

# FORUM

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

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## President of Palau says GVSU environment allowed him to succeed

Tommy Remengesau, president of the Pacific island nation of Palau, told a standing-room-only crowd in the Kirkhof Center that he succeeded because Grand Valley had the perfect learning environment for him.

"I was away from the island for the first time, but there was diversity here," he said. "And, I must say the cold weather made me study; a warmer place would have offered distractions. And, so I graduated from Grand Valley in 1979."

Remengesau addressed students, faculty and staff members November 1 as part of 3-day trip to campus. He visited West Michigan October 30-November 3 to address the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan about what his country is doing on an international scale about global warming.

He said global warming and preserving the island of Palau for future generations are among his biggest concerns and challenges.

"The issue of global warming is beyond debate and discussion," he said. "It's time for leadership and action. Let's look at the science so we can plan. Let's look at the cause of the rising sea levels."

Remengesau is leading a government that is in the center of not only climate change, but U.S.-China relations and outside threats to an ocean economy.

He said while roughly 20,000 people live on the island, more than 200,000 tourists visit each year. He said Palau is a large ocean state with a responsibility to take care of the ocean.

"Big or small, you have a role to play; every nation matters," he said. "The world relies heavily on marine issues. We can contribute to issues like marine life protection, climate change and sustainability."

Remengesau said through a special treaty, the U.S. is responsible for the island's defense and



Tommy Remengesau, president of Palau, graduated from Grand Valley in 1979.

thousands of residents of Palau serve in the U.S. military. He said the island is used for military exercises and the U.S. was recently allowed to install radar on the island because of the intimidating presence of North Korea.

## ACROSS CAMPUS

### Cards provide university quick facts

The 2017 Talking Points cards are included in this issue of Forum.

The cards provide quick facts about Grand Valley and updated statistics. Departments can request more cards by calling University Communications at x12221.

### Accountability Report shows continued strong performance

Grand Valley's annual Accountability Report shows the university is delivering on its promise of a quality, public education for students and is a public good for the people of Michigan.

The 11th annual report shows Grand Valley is again a top performer in the state in several key areas, including providing access to students who might not otherwise be able to afford a college degree and keeping students on a path to a timely graduation.

The 2017-18 report was released at the Board

of Trustees meeting November 3 at the Kirkhof Center.

The report includes seven core values that form the basis for Grand Valley's 2016-2021 strategic plan: excellence, integrity, inquiry, inclusiveness, community, sustainability and innovation.

Here are some highlights from the report:

- For the fourth consecutive year, Grand Valley welcomed more than 25,000 students (25,049 in fall 2017), and a record number of students of color (4,344). More than 4,000 freshmen have enrolled for six years in a row.
- Grand Valley ranks in the top four of all public universities in Michigan for graduation rates, and third for retention.
- 93% of recent graduates are employed or in graduate school, and 86% are working and giving back in Michigan.
- The university was rewarded by the state legislature and the governor for a sixth year in a row with a portion of appropriations based on performance.
- Tuition remains in the bottom half of all Michigan public universities, while Grand

Valley receives the second-lowest funding per student.

- The economic impact of Grand Valley on Kent, Ottawa and Muskegon counties is \$816 million.

The full report can be viewed online at [www.gvsu.edu/accountability](http://www.gvsu.edu/accountability).

### "I Am Grand Valley" nominations open

Nominations for the annual "I Am Grand Valley" student leadership recognition campaign are now open.

Students, faculty and staff members can nominate students who display and employ strong leadership skills that affect the campus community. Nominations are due November 30 and can be submitted online at [www.gvsu.edu/orgsync](http://www.gvsu.edu/orgsync).

Nominated students will be notified during the first week of December and celebrated January 24 at the "I Am Grand Valley" Leadership Reception. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/iamgv](http://www.gvsu.edu/iamgv) for more information.

# ACROSS CAMPUS

## Women in politics focus of Democracy 101 event

A panel discussion October 25 featured a group of women who hold political leadership positions. During the event at the Eberhard Center, panelists discussed challenges and opportunities in their careers.

The event was part of Democracy 101, a series that focuses on public issues and democratic principles, processes and history. The series is organized by the Community Service and Learning Center.



Winnie Brinks discusses her experience in politics during a panel discussion.

