

Graduate Student Celebration

December 7, 2012

Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall
Charles W. Loosemore Auditorium

Presented by the Office of Graduate Studies

318C DeVos Center 616-331-7105

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in collaboration with the
Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Program

5:00 PM: Refreshments and Social Hour (Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall)

6:00-7:30 PM: Awards Presentation Ceremony (Loosemore Auditorium)

- Introduction: Austin Dean, GSA President
- Welcome: Dr. Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Dean of Graduate Studies
- Awards: Dr. Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. John R. Stevenson, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, and Steven Lipnicki, Assistant Dean of Students
- Faculty Mentor Recognition Award: Austin Dean, GSA President, and Paul Jabaay, GSA Administrative Officer

Award recipients please note: group photos will be taken immediately following the award ceremony.

Welcome!

Dear Graduate Students, family members, and friends,

Tonight we recognize those individuals who have distinguished themselves in graduate education at Grand Valley State University. We celebrate all your hard work and recognize the achievements you have made at GVSU.

The awarding of the Dean's Citations for Academic Excellence is a proud Grand Valley State University tradition that honors the accomplishments of our graduate students. First held in 2006, this event recognizes the academic excellence of graduate students and faculty at our university. It originated through the combined efforts of the members of Graduate Council and the Graduate Program Directors. The Graduate Student Association and the Office of Graduate Studies are co-hosts for this evening's activities.

In the awards ceremony, we recognize excellence in academic performance in several categories. Graduate students can be nominated for these awards by staff, faculty, advisors, the graduate program director, and the departmental chair or school director who is familiar with the individual student's accomplishments in the specific areas of recognition. Nominees are reviewed by the Dean of Graduate Studies who makes the final selection. Each recipient will be granted a certificate of recognition and a graduate honors cord, which may be worn at commencement. We are also proud to honor several of our graduate faculty members who have distinguished themselves in mentoring and serving our students at GVSU. It is through their efforts that we create a rich and vibrant learning environment.

Grand Valley State University is proud of your accomplishments. I wish each and every one of you a bright and successful future.

Congratulations!



Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Ph.D., FACSM

Dean of Graduate Studies

Grand Valley State University

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**Graduate Dean's Citations for Academic Excellence in the Major
Fall 2012**

Seidman College of Business

- ❖ Michele A. Booms, Accounting
- ❖ Michael K. Birkmeier, Business Administration

College of Community & Public Service

- ❖ Michael K. Cardinal, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Amy E. Jackson, Health Administration
- ❖ Kyle S. Van Strien, Public Administration

College of Education

- ❖ Emily A. Burrus, School Counseling

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Emily A. Sydloski, Physician Assistant Studies

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Holly R. Kaupa, English

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Mary L. Dougherty, Nursing

Comments from Faculty and Staff about the Honorees
Graduate Dean's Citations for Excellence in the Major, by College

Seidman College of Business

❖ **Michele A. Booms, Master of Science in Accounting**

(B.B.A., Accounting and Finance, Grand Valley State University, 2012)

Michele is a recent graduate of the undergraduate programs in Accounting and Finance, as well as the Honors College at GVSU. Michele is a standout in all her classes. She generally receives the highest grade in each class. She has completed two internships (Mercantile Bank and Ernst and Young). She has served as a Finance department tutor for the last year. She has already passed three of the four parts of the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam with an average score in the top 1% nationally. Michele will start her career in public accounting in January with Ernst and Young. "We expect her to be a real leader in the profession," stated her graduate program director.

❖ **Michael K. Birkmeier, Master of Business Administration**

(B.S., Industrial Engineering, Western Michigan University, 1987)

Mike has a long history of academic excellence; prior to pursuing the MBA, he earned a bachelor's degree in engineering Cum Laude from WMU. He is recognized as an outstanding MBA student among students and faculty. Mike demonstrates sophisticated analytical skills; faculty members are consistently impressed with his ability to connect theory and applications. He has demonstrated that he is a good team member, and emerges as a natural leader in collaborative efforts. He has held positions as director of operations in two divisions at Harlo Corporation, a leading manufacturer of rough terrain forklifts and protective relay and control panels for the electrical transmission industry.

College of Community & Public Service

❖ **Michael K. Cardinal, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**

(B.S., Criminal Justice, Grand Valley State University, 2007)

Mike's academic performance, in each and every class, was at or near the top. He consistently exceeded expectations and outperformed most, if not all, of his

peers on his assignments, both written and oral. He was hired by the Michigan Department of Human Services while he was still a student in the Criminal Justice graduate program, and finished his course work and final project while he also was working full-time. Mike's dedication and hard work on his project and his coursework is remarkable and the program would be fortunate if all students were like him. He is currently a Child Welfare Specialist with Children's Protective Services in Muskegon.

❖ **Amy E. Jackson, Master of Health Administration**

(B.A., Communication, Michigan State University, 2001)

Amy is "an outstanding graduate student, in terms of her attention to detail, critical thinking, timeliness, and quality of contributions to the class discussion both through oral presentations, course discussions, and written work." Amy undertook study in health administration as a way to make a career change, coming from a background in human resources management in the private sector. As such she was challenged in every class to dig deep in order gain an understanding of the wide range of issues, concepts, and challenges of health administration, policy, and practices. Amy has demonstrated that she can apply theory to practical situations which will serve her well in her career in health administration.

