

# FORUM

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

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## Coronavirus cautions impact spring on campus

*University leaders implement remote learning, other actions during unprecedented time*

Students moving home in March. Classrooms empty in lieu of remote learning. Commencement and other campus events large and small postponed or canceled.

The spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has caused university leaders to take quick and unprecedented action and react fluidly to announcements from state and local health and governmental officials and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

President Philomena V. Mantella canceled classes March 12-13, allowing faculty members to transition to remote learning, which began March 16 and will continue through the start of spring/summer classes on May 4.

Mantella said these are challenging times, and working together will ensure essential operations continue smoothly.



Photo by Valerie Wojciechowski

Students carry belongings out of their living centers March 12.

### Students move out of living centers

After remote learning was extended through the semester, students who live on campus began moving their belongings out of living centers.

First-year students Taylor McMiller and Brody Conaty loaded up their clothes and other items to head back to Detroit and Grand Ledge, respectively.

McMiller said her 5-year-old brother, Donovan, who came to help, is happy she's moving home to Detroit for the rest of the semester, but not happy about sharing a bedroom again.

Housing and Residence Life created a move-out process and students signed up for dates that worked best for their needs.

Housing and meal credits during this period will be sent to student accounts. For more information, visit [gvsu.edu/housing](https://gvsu.edu/housing).

### Study abroad programs canceled

In mid-March, study abroad programs and courses planned for the spring term were canceled. Later that week, all summer study abroad programs were canceled.

Michael Vrooman, interim chief international officer in the Padnos International Center, said students who made deposits to GVSU on trips will be refunded and PIC staff members will work with affected students to minimize the impact on their academic coursework.

In February, study abroad programs in Italy, China and South Korea were canceled and students in those countries were asked to return to the U.S.

### Charter Schools Office helps parents educate at home

With many U.S. states suspending K-12 education for varying periods of time, millions of parents are looking for resources to help bridge the education gap between coronavirus-related stoppages and the time when schools resume.

Grand Valley's Charter Schools Office created a resource website with prompts for activities and educational work based on grade level, as well as a resource for social-emotional learning: <https://sites.google.com/view/gvsufamilyresources/home>.

### Keeping campus clean

Maintenance, service and grounds staff members have been on the front lines keeping



Photo by Kendra Stanley-Mills

A closed sign is posted on a door to the Fieldhouse. The facility and other campus buildings closed in mid-March as precautions because of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

campus buildings clean and sanitized amid the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak.

Tim Thimmesch, associate vice president for Facilities Services, said staff members and contractors have been incredible in responding to the needs of the community.

"We are really appreciative of their efforts during this ongoing situation," Thimmesch said, adding some staff members have been reassigned to populated buildings.

### IT supports campus community

As students, faculty and staff members adjust to learning, teaching and working remotely, Information Technology has adjusted approaches, been nimble and flexible to help everyone succeed in remote applications.

Sue Korzinek, associate vice president and chief information officer, said IT staff has worked hard to help with logistical challenges and been responsive to new needs.

Korzinek said the shift to online education has driven a spike in the use of both Blackboard Collaborate and Panopto, which are online video and learning tools that can be used by students and faculty for classes. Use of Collaborate increased 800 percent, and Panopto saw a 725 percent increase in use.

# ACROSS CAMPUS

## Novel by alumna earns recognition from Library of Michigan

Grand Valley alumna Erin Bartels earned a spot on the 2020 Library of Michigan’s Notable Books list for her novel “We Hope For Better Things.”

Bartels graduated with a bachelor’s degree in English language and literature in 2001 and a year later



Erin Bartels

started working at Baker Publishing Group in Grand Rapids, where she still works.

Bartels planned on pursuing a master’s degree to become a teacher, but realized her passion for writing was stronger than her passion for teaching. She began writing “We Hope For Better Things” in 2014, during a time, she said, when societal issues were taking a turn.

“There were these news stories about racially charged situations: the Charleston church shooting, police brutality, white nationalist rallies,” she said. “That’s one of the messages in the book: we do make some progress over time, but we’re not as progressive as we think.”

“We Hope For Better Things” follows the main character Elizabeth as she discovers her family’s history. The book moves through three different time periods, including the Civil

War and the Detroit riots in the 1960s. Bartels said the idea for the story came from a box of photographs she found in her aunt’s house.

