

# The Bridge:

Bridging The Gap Between Today and Tomorrow

Vol. 24 Issue 3

Grand Valley State University  
Educational Support Program

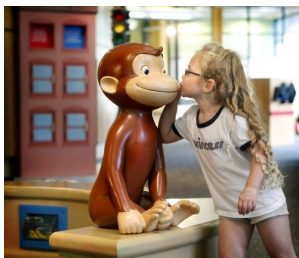
December 2011

## A Social Service Event: Connor's Friends

By: Saulo Ortiz

For November's social service event, participating students volunteered at Grand Rapids Children's Museum's (GRCM) for Connor's Friends. Connor's Friend's is named in honor of a West Michigan boy named Connor who has autism. This event brings children and families together that are affected by autism. An environment where these autistic children are relaxed and feel at ease while exploring and playing is created. Modifications to the museum's two floors to accomplish this goal by placing large rolling shades throughout the museum to reduce noise and visual stimulation, as well as music therapy, and special sensory activities. Through this event, a voice is given to those suffering with autism.

ESP volunteers supervised the children and played with them as well. One volunteer, when asked how the event was, proclaimed "It was amazing! Interacting with the kids, being able to talk to them, and make them feel calm and safe was a great experience. I learned that no matter what mental or physical [disability] you have, you are a joy to have on earth, as long as you have love and family. I can't wait to volunteer again!" All volunteers, including ESP advisor Vicky Powers, commented similarly on the joy of participating in this social service event. ESP plans on participating in the seventh annual Connor's Friends next year. Look for this event next year, as well as new social/cultural events coming up soon!





## **Christmas Gift Ideas**

By: Mackenzie Kindel

Christmas is just around the corner! I am sure by now you are trying to think of some brilliant gift ideas for your family. But who are we kidding? We are college students, and we are working on a budget! So here are just a few ideas that are fun, fashionable and easy enough to make on your own!

### **GIFTS IN A JAR:**

- Apple crisp in a Jar
- Cupcakes in a Jar
- Cookies for Santa in a Jar
- Hot Coco in a Jar

There are so many cute, inexpensive ideas. This website was passed down to me and now I am passing it on to you. For pictures and more ideas go to

<http://www.tipjunkie.com/jar-homemade-gifts/>.

- Paint a wine bottle and make it into a dish soap dispenser or olive oil dispenser
- Frame a piece of your own artwork
- Make a holiday wreath
- Make a booklet of family recipes
- Put together a gift bag of assorted holiday coffees and treats

Hope these ideas helped! Now all I have to do is decided which idea to make for my family members and start putting it all together. Hope everyone is able to save a little bit of money and still share the love. Happy Holidays!



## **Money Talk**

By: Victoria Powers

### **Winter Semester Bills**

It's hard to believe the Fall semester is almost done! December 16<sup>th</sup> is the payment deadline for Winter semester bills at GVSU. Each student will receive 2 emails from the university the week of November 21st to your GVSU student email account. The first email will be from Student Accounts letting you know your Winter bill is available for viewing in your MyBanner and giving instructions on how to access your bill. The second email will be from the Financial Aid Office letting you know something has changed on your financial aid award. The change is your Winter semester aid paying towards your Winter bill. Be sure to log into your MyBanner to verify your balance is paid to zero.

If you have any money owing to the university and you do not pay your bill in full or sign up for a payment plan, your classes will be canceled on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. If you need help understanding your bill or figuring out how to pay your balance please contact your ESP advisor for assistance.

## **U of M Trip**

By: Marnie Parris-Bingle



The Educational Support Program (ESP) partnered with Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) for a trip to University of Michigan and it was incredible! GRCC brought students who were looking to transfer to complete their bachelor's degree. GVSU students met admissions advisors from nursing, international relations, pharmacy, and social work for graduate programs. We had a beautiful day and gathered some great information. U of M admissions department was so accommodating and helpful that our students went away feeling hopeful, inspired and, ready to apply to their chosen graduate programs!

## **You've Got Questions? We've Got Answers!**

By: Melissa Selby-Theut

If you have any other questions about the program that you would like answered, you can either submit them to [frontesp@gvsu.edu](mailto:frontesp@gvsu.edu) or schedule an appointment with your ESP advisor. Remember, we're here to help! I will be answering those questions in the newsletter throughout the course of the year.

### **Where can I find out about internship opportunities?**

ESP highly recommends internships for students – especially for students with liberal arts majors who may need some experience to refine their career interests and make them marketable after graduation. In the long-run, your best bet when looking for an internship is to find one that fits well with your future career goals. It will pay off down the road as you'll make better contacts and be more likely to get hired in your field of choice upon graduation.

That said, the best ways to locate any internship are:

Identify companies and organizations that you would like to intern for and call them to inquire about internship opportunities.

Check out the website of your academic department; many academic departments have suggestions or opportunities listed online.

Check out where other GVSU students have interned through the Experience Matters! site ([www.gvsu.edu/experiencematters](http://www.gvsu.edu/experiencematters)).

Contact the Chamber of Commerce in the city that you want to intern to ask about available internships. Let your friends, family members, acquaintances, and advisor know that you're looking for an internship; they know people who know people!

Visit the Laker Jobs website ([www.gvsu.edu/lakerjobs](http://www.gvsu.edu/lakerjobs)) or any of the other online internships search engines listed on the Career Services website. Attend a career fair! GVSU hosts several throughout the year, as to other local organizations. Career fairs offer job AND internship opportunities.

Visit the Career Services Office at 206 STU on the Allendale Campus or 116B on the Pew Campus, or visit the Career Services website ([www.gvsu.edu/careers](http://www.gvsu.edu/careers))

As always, if you need any help finding an internship (or anything else), ESP is here to help. Call the office at 331-3401 to set an appointment with your advisor!

## **Calendar of Events**

By. Natosha Beaman

**December 1-4:** 11am, 2pm, 5pm, and 8pm

Showing *Twenty One*: Kirkhof Center, Big Screen Theater

**December 5-11:** 11am, 2pm, 5pm, and 8pm

Showing *The Nightmare Before Christmas*: Kirkhof Center, Big Screen

**December 10:** CLASSES END!!

**December 10:** All Day

Commencement: VanAndel Arena, Grand Rapids

**December 12-16:** 11am, 2pm, 5pm. and 8pm

Showing *National Lampoons Christmas Vacation*: Kirkhof Center, Big Screen Theater

**December 12-16:** Final Examinations all week

**December 17:** Semester Ends

**December 22:** Grades available to students

**January 9:** Classes Begin (Winter Semester)



**Check Us Out on the Web!**

**[www.gvsu.edu/esp](http://www.gvsu.edu/esp)**

**Add us as your Friend on Facebook: ESP Peer Mentors**

## **ESP Staff Directory**

Melissa Selby-Thuet

*Director*

Marnie Parris-Bingle

*Advisor*

*Victoria Powers*

*Advisor*

Lolita Salindong

*Office Coordinator*

### **SSO Staff**

Ashleigh Zerbst

Mackenzie Kindel

Saulo Ortiz

Natosha Beaman

### **The Bridge**

Written and edited

by the ESP & SSO staff.

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**EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM**

**GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

**1 CAMPUS DRIVE**

**239 STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING**

**ALLENDALE, MI 49401**