Panelists offered advice for students who are interested in careers in politics. Rep. Winnie Brinks encouraged young women to get involved early on by volunteering for campaigns or attending educational events. She said 20 percent of the legislature is women.

“Find your seat at the table,” Brinks said. “Get involved and educated in civics and step outside of your comfort zone to support issues and policies you believe in. There are many leadership opportunities out there.”

Panelists included Sonya Hernandez, Hispanic-Latino Commission of Michigan; Commissioner Mandy Bolter, Kent County; Commissioner Ruth Kelly, City of Grand Rapids; Rep. Winnie Brinks; State of Michigan House of Representatives; Wendy Falb, Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education; and Lupe Ramos-Montigny, State of Michigan Board of Education.

The event was co-sponsored by the Davis Center for Women and Gender Equity and the Brooks College Office of Integrative Learning and Advising.

Democracy 101 will continue with several events throughout the academic year. The next session November 8 at noon in the Kirkhof Center will feature a panel discussion about ways to get involved in local and state politics. Panelists will include local activists, political strategists and community organizers.

Visit [www.gvsu.edu/service](http://www.gvsu.edu/service) for more information.

## Mother, daughter will graduate together

Shanna Turner found her own motivation for college when her mother began taking classes at Muskegon Community College.

“I wasn’t even thinking about attending college,” said Turner, who lives in Muskegon. “Then I saw her going and thought, ‘If she can do it, I know I can.’”

Turner and her mother, Edith Evans, graduated together from MCC in 2015; they will again cross the commencement stage together in April when they graduate from Grand Valley.

Turner will earn a bachelor’s degree in liberal studies with an emphasis on human services. She

works as a legal advocate for Every Woman’s Place in Muskegon, a shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

Her tenure there began when Turner was completing an internship at the shelter. “I started as a crisis aid and have received several promotions since I’ve been there,” she said.

As a legal advocate, Turner assists women during court appearances and with filing personal protection orders.

Evans, 61, is enrolled in the liberal studies accelerated degree program and works in community mental health for Mercy Health Muskegon. She enrolled at Grand Valley after an illness forced her to quit a previous job.

“I needed to do something to keep me grounded,” said Evans. She joked that her motivation came following a family reunion. “It seemed that everyone had at least a master’s degree. I said, ‘We cannot be the black sheep of the family,’ and that was enough to get me started,” she said.

Shawn Jenkins, director of the Muskegon Regional Center, said she’s enjoyed getting to know Turner and Evans, although she didn’t know they were mother and daughter at first.

“They have supported each other through their journeys and found additional support in their own cohorts of classmates,” Jenkins said.



Edith Evans, left, and Shanna Turner are mother and daughter and will graduate together in April.

## FORUM

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Other University Communications publications:

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

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

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## GVFACES

### Laura Stroik, assistant professor of biomedical sciences

Laura Stroik, assistant professor of biomedical sciences, is committed to expanding the classic definition of science.

Stroik inherited the monthly event “Science on Tap” and co-organizes it with another BMS faculty member. Science on Tap, casual discussions about science, is held at the SpeakEZ Lounge in Grand Rapids; discussions are led by guest speakers with backgrounds in politics, biology and more.

Looking ahead, Stroik said she wants to bring in guest speakers who will attract participants who aren’t science geeks. “We are trying to mix it up and expand the definition of science to include more of the community,” Stroik said.

Along with teaching science courses and anatomy labs, Stroik works with graduate students and pre-dental students outside the classroom.

Stroik’s research focuses on dental anatomy and evolution. She is originally from San Diego and

attended graduate school in Phoenix before coming to Grand Valley in 2014.

“I felt a sense of community here even when I was interviewing for the job,” she said.

Stroik holds doctoral and master’s degrees in anthropology from Arizona State University and a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from the University of San Diego.

For more information about Science on Tap, visit [facebook.com/scienceontapgrandrapids/](http://facebook.com/scienceontapgrandrapids/).



Laura Stroik

# WHAT'S AHEAD

## Interfaith conference set for Aquinas College

Fear, division, skepticism and assumptions are the foundations of many national and global headlines, but the annual Academic Consortium Conference will encourage attendees to build healthy relationships with their neighbors.

The conference will take place Wednesday, November 8, from 1-8:30 p.m., in the Donnelly Center at Aquinas College. The conference is LIB 100 and 201 approved for students, and sponsored by the Kaufman Interfaith Institute and Interfaith Academic Consortium.