❖ **Kyle S. Van Strien, Master of Public Administration**

(B.A., Business, Calvin College, 2007)

Kyle has demonstrated excellence throughout the MPA program. With a background in the nonprofit sector, as director of fund development with Other Way Ministries, he initially entered the program to pursue that concentration. After being introduced to the public management and urban and regional planning domains within the MPA, he turned to the public sector for his career preparation. He served on the Board of the West Grand Neighborhood Organization, where he worked with the West Fulton Business Association and West Leonard Downtown District, dealing with issues of west Grand Rapids. Kyle's commitment to public service, based on a strong undergraduate preparation at Calvin, has grown and strengthened throughout the MPA program.

College of Education

- ❖ **Emily A. Burrus, Master of Education in School Counseling**
(B.S., Group Social Studies, Grand Valley State University, 2002)

Emily stands out among the most capable students as one who is both thorough and meticulous in her work. Her written assignments have met or exceeded the highest standards. During her internship at Gull Lake Middle School, Emily has demonstrated both maturity and wisdom as she thoughtfully applies the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that have been taught through coursework. She has also demonstrated that she is thorough and thoughtful in her planning and implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs. "Emily demonstrates those quiet leadership skills so prized in our profession," commented the faculty in the School Counseling program, "her educational experiences will translate into her success as an exemplary school counseling professional."

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ **Ramya Gunda, Master of Science in Computer Information Systems**
(Bach., Computer Science and Engineering, Vaagdevi College of Engineering, India, 2009)

Ramya has excelled in every class she's taken, earning a near perfect GPA of 3.970. Not surprisingly, her faculty say she is bright, inquisitive, and diligent. She has also served as a graduate assistant, creating a semantic web repository, and completed an internship with HMI Worldwide as a website developer. She began employment with IMB as Application Developer in 2010 and was recently transferred to be part of Maximo North America Technical Services Team. She is now a Maximo Technical Consultant and is serving as the lead on several projects. The School of Computing and Information Systems enthusiastically supports her nomination for this award.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Emily A. Sydloski, Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

(B.S., Biomedical Science, Grand Valley State University, 2010)

Emily has demonstrated excellence in academic achievement in her education in the PAS Program. Prior to entering the graduate program, Emily maintained a 4.0 GPA and was president of the pre-PA club here at GVSU. Since entering PA school, she has continued to maintain that 4.0 GPA and has excelled in every academic way. She has excelled in her clinical rotations, where she continually received excellent evaluation by her preceptors. Emily's ability to critically think through a process is incredible. She can analyze a clinical situation and with great ease, work through the differential and critical reason through all the possible solutions.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Holly R. Kaupa, Master of Arts in English**

(B.A., English, Grand Valley State University, 2010)

Holly is not only an academically talented student, as befits a nominee for this award, but possesses the kind of courage and fortitude that impresses just about every faculty member who has the pleasure to encounter her. She is a remarkable person. Moreover, in addition to her ability to shed new light on a field that was entirely new to her, "Holly brought to our meetings a keen wit and depth of engagement that made the experience of discussing the texts and contexts in question all the more rewarding." In short, Holly is one of those students for whom professors are grateful, and the faculty are delighted to learn that she is representing the MA program.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Mary L. Dougherty, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

(M.S.N, Nursing, DePaul University, 1991)

Mary is a truly outstanding representative of the first group of nursing administration track graduates from the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program. Employed as a clinical nurse specialist at Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids, she is an expert in the care of adults who receive a cancer diagnosis.

“When the people of Grand Rapids hear that diagnosis, they are truly fortunate that our city includes one of the most outstanding and passionate nurses, who is leading her peers in elevating the level of care for those who must become oncology patients.” Mary possesses an impressive command of practice and leadership literature. She conducted her dissertation project with a high degree of independence, yet knew how and when to obtain guidance.

**GRADUATE DEAN'S CITATIONS FOR
OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS IN A MAJOR
Fall 2012**

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ **Thomas J. Parker, Jr., Master of Science in Computer Information Systems**
(B.S., Computer Science, Michigan State University, 2011)
 - **Thesis Title:** An inquiry into therapist effectiveness and productivity when using gamification to motivate patients
 - Thesis Committee:** Dr. Jonathan Engelsma (Chair), Dr. Guenter Tusch, Dr. John Farris

Tom's examines how state of the art therapeutic game technologies can be effectively integrated into a clinical setting where patients are being treated for traumatic brain injuries. The goal of his work was to understand not only how these technologies can motivate patients, but also the potential for these technologies for increasing the effectiveness and productivity of the therapist.

"Tom is among our best CIS graduate students here at GVSU. In his research he tackled a very ambitious and opened-ended problem in a domain that was quite new to him and produced excellent results." His work has been validated by the larger international serious games community in that he coauthored a paper entitled "Accesorized Therapeutic Game Experiences for Tablets" and presented it at the 2012 Meaningful Games Conference. Tom has accepted a full-time position with ProCare Systems, Inc., in Grand Rapids, where he will continue to explore the application of smartphone and tablet technologies in the medical industry.

