

# FORUM

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

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## Study: race impacts how residents rate Grand Rapids

A new study released by the Johnson Center for Philanthropy showed more than 80 percent of Grand Rapids area residents would give the city an overall grade of "A" or "B" as a place to live, but ratings varied widely based on home location, race, education and poverty level.

The study was based on the results of the 2015 VoiceGR survey conducted by the Johnson Center last fall. The survey asked area residents questions about the city, safety, work, health care, economy, ability to meet basic needs and more.

A full breakdown of the study results were explained at a data summit on March 3. Several city and nonprofit leaders, including President Thomas J. Haas, participated in the presentation of study results.

Online results, including visualization tools, are available at [www.johnsoncenter.org/voicegr2015/](http://www.johnsoncenter.org/voicegr2015/).

Fifty-four percent of survey respondents said they felt racism was "very much" an issue in the U.S. as a whole, but only 15 percent felt it was "very much" an issue in their neighborhood.

The study also showed that a slightly lower percentage of city residents reported not being able to meet their basic needs (21 percent) compared to 2014 (24 percent). Of those who indicated not being able to meet basic needs, 14 percent were employed full time, 21 percent were employed part time, and 29 percent were unemployed, which suggests that employment alone does not always provide relief from poverty.

Other key findings from the study include:

- 63 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that schools in

the community are committed to building each child's strengths.

- Residents near or below the poverty line were more likely to report having chronic health conditions (anxiety, depression, asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, high blood glucose, lead poisoning and ADD/ADHD).

The 2015 VoiceGR survey was conducted both through paper and online administration. Paper surveys were collected at community events and in conjunction with community organizations. Data collection ran June 20-November 15.



Photo by Bryan Esler

Kyle Caldwell, executive director of the Johnson Center for Philanthropy, reviews data collected for the 2015 VoiceGR survey.

## Across Campus

### Campus mourns death of professor

The Grand Valley community is mourning the death of Julie Chlebo, a longtime professor in the College of Education, who died March 19.

Chlebo, associate professor of early childhood education, came to Grand Valley in 1997. She was known for her caring attitude with students.

"Julie was an exceptional professor who always went the extra mile with her students," said John Shinsky, interim dean of the College of Education. "She had high expectations and cared about the success of her students; she kept their needs at the forefront. Julie will be



Julie Chlebo

deeply missed by her students, colleagues and everyone who had the opportunity to know and work with her."

Her scholarly interests included Waldorf Early Childhood Education, Head Start and Jewish Early Childhood Education.

Chlebo earned a bachelor's degree from Taylor University, a master's degree from Grand Valley and a doctorate from Indiana University.

A service was held March 22 at Muehlig Funeral Chapel in Ann Arbor. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that donations be made to any charity in honor of Chlebo.

### Theater professor directs play in India

After an intensive 20-day workshop, theater professor Karen Libman and more than 30 students from B. Borooah College in Guwahati, India, recently wrapped an adaptation of the play "Here We Are."

The performance was just one of the many

experiences on Libman's checklist while traveling, working and conducting research under the Fulbright grant she received in 2015.

"I plan to investigate and examine select Indian theater education programs and festivals, and apply my findings to broadening the impact of Grand Valley's theater program," Libman said. "My goals are to execute site visits to at least two Indian universities, as well as observe and participate in at least one Indian theater festival."

During the "Mock-Up" workshop at B. Borooah College, the group participated in games and exercises that actors use in their practice centered around developing the body, voice and mind, and skills necessary to perform on stage, such as concentration, collaboration, listening, sense awareness, creativity and trust.

"The students at B. Borooah were not theater students, but came from every discipline around the college, so we had to begin with basic exercises," Libman said. "Also, it was a large group of 31 to start, and I wanted to include

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# Across Campus

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everyone who wanted to participate, so it was challenging finding a piece to accommodate.”

Libman said her interest in South Asian theater was inspired by her tenure as the executive secretary for the International Drama/Theatre Education Association from 2010-2013. Through this experience, she traveled around the world to meet international theater educators and artists, and spent a brief time in India and Bangladesh.

“I admire the physicality that Bangladeshi and Indian theater training provides, which is quite different from standard American theater training,” Libman said. “I am also interested in what will happen for me as an English speaker when the theatrical prose and verse that we ground our productions in are taken away from the mix.”