R. Scott Appleby, dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame, will present two keynote presentations during the conference.

“When Religions Collide: Sources of Intra-Religious and Inter-Religious Conflict,” at 1 p.m., will focus on the barriers to religious collaboration. Appleby’s evening lecture, “When Religions Collaborate: Models of Religious Cooperation for Peace and Justice,” will take place at 7 p.m.

The conference is free and open to the public, but registration is required by November 7. To register, and for more information about the conference, visit [gvsu.edu/interfaith/](http://gvsu.edu/interfaith/).



R. Scott Appleby

## Holocaust expert will lead students in one-act play

Robert Skloot, a noted expert on theater and the Holocaust, will lead a group of Grand Valley students in a staged reading of his play, “If the Whole Body Dies,” — a work about Raphael Lemkin, the man who created the term “genocide” and who was responsible for creating an international treaty against it.

Skloot said Lemkin advocated for a mechanism that perpetrators of genocide be brought to justice under the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The one-act play will be performed Wednesday, November 8, at 3 p.m. in the Mary Idema Pew Library Multipurpose Room. An audience discussion will follow; the event is free and open to the public.

Skloot is an emeritus professor of theater and drama at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the author of four books and numerous articles on the theater of the Holocaust.

This event is sponsored by the Joseph Stevens Freedom Endowment. Established in 1990 to honor its namesake, the endowment funds lectures to promote the understanding of issues related to human freedom, including the history and consequences of the Holocaust.

For more information, contact Rob Franciosi, professor of English, at [francior@gvsu.edu](mailto:francior@gvsu.edu).

## Panelists joined by Hollywood costume artist

Los Angeles-based costume concept artist Phillip Boutte Jr. has created costume concepts for blockbuster action and science fiction films including “Star Trek” and “Hunger Games.” His upcoming projects include “A Wrinkle in Time” and “Black Panther.”

Boutte will discuss the intersection of film, fashion and art during a panel discussion on Wednesday, November 8. “Film, Fashion, and Art: Imagining Real and Fictional History” will take place at 7 p.m. in the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium.

Joining Boutte on the panel will be Grand Valley faculty members Durwin Talon and Julie Goldstein, and Suzanne Eberle, professor of art history at Kendall College of Art and Design.

The event will kick off with a screening of the winning films of the Mosaic Mobile College, presented by The Mosaic Film Experience. The contest features short films produced by Grand Valley and other college students around the Midwest that were shot and edited using only a mobile device.

For more information about this event, contact the Visual and Media Arts Department at [vma@gvsu.edu](mailto:vma@gvsu.edu).

## Fifth annual Teach-In to feature 55 sessions

The fifth annual Teach-In on Thursday, November 9, will feature 55 sessions on topics meant to engage participants in dynamic and challenging conversations: microaggressions, Confederate monuments and resegregation, to name a few.

John Bender, professor of chemistry and one of the Teach-In organizers, said addressing, discussing and learning about challenging subjects is at the heart of the event.

“Nationally, social justice challenges for the U.S. have been evolving rapidly, and the Teach-In aspires to capture these conversations for the campus community,” he said. “Students have come to embrace the Teach-In as a benchmark event in their academic calendar.”

Teach-In sessions, with the theme, “Power, Privilege, and Difficult Dialogues,” will run from 8:30 a.m.-9 p.m. at the Kirkhof Center and DeVos Center. Each session was collaboratively created by teams of students, faculty and staff members, or community members. View a list of sessions, times and locations at [gvsu.edu/teach-in/](http://gvsu.edu/teach-in/).

The event is co-sponsored by Student Senate and University Academic Senate. Participate during the day on social media by using the hashtag #GVTeachIn17.

## Week of Nov. 13 events:

### LGBT Center to host author, filmmaker

A professor, author and filmmaker whose work focuses on gender and human sexuality will give a presentation November 13.

Susan Stryker’s presentation, “What Transpires Now: Transgender History and the Future We Need,” will take place at 4 p.m. in room 2250, Kirkhof Center. The event, hosted by the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center, will take place in conjunction with Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Stryker is associate professor of gender and women’s studies at Arizona State University, where she also serves as director of the Institute for LGBT Studies.