ABSTRACT

Past research has shown that games on handheld devices can be used to motivate and elicit therapeutic movements from traumatic brain injury (TBI). There remains a need to examine how this approach can be best integrated into the daily practice of the therapists treating these patients. Moreover, there is a need to understand how a therapist's goals for a particular patient can be translated into terms meaningful within the game, and how game output can be translated back into information that helps the therapist monitor a patient's progress and intervene when necessary. Furthermore, there is a need to examine what type of supporting software infrastructure is needed in order for therapists to utilize this approach in a clinical setting, and whether or not there is potential to improve the effectiveness and productivity of therapists when all of these issues, ranging from patient motivation and therapist efficiency, are addressed in the context of an end to end solution. This study proposes to address these questions by building a series of prototypes that will be evaluated by therapists in local clinics.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **David A. Baisch, Master of Science in Biology**

(B.S., Biology, Grand Valley State University, 2010)

- **Thesis Title:** Origin of Great Lakes Brown Trout, *Salmo trutta*: A Phylogeographic Analysis Using mtDNA Sequence Variation
- **Thesis Committee:** Dr. Alexey Nikitin (Chair), Dr. Mark Luttenton, Dr. Roderick Morgan

David's thesis work has been exemplary. His focus is extraordinary and his commitment to his thesis research has been unwavering. His commitment is matched by his deep curiosity. He often arrived at the office early and stayed late, never satisfied with doing the minimum. While working on his thesis, he made the effort to visit researchers at other universities, learning new skills and techniques. Conversations with David are always engaging, and he is constantly asking new questions. In short, David is more a colleague than student.

David recently completed a contract with the state of Washington as a Fisheries Biologist and was soon after offered a position with the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Association (NOAA) as a commercial fisheries inspector. He will soon leave on a 3 month long ride-along with the commercial fishing vessels in the Bering Sea, recording their total catches, by-catches and interactions with endangered mammals and sea birds.

ABSTRACT

The brown trout, *Salmo trutta*, was first introduced to the Laurentian Great Lakes in 1887 from European broodstocks to found a recreational salmonid fishery; however, the origins of these progenitor lineages remain largely unknown. Trout from these regions are very specialized to their native habitats and matching North American stocks to similar watersheds may help increase survivability by introducing the stock to a more appropriate environment. The objective of this study was to determine the European origins of brown trout found in the Great Lakes. We analyzed 144 brown trout from ten watersheds across Michigan and Wisconsin and identified their strain assignment according to the MIDNR classification using their mtDNA *ND-1* sequences. European progenitor lineages occurring within these strain assignments were then identified using the first 309 base pairs of the mtDNA control region. We found nine *ND-1* haplotypes found in the four most recently stocked strains (Gilchrist Creek, Wild Rose, Seeforellen and Sturgeon River). A total of four different European lineages were identified by 5 SNPs in the mtDNA control region in the 144 brown trout samples. One unique control region haplotype which has not been described was observed and a phylogeny was constructed with known sequences. Ten individuals from the Sturgeon River strain were analyzed in order to compare diversity of this new strain with previously founded stocks. We found that the Sturgeon River strain largely shares the same progenitor lineage as Gilchrist Creek. Fishery managers can use this information to make informed decisions about stocking watersheds where certain strains might prosper or to choose to not stock strains due to poor performance and great dissimilarity between North American watersheds and the European progenitor's native watershed.

❖ **Ellen C. Zwarenstejn, Master of Science in Communications**

(B.A., International Relations, Michigan State University, 1999)

- **Thesis Title:** High School Policy Debate as an Enduring Pathway to Political Education: Evaluating Possibilities for Political Learning
- **Thesis Committee:** Dr. Danielle Leek (Chair), Dr. Alex Nesterenko, Dr. Frederick Antczak

Ellen's thesis makes a notable contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship and promises to be a focal point for discussion among academics and professionals in argumentation, speech, and education studies. Her thesis takes on one of the most important, and often controversial, debates in higher education. As the Association of American Colleges & Universities notes in their 2012 report *A Crucible Moment*, our nation's colleges and universities are failing undergraduates in the critical area of teaching skills for civic and political engagement. The National Task Force calls for research addressing this crisis.

Her project enriches and expands the understanding of the methodological approaches to take to develop measurements of political learning. Her work challenges us to re-think what "counts" as political education and pushes teachers to move beyond basic civic engagement projects to immerse students in policy debate.

Already, Ellen's work is being recognized and referenced in the argumentation & forensics community. There is also interest in potential collaborations with GVSU and other universities whose programs provide support for competitive and non-competitive speech activities. Her thesis is a rigorous, well-written, and thoughtful treatment of a topic important not only for scholars and teachers, but for a nation whose growth development relies on the civic participation and knowledge of its citizens.

ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the role competitive high school policy debate participation has on key developmental markers of political learning. As identified by the Carnegie Foundation's Political Engagement Project (PEP), political learning includes political knowledge and understanding, political identity, and the development of political skills. Based in interviews with former high school debaters, the results of this study suggest there may be a transformative, politically enduring and engaging experience surrounding policy debate.

Using grounded theory to extract analysis of debaters' experiences, this study demonstrates how sustained competitive high school policy debate experience directly advances political learning and should be a tool to engage students politically. Debaters tend to focus on issues rather than partisan politics, consider themselves well informed on issues of national and international importance, incorporate reflexive political identities, feel their daily lives and activities manifest political actions, and have increased comfort levels employing political advocacy skills including the articulation and design of political argumentation. To respond to a paradoxically increasing partisan and apolitical world, policy debate encourages high school students to access critical concepts of political engagement.

