

# FORUM

**A NEWSLETTER FOR THE GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY**

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## Three commencement ceremonies scheduled

More than 3,000 students will participate in commencement ceremonies April 28-29 at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids.

For the first time, commencement has expanded to three ceremonies to improve the overall experience for graduates and their families.

The first ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. on Friday; second and third ceremonies will take place at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday.

Shelley Padnos, chair of the executive committee of Louis Padnos Iron and Metal Company, is the speaker for the Friday ceremony. On Saturday, Sean Patrick Welsh, executive vice president and regional president



Shelley Padnos

for PNC Bank, is the morning speaker, and Erion Veliaj, Grand Valley alumnus and mayor of Tirana, Albania, is the afternoon speaker.

Padnos is among the third generation of family members overseeing Louis Padnos Iron and Metal Company. She was appointed to serve on the National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy and Technology, Superfund Subcommittee under the Clinton administration. She has served on numerous boards, including Grand Valley's Board of Trustees from 2007-2014.

Welsh began his banking career in 1986 and has held several vice president positions in finance, corporate banking and investment real estate. He serves on boards for The Right Place, Spectrum Health Systems, Grand Valley



Sean Welsh

University Foundation, among others.

Veliaj was elected mayor of Tirana in 2015 and has been involved in Albania's political system since 2003 when he founded MJFT!, which raises awareness for diverse social and political issues in Albania. He has worked for several international humanitarian organizations in the Americas, Eastern Africa and Kosovo. He earned a degree in political science from Grand Valley in 2012.

The Alumni Association will present its Distinguished Alumni Award to Eglantina Gjermeni, '98, minister of urban development for the Republic of Albania. Gjermeni earned a master's degree in social work from Grand



Erion Veliaj

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## Across Campus

### Provost surprised by announcement of scholarship, naming of center

Provost Gayle R. Davis was surprised by her colleagues by announcements at both of her retirement celebrations.

A scholarship fund in her name was detailed April 18, and the announcement of the naming of the Women's Center as the Gayle R. Davis Center for Gender Equity was made April 20.

Both recognitions honor Davis' 15 years of service at Grand Valley as provost and executive vice president for Academic and Student Affairs.



Photo by Amanda Pitts

President Thomas J. Haas announces a scholarship fund created to honor Provost Gayle R. Davis' years of service to Grand Valley.

Faculty and staff members are invited to donate to the Gayle Davis First Generation Endowed Scholarship; to give, visit [www.gvsu.edu/giving/Davis](http://www.gvsu.edu/giving/Davis).

During her tenure, Davis shepherded a major reorganization of the university's colleges, and oversaw major growth in enrollment and significant success in retaining students through graduation.

President Thomas J. Haas made the announcement and said the scholarship's goal is to reduce the financial pressure on students and their families and make a Grand Valley education accessible to students from all backgrounds.

The scholarship will be awarded to a junior or senior who is the first person in their immediate family to pursue a college degree.

### School of Communications to undergo reorganization

Provost Gayle R. Davis has announced a reorganization of the eight programs within the School of Communications.

Davis said the changes will better meet and support the educational needs of students, faculty and staff; the reorganization will take effect prior to the 2017-2018 academic year.

The following changes will take place in August:

The Theater Department will become part of what is currently called

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# Across Campus

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the Music and Dance Department, while the photography, and film and video production programs will join the Art and Design Department. The School of Communications will continue to facilitate the communications studies, advertising and public relations, broadcasting, multi-media journalism and health communications programs, in addition to the communications graduate program.

No units will be closed or created by these changes, nor will curriculum in the majors be affected.

Davis said the realignment will better support students, faculty and staff members by offering increased opportunities for visibility, collaboration and innovation as the programs will be housed with others that have operational parallels. She added that the new formulation will also more closely meet the expectations of the university's accreditation bodies.

Fred Antczak, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, said that he is enthusiastic about the future of the SOC and other reorganized CLAS departments.

## Graduate Showcase highlights scholarly research



Photo by Adam Bird

Rakesh Neela explains his research project during the Graduate Showcase April 18 in DeVos Center.

More than 30 graduate students presented their research and scholarly activities during the 2017 Graduate Showcase April 18 in DeVos Center.

Students gave poster presentations to explain their research methods and conclusions. Topics included cancer research, local government and affordable housing, osteogenesis research, bilingual family literacy programs, undergraduate women who abandon STEM majors, and

the impact of graduate leadership on land management work.

