GRADUATE STUDENT CELEBRATION

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION AWARDS FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Presented by The Graduate School in collaboration with the Graduate Student Association

DECEMBER 8, 2023

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School Citations for Academic Excellence

Fall 2023

Presented by The Graduate School
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in collaboration with the
Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Dear friends and members of our graduate education community,

At the end of each academic semester, we have the great pleasure to honor those students and faculty who have distinguished themselves in graduate education at Grand Valley State University. The Graduate School Citation Awards for Academic Excellence and the Graduate Student Association Faculty Awards are proud Grand Valley State University traditions that began in 2006 thanks to the combined efforts of the University Graduate Council and the Graduate Program Directors. The Graduate School and the Graduate Student Association serve as co-sponsors for this event.

The Graduate School Citation Awards recognize excellence in academic performance in several categories. Graduate students are nominated for these awards by staff or faculty members, advisors, graduate program directors, and departmental chairs or school directors. The Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School reviews the nominees and approves the final selection. Each recipient receives a certificate of recognition and a graduate honors cord. Additionally, the Graduate Student Association honors members of our graduate faculty who have distinguished themselves in mentoring and supporting our students at Grand Valley. Their noteworthy dedication helps to create a vibrant and engaged learning community.

Grand Valley State University is extremely proud of the accomplishments of these graduate students and graduate faculty members. I commend each of our award winners and wish them a very successful future.

Congratulations to all!

Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Ph.D., FACSM
Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School
Grand Valley State University

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Congratulations to the Fall 2023
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Congratulations to the Fall 2023
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GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN THE DEGREE PROGRAM
Fall 2023

Seidman College of Business

- **Jessica Henkel, Master of Business Administration**

  Jessica not only participated at a very high level, but she also brought in topics and concepts that were not considered in classes. Her ability to conceptually apply marketing material to her everyday life made her a fantastic contributor. Jessica was a pleasure to have in class, and her classmates would likely say the same thing. She helped to make this class interesting, and she was always respectful of other's perspectives and points of view. I had her in class shortly after we returned to face-to-face class meetings following COVID. Jessica's contributions helped to facilitate a return to normal through her engagement both with me and with her peers. Jessica's attention to detail allowed her to stand out not only in the classroom, but also in the online portions of the class, in writing assignments, and in presentations. She was able to bring her experience in the field into the classroom in a way that benefited all of us.

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **José Capeles, Master of Public Administration**

  José began the program in January 2020, a semester like none other. Despite many disruptions, José persisted through the program while balancing his family life and his work life with the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. His performance in the classroom and leadership in the community are outstanding. Moreover, his work experiences complement classroom discussion, linking theory and practice. José is regularly prepared for class and goes above and beyond to engage meaningfully in our discussions. He consistently demonstrates the will to learn, intellectual curiosity, and critical thinking in class and in his assignments.

- **Abbey Cook, Master of Health Administration**

  Abbey came to the MHA program immediately after completing her BS in Health Information Management. At the time of her acceptance into the MHA program, she was working at the GVSU Family Health Center and was encouraged to enroll in the MHA program by two FHC colleagues. Abbey has continued to work full-time throughout her full-time tenure as an MHA student, participating in a variety of student and professional activities, and maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Throughout her program, Abbey has been a role model for academic and professional excellence. She has brought together the qualities of intellectual curiosity and humility with thoroughness and completeness in her MHA program performance. Abbey has also brought a spirit of collegiality coupled with excellence as she has engaged in both classroom and team activities, always pulling her part and encouraging others to perform just a little better.

- **Colleen Hill, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**

  Colleen has demonstrated academic excellence by maintaining a high GPA and achieving high grades in her courses. However, beyond grades, Colleen has performed in outstanding ways within her coursework. Her thoughtful and conscientious persona led her to create meaningful experiences for students, specifically focused on small group instruction and providing feedback for student growth as readers and writers. Additionally, Colleen stood out while writing her master's project, demonstrating the thoughtful and excellent application of learning as she created interventions for upper elementary striving readers. Thus, we have looked to Colleen as a leader in our courses, and we see her as an emerging leader in the field. Colleen is a talented woman—a true asset to the field. Colleen's dedication to the education of students is obvious, as well as her commitment to her growth and learning.