When Libman returns from her Fulbright travels, she plans to incorporate the major trends and ideas acquired through her research to Grand Valley’s annual Shakespeare Festival in the fall. Libman frequently directs the festival’s main stage production and works with the festival’s touring student group, Bard to Go, which performs 50-minute compilations of Shakespearean scenes at secondary schools in Michigan.



Theater professor Karen Libman poses with students from the B. Borooah College in Guwahati, India. Libman directed them in a performance, ‘Here We Are.’

## Heartside Gleaning wins 5x5

Heartside Gleaning Initiative, which promotes access to healthy food in the Heartside neighborhood, won the GVSU 5x5 Competition and received \$5,000. They competed against four other Grand Valley teams March 23 at the Eberhard Center.

Grand Valley students, faculty and staff who are engaged with community partners were invited to submit ideas to the competition.

Voting was open to the public and the top five teams were given the opportunity to present their case. Each team had five minutes to pitch their ideas to five judges.

Lisa Sisson, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism management and director of HGI, formed the initiative to help low-income and marginalized populations in the Heartside and surrounding communities of Grand Rapids improve their health through greater access to healthy food.

In her presentation, Sisson said there is a great need for healthy food in the Heartside neighborhood as there is not a grocery store within walking distance for area residents, and many do not have their own transportation.

Sisson said the prize money will be used to purchase a truck to collect and distribute food to residents in the greater Grand Rapids community and to increase distribution throughout the year. Since 2014, HGI has collected donations from farmers and provided, without charge, more than 37,000 pounds of fresh produce, which amounts to more than 50,000 servings.



Photo by Jess Weal

Lisa Sisson, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism management, and the team from Heartside Gleaning Initiative pitch their idea during the March 23 5x5 Competition at the Eberhard Center. The team won \$5,000, which will go toward purchase of a truck to collect and distribute food. Sisson is director of HGI.

The competition was sponsored by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Seidman College of Business.

The five judges for the competition were Jeff Shade, Ernst & Young, LLP; Erik Daly, Barnes & Thornburg LLP; Peter Rahrig, Lake Michigan Credit Union; Maddie Cleghorn, president of Student Senate at Grand Valley; and Mike Czechowskyj, Spectrum Health Innovations.

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Faculty and staff members can find an online “Sketches” submission form on the Web at www.gvsu.edu/forum.

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## GVFaces

### Stacey Tvedten, Program Coordinator, Art Gallery

Stacey Tvedten has always been a visual learner. Her love for hands-on, tactual experiences is what eventually led to her passion for history and art.

Tvedten studied at Western Michigan University and earned a bachelor’s degree in public history, which focused on museum studies, archival administration and historic preservation.

Tvedten is currently working on a master’s degree in philanthropy and nonprofit leadership at Grand Valley. She said it will help her to further pursue museum leadership through a philanthropic and nonprofit lens.

After college, Tvedten originally thought she would pursue careers in historic preservation but said she soon learned that would not be the case, when she started interning at the Grand Rapids Public Museum and fell in love with collections and curatorial work.

Tvedten started working as program coordinator for the Art Gallery in 2013; since then the position has grown substantially. Her role includes coordinating educational programs for the Art Gallery exhibitions, lectures and panel discussions. She also coordinates Grand Valley’s ArtPrize participation as an exhibition venue.

She explained that her job looks different daily, which keeps her work interesting.

“The beauty of museum and gallery work is that no day is the same,” Tvedten said. “You get to meet different people every day.”

Material culture and history have always interested Tvedten, along with social and civil rights movements, and how art connects to all of it.

“Art is really the perfect interdisciplinary resource. There’s just something great about working with artwork or historical objects that have seen so many historical eras in time,” Tvedten said.

Tvedten appreciates working at Grand Valley, because she enjoys working with faculty and staff members and students. She also appreciates the emphasis of art on campus.

“In the museum context, it’s fun working at a university where the art collection is integrated throughout the campuses,” Tvedten said. “The context of having the collection displayed throughout the university is really exciting.”



Stacey Tvedten



# What's Ahead

## Board member is Secchia Breakfast speaker

Mary Kramer, publisher of *Crain's Detroit Business* and Grand Valley alumna, is the keynote speaker for the Peter F. Secchia Breakfast Lecture.

The event will take place Tuesday, March 29, from 8-9 a.m. at the L. William Seidman Center.

Kramer, who is also a member of Grand Valley's Board of Trustees will give a speech, "Hurray for Hush Puppies: Why West Michigan Companies are Adding Women to Their Corporate Boards."