The event is sponsored by The Graduate School and the Center for

Scholarly and Creative Excellence. For more information on the Graduate Showcase visit [www.gvsu.edu/gradshowcase](http://www.gvsu.edu/gradshowcase).

## Civic action plan detailed

Grand Valley celebrated civic engagement at a showcase April 13 at the DeVos Center by highlighting the collaborative work of 56 teams of students, faculty and staff and community members, and by detailing the university's civic action plan.



Photo by Jess Weal

Ruth Stegeman, director of community engagement, addresses the audience at the Civic Engagement Showcase April 13 in the DeVos Center.

Carnegie Foundation's classification of a "community engaged" campus by 2020.

The plan follows the commitment President Thomas J. Haas made to the Campus Compact, a coalition of 1,000 institutions committed to the public purposes of higher education. Haas called the public purpose of

The plan will drive Grand Valley's future work around sustainable partnerships, student civic engagement, place-based contributions, and challenges to social and economic inequalities. Provost Gayle R. Davis said the plan is a timely response to local and national issues.

"There is so much inequity and polarization in our country," Davis said.

"This plan will help our students go out and talk to our community partners and residents civilly to understand their issues from their point of view. This prepares students not only to be employees but to be leaders in a complicated society."

Davis also said the civic action plan sets the stage for Grand Valley to apply for the

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Faculty and staff members can find an online "Sketches" submission form on the Web at [www.gvsu.edu/forum](http://www.gvsu.edu/forum).

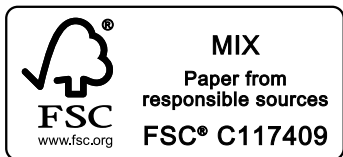
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Other publications by University Communications include:

*Grand Valley Magazine*, published quarterly; visit its website at [www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvmagazine).

Visit Grand Valley's online publication, *GVNow*, at [www.gvsu.edu/gvnow](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvnow), for daily news updates and video features.

Grand Valley State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.



## GVFaces

### Salvador Lopez, Associate Director of Admissions

After moving to Grand Rapids from California, Salvador Lopez attended Grand Rapids Community College. One day, seemingly from luck, he stumbled onto Grand Valley's Allendale campus. He fell in love with Grand Valley, and now he works to help more students find the university.

"Once students are here, and they see the campus like I did, they'll fall in love with it," Lopez said. "We want to make it easy for students to come to Grand Valley."

As an associate director of Admissions, Lopez focuses on diversity recruitment. He started working in admissions in 2013, focusing on bringing underrepresented communities to Grand Valley.

"Since I come from poverty and an underrepresented community, it always made sense to try to connect with students on how they can achieve success in higher education, that's my big goal," Lopez said.

On top of making sure students get a chance to visit the university, Lopez wants to support underrepresented and first-generation students.

"Retention and graduation rates are the best forms of recruitment," Lopez said. "How can I better help students be successful here, so that I can then recruit more students?"

Families and students meet with Lopez every

day, either one-on-one or through small presentations. He travels to Detroit and Flint for recruiting, while also advising regional recruiters in Chicago and Detroit.

On-campus involvement is key when focusing on student success, Lopez said. He is the co-chair of Laker Familia, a student-led group dedicated to helping Latino and Latina students. He also meets with a Student Senate group to gain feedback.

"Wearing different hats is a challenge, but once I see the students on campus through Laker Familia, it allows me to reflect on the work that our office has done," Lopez said.

Staying connected with what happens on campus is helpful when Lopez meets with recruiting teams. He said knowing the successes and challenges of students improves their recruiting ability.

"When I came to the university, the staff, whether it was people in admissions or professors, really made a difference," Lopez said. "I want to be able to help others the same way I got help."



Salvador Lopez



# What's Ahead

## Teacher Search will bring 160 recruiters

Teacher Search 2017, a job fair featuring Michigan employers, will take place April 25 at the Eberhard Center from 1-4 p.m. No advanced registration is necessary.

About 160 recruiters representing 75 Michigan school districts and organizations will attend. Some recruiters may conduct short introductory conversations, while others may offer on-the-spot interviews.

The event is free and open to the public for candidates who are fully certified to teach for fall 2017. Some organizations will also be recruiting social workers and speech/language, occupational and/or physical therapists.

The event is co-sponsored by Grand Valley, Aquinas College, Calvin College, Cornerstone University and Hope College.