“My great aunt was almost 100 and she was in hospice. She had all of these old photographs and her sons didn’t know who anyone was. I thought it would be an interesting story that started with a box of photographs and you didn’t know who took the pictures,” Bartels said.

Bartels said being recognized by the Library of Michigan has given her book a wider audience. The novel was published by Baker Publishing Group, which publishes Christian books.

She added it is a great honor to be recognized in the state she loves so much.

# FACULTY AND STAFF SKETCHES

## In the News

**Paul Isely**, associate dean and professor of economics, and **Amanda Dillard**, associate professor of psychology, were interviewed by media outlets for stories about how the coronavirus is affecting the economy and people’s anxiety levels, respectively.

## Sketches

**Anne McKay**, assistant professor of nursing, gave a presentation, “Updates on Osteoporosis: Equipping Nurse Practitioners to Address a Looming Public Health Crisis,” at the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners conference held in Detroit.

**Rebecca Davis**, associate dean for research and scholarship, KCON, was a co-author of an article, “Wayfinding Strategies and Wayfinding Anxiety in Older Adults With and Without Alzheimer’s Disease,” set for publication in *Research in Gerontological Nursing*.

**Robert Johnson**, affiliate faculty of nursing, was elected as a distinguished fellow of the National Academies of Practice in Medicine at the organization’s annual meeting.

**Bopi Biddanda**, professor of water resources, wrote a book review of Freshwater Ecology: Concepts and Applications of Limnology, “A Freshwater Science Refresher,” published in the *Lakes Letter* by the International Association for Great Lakes Research.

**Cynthia McCurren**, professor and dean of nursing, gave presentations, “Re-envisioning the AACN Essentials: A Task Force Update,” at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing CNL Summit held in San Antonio, Texas; and “AACN Essentials Revision Task Force: Progress to Date,” at the AACN Doctoral Education Conference held in Naples, Florida.

Students involved in **Campus Recreation** earned third place in the Student Digital Presentation category of the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association’s Creative Excellence for a video series, the “7 Principles of Leave No Trace.”

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Other University Communications publications:

Grand Valley Magazine, published quarterly; visit [gvsu.edu/gvmagazine](http://gvsu.edu/gvmagazine).

GVNext, web publication; visit [gvsu.edu/gvnext](http://gvsu.edu/gvnext), for daily news updates and video features.

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# GVFACES

## Alex Priebe, Office Coordinator

Alex Priebe, office coordinator for the Brooks College Dean’s Office, is feeling more thankful than ever to be a part of the Laker community.

Priebe is a communication specialist and manages Brooks College’s website, social media presence, and newsletters. He also provides administrative support for the Supplemental Writing Skills courses and the Lake Michigan Writing Project, a summer writing camps for students in grades 3-12.

“Grand Valley is an incredible place to work and learn,” Priebe said. “Everywhere you look there are opportunities to learn, grow and connect. I feel very fortunate to work here. I started in 2018, and it quickly became apparent to me why GVSU ranks so highly as a place to work in Michigan.”

Priebe grew up in Zeeland and earned a bachelor’s degree in filmmaking from Michigan State University in 2008. He then spent four years in Turkey working for a nonprofit organization and teaching English. When he returned to the U.S., Priebe started his own photography business, worked in admissions at a university in Colorado and a photo print company before joining Brooks College.

Now working at home, like many other faculty and staff members, Priebe is trying to offer his support in any way he can.

“I’m focusing on ways to support students and our faculty during this adjustment to online

teaching,” Priebe said. “With the rapidly evolving situation around COVID-19, I’m also doing my best to keep up with clear communication with the programs I’m involved with.”

Although this situation isn’t ideal, Priebe said he has seen cooperation and kindness.

“Some of the good I’ve seen come of this includes support for students and student employees who are experiencing financial hardship, delayed deadlines where possible, and frequent updates from our leadership,” he said. “Last week, when I found out I would be working at home, the IT team quickly helped me get my computer modified so I could set-up a home office.”

When campus resumes regular business, Priebe is looking forward to documenting the making of a beer made by Founders Brewing with help from one of Grand Valley’s design thinking classes, and applying to graduate school at Grand Valley.



Alex Priebe