Kramer will discuss a recent scorecard for Michigan's largest publicly traded companies and offer ideas on ways Michigan can lead the nation in voluntarily adding more diversity to the corporate ranks.

"Some European companies have placed legal quotas on companies to ensure diversity on their boards of directors. Quotas aren't the right path," Kramer said.

Kramer was appointed to the Board of Trustees in 2013. Along with serving as publisher of *Crain's Detroit Business*, she is the corporate vice president of its parent company, Crain Communications. She has a bachelor's degree in arts and media from Grand Valley and a master's degree in integrated marketing communications from Eastern Michigan University.



Mary Kramer

## Mercy Health Systems leader to give presentation

The director of the complex care center for Mercy Health System will be the speaker during the annual Distinguished Wesorick Lectureship on Tuesday, March 29.

Lauran Hardin will present "The Power of the Patient's Story to Transform Health Care" at 1 p.m. at the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium. Register online at [www.gvsu.edu/kcon](http://www.gvsu.edu/kcon).

Hardin works in a complex care center that serves five hospitals, multiple providers and more than 1,000 high frequency or complex patients in the Mercy Health System. She earned an innovation grant from Trinity Health to develop and test tools and processes for complex patients.

Housed in the Kirkhof College of Nursing, the Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation is named for Bonnie Wesorick, founder and chair emerita for the Clinical Practice Model Resource Center in Grand Rapids.

## ACLU reporter to discuss Flint water crisis

The dangerously high lead levels in Flint's water supply has been the focus of numerous headlines. At the forefront of lifting the veil on the issue has been Curt Guyette, American Civil Liberties Union Michigan investigative reporter.

Guyette will share his investigative work regarding the issue on campus, Tuesday, March 29, at 4 p.m. in the Cook-DeWitt Center. During the event, Guyette will be interviewed by Eric Harvey, assistant professor of multimedia journalism.

Harvey said that before the Flint water crisis was international news, Guyette was urging community members to test the lead levels of their water.

"After hearing of the significant issues being suffered by residents like Melissa Mays, whose children were breaking out in rashes, losing hair, and suffering muscle pains and cramps, Curt started going door-to-door asking Flint residents to test their lead levels to compile evidence that water contamination was widespread," Harvey said.

Guyette's investigative work regarding the Flint ordeal led to the Michigan Press Association awarding him its Journalist of the Year award in 2015.

"Curt's dogged reporting and strong advocacy for the underrepresented among Michiganders is a sterling example of what journalism can be when commercial and corporate interests do not drive



Curt Guyette

news production, and journalists are given significant latitude to uncover, understand and publicize the real issues," Harvey said.

Harvey said he hopes students walk away from Guyette's presentation with an understanding that journalism is not merely about finding a job, but also using a liberal education to serve their communities.

This event is sponsored by the School of Communications and its multimedia journalism program.

For more information, contact Harvey at [harveyer@gvsu.edu](mailto:harveyer@gvsu.edu).

## Grand Valley, KDL will celebrate expansion of oral history project

Grand Valley will host an event this week that highlights an oral history collection of civil rights leaders in Chicago and celebrates an expansion to the collection: interviews with Grand Rapids area senior citizens.

"A Neighborhood Affair to Preserve Community" will be held Tuesday, March 29, from 4-8 p.m. in the Kirkhof Center, Pere Marquette Room. The event is free and open to the public.

"A Neighborhood Affair" highlights the Young Lords in Lincoln Park oral history collection and debuts new oral histories from nearly 50 African American and Latino senior citizens from southeast and southwest Grand Rapids. These stories, "Community House: Senior Histories," will be available in March through the Kent District Library as well as the Young Lords Collection, housed at Grand Valley.

KDL director Lance Werner and other community members who collaborated on the project will give remarks. Scheduled to speak are former Kentwood Mayor Richard Clanton; Tony Baker, Grand Rapids Public Schools board president; Grand Valley President Thomas J. Haas; and Lee Van Orsdel, dean of University Libraries.

After remarks, the event continues with music by Soul Syndicate and a senior steppers dance show. Refreshments will be provided; RSVPs are requested, send an email to [younglordsmail@yahoo.com](mailto:younglordsmail@yahoo.com).

