Florida. Dr. Bacheler has published more than 25 articles in diverse scientific journals and continues his research using novel quantitative and methodological approaches to understanding the abundance and distribution of marine fish species.

# Matthew Cooper, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Biology (2002)\**

*M.S. in Biology (emphasis in aquatic science) (2009)\**

*Ph.D. Biology (2014)*

Dr. Matthew Cooper earned his B.S. in Biology at Grand Valley State in 2002. He then went on to earn an M.S. in Biology in 2009 while conducting research at the Annis Water Resources Institute and a Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame in 2014. Matt is currently a Research Assistant Professor at Central Michigan University’s Institute for Great Lakes Research. A central theme of Matt’s professional and personal life has been a passion for the Great Lakes. Growing up near the shore of Lake Michigan instilled a sense of just how special the lakes are, which has led to a career studying their natural complexities and the ways in which humans have impacted them. For his M.S. research, Matt measured the metabolism of Lake Huron coastal wetlands, in a sense, taking the pulse of each wetland he visited. For his Ph.D., Matt focused specifically on ways that humans have harmed coastal wetlands, from excessive nutrient loading, to urban development along the coast, to economic policies that undervalue ecosystem health. In his current position at CMU, Matt continues to focus on the Great Lakes, recently launching projects to investigate nitrogen cycling along the coast and exploring microbial community function in coastal wetlands. Matt also helps manage a U.S. EPA-funded Great Lakes wetland monitoring program that is assessing the condition of over 1,000 wetlands over 5 years. Matt’s connection to the lakes remains personal as well, and he spends as much time as possible surfing, sailing, or just simply exploring the coastline with his wife and two children.

# Jaime Curtis-Fisk, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Chemistry (2004)\**

*Ph.D. in Chemistry (2009)*

Dr. Jaime Curtis-Fisk is an associate research scientist and STEM program manager for the Dow Chemical Company. Through this unique dual role she leads both technical projects and community outreach initiatives. As a scientist, Jaime’s work focuses on formulation development for the delivery of active ingredients which has involved leading projects for pharmaceutical, microbial control, and packaging applications. Her technical focus is on polymer chemistry and use of hydrogels as delivery systems in biological applications. Jaime also leads the Dow STEM Ambassadors program and the company’s initiatives to support teacher professional development. As chair of the Midland section of the Women Chemists Committee, Jaime works with her team to coordinate community programs focused on networking, career development for women, and youth outreach to build the pipeline of future women scientists. Jaime also serves on Dow’s GROW steering committee, the company’s internal effort dedicated to Growing R&D Opportunities for Women. Jaime was recently honored with the American Chemical Society’s 2015 Rising Star Award, presented by the Women Chemists Committee, for her technical strength and passion for advancing the role of women in science. Jaime holds a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from Grand Valley State University and Ph.D. in Chemistry with a Certification in College Teaching from Michigan State University. She lives in Midland, Michigan with her husband, also a scientist at Dow, and their two children.

# Richard Damstra, J.D.

*B.A. in Political Science (1996)\**

*J.D. (2001)*

Richard Damstra recently completed his 10th year as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Department of State. He is currently serving a tour at “Main State” in Washington, DC, working on the team that coordinates U.S. foreign assistance to Ukraine. Previously, Richard served as a cultural affairs officer in Sofia, Bulgaria, overseeing many exchange programs, public diplomacy outreach, and cultural engagement with the Bulgarian public; as a consular officer in Kyiv, Ukraine, interviewing visa applicants and leading the fraud prevention team; and as a political officer in Astana, Kazakhstan, reporting on human rights and religious freedom issues. Prior to the State Department, Richard worked in Michigan politics, primarily for State Representative Ken Sikkema; received his law degree from Valparaiso University School of Law; and practiced law for four years at Warner Norcross and Judd in Grand Rapids.

Richard was born and raised in Grand Rapids and graduated from GVSU in 1996 with a B.A. in Political Science. He gives great credit to fantastic professors like Forrest Armstrong, William Baum, and Erika King for energizing his interest in politics and world affairs and helping him sharpen his writing and analytical skills. He was also an early participant in the Honors Program (predecessor to the current Honors College), and he continues to draw on the diverse subject matter knowledge and creative thinking skills that he developed thanks to the many demanding professors that taught in the program. Finally, Richard’s “GVSU resume” would not be complete without mentioning the summer study abroad program in Kingston, England. He participated in 1995, his first trip overseas, and has been hooked ever since.