- **Ashley Knaffle, Master of Education in School Counseling**

  Ashley has excelled in all aspects of her graduate student experience. She has consistently demonstrated her ability to apply academic information learned in the program in her day-to-day work in the role of a school counselor in her district. Her academic work exhibits scholarly knowledge, an ever-present quest for excellence, and attention to detail. Her passion for serving all

students rings true in both her written work and internship experiences. Ashley actively seeks feedback from supervisors which she can skillfully implement to better serve her students. As a distance learner, she sought connections and relationships with her instructors and classmates. She was also seen as a leader by her peers which was evidenced in group work. She advocates for herself and the profession of school counseling. Ashley was hired by Cheboygan Public Schools where she has worked while completing her 600-hour internship. Her effectiveness in working with students in individual, small group, and classroom settings is evidenced in all she does.

- **Rueben Riley, Master of Education in Educational Leadership**

  With great enthusiasm, I nominate Rueben Riley for the Academic Excellence Award. Rueben is an exceptional student who has consistently demonstrated a remarkable commitment to academic achievement throughout his time in the educational leadership program. He has maintained an outstanding academic record, earning a cumulative GPA of 4.0. He has consistently challenged himself with exemplary responses in the coursework. In addition to his strong grades, Rueben is a dedicated and passionate learner who is always eager to explore new ideas and concepts. Beyond his academic achievements, Rueben is also a well-rounded individual who is active in his professional community. He is the student life coordinator and a varsity coach in his school district. In these roles, he has demonstrated his leadership skills by serving the stakeholders of his school community. Rueben is a true inspiration to his colleagues in the ed leadership program and at his school. More importantly, he is a role model for the young students at his school. He is known for his kindness, compassion, and fair treatment of all students.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- **Scott Hanson, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**

  Since starting the Applied Computer Science program in Fall 2019, Scott has maintained an incredible 4.0 GPA. In addition to his academic achievements, Scott works on open-source software to run Christmas lights, and he took part in setting up the Gilmore Car Museum drive-through light show. The faculty describes him as "excellent" and a "great student". Scott is certainly

worthy of recognition, and the faculty considers him an exemplar who represents GVSU very well.

- **David Pearson, Master of Science in Health Informatics**

  David is an A student; he was always among the best in class. The most challenging part of those classes was a group project, where David had to team up with a student with a technical background. One of the goals of these projects is to learn how to communicate and collaborate with a partner from a different background. For students with a life science background like David, it also helps to get an in-depth insight into the field of computing and statistics. David mastered the projects and their challenges without difficulties. David has continuously exemplified excellence throughout his time as a graduate student. David easily mastered projects and worked with group members very well. Projects of his stood out among students due to his obvious persistence and quality of work. His organization and listening skills were among some of his most admirable and outstanding qualities as a student. David has maintained a positive attitude in everything that he does.

- **Joshua Veldheer, Master of Science in Engineering**

  Joshua is one of those students who is constantly asking the question, "Why?". He is always seeking the theory behind any equation he uses and finding deeper meaning in his work. This talent is what led to his enormous success as a graduate student, achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA in his graduate studies and completing his Master's Project with very little guidance. Joshua's talents extend beyond engineering. He was in my EGR 302, Engineering Decision-Making in Society class where he consistently contributed thoughtful and meaningful additions to discussions of philosophy and ethics as they relate to engineering practice. Joshua was very well respected by his co-op employer, Magna Mirrors, where he consistently received excellent ratings. His supervisor said of him, "Josh's work ethic is excellent. He is a good worker, on time, very smart, no need to tell twice."

College of Health Professions

- **Autumn Cannon, Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology**

  In addition to maintaining a 4.0 GPA during her graduate program, Autumn has been an outstanding representative of our program. During her time in the program, she presented her research work at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Convention for two consecutive years and earned 2nd place at the 2023 GVSU 3-Minute Thesis competition. She also was voted "People's Choice" at the same competition. She is also a strong clinician as evidenced by regularly receiving high praise for her clinical performance from preceptors. Autumn has consistently demonstrated excellent clinical, academic, and research skills.

- **Terese Feldpausch, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy**

  Terese excels in the classroom and her fieldwork placements, but she is also a leader in our traditional cohort. Terese currently holds a 3.97 GPA, serves as the co-president of Pi Theta Epsilon (the occupational therapy honor society), is an active member of Pi Theta Epsilon, and has volunteered her time to help with departmental events such as sHaPe Camp. She is always professional and positive in her interactions with faculty and other students.