❖ **Carrie L. Steenwyk, Master of Arts in English**

(B.A., English and Philosophy, Calvin College, 2002)

- **Thesis Title:** "Temples fit for Thee:" The Interplay of Holy Space, Time, Actions, and People in George Herbert's *The Temple*
- **Thesis Committee:** Dr. Benjamin Lockerd (Chair), Dr. Kathleen Blumreich, Dr. David Landrum

In this thesis, Carrie Steenwyk explicates George Herbert's sequence of poems, *The Temple*, in the context of Jewish and Christian ideas concerning the architecture of the place of worship. She gives a masterful overview of Jewish, Catholic, and Reformed theologies of sacred space and shows that Herbert drew on all of them in the poems. This approach helps to elucidate Herbert's religious convictions, a matter which has been the subject of some debate. Carrie brought to this study an impressive knowledge of those varied theological contexts, and she applied that knowledge in an extremely intelligent way. The result was a highly original and insightful explication of

Herbert's poem. Members of the committee remarked that the thesis was also beautifully written--readable, eloquent, and engaging. It is an altogether impressive work of scholarship and interpretation.

The faculty who attended Steenwyk's defense have attested to the depth and quality of her research. The originality of her thesis, though, cannot be overstated. One faculty member, considered an expert on Herbert, was both willing to serve on the thesis committee and was most impressed with Carrie's work.

ABSTRACT

In contrast to previous academic work that focuses on one aspect of the temple image, this study will demonstrate that an understanding of Herbert's worldview, specifically his theology with particular attention to the biblical image temple, illuminates the interplay of temple images in *The Temple* in a way that embraces the beauty and intricacy of the work as a whole. The study begins by examining Herbert's religious and literary milieu, continues by exploring the various biblical images of temple that include the tabernacle, Old Testament temple, Jesus as temple, Christians as temples both individually and corporately, and the fulfillment of the temple at the end of time, and concludes by demonstrating the continuity within these images as shown in Herbert's poetry through the use of four categories common to all these temple images: space, time, actions, and people.

**GRADUATE DEAN'S CITATION FOR
OUTSTANDING MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT IN A MAJOR
Fall 2012**

College of Community & Public Service

- ❖ **Michael K. Cardinal, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**
(B.S., Criminal Justice, Grand Valley State University, 2007)
 - **Title:** Sixty-First District Sobriety Court Evaluation
 - **Advisor:** Dr. Frank Hughes

The faculty in the School of Criminal Justice were impressed with Mike's work on this "exemplary project" which can stand "as a model for students to come." He selected a very timely topic in regard to the corrections and judicial field, but it also required him to collect primary data and employ quantitative statistical techniques, which required many, many hours of dedication. His project was also beneficial to the community, as it assisted the Sixty-First District Court in evaluating their sobriety court. As evidence-based policy continues to grow in importance in the criminal justice field, this project will help the program improve and continue.

"Additionally, Mike was an excellent role model to other students during his course work at GVSU, and demonstrates the essence of what we hope our graduate students become. "

Mike is also the recipient of the Graduate Dean's Citation Award for Excellence in the Major from the School of Criminal Justice.

ABSTRACT

This study is an evaluation of the effectiveness of the 61st District's Sobriety Court. The court is located in Kent County, Michigan and attempts to treat repeat drunk-driving offenders by combining the power of the district court, with substance treatment options available to drunk-driving offenders. Using secondary data gathered by the 61st District Court, this study analyzes all of the offenders eligible for the program between January 1st, 2003 and October 1st, 2008. Using the Michigan Motor Vehicle Records of the offenders, instances of alcohol related recidivism were recorded for those who were eligible for the program and analyzed based on level of participation, age, gender and self-identified race. Results of statistical analysis indicate varying levels of success for the program. Basic overall recidivism is reduced, however, a deeper analysis of the data indicate that the reduction is based on the individual characteristics of offenders. Specifically, recidivism is reduced for males, those between 21 and 31 years of age, and for those who identify themselves racially as White. There was no statistical evidence that recidivism was reduced for females, those older than 31 years of age, and those who identify themselves as any other race than White.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Vincent K. Sam, Master of Science in Computer Information Systems**

(B.S., Computer Information Systems, Davenport University, 2009)

- **Title:** Creating Multiplatform Native App Support for Locating H1B Jobs
- **Advisor:** Dr. Jonathan Engelsma

For his Master's project, Vincent designed and implemented the "H1B Jobs" iPhone application, which is designed to help international students locate employers who sponsor H1B /greencard jobs. The project grew out of a course Vincent took with me in which he initially conceived of the idea and implemented the app on the Android platform. Today the app is available on both the Apple iTunes App Store as well as the Google Play Store. It serves as a useful tool to users around the world.

In addition, Vincent has excelled in his CIS coursework, exhibiting a consistent passion for learning and rock solid discipline that enables him to see his ideas carried through to fruition. Vincent's mobile programming skills have attracted the attention of a number of top tier firms around the country, and recently he has decided to join Compuware Corporation in Detroit, Michigan where he will continue to immerse himself in mobile technology.

ABSTRACT

This project highlights the use of mobile technology to revolutionize the relationship between employers and prospective hires. Specifically, it captures the quest to create native mobile apps to address the challenges of job searching for foreign students. The research began with a study of alternative mobile platforms and then proceeded to implement the job search app on both Android and iOS platforms. Both versions were then deployed to the iTunes App Store and the Google Play Store and are now available to the general public. The project concluded with a comparative analysis of these two popular smartphone platforms from a developer's perspective.