# Ashley Dressel, Ph.D.

*B.A. in Philosophy (2008)\**

*Ph.D. in Philosophy (2014)*

In 2008, Dr. Ashley Dressel, graduated *magna cum laude* from Grand Valley State University with a bachelor’s degree in Philosophy. While at GVSU, she was a member of the Honors College, served as Photo Editor for the *Lanthorn*, taught at Muskegon Correctional Facility through the Philosophy Department’s Community Working Classics program, and received several honors. After graduating, Professor Dressel moved to Southern California where she completed a Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of California, Irvine with specializations in the history of ethics and medieval philosophy. While at UC, Irvine, Ashley was awarded the Machette Foundation Award for Philosophy, the Kavka Prize in Philosophy, and a President’s Dissertation Year Fellowship. Ashley was also a founding member of the UC, Irvine Hypatia Society, a group dedicated to nurturing graduate women in Philosophy. In October 2014, she was organizing co-chair of the Hypatia Society’s first Perspectives on Genderconference. Presently, Ashley is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN. Ashley also serves Duluth as a lay member on the 11th District Judiciary Ethics Committee. At St. Scholastica, Professor Dressel teaches classes in Ethics, History of Philosophy, and Feminism, and she is working on articles on Aquinas’s understanding of vice and despair. She has two publications: “Directed Obligations and Deathbed Promises in Ethical Theory and Moral Practice” and a chapter in *The Cambridge Critical Guide to Aquinas’s On Evil* entitled “Weakness and Willful Wrongdoing in Aquinas’s De Malo” (forthcoming, co-authorship with Bonnie Kent).

# Kenneth Games, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Athletic Training (2009)\**

*Ph.D. in Kinesiology (2013)*

Dr. Kenneth Games earned his bachelor’s degree in Athletic Training at Grand Valley State University in 2009. He earned his master’s degree in Exercise Science and his Ph.D. in Kinesiology at Auburn University in 2011 and 2013 respectively. During his time at Auburn University, Dr. Games also earned a Graduate Certificate in College and University Teaching. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation at Indiana State University and the Director of Clinical Education for the Doctorate in Athletic Training Program. Dr. Games also serves as the Director of the Neuromechanics, Interventions, and Continuing Education Research (NICER) Laboratory. His primary research interest focuses on improving the quality of life of tactical athletes by bridging physiological, clinician, and patient rated outcomes to reduce musculoskeletal injuries and create patient-centered prevention and intervention programs. In his short career, Professor Games has published over 15 peer-reviewed journal articles and over 50 peer-reviewed abstracts. Kenneth is also involved in the profession of athletic training at the state, district, and national levels. He currently serves on several committees with the Indiana Athletic Trainers Association, the Great Lakes Athletic Trainers Association, the National Athletic Trainers Association, the NATA Foundation, and the World Federation of Athletic Therapy and Training. Additionally, Dr. Games volunteers his time with the Sycamores First program, a program focused on the mentorship and guidance of first generation college students.

# Michelle LeMieux, D.O.

*B.S. in Biomedical Sciences & Classics (2009)\**

D.O. in Osteopathic Medicine (2013)

A 2009 GVSU Honors graduate from Brighton, Michigan, Michelle LeMieux received the B.S. in Biomedical Sciences with a double major in Classics, concentrating on the Classical Tradition—a background that she put to good use while studying at John Cabot University in Rome and completing her Honors Senior Project on Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Michelle matriculated at Michigan State University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine and earned the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree in 2013. She is now Chief Resident in the Integrated Family Practice and Neuromusculoskeletal Residency Program at the Botsford Hospital campus of Beaumont Health in Farmington Hills, Michigan. She anticipates graduation in 2017. Michelle is actively participating in two research projects. The first is investigating an association between cardiac stress test results and Chapman’s reflex points—a system of fascial tissue texture abnormalities hypothesized to be reflections of internal dysfunctions or pathologies. The other is seeking to demonstrate a new theory for the mechanism behind a specific osteopathic diagnosis, called an upslipped innominate. Michelle is also working on quality improvement initiatives in her family practice office. Navigating the demanding curricula in Biomedical Sciences, Classics, and Honors while studying abroad (and graduating in four years!) was a challenge that reflects Michelle’s commitment to developing herself as a whole, well-rounded person. Similarly, her work in osteopathic medicine approaches medicine in a holistic way, focusing on the whole body and working in partnership with her patients.

# Andrew McCarthy, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Geology (2000)\**

*Ph.D. in Geosciences (2007)*

Andrew McCarthy, a native of Grand Haven, Michigan, graduated from GVSU near the top of his class with a B.S. in Geology in 2000. He then went on to work as an entry-level field geophysicist for Earth-Water Technology Inc. in Trinidad and Tobago, but quickly returned to academia to work on and complete a Ph.D. in Geosciences at the University of Arizona (2007). His Ph.D. dissertation title was "Behavior of Sodium Clinopyroxenes Under Compression". Since completing his Ph.D., Andrew transitioned from high-level academic research into more practical work as a geoscientist in the oil and gas industry. His career has progressed through a variety of professional positions and physical locations, starting with ConocoPhillips in Houston, Texas and later Midland, Texas. In 2011 Dr. McCarthy left ConocoPhillips to join independent oil and gas operator Concho Resources in Midland, Texas. He has served in a number of operations and development roles at Concho and is now Senior Exploration Geologist where he explores for and helps to extract unconventional petroleum resources in the Permian Basin of West Texas and SE New Mexico. It has been exciting and fun for us at GVSU to watch Dr. McCarthy grow immensely into a top-notch, well-respected, highly knowledgeable, professional geoscientist.