- **Jenna Kesh, Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

  Jenna started as a very strong student in the program, achieving high academic marks in her first semester. She continued this level of greatness throughout the program, performing at a very high level in all aspects of the program, which include traditional lecture style courses, hands on laboratory courses, small group discussion courses, and especially in her clinical courses. Jenna has proven that not only does she have outstanding medical knowledge, but she also possesses great compassion, professionalism, and interpersonal skills to deliver high-quality health care to her future patients. Because of her inquisitive nature, she is not satisfied with just memorizing facts, but really tries to critically think about the complexity of medical practice.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Faith Kuzma, Master of Science in Biology**

  Faith has been an exceptional graduate student—not just academically with a 4.0 GPA—but also in terms of her willingness and ability to mentor incoming graduate students in Biology. Multiple students have noted that Faith serves as an effective sounding board for (i) statistical consulting, (ii) advice on coursework and thesis FAQs, and (iii) an important peer mentor with respect to strategies for flourishing in graduate school. In addition, she serves as an officer in the Biology MS Student Club. All faculty instructors who have had the pleasure of having Faith in their classes have commented on her passion for the class, and her outstanding academic performance in a variety of different class assignments that include statistical programming & data analysis, field ecology, herpetology, and dissemination (scientific writing and public speaking).

- **Hannah Taylor, Master of Science in Communications**

  Hannah exhibits a level of mastery of the subject matter that is rare among graduate students nationally. Her academic performance has been superlative and, in every situation, far exceeds the expectations of the program. She is graduating with a 4.00 GPA. Not only does Hannah possess a remarkable reading knowledge relevant to the field of communication, but she skillfully and successfully applies conceptual principles to practical communication problem-solving situations—the hallmark of true excellence in the Master of Science in Communication program. Hannah's pursuit of graduate education speaks to the heart of her character, as that of an individual who is deeply passionate about education and committed to learning.

- **Eléna Tislerics, Master of Science in Cell & Molecular Biology**

  Eléna has great intellectual curiosity, strong analytical skills, and a work ethic. Eléna has completed both the master's degree as well as the graduate certificate in Bioinformatics and Genomics, demonstrating a breadth of interests and equal aptitude for both experimental and computational work in cell and molecular biology. She worked well both independently and as part of a team, communicated with clarity, and always sought to fully master the topics and skills in her classes. She has presented different aspects of her

work at GVSU at three conferences, including the 2022 Great Lakes Beaches Association Conference where a poster she co-authored won first prize. In all of her graduate work, as a student, as an intern, and as an employee, Eléna has been thoughtful, and thorough, seeing both details and a broad context, and making scientific connections between topics and courses.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS
Fall 2023

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Davis Fray, Master of Science in Biology**
  - **Thesis Title:** Characterizing biodiversity and interspecific interactions of microbial mat communities in low-oxygen, high-sulfur springs of Michigan and Florida
  - **Thesis Committee:** Dr. Sarah Hamsher (Chair) – Biology Department, Dr. Bopaiah Biddanda – Robert Annis Water Resources Institute, and Dr. Dale Casamatta – Biology Department

Davis's research involved a detailed description of the taxonomy of algae in two low-oxygen/high-sulfur spring environments in Michigan and Florida. This is an extension of his field experience through working for a fish hatchery and an environmental consulting firm conducting stream surveys. He personally traveled to Florida and worked with a collaborator's lab for this and other projects. Throughout this project, he overcame multiple roadblocks. While preparing for the thesis, Davis also supervised three undergraduate students in designing and conducting a study relating to his findings. This will be combined with his manuscript in a publication submission to the Hydrobiologia Journal. Davis' work in the lab and the field is exceptional. He presented his findings at four conferences, submitted one manuscript, and is working on a second publication. His dedication and passion for aquatic environments will surely serve him many successes in the future.

Davis's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Extreme aquatic habitats, such as low-oxygen, high-sulfur springs, can harbor stratified microbial mat communities similar to those that oxygenated Earth's atmosphere ~ 3 BYA. This thesis aims to describe the microbial mat communities of five low-oxygen, high-sulfur springs in Michigan and Florida and investigate the interactions among two strains of cyanobacteria (both Anagnostidinema) and two diatoms (Craticula cuspidata and Nitzschia palea) cultured from these mats. The goals of Chapter II of this thesis were to: 1) compare water parameters and microbial mat community diversity between four springs in Michigan and one in Florida; 2) document the Bacteria, Archaea, and diatom communities using multi-marker metabarcoding supplemented by a culture-based DNA reference database; and 3) explore whether environmental characteristics and/or geographic distance drive any differences observed. Diverse and significantly different ($P < 0.001$) mat communities were revealed at each site. Community differences showed a greater correlation with geographic distance ($r = 0.6022$) than environmental variables ($r = 0.4621$) although both effects were significant ($P < 0.001$). Therefore, dispersal limitation as well as water parameters likely drive the differences between microbial mat communities of sulfur springs.