Susan Stryker

She is the recipient of a Lambda Literary Award for her anthology, “The Transgender Studies Reader,” and an Emmy Award for the documentary film “Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton’s Cafeteria.”

Grand Valley’s LGBT Center recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary with two events in October.

Director Jen Hsu-Bishop said the center has grown tremendously through the years to include three endowed scholarships, an annual event that features a renowned speaker and many student engagement and support programs.

The 10-year anniversary celebration will continue with several events during the winter semester. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/lgbt](http://www.gvsu.edu/lgbt) for more information.

## Lecture series focuses on Alzheimer’s disease

Two health care experts will discuss “Living Well with Alzheimer’s Disease” at the Your Health Lecture Series, a community event hosted by the Office of the Vice Provost for Health.

Rebecca Davis, professor of nursing, and Timothy Thoits, neurologist for Spectrum Health Medical Group, will discuss the latest research, treatments and support services and strategies for coping with the disease. The event is expected to draw caregivers, health care workers and family members of patients.

The event is set for Monday, November 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the L. William Seidman Center, Loosemore Forum. It is free and open to the public. RSVP online at [gvsu.edu/vphealth](http://gvsu.edu/vphealth).

Other sponsors of the Your Health Lecture Series are Spectrum Health and Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.

## Fall Science Update conference to focus on STEM literacy in K-12 classrooms

Educators from districts across Michigan will gather to expand their teaching knowledge and strategies surrounding K-12 STEM literacy during the 33rd annual Fall Science Update.

The conference, sponsored by the Regional Math and Science Center, will take place November 15 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Kirkhof Center. Cost for the conference is \$45 per person, \$20 for undergraduate students, and \$10 for undergraduate students without the lunch included in the registration fee.

During the conference, area K-12 teachers will experience 25 breakout sessions on various science topics and pedagogy. The sessions will provide information about how teachers can prepare students to be “STEM literate” and have the ability to apply STEM concepts toward understanding problems and generating innovative solutions.

This year’s keynote speakers will be Ebiri Nkugba and Rick Mushing, both Kent Intermediate School District STEM consultants. The keynote will spotlight how attendees can teach the Michigan Science Standards using STEM principles in collaboration with area business partners in order to prepare students for their futures.

Registration is required for the Fall Science Update conference. To register, visit [gvsu.edu/s/KV](http://gvsu.edu/s/KV).

# FACULTY AND STAFF SKETCHES

## SKETCHES

### National Academic Advising Conference



Staff members from the Student Academic Success Center and Dennis Malaret, professor of sociology, gave a presentation, "Investing Early and Often: Facilitating Growth for First-Generation College Students," at the National Academic Advising Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. From left are Sulari White, Dennis Malaret, Gabe Pena and Saulo Ortiz.

Mathematics faculty members **Lauren Keough**, **Mike Santana** and **Taylor Short** organized the 58th Midwestern Graph Theory (MIGHTY) Conference at Grand Valley, October 6-7. Forty researchers gave presentations, and 10 undergraduates from six universities participated in a poster session.

**Vandana Pednekar-Magal**, professor of communications, served as editor and wrote a chapter, "Globalism and Nationalism Experienced

Locally," for a book, *International Communication: Essential Readings*, published by Cognella Academic Publishing. She also served as a panelist for a presentation, "Tryst with Democracy: 70 Years of Media in Independent India — Successes, Challenges, Interventions," at the International Communication Association conference.

**Brent Smith**, assistant professor of liberal studies and religious studies, wrote a chapter, "Can't I Just Learn about Religion in my Church, Mosque, or Temple?" for a book, *Religion in Five Minutes*, published by Equinox Publishing.

Faculty Teaching and Learning Center staff members **Christine Rener**, **Patty Stow Bolea** and **Dana Munk** gave a presentation, "Responding as Educational Developers to the Changing Higher Education Landscape," at the annual POD Network Conference in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

**Lori Houghton-Rahrig**, assistant professor of nursing, gave presentations, "Is There A Relationship Between The PNPLA3 (Rs738409)-G Allele And Comorbid Conditions Of NAFLD?" and "Is There A Relationship Between The PNPLA3 (Rs738409)-G Allele And Comorbid Conditions Of NAFLD?" at the International Society of Nurses in Genetics Conference in Reston, Virginia.