College of Health Professions

❖ Kevin H. Wolf, Master of Physician Assistant Studies

(B.S., Biomedical Science, Grand Valley State University, 2010)

- **Title:** Assessment of Risk Factors for Post-Rewarming Rebound Hyperthermia in Cardiac Arrest Patients Undergoing Therapeutic Hypothermia
- **Advisor:** Dr. Theresa Bacon-Baguley

Kevin began his work in the Physician Assistant graduate program after completing his undergraduate degree at GVSU in 2010. The objective for this project was to assess the risk factors associated with rebound hyperthermia during the rewarming period of these individuals who had out-of-hospital cardiac arrests and were admitted to the intensive care unit for therapeutic hypothermia.

Kevin worked with an Emergency Department physician for this research, as well as three students from Michigan State University's College of Medicine. Therefore, this research was not only innovative, but also interprofessional. He worked many long hours reviewing charts for data analysis and to find correlations. Not only did Kevin produce an excellent final project, but he also has presented this research on two separate occasions, including a national Emergency Medicine Conference in San Francisco, California.

ABSTRACT

Objective: Guidelines recommend initiating therapeutic hypothermia (TH) in cardiac arrest patients with return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC). However, the incidence of complications, such as rebound hyperthermia, are relatively unstudied. Post-rewarming 'rebound hyperthermia' (RH), defined as a temperature of 38.5°C or greater within 24 hours of cooling withdrawal, may worsen survival and outcome. The purpose of this study was to determine the incidence and risk factors associated with RH as well as its relationship to mortality, neurological morbidity, and hospital length of stay (LOS).

Methods: A retrospective, observational study was performed at four independent hospitals. During the four-year study period, all patients undergoing TH following cardiac arrest were eligible. Patients less than 18 years, trauma cases, pregnancy and cardiogenic shock cases were excluded. The main outcome was the incidence of RH, and 17 risk factors for RH were also analyzed. In-hospital mortality, discharge neurologic status as measured by the modified Rankin Scale, and LOS data were also collected.

Results: 141 patients were included. 17 risk factors for RH were analyzed and no potential risk factors were found to be significant at a univariate level. 40.4% of patients without RH experienced any cause of death during the initial hospitalization compared to 64.3% patients who experienced RH (OR: 2.66; 95% CI: 1.26 – 5.61; $p = 0.011$). The presence of RH is not associated with an increase in LOS (10.67 days vs. 9.45 days; absolute risk increase = -1.21 days, 95% CI: -1.84 – 4.27; $p = 0.434$). RH is associated with increased neurologic morbidity ($p = 0.011$).

Abstract continues on next page.

ABSTRACT CON'T

Conclusions: While no potential risk factors for RH were identified, RH is a marker for increased mortality and worsened neurologic morbidity in cardiac arrest patients who have underwent TH. It is unclear if RH directly impacts mortality and morbidity, or if it is simply a result of a deeper pathophysiological process. While further research is warranted to evaluate this relationship, the presence or absence of RH is valuable information to clinicians who often resort to subjective reasoning instead of objective data to gauge prognosis in this population.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ **Rusheeswar Challa, Master of Science in Cell & Molecular Biology**
(Bachelor of Technology in Biotechnology, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, India, 2008)
 - **Title:** Studying the role of mutations in PPP2R1A with respect to Endometrial Cancer
 - **Advisor:** Dr. John Risinger (Michigan State University's College of Medicine, Grand Rapids)

Rusheeswar has a very quick mind and is able to grasp information and process it much, much faster than most other people. He can very quickly evaluate data and formulate good questions regarding the interpretation and rationale. Not unexpectedly, this means his critical thinking and troubleshooting skills are very strong, both of which are crucial to a successful career in biotechnology.

Rusheeswar also has 'good hands' – his hands-on experiments are well-designed but also well-executed (this particular skill does not always accompany a good analytical brain). He is a careful, thoughtful scientist.

Rusheeswar, as a student, is enthusiastic, energetic, and consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic. He joined Prof. John Risinger's Laboratory to pursue his required internship. During his time there, Rusheewar quickly acclimated to the intellectual rigors of research, partnered in a team environment and worked odd hours to accommodate laboratory research schedules. He quickly progressed from grasping the laboratory-specific etiquettes to pursuing his own independent research project. Rusheewar was

diligent and a dedicated mentee. A testimony to his hard work is the fact that his contributions have been added to an extramural grant submitted by his mentor; he is also a co-author on a paper being drafted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

ABSTRACT

Endometrial serous carcinoma (Uterine Serous Carcinoma, USC) is an aggressive variant of endometrial cancer occurring only in 10% of cases out of 46000 new cases in US, but it is responsible for 50% of all the mortalities associated with endometrial cancer. Little is known about the molecular alterations in USCs which presumably contribute to this high mortality rate. Recently PPP2R1A was found to be associated with USCs as mutations in the PPP2R1A gene were observed in 20-40% of the cases. PPP2R1A is the scaffolding subunit 'A' within the ubiquitous serine/threonine phosphatase PP2A. PP2A is involved in crucial cellular processes including the regulation of cellular proliferation and tumor suppression. It is hypothesized that mutations in PPP2R1A might interfere with the tumor suppressor function of PP2A, thereby contributing to tumor initiation and/or progression. Our interest in this project is to elucidate the molecular alterations in PPP2R1A and to determine how it is a key partner in tumor initiation/progression. For this I have worked to express PPP2R1A mutants in established normal endometrial cell lines and to look at the changes this expression brings. In order to express the mutations, I have transfected plasmid vectors carrying the PPP2R1A mutants into viable cells and established stable cell lines. The expression levels in these cell lines were measured using quantitative-PCR and western blotting techniques. The Cell and Tissue Culture lab in the Biotechnology Masters' curriculum set up a strong platform for performing these *in vitro* experiments during my internship project. Also having a thorough experience with techniques like DNA, RNA and plasmid isolations, culturing bacteria, and PCR from the Advanced Nucleic Acids lab at GVSU made my integration into the project faster.