For details and a list of participating employers, visit [www.gvsu.edu/careerfairs](http://www.gvsu.edu/careerfairs) and click on Teacher Search.

For more information, contact Ginger Lange, associate director of the Career Center at GVSU, at x16708.

## Asian student graduation reception



Photo by Dianne Carroll Burdick

Pictured are participants at the reception for Asian graduating students on April 13. The Division of Inclusion and Equity hosted receptions for Asian and LGBTQ students last week; ceremonies for Black, Native American and Hispanic/Latino students are scheduled for April 28, visit [www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/graduation](http://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/graduation).

## COE will celebrate educators

Students and faculty members in the College of Education will be honored at a convocation ceremony April 26 at Ottawa Hills High School in Grand Rapids. The ceremony will run from 7-9 p.m. and will be held in the auditorium.

More than 200 graduates are expected to participate; the ceremony will also include a hooding ceremony for those completing their master's degree requirements.

During the ceremony, Joann Riemersma will receive the Outstanding Educator Award. Riemersma earned a master's degree from Grand Valley in 1996 and has worked for Grand Rapids Public Schools as an elementary teacher, literacy coach and principal. She is known as a passionate leader of teaching and learning and has provided professional development to school districts in and around Grand Rapids for several years.

Over the past three years, she has worked alongside Grand Valley

professors and students to create place-based learning classrooms at Stocking Elementary School, providing valuable opportunities for future teachers and increased instructional support for students.

The College of Education Convocation is a precursor to Grand Valley's commencement ceremonies April 28 and 29 at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids.

For more information, visit [www.gvsu.edu/coe](http://www.gvsu.edu/coe).

## Register for CLAS golf outing

Registration is open for the annual CLAS on the Green golf outing. The event, hosted by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, is Wednesday, June 14, at the Meadows Golf Course.

Each year, CLAS on the Green supports the CLAS Endowed Scholarship Fund. The event is open to faculty and staff members, alumni, students and community members.

Registration and the driving range will open at noon, followed by a shotgun start at 1 p.m. The outing will conclude with a cookout and celebration with prizes at 6 p.m.

To register for CLAS on the Green, visit <http://gvsu.edu/s/Or4>. To give to the CLAS Student Scholarship Fund, visit <http://gvsu.edu/s/V2>.

## International musicians to perform during carillon concert series

Some of the finest carillonneurs from around the world will fill the air with music on the Grand Valley campuses during the annual International Carillon Concert Series.

The 23rd annual Cook Carillon International Concert Series will take place on Sundays at 8 p.m. on the Allendale Campus, from June 25-August 20.

### Cook Carillon Concerts

- June 25: Amy Johansen, Australia
- July 2: Open tower tours (beginning at 7 p.m.), hosted by Julianne Vanden Wyngaard, university carillonneur at GVSU
- July 9: James Fackenthal, Chicago, Illinois
- July 16: Sharon Hettinger, Lawrence, Kansas
- July 23: David Johnson, St. Paul, Minnesota
- July 30: Laura Ellis, University of Florida
- August 6: Sue Bergren, Naperville, Illinois
- August 13: Ray McLellan, Ann Arbor
- August 20: Julianne Vanden Wyngaard

The 17th annual Beckering Family Carillon International Concert Series brings five concerts to the Lacks International Plaza located at the DeVos Center. These concerts will take place on Wednesdays at noon, beginning July 5.

### Beckering Family Carillon Concerts

- July 5: Carol Lens, University of Denver
  - July 12: James Fackenthal, Chicago, Illinois
  - July 19: Helen Hawley, Grand Rapids, Michigan
  - July 26: Jon Lehrer, Vancouver, British Columbia
  - August 2: Julianne Vanden Wyngaard
- All concerts are free and open to the public, and will take place rain or shine. For more information, visit [www.gvsu.edu/music](http://www.gvsu.edu/music), or call the Music and Dance Department at x13484.

# FACULTY AND STAFF SKETCHES

## In the News

**Chelsea Brehm**, movement science faculty member, was interviewed by WOOD-TV's "EightWest" for a story about her role as sustainability coordinator for the Gazelle Girl Half Marathon.

### Outstanding faculty



Tom Pentecost, associate professor of chemistry, and Julie White, senior affiliate faculty of writing, were recognized by the Oliver Wilson Freshman Academy students at a year-end celebration. Pentecost and White were nominated by students for contributing to their success on campus. They are pictured with students Elicia Mack, second from left, and Alexis Baskin, far right.