In Chapter III, four cultured mat microbes including two strains of Anagnostidinema (ANA1 and ANA2) and two diatoms, Craticula cuspidata (Cr) and Nitzschia palea (Ni), from the Middle Island Sinkhole were grown in a controlled experiment using a full-factorial design to investigate interspecific interactions between mat community members. Although most crosses showed limited interactions, ANA1 increased in abundance when grown in co-culture with Cr compared to ANA1 alone and with other strains ($P < 0.0001$). Additionally, Ni growth was significantly reduced when grown with ANA1 or ANA2 ($P = 0.0040$). Therefore, the metabolic capabilities of C. cuspidata may benefit some cyanobacteria, and cyanobacteria may inhibit N. palea growth via interference competition. However, these relationships are not reflected in the community composition of mats in situ based on metabarcoding studies (Chapter II), indicating these interactions may allow species to survive in low abundance in an otherwise unfavorable habitat, or other environmental controls are important to mat

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- **Bibash Lama, Master of Science in Engineering**
  - **Thesis Title:** Enhancing Human Key Point Identification: A Comparative Study of High-Resolution VICON Dataset and COCO Dataset Using BPNET
  - **Thesis Committee:** Dr. Yunju Lee (Chair) – School of Engineering, Dr. Jaerock Kwon – School of Engineering, and Dr. Sunghwan Joo – School of Engineering

Bibash's exciting thesis work makes it possible to acquire 3D motion capture data for biomechanical analysis outside the laboratory. This will expand our options to study human body movement. The early research result was presented at the American Society of Biomechanics this past summer. Currently, his work is under review in the international, peer-reviewed, and open-access journal Sensors. His findings will no doubt carry the potential of significant contributions to the field. Beyond the paper, Bibash was also a remarkable student, excelling in both theoretical and applied engineering courses. He always strived to go the extra mile, embodying the very essence of academic excellence.

Bibash's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Accurately identifying human key points is crucial for various applications, including activity recognition, pose estimation, and gait analysis. This study presents a high-resolution dataset created using the VICON motion capture system and three differently oriented 2D cameras, that can be used to train different neural networks for estimating the 2D key joint positions of the person from the 2D images or videos. The participants in the study included 25 healthy adults (17 males and 8 females) performing normal gait movements for about 2 to 3 seconds. The VICON system captured 3D ground truth data, while the three 2D cameras collected images from different perspectives (0°, 45°, and 90°). The dataset was used to train the Body Pose Network (BPNET), a popular neural network model developed by NVIDIA TAO. For comparison, another BPNET model was trained using the COCO 2017 (Common Objects in Context) dataset, a state-of-the-art dataset with more than 118,000 annotated images. Results demonstrate that the proposed dataset achieved significantly higher accuracy compared to the COCO 2017 dataset, despite containing only one-fourth of the number of images than the COCO 2017 dataset. This reduction in data size resulted in improved computational efficiency during model training. Moreover, the proposed dataset's unique focus on gait and its precise prediction of key joint positions during normal gait movements set it apart from other existing datasets. Potential applications of this study include person identification based on gait features, noninvasive detection of player concussions through temporal analysis in sports activities, and identification of pathologic gait patterns. The proposed dataset shows promise for further accuracy enhancements with the incorporation of additional data.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING FINAL PROJECT
Fall 2023

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Katie O'Dell, Master of Education in Special Education**
  - **Project Title: "**Building a Community of Inclusion Through Peer Mentoring: A Framework"

Katie's project is notable because of the high quality of her writing, the importance of her topic, and the impact it has had on the lives of the students with whom she teaches. For her Master's Project, Katie chose to focus on peer mentoring, an evidence-based practice used to meaningfully include students with intellectual disability within the general education classroom. In her incredibly well-written Chapter 1, Katie offers a compelling rationale for including students with intellectual disability within the general education classroom and how peer mentoring can be used to benefit both students with and without disabilities. To ensure special education teachers and administrators can begin their peer mentoring programs, Katie developed a clear protocol, created original materials, and shared resources from GVSU's Peer to Peer START Project. Notably, Katie uses the knowledge gained from this project and the resources she created in her day-to-day role as a special education teacher.

