

# BENEFITS & WELLNESS

[gvsu.edu/hro/benefitswellness](https://gvsu.edu/hro/benefitswellness)



GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
HUMAN RESOURCES



## GVSU Health & Wellness has changed to Human Resources Benefits & Wellness

We are transitioning to Benefits & Wellness to align our brand more closely within the [Human Resources scope of services](#) and to appeal more directly to our target audience—faculty and staff at the university. Though our title has changed, our mission has not, as we remain focused on promoting and encouraging healthy lifestyles throughout the Grand Valley community.

Please note our new contact information:

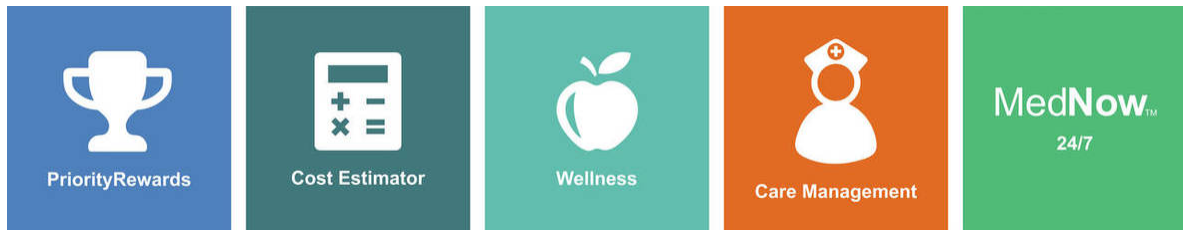
Email: [benefitsandwellness@gvsu.edu](mailto:benefitsandwellness@gvsu.edu)

Website: [gvsu.edu/hro/benefitswellness](https://gvsu.edu/hro/benefitswellness)

## How to Make the Most of Your Benefits

Ahhh sweet summertime, where the first thing you think about in the morning are your benefits, right? Well, if how to make the most of your GVSU benefits has not been on your mind, follow along with us this month on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) to learn more about the resources and tools you have at your fingertips to help you save money when it comes to your health care dollars. Who knows, the savings you collect from these tools could go toward a nice summer vacation next year! Stay tuned to save!

For more information, visit the [How to Make the Most of Your Benefits page](#) on our website.



## Success Story: Joy Gianakura

Joy Gianakura—the associate dean of student academic services within the Seidman College of Business—says she has been “battling the curse of the short girl” her entire life. She has spent most of her life yo-yoing from being fit, to being in less than ideal shape. In an effort to stay away from medication and improve blood pressure, and with two neurological disorders that had been diagnosed within her immediate family, Joy decided it was time to take her health more seriously.



Having a mother with Alzheimer’s, Joy began doing her own research on brain health, and learned that brain health is linked to gut health. In the meantime, her sister was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, which is the result of the body not making enough dopamine on its own. Aside from medications, cardio exercise has proven to be beneficial to individuals with Parkinson’s. Joy says, “Moving is the means to living a productive life with Parkinson’s disease.”

In lieu of her situation, Joy says, “I knew I had to be ‘on’ for my family. I knew that I needed to be stronger and do what I can to combat whatever may be coming my way.” As a result, she decided to change her diet and activity levels by “living like a healthy athlete,” which Joy says is humorous if you know her.

Joy has been running 5 and 10k’s since the age of 40, and decided to become a Spin instructor at the age of 48. She loves having this as a cardio outlet, and simply adores her “usual suspects’ who have faithfully been in the saddle much longer than I have been teaching at GVSU,” she says. Though she is an active individual, Joy realized that “you can’t exercise your way out of a bad diet.”

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*“Food is 80% of the equation, but exercise keeps you healthy. It feeds the body in different ways than food.”*

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In terms of her diet, Joy says, “Food to me now is medicine.” She tends to eat food that is good for her gut, brain and nerves, and tries her very best to stay clear of foods that are not. Since starting her journey about a year ago, Joy has lost 26 pounds and is completely med-free, but says the biggest change is the amount of energy she has at 54.

In addition to adopting a better diet, Joy has become more involved in the [faculty and staff Group Exercise](#) classes on campus. Among her favorites are TRX—for her improved strength—and Spin, which continues to be her first love. Joy says, “We do have the power to change our bodies inside and out, and I am so grateful for the opportunities my employer provides me to make this a sustainable part of my life!”

## GVSU Named a "Best Place to Work" by Forbes

Grand Valley State University is ranked No. 2 in the state of Michigan by Forbes in its list of America's Best Employers and we couldn't agree more!



Forbes released a list for each state, ranking the best 39 employers in Michigan. Grand Valley is listed as the second best place to work in Michigan, only behind the University of Michigan Health System.

Others on the list include General Motors, Meijer, Steelcase and Gordon Food Service. [Read more](#) at GVNow and [see the full list of ranked employers](#).

## Farmers Market: Upcoming Events

### Looking with Intent

On Wednesday, July 10th, join Elisa Salazar and Stacy Burns in taking time to move mindfully and with intention by following a guided mindfulness practice. Looking With Intent will take place from 12-12:30pm at the Market. Register at [gvsu.edu/sprout](https://gvsu.edu/sprout).

### Cooking Demo

Join Jody Vogelzang, program director of GVSU's Clinical Dietetics program, for another cooking demo at the Market on Wednesday, July 17th! Stay tuned for the recipe at the [Farmers Market website](#).

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