## Sketches

**Jim Penn**, associate professor of geography and sustainable planning, wrote a chapter, "Piassaba Broom Production and Fiber Extraction Amid Challenging Conditions in the Lower Andes: A Case from Peru," for a book, *The Andes: Geography, Diversity and Sociocultural Impacts*, published by Nova Science.

**George McBane**, professor of chemistry, wrote an article, "A Three-Dimensional He-CO Potential Energy Surface with Improved Long-range Behavior," published in the *Journal of Molecular Spectroscopy*.

**Scott Stabler**, associate professor of history, gave a presentation, "An Indian Killed Father Abraham: Abraham Lincoln and American Indians," at the annual Lincoln Lecture at Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills.

Liaison librarians **Gayle Schaub** and **Hazel McClure** were co-authors of an article, "Information Literacy Threshold Concepts and the Association of College and Research Libraries' Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education," published in *Das offense Bibliotheksjournal*.

**Keith Piccard**, adjunct faculty of biology, and **Peter Riemersma**, professor of geology, collected and brought macroinvertebrates from a California stream to support their workshop "Wading Into Ecology, Inquiry Based Learning with Macroinvertebrates," at the Annual National Science Teachers Association Conference in Los Angeles. Piccard, Riemersma and **Steve Rybczynski**, assistant professor of biology, were authors of an article published in *Science Scope*.

**Bopi Biddanda**, professor of water resources, was a co-author of an article, "Versatile Photophysiology of Compositionally Similar Cyanobacterial Communities Inhabiting Submerged Sinkholes of Lake Huron," published in *Aquatic Microbial Ecology*.

Women's Center staff members **Jessica Jennrich** and **Ashley Schulte** hosted a webinar, "When Victim Advocacy Becomes Co-Advocacy," for the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals.

## Across Campus

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higher education vital to maintaining a healthy community.

Three campus-community partnerships earned Distinguished Engagement Initiative Awards, recognizing a sustainable partnership of shared power that incorporated the voices of community members and student-leaders.

- West Side Education Initiative: Grand Valley's Liberal Studies Accelerated Leadership program for adult learners has partnered with Harrison Park and Westwood schools, and the

West Grand Rapids Neighborhood Association on multiple projects to create a college-going culture among students.

- Spectrum Health Innovations Partnership: Grand Valley's Padnos College of Engineering and Computing has partnered with Spectrum Health Innovations to develop new health care products and technologies, such as medical devices, hospital equipment and software.

- Pathway Home Project: Students in a social work class, over three semesters, have partnered with Family Promise and Mel Trotter Ministries on projects that provide case

management and temporary emergency shelter for families experiencing homelessness.

Learn more about Grand Valley's civic action plan online at [www.gvsu.edu/community/](http://www.gvsu.edu/community/).

### Last printed issue

This marks the last printed issue of *Forum* for the academic year.

Keep up with campus news via GVNow, at [www.gvsu.edu/gvnow](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvnow). Subscribe to receive daily headlines via email.

## Commencement ceremonies scheduled for April 28-29

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Valley in 1998. She is a dedicated social researcher and lecturer, and successfully led the Gender Alliance for Development Center for 10 years.

The Outstanding Educator Award will be presented to Sheryl Vlietstra, affiliate professor of education. She helped establish the Michigan Literacy Project, which provides funds to recent Grand Valley graduates who are teaching in underserved Michigan school districts. She has raised more than \$32,000 to help grow the program.

Gary Verplank, Ellen Thompson and Nancy

Mulnix Tweddale will receive honorary degrees. Verplank, chair and CEO of Shape Corp., is a member of the Grand Valley University Foundation Advisory Cabinet and served as a committee member for two university lakeshore campaigns. Thompson began her career as an elementary school teacher and founded the Thompson Foundation with her husband, Bob. The foundation has funded thousands of K-12 and college students through scholarships, including two at Grand Valley. Mulnix Tweddale, '95, is a retired medical psychologist and has chaired the Grand Rapids Arts Festival. She was vice president of Grand Valley Colleges Foundation from 1970-1974 and chair from 1974-1980.

The April 28 ceremony will include the following colleges: Seidman College of Business, College of Community and Public Service and Padnos College of Engineering and Computing. The morning ceremony on April 29 will include College of Health Professions, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Kirkhof College of Nursing. The afternoon ceremony on April 29 will include College of Education, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

For more information, visit [www.gvsu.edu/commencement](http://www.gvsu.edu/commencement).