Abstract continued on next page.

ABSTRACT CON'T

Presently I have generated all the cellular reagents required for the experiment; further into the project different advanced techniques like immuno precipitations and proteomics studies will be employed to have a better understanding of the role of PPP2R1A mutants. Since research is not limited to techniques, I would like to mention that the understanding I have gained through courses like Advanced Cell Biology and Advanced Molecular Biology at GVSU was invaluable. These courses triggered my interest to pursue work in a cancer biology lab. Further I strongly believe my experience in the Colloquium in Biotechnology course, reading and analyzing numerous research papers and designing a research project, will also help me establish a career in research.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Barbara L. Hooper, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

(M.S.N., Nursing, Grand Valley State University, 1992)

- **Title:** Using Case Studies and Videotaped Vignettes to Facilitate the Development of Critical Thinking Skills in New Graduate Nurses
- **Committee:** Dr. Cynthia Coviak (Chair), Dr. Linda Scott (University of Illinois at Chicago), Ms. Glenna Decker, Ms. Janice Hodges (Sparrow Hospital)

Combing both the strategic assessments of a nurse executive and the passion of a nurse educator, Barbara completed a scholarly project that piloted an orientation unit for new graduate nurses who were beginning positions in a central Michigan hospital. Concerned for the needs of critical thinking regarding delegation of care to non-licensed patient care technicians, she developed both the learning activities and the evaluation methods. Through the success of her work, the institution is planning to incorporate the learning unit in its ongoing orientation program. This project will therefore have lasting impact on the long term development of the institution's nursing workforce, with its concomitant positive effects on patient safety.

It is clear that Barbara has served as a dedicated leader in the nursing profession. When KCON designed its program, they not only provided courses

for those who wish to provide primary care, but also for those who wish to be among the next generation of nurse executives. In Barbara, that vision is being realized and she should be recognized for her leadership to the profession of nursing. Barbara also serves as an Affiliate Faculty member for KCON.

ABSTRACT

Based on the increasing complexity of healthcare, nurses are performing extremely skilled and high level cognitive work that requires a solid foundation upon which to build. A variety of educational strategies have been utilized to teach critical thinking. The purpose of this program evaluation was to determine if using case studies with videotaped vignettes helped to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills in new graduate nurses participating in a nurse residency program.

Eighteen nurse residents hired for the July nurse residency program participated in this program evaluation. The Health Sciences Reasoning Test (HSRT) was used to measure critical thinking. A paired samples t-test revealed a statistically significant increase ($t = -2.219$, $p = .041$) on the overall HSRT score, indicating the participants critical thinking did improve after using case studies and videotaped vignettes as an educational strategy for their orientation program. No relationships were found between critical thinking and the variables: age; previous health care experience; location of healthcare experience; and previous experience with case studies and videotaped vignettes.

It is impossible to prepare new graduate nurses for every situation they could encounter in the clinical practice environment, which is why it is so important for individuals to develop critical thinking skills. Using multiple strategies and embracing technology are options that should be considered when selecting a strategy. The results of this scholarly project are site specific, which precludes the generalizability to other organizations.

**GRADUATE DEAN'S CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION
Fall 2012**

College of Community & Public Service

- ❖ **Nicolas O. Lavalard, Master of Health Administration**
(B.A., General Business Administration, Michigan State University, 2009)

Nicolas was nominated by the faculty of the School of Public, Nonprofit, and Health Administration because of his dedication to health care in public schools. Nicolas has worked with the Muskegon Community Health Project for over a year on the evaluation of a project that places community health workers in schools to improve access to health care and overall health with the goal of also increasing educational attainment. The project is named Project Healthy Grad. Nicolas presented a poster on this ongoing evaluation work at the October 2012 Michigan Premier Public Health Conference. His work has been highly valued by the project partners for his efforts in working to provide ongoing evaluation information for tracking progress towards all goals

- ❖ **Stacey J. Trowbridge, Master of Public Administration**
(B.S., Criminal Justice, Western Michigan University, 1994)

Stacy has been an exceptional student in the philanthropy and nonprofit leadership concentration of the MPA program. For fourteen years, Stacy has been the program director at Disability Network/Lakeshore. In her work, she has made a difference in the lives of thousands of individuals and families in Ottawa and Allegan counties. Stacey is a self-motivated innovator. She energetically pursued expansion of the program model at Disability Network/Lakeshore and did so with minimal support from others in the organization except for positive feedback on outcomes. While she developed the program and implemented it, she also wrote numerous successful grants to support the program.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Noelle M. Kasa, Master of Arts in English**

(B.A., Psychology and English, University of Michigan, 1998)

Noelle has served as a graduate assistant for two years and has made outstanding contributions to the program and to the profession. She has carried out her primary responsibility as editorial assistant for the Russell Kirk Center Newsletter with admirable efficiency, making the job of the editor an easy one. Noelle has an eye for effective page layout and expert ability with the design program. She is also adept as writer, editor, and proofreader. In addition to this primary responsibility, she has taken on many other tasks for the program and the university, including website design and maintenance, organization of the Shakespeare Festival student competition, and book orders for the library collection. Her work has produced significant benefits for the English M.A. Program, the university, and the profession.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

The Kirkhof College of Nursing (KCON) has selected two recipients of this year's Excellence in Service to the Community or Profession Award; one who exemplifies service to the profession of nursing and one who exemplifies service to the broader community.