Kirkhof College of Nursing faculty members **Janet Winter**, **Geraldine Terry** and **Susan Strouse** gave a presentation, "Influencing Health through IPE: Perspectives on RN to BSN Education," at the Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing Biennial Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**Anal Shah**, assistant professor of communications, produced a film, "Kalaripayattu," which made its international debut at Viennale, the 2017 Vienna International Film Festival.

Movement science faculty members **Ingrid Johnson** and **Tess Armstrong** gave presentations, "Increasing Physical Activity, 30 Seconds at a Time" and "Teaching Games for Understanding: Building Physical Literacy," at the 12th European Congress for Physical Education Teachers at the University of Luxembourg.

## WHAT'S AHEAD

*continued from page 3*

### Women's Commission to host mentoring reception

Grand Valley's Women's Commission will host its annual mentoring reception, featuring a panel discussion of women leaders on campus.

"Reflections: Mentoring Reception" will be Thursday, November 16, from 4-6 p.m. in the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium.

Panelists are Annie Bélanger, dean of University Libraries; Betty Schaner, assistant dean for Advising and Student Services; Shontaye Witcher, director of Disability Support Resources; and Jody Vogelzang, assistant professor of public health and program director for clinical dietetics.

Light hors d'oeuvres will be served; RSVP by November 10 online at [gvsu.edu/wcommission](http://gvsu.edu/wcommission).

### Students to promote tuning in to politics during performances of "Cabaret"

In Berlin, Germany in 1930, three years before Adolf Hitler came to power, American novelist, Cliff, is searching for inspiration when he finds lodging at Frau Schneider's boarding house above the notorious and racy Kit Kat Club. Led by a saucy Emcee and Sally Bowles, a sassy showgirl and British singer, the free-wheeling performers at the club turn Cliff's world upside down while the power of the Nazi party lurks just beyond the club's doors.

This is the plot of "Cabaret," which Grand Valley students will perform November 16-18, 29 and 30, and December 1-2 at 7:30 p.m., and November 19 and December 3 at 2 p.m. All performances will take place in the Linn Maxwell Keller Black Box Theatre, located in the Thomas J. and Marcia J. Haas Center for Performing Arts.

"These characters are focused on having a good time and living in an environment that is free and liberated, but what they fail to realize, or refuse to realize, is that a change in German politics is allowing the Nazis to come to power," said Dennis Henry, director and visiting professor of theater. "Cabaret is a warning about the need for everyone to know what is going on in politics in order to prevent the rise of evil."

"Cabaret" marks the first theater performances to take place in the new

Keller Theatre, and Henry said the production will take full advantage of a black box theater's ability to provide flexible staging and audience seating formations.

"For this first production, we are arranging the seats in an 'arena' configuration, with the audience on all four sides of the playing space," he said. "Since much of the play takes place in the Kit Kat Club, this arrangement will give the audience the feeling of being in the club with the performers, and there will even be some limited table seating on the edges of the stage itself."

Ticket prices are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors and Grand Valley alumni, faculty and staff, and \$6 for students and groups. To purchase tickets, contact the Louis Armstrong Theatre Box Office at (616) 331-2300 or visit [startickets.com](http://startickets.com).

### Alumnus returning to campus to discuss risograph printing and publishing industry

George Wietor, an artist, curator, publisher, and alumnus of the Visual and Media Arts Department, will return to Grand Valley to discuss his work with Issue Press, an independent publisher of artist publications, multiples and other printed matter based in Grand Rapids.

Wietor, '05, will present a lecture on November 6 at 6:30 p.m. in Loosemore Auditorium during which he will provide an in-depth look at several of his projects and how he works creatively and collaboratively with artists and designers. He will additionally facilitate a "How-to RISO" discussion November 8 at 3 p.m. in the Printmaking Studio (room 1208) in Calder Art Center, which will feature a conversation about risograph printing, small press publishing and book fairs. The week of events will conclude November 10 with an open house at Issue Press (314 Straight Ave. SW, Grand Rapids).

The lecture, discussion and open house are free and open to the public.

Wietor has worked for more than 15 years to shape the cultural landscape of Grand Rapids in multiple ways, including co-founding the Division Avenue Arts Collective, a DIY music and visual art venue. He is also currently a staff member at the Community Media Arts Center. At CMC, he was part of the core team that developed The Rapidian, an online, hyperlocal news source.