



Success Story: Sandra Matthews & Christine Rener

Both Sandra Matthews and Christine Rener know the power of kindness. Sandra has worked at GVSU since 2015, and is currently the receptionist/special events coordinator at the Kirkhof College of Nursing. Christine has been at GVSU for 10 years and serves as the vice provost for instructional development & innovation as well as the Director of the Robert and Mary Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center. Despite busy schedules, both decided to join Positive Organizations, and fell in love with spreading positivity throughout GVSU.



Positive Organizations is a Human Resources Community of Practice that brings together a group of faculty and staff to brainstorm ways of making GVSU a more positive place to work overall. Sandra and Christine helped spearhead the "Not So Random Acts of Kindness" subgroup of Positive Orgs, and through this group, developed the Kindness Counts campaign. This campaign allows faculty and staff to share appreciation and gratitude through "Kindness Counts Cards," that faculty and staff can write on and use to spread positivity.



"The giving of a Kindness Counts card is so much more than merely a card," Sandra said. "It is sharing appreciation for acts of kindness and compassion at GVSU."

In addition to her work at Positive Orgs, Christine has also been working towards personal wellness through a health coach and practicing self-compassion tactics to remain positive. Christine emphasized looking to your coworkers to inspire healthy practices and said, "We have made it a collaborative effort, whether through participating in the Get Moving Challenge or helping each other remember to take breaks, to get up out of our chairs and go for a walk, or to simply breathe."

Christine also recommends faculty and staff visit the [Benefits and Wellness website](#) when looking to make more positive steps in your life, stating: "There are so many resources available to us. Make a commitment to try one new thing— either [a group fitness class](#), [work-life consultation](#), or a [community of practice](#)."

Regardless of how you work towards your own personal wellness, both Sandra and Christine emphasized how important it is to spread positivity to others. Sandra said "The positive energy that spreads from giving to others is immeasurable."

If you'd like to spread positivity through Kindness Counts, faculty and staff can sign up to become a host site for Kindness Counts Cards, or download their own copies [at this link](#).

Winter Event Guide

Faculty and staff have a wide variety of programs, events, and services provided by Human Resources. Check out all the resources available to you this upcoming semester with the winter event guide! Mark your calendars for events in 2020 including:

- [Wellness Fair](#)
February 12th from 11am-2:00pm
- [Faculty and Staff Group Exercise](#)
begins January 6th
- [Emotional Strength Training](#) and [Interpersonal Communication Workshops](#)



[View the Winter Event Guide for a complete list of offerings](#)

Get Moving Team Challenge Winners

Thanks to all who participated in the Get Moving Team Challenge! We'd like to recognize the winning teams and individuals below. Thanks for all your hard work and continue to stay active this holiday season to keep your energy levels high!



Top 3 Competitive Team Challenge Winners:

- 1st Place: 84% Psyched
- 2nd Place: We Are "Sole" Men
- 3rd Place: WTF? Where's The Finish

Individual with the most steps

Rence Meredith

Most creative team name:

Kickin' Asymptotes

[View the complete winners list online.](#)

Looking to stay active after the new year? [Check out the Trek 100 challenge!](#)

Have a Happy, Stress-Free Holiday!

We love the holidays as much as anyone, but it can sometimes be a stressful and depressing time for a lot of us. Follow these few tips to help prevent holiday stress and depression:



1. **Plan ahead**
2. **Keep up with healthy habits**
3. **Take a breather**
4. **Reach out to others**
5. **Seek professional help if you need it**
6. **Have self-compassion**

[Elisa Salazar, work life consultant](#), defines self-compassion as "honoring and accepting your humanness." In this clip, Elisa walks you through an activity to foster self-compassion and combat negative emotions.