❖ **Dennis A. Bertch, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

(M.S.N., Care of the Adult and Administration, Grand Valley State University, 1993)

Dennis Bertch, one of the two selected graduates who KCON feels demonstrates leadership in the nursing profession, truly has bridged the gap between practice and education. Employed as a community college executive, he holds much responsibility for the development of new nursing professionals. As a student, he lived the world of the nurse executive in practice, and merged concerns of both roles in his dissertation project. The project, *Quality and Safety Education in Nursing*, positioned his selected institution to plan its movement forward toward the strategic initiatives in the creation of a safety culture and instilling quality in nursing services. Dennis exhibits multiple characteristics of a dedicated leader in the nursing profession.

❖ **Kelli M. Damstra, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

(M.S.N., Nursing Administration, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, 2006)

Kelli has devoted her professional career to the care of women and their infants, and to providing education that puts family-centered care at the forefront of nursing concern. In pursuing the DNP, she added an emphasis on creation of environments that support families. She chose to work with a local hospital to achieve a “Baby-Friendly” designation (as defined by the World Health Organization/UNICEF and Baby-Friendly USA organization). This initiative required education of mothers and their family members, professionals in the community, as well as staff at the hospital. In addition, it required the hospital to examine and challenge policies and processes. Kelli was involved in all of these aspects of the initiative, as well as plans for continued actions in the community at large. Kelli is also an Affiliate Faculty of Nursing at GVSU.

**GRADUATE DEAN'S CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP & SERVICE TO GVSU
Fall 2012**

College of Community & Public Service

❖ **Michael J. Breon, Master of Health Administration**
(B.A., Communications, DePauw University, 2001)

Michael has played an active role in enriching the graduate student experience at GVSU through his leadership and support on many dimensions. Most notable has been his involvement with the creation and implementation of the Health Care Professional Graduate Alliance (HCPGA). As Marketing Director for Spectrum Health Continuing Care, he has also been an important recourse for enriching the MHA through referrals of leaders as adjunct faculty and guest speakers, connecting potential interns to opportunities within the Spectrum system, and letting current students know about openings in health administration. He has made a commitment to both his current classmates and to those who should be coming in the future by helping to enrich the content and experiences of the graduate students. Michael was also selected as a graduate student representative for the Office of Graduate Studies' Graduate Education Task Force.

❖ **Claire M. Harrison, Master of Public Administration**
(B.A., Liberal Studies, Grand Valley State University, 2006)

Claire has been particularly active in her service to GVSU and the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration. On Community Outreach Week of 2011, Claire organized 25 alumni, faculty and students from SPNHA to assist the Eastown Neighborhood Association in their neighborhood beautification project. She has also served as Communications Officer for the Graduate Student Association and has been a campaign volunteer with University Development. Since February 2011, Claire has been an Office Coordinator/Advisor with the Seidman College of Business Advising Services. She is also very active in GVSU Alumni activities.

**GRADUATE STUDENT
PRESIDENTIAL RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS**

Spring/Summer 2012

GEREAUX, Leon. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology-Aquatic Biology.
Title: *Earth's Eyes: A Time-Series Lake Observatory for Tracking Ecosystem Change*

GREEN, Josh. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology-Natural Resources Management.
Title: *American Marten (Martes americana) Habitat Suitability Analysis with Predicted Effects of Climate Change at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore*

HILLMAN, Tamara. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology-Natural Resources Management.
Title: *Population estimate of American marten in Michigan's Lower Peninsula using noninvasive hair snares*

MARTIN, Alynn. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Analyzing Population Limits and Gene Flow in Perimyotis subflavus with Application to White-Nnose Conservation*

NEAL, James. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Evaluating the Success of Wetland Mitigation along M-6*

SCHMIDT, Thomas. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Predictive niche modeling of pteridophyte community reestablishment in secondary forests of Puerto Rico*

TESTORI, Marian. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Cell and Molecular Biology.
Title: *The interaction of Mid1 and F-actin in the fission yeast, Schizosaccharomyces pombe*

ZHU, Huijing. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Cell and Molecular Biology.
Title: *Sleeping Beauties: Understanding the Contribution of the Late Embryogenesis Abundant Proteins to Survival in Dormant Orchid Seeds*

**GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD
OUTSTANDING FACULTY/STAFF MENTOR AWARD
Fall 2012**

❖ **Danielle Leek, Associate Professor of Communications**

Nominated by: Maisoon Al-sebaei , Master of Science in Communications and Ellen Zwarenstejn, Master of Science in Communications

Ellen writes: "At every level of my Master's education experience in the School of Communications, including an independent study, community and service learning projects, and with a special emphasis on my thesis, Dr. Leek has exemplified true mentorship in her dedication to my professional goals and personal growth.