# Teague O’Mara, Ph.D.

*B.S. in Anthropology & Biology (2001)\**

*Ph.D. in Biological Anthropology (2012)*

Dr. O’Mara graduated with undergraduate degrees in Anthropology and Biology and completed the Honors College at GVSU in 2001. He then worked as the field director for the Semliki Chimpanzee Project in Uganda where he re-started research efforts after a civil war induced hiatus. After brief stints teaching university students primate ecology in Costa Rica and high schoolers in Michigan how to make TV shows, he earned M.A. (2005) and Ph.D. (2012) degrees in Biological Anthropology at Arizona State University. His work on the development and ecology of lemurs in Madagascar earned him grants from the National Science Foundation and the Fulbright Foundation, among others, and the American Association of Physical Anthropologists awarded him the Sherwood Washburn student prize. Teague has earned postdoctoral fellowships from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, and the European Union’s Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowship for his work on social learning, cooperation, and physiology in bats. Teague’s research in primates and bats focuses on how animals learn to be part of a social group as they develop, how males and females differ in their development, why certain animals have long juvenile periods, and what these questions tell us about development and learning in humans. He is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Max Planck Research Institute for Ornithology in Radolfzell, Germany where he teaches and conducts research, but also spends some time thinking about how lucky he is to study amazing animals in some great places around the world.

# Hillery York

*B.A. in History (2012)\**

*M.A. in Museum Studies (2014)*

Hillery York graduated from Grand Valley in 2012 with a B.A. in History, minoring in Archaeology. A founding member of the Rho Eta chapter of Phi Mu Fraternity, she also proudly served as President of the Archaeological Society of Grand Valley, an officer for the Grand Valley History Club and was inducted into Phi Alpha Theta. Shortly after graduating from GVSU, she attended The George Washington University, in Washington, D.C. for her M.A. in Museum Studies. While attaining her degree, Hillery began an internship at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History (NMAH) in The National Numismatic Collection (NNC). The NNC is the nation’s monetary history collection and contains approximately 1.6 million objects and boasts impressive geographic diversity. In January of 2014, Hillery was offered a position at NMAH serving as the Collections Manager for the national collection. She graduated with her M.A. in May of 2014 and was prepared for this career path by the wonderful variety of history classes she attended at GVSU and the support and encouragement of her professors to pursue her historical passions and interests. While serving as the NNC Collections Manager, she has led many initiatives for the Smithsonian. Recently, she completed a massive Rapid Capture Digitization program for the collection. This program employed a conveyer belt system to digitize over 270,000 proof sheets from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing collection in under 5 months. Hillery’s latest project has been installing a new exhibition on the first floor of NMAH called, The Value of Money, which contains over 400 artifacts varying from a 465 BC Decadrachm coin from Syracuse, Sicily to a personal check signed by President James Madison in 1813.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is a student-centered and diverse learning community that engages in critical inquiry, extending knowledge to enrich and enliven individual and public life. Created in July 2004, CLAS is the largest of GVSU's colleges and offers more than 50 bachelors degrees (and a growing number of advanced degrees) in the natural and mathematical sciences, humanities, the fine and performing arts, and the social sciences. GVSU undergraduates in all fields build the foundation for their major studies in general education courses offered by our College.

**Mission**

**What is the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' reason for being?**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a student-centered, diverse, and inclusivecommunity that engages in critical inquiry extending knowledge to enrich andindividual and public life.

**Vision**

**What is the desired future for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences?**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will set a standard of excellence in liberal. We will prepare our students to be responsible citizens, productive, and lifelong learners with global perspective. We will foster a diverse andcommunity of inquiry, discourse, discovery, expression, and reflection.

**Value Statements**

**What are the core values for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that guide our actions and priority-setting?**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences values:

• Excellence in liberal education facilitated through active student-teacher engagementacademic achievement supported by appropriate class size and a highproportion of permanent faculty.

• Intellectual inquiry and discourse fostered by an engaged and diverse community ofwhich rests upon academic freedom, integrity, collaboration, and collegiality.

• Excellence in a broad range of scholarly and creative activities and researchby appropriate resources.

• Consistent and effective unit, college, university, professional, and community.

• An environment that promotes student development in professional careers, asin a democratic society, and as members of the global community.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences acknowledges the following offices

for their participation in this event:

Alumni Relations

Annis Water Resources Institute

Anthropology Department

Art and Design Department

Biology Department

Chemistry Department

Classic Fare Catering

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