Katie's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Students with intellectual disability (ID) are prone to low quality of life (Robinson & Idle, 2023), impeded social lives, loneliness (Emerson et al., 2021; Robinson & Idle, 2023), and an education that doesn't challenge them to the degree they are capable (Carter et al., 2016; Malone et al., 2019). A low-cost, highly effective, and mutually beneficial practice that can address these issues is peer mentoring (Malone et al., 2019; Travers & Carter, 2022a; Vasileiadis et al., 2021). Training general education students on how to effectively partner, engage, and build relationships with students with ID also improves school climate and has shown remarkable results in improving student attendance, behaviors, and grades (Owen et al., 2022; Travers & Carter, 2022a). Further, teachers are able to work more effectively and efficiently in the classroom as this program provides support to students with ID in a more age-appropriate manner. This project stresses the necessity of providing teachers with proper training for a peer mentoring program while providing an adaptable framework that can be tailored to the unique needs of students within their classroom. The project stems from a theoretical framework and provides a platform from which a peer mentoring program should be viewed, developed, and implemented. The framework includes a step-by-step approach to development, implementation, evaluation, and reflection.

- **Erika Scheu, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**
  - **Project Title: "**Grammar Instruction Embedded Within Writing Instruction in the Secondary ELA Classroom"

Erika performed in outstanding ways within her coursework, specifically writing/creating an outstanding final project. Research indicates that students in the United States are underperforming in writing, often due to limited grammar skills. Thus, Erika examined the research supporting grammar instruction as part of the writing process. Synthesizing the research, Erika created a writing unit for 11th and 12th grade students that includes a genre-based framework for writing, along with directed writing instruction on sentence combining and building students' metalanguage to articulate their understanding of grammatical choices and their effect on a text's rhetorical purpose. The unit Erika created is detailed, thorough, and applicable; she is currently implementing it in her classroom.

ABSTRACT

Available research indicates that American students are underperforming in the area of writing. Grammar is the foundation of the English language, so it follows that an understanding of the language system is inherent in the act of writing. Grammar instruction, however, has been largely absent from American ELA classrooms for the past half century. This project examines the research which supports grammar instruction as part of the writing process and synthesizes the most promising research findings into a writing unit for 11th and 12th grade students. This unit includes a genre-based framework for instruction, directed writing, sentence combining, and instructional methods and resources to build students' metalanguage to articulate their understanding of grammatical choices and their effect on a text's rhetorical purpose.

College of Health Professions

- **Sarah Corder, Spencer Jackson, Alayna Kagande, Allison Range, and Lydia Stout, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy**
  - **Project Title: "**Reliability of the Corbett Targeted Coin Test"

Sarah, Spencer, Alayna, Allison, and Lydia have demonstrated excellence in this project from initial design, literature review, data analysis (independent statistics that included Interclass correlations), and a well-written final manuscript with an eloquent defense. The students were able to collect, analyze, and report data that established inter-rater reliability, intra-rater reliability, and test-retest reliability of a new hand therapy assessment, the Corbett Targeted Coin Test. This research has not been completed anywhere else and promises to be a significant contribution to the profession of hand therapy, dexterity literature, and clinical practice. This outstanding project has been submitted as a poster presentation to the national meeting, of the American Occupational Therapy Association in April, and will be submitted for publication in the Journal of Hand Therapy.

Their abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Study Design: Clinical Measurement

Introduction: Manual dexterity is important for performing many daily functional activities. The Corbett Targeted Coin Test (CTCT) measures aspects of dexterity that are not currently measured by most other assessments, including palm-to-finger translation and proprioceptive target placement. The CTCT has prior established normative data but lacks established inter-rater reliability, intra-rater reliability, and test-retest reliability.

Purpose of the Study: To determine inter-rater reliability, intra-rater reliability, and test-retest reliability of the CTCT.

Methods: The inclusion criteria consisted of participants who were over 18 years of age, non-institutionalized, community-dwelling, able to complete active fist closure, and able to perform finger-to-palm translation of 20 coins. Subjects (n=27) were tested by two trained researchers for inter-rater reliability. The same two researchers and subjects completed the test for intra-rater reliability with a five-minute break between trials CTCT standardized testing procedures. A second group of subjects (n=16) completed the test with a third researcher for test-retest reliability with one week