The Young Lords in Lincoln Park was established by José "Cha-Cha" Jiménez in 1968, when he recognized the struggle for human rights and fair housing when Puerto Ricans, Latinos and others were being displaced from the Lincoln Park neighborhood. As an undergraduate student at Grand Valley, Jiménez began researching and building the oral history collection as a Student Summer Scholars project through the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship.

## Campus event will honor César Chávez

A poet, community organizer and artist from Chicago will give a presentation March 30 in celebration of César Chávez Day.

Michael Reyes, from Chicago, will lead a dynamic exploration of social justice through poetry and hip-hop from 6-7:30 p.m. in the Cook-DeWitt Center.

Reyes is the grandson of migrant workers. His work has been featured on HBO, CNN, PBS, National Public Radio, among others, and he has collaborated with organizers, educators and artists such as Cornel West, Oliver Stone and Kanye West.

The event, hosted by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, is free and open to the public. For more information, visit [csar-e-chvez-29.htm](http://csar-e-chvez-29.htm); RSVP by emailing [lopezs@gvsu.edu](mailto:lopezs@gvsu.edu). It is approved for LIB 100 classes.

Another event, the Chavez Challenge Blood Drive, will also celebrate Chavez. The Latino Student Union will host the drive Friday, April 8, from 10:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m. in Kirkhof Center, Pere Marquette Room.

That national holiday, which falls on March 31, celebrates the life and legacy of Chavez, an American civil rights and labor movement activist.

## Mosaic Lecture to examine statistical misuses in American media

Statistical information, ranging from politics and health, to education and film, can be seen via various media outlets daily, and the widespread use of these numbers can play an influential role in persuading public opinions.

During the third annual Mosaic Lecture at Grand Valley, Talithia Williams, associate professor of mathematics at Harvey Mudd College, will examine the applications of statistics in American media and give examples of where statistics have been misused.

Williams will present "Lies, Deceit, and Misrepresentation: The Distortion

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# FACULTY AND STAFF SKETCHES

## Sketches

Social work faculty members **Brandon Youker** and **Steve L. Smith** and graduate assistants were co-authors of a presentation, "The Impact of Simulation on Social Work Students' Interviewing Performance" at the annual conference of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, & Letters held in Saginaw.

**Donald Mitchell Jr.**, assistant professor of education, gave presentations, "Learning Race and Racism While Learning: Experiences of International Students Pursuing Higher Education in the Midwestern United States,"

at the Ethnographic & Qualitative Research Conference; "Intersectional Value? Comparing Outcomes for African American Women in Historically Black Sororities and Non-Black Sororities," at the American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences Conference; and two presentations at the American College Personnel Association Annual Convention.

**Stephen Rowe**, professor of philosophy and liberal studies, wrote an article, "Pragmatism, Possibility, and Human Development," published in the *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism*.

**Michael DeWilde**, director of the Koeze Business Ethics Initiative, gave a presentation,

"What (and How) We Teach When We Teach Neuroethics," at the International Neuroethics Society Conference. The presentation was selected a Top Abstract of 2015 and will be published in the *American Journal of Bioethics-Neuroscience*.

**Rick Albrecht**, professor of movement science, gave a keynote address, "Our Role in Creating Great Youth Football Experiences," at the Buffalo Bills Coaching Academy for Amateur Football Coaches in Buffalo, New York.

## What's Ahead

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Talithia Williams

of Statistics in America" Wednesday, March 30, at 7 p.m., in Manitou Hall, room 123.

"Everyone, regardless of educational background and interest, is both a consumer of statistics and a subject of statistical analysis," said Jonathan Hodge, chair of mathematics. "Data

and statistics have become vital components of news reports, and numerous companies, organizations and governmental entities collect data on just about everyone."

Throughout her career, Williams has made it her mission to excite students, parents, educators and community members about the benefits of a STEM education through her knowledge of statistics. To accomplish this, she attempts to take complicated numerical concepts, and make them more understandable and relatable for all audiences. Through her research and work, Williams is striving to rebrand the field of mathematics as being a stimulating and positive career path that is crucial to the future of the country.

Williams has received numerous awards and fellowships during her career, including the Mathematical Association of America's Henry L. Alder Award for exemplary teaching by an early career mathematics professor. She is also a 2015-2016 ACE Fellow — a higher education leadership development program through the American Council on Education.

The 2016 Mosaic Lecture is co-sponsored by the Statistics Department, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Frederik Meijer Honors College.