Dr. Leek consistently provided opportunities for academic growth through her scholarship and commitment to academic excellence. Our work together focused on a highly specialized field within communication studies; an area where she is one of only a few in the Mid-West that could speak as a practitioner and scholar. Her questions and our mutual reflections guided me through the thesis process. Her approach to mentorship is always focused on my growth; she never just tells me what to do. "

Maisoon adds: "I recommend her with the very highest regard her creativity and personal character in teaching in that class. As an international student, I was hesitant to participate in class. Thus, she encouraged me to talk and express my opinion in front of my classmates by asking me direct questions about my culture and how can I compare it with the American culture in the business field. Also, she encouraged collaboration among students in the class by making workshops in the class, such as meetings and problem solving activities."

❖ **Debra Ross, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice**

Nominated by: Jacqueline Stevens, Master of Science in Criminal Justice

Jacqueline writes: "Immediately upon being invited into Dr. Ross's office, I felt both welcomed and inspired by her enthusiasm in assisting a prospective student. She asked me grounded, intuitive questions which opened up possibilities and avenues of choice within the MCJ curriculum as well as the field of criminal justice. Her intention was clearly to guide an interested and

possible candidate for the MCJ degree through a detailed overview of the program being considered. She was polite, respectful, interested, interesting, passionate, caring, engaging, and above all highly intelligent, knowledgeable, and professional.

I have never been so challenged yet so determined to succeed based in large measure on Dr. Ross's extraordinary gifts to get the best from each of her students. Her passion for the material is contagious. You cannot sit in her classroom and not be inspired to think and to learn. She uses a variety of approaches from lecture, to slides, to interactive learning, to dialogue. Time spent in her classroom is exciting and motivating. The class period is never dull and uninteresting. Her tone of voice and demeanor constantly keep students alert and on their toes. Above all, she challenges the students relentlessly from a desire to see them succeed to the greatest extent possible.

Throughout my life as a student, I have had a range of teachers. Most of them have been excellent, and some of them have been exceptional. I would put Dr. Ross at the top of the list. She brings together what is best about being a teacher and a mentor from every single perspective and criteria imaginable."

**GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD
KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD
Fall 2012**

The Graduate Student Association has created the Kimboko Award to recognize Grand Valley faculty who have made significant contributions in outstanding teaching, distinctive scholarship or creative work, or noteworthy service in moving GVSU graduate education toward being a more diverse and inclusive community. The award recognizes the accomplishments of Dr. Priscilla Kimboko, GVSU's first Dean of Graduate Studies, and represents her commitment to these values.

❖ **Cynthia Mader, Professor of Education**

Nominated by: Kris Cortez, Master of Education – Higher Education,
John Gipson, Master of Education – College Student Affairs Leadership,
Eric Stevens, Master of Education – College Student Affairs Leadership

Kris Cortez writes: "Dr. Mader did an incredible job providing instruction that challenged learners to examine personal and social lenses that affect the way education is implemented and students are perceived. She also established a learning environment that facilitated open discourse and invited students to voice opinions and arguments. The combination of the two provided the most critical discussions that I have participated in as a student at GVSU."

John Gipson adds: "Dr. Mader fostered a safe environment where all students could reflect critically on why education and society function as they do by fostering deep discussions regarding race, gender, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, and religious beliefs. She carefully tailored these discussions to not discriminate against any particular group of people or force individuals to believe a certain way of thinking is "right." Rather, these discussions allowed students to gain an understanding of who we are, where we came from, and who we want to be. The discussions also allowed us to appreciate the differing views within society; no two people seemed to have the exact beliefs. Such an appreciation of diversity is needed to function within our communities, professions, and within our role as educators."

Eric Stevens concludes: "In every single class Dr. Mader challenges the status quo. She creates an environment that encourages open discussion, and sometimes even heated argument, on issues like: culture, race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, religion, and sexual orientation in regards to our public school systems.

Dr. Mader is a strong and powerful advocate for the underrepresented in public schools. Also as Graduate Students, she does not allow us to stay on the fence with issues. She asks difficult questions pushing us towards bitter sweet introspective truths and discoveries. She opened my eyes to my place of privilege that I operate from, and how this privilege affects society."

The Office of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association both offer Dr. Mader congratulations on her successful career at GVSU and wish her well in her impending retirement.

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS FALL 2012**

President: Austin Dean, Business Administration

Vice President: Paul Jabaay, Business Administration

Communications Officer: Nathan Bair, Business Administration

Social Media: May Shabaka, Business Administration

Finance Officer: Renata Horvath, Public Administration

Administrative Officer: Timothy Ramnarine, Cell and Molecular Biology

Graduate Council Student Elected Representatives:

Paul Jabaay, Business Administration

Hilary Powsner, Business Administration

Advisors:

Steven Lipnicki, Assistant Dean of Students

Dr. John Stevenson, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

Michelle Burke, Student Life

GRADUATE COUNCIL OFFICERS FALL 2012

Chair:

Dr. Mark Luttenton, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Vice-Chair:

Dr. Aaron Lowen, Seidman College of Business

Policy Subcommittee Chair:

Dr. David Cannon, Seidman College of Business

Curriculum Subcommittee Chair:

Dr. Andrea Bostrom, Kirkhof College of Nursing



Dr. Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Dean of Graduate Studies

Dr. John R. Stevenson, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

Irene Fountain, Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Palm, Office Coordinator

Graduate Assistants:

Heather De Nio, Public Administration

Layna Edington, Taxation

Gayane Kabalyan, Computer Information Systems

Kelley Senkowski, Educational Technology

Student Assistant:

Destine Hatcher, Psychology (undergraduate)

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