For more information about this year's Mosaic Lecture, contact Hodge at [hodgejo@gvsu.edu](mailto:hodgejo@gvsu.edu) or visit [www.gvsu.edu/math](http://www.gvsu.edu/math).

## Faith Matters Network director to present annual Sigal Lecture

Named one of the 15 Faith Leaders to Watch in 2015 by the Center for American Progress, the Rev. Jennifer Bailey is an ordained minister, community organizer and emerging national leader in the multi-faith movement for justice, compassion and peace in the world.

Bailey, founder and executive director of Faith Matters Network, will visit Grand Valley

Wednesday, March 30, to discuss the pressing issue of racial injustice across all religions, and how spiritual and secular communities can work together to address this.

This year's annual Sigal Memorial Lecture, "Racial and Interfaith Justice: A New Vision for Leadership at the Intersections," will take place at 8 p.m. in the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium. The event is sponsored by Grand Valley's Kaufman Interfaith Institute and Interfaith Dialogue Association.

From the food justice movement to combatting intergenerational poverty, Bailey will also share stories from years of leadership in interfaith and intersectional work on a variety of justice issues during a luncheon from noon-1 p.m. Thursday, March 31, in Kirkhof Center, room 1142.

Rabbi Phillip J. Sigal was a pioneer of the interfaith movement in West Michigan until his death in 1985. Aside from his duties at Ahavas Israel Synagogue, Sigal was instrumental in opening the lines of communication among several religions in the area. After his death, a group of local academic and interfaith enthusiasts established the Sigal memorial lecture in his honor. Since that time, the event has brought some of the most important voices in religion and social movements to churches, schools and other venues in West Michigan.

For more information about this year's Sigal Lecture, visit [gvsu.edu/interfaith](http://gvsu.edu/interfaith). To register for the luncheon, contact Katie Gordon at [gordonk1@gvsu.edu](mailto:gordonk1@gvsu.edu) by March 28.

## Health Forum will focus on medical, behavioral integration

The next Health Forum of West Michigan event focuses on the integration of medical and behavioral health.

"Medical/Behavioral Integration: Promise, Results, Challenges" is set for Friday, April 1, from 8-9:30 a.m. at the DeVos Center, Loosemore Auditorium. A light breakfast will begin at 7:30 a.m.

The event is free and open to the public; register online at [www.gvsu.edu/vphealth/](http://www.gvsu.edu/vphealth/). The



The Rev. Jennifer Bailey

May 6 Health Forum will continue the discussion of mental health issues.

Panelists for the April 1 event are Phil Baty, medical director, Mercy Health Physician Partners; Gary Buchanich, case manager, Mercy Health Physician Partners; Kiran Taylor, division chief of psychiatry and behavioral medicines, Spectrum Health Medical Group; John Fox, senior medical director and associate vice president of medical affairs, Priority Health; and William Beecroft, medical director of behavioral health, Blue Care Network.

The Health Forum of West Michigan continues the tradition of the Alliance for Health's First Friday Forums, under leadership from community partners and sponsorship from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

## 'Six Characters' confronts appearance versus reality

Theater students at Grand Valley will ask audience members to reflect on what they accept as truth in an age when alternative realities are created daily through technology during "Six Characters in Search of an Author."

The production will offer performances April 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9, at 7:30 p.m. and April 3 and 10 at 2 p.m. All shows will take place in the Performing Arts Center, Louis Armstrong Theatre. Tickets are \$12 for adults; \$10 seniors and GVSU alumni, faculty and staff; \$6 students and groups.

In "Six Characters in Search of an Author," a dysfunctional family of six people, who call themselves "unfinished" dramatic characters created by a playwright, confront a theater director and his entire stage company. The group begs the company to turn their unfinished family drama into a play. As the bizarre situation unfolds, the theater company gradually realizes that these six people may be even more real than themselves.

Roger Ellis, director and professor of theater, said this production presents the dangerous distinction between appearance and reality.

"We are so obsessed today with the 'virtual reality' in our lives in the form of mobile devices and movie screens, that virtual reality is more real to us than reality itself," Ellis said.

Ellis added that the themes of this 90-year-old Luigi Pirandello drama raise many questions about the relation between art and life, the limitation of words as communication tools, and the true nature of identity.

For more information about "Six Characters," call the Louis Armstrong Box Office at x12300 or visit [www.gvsu.edu/theater](http://www.gvsu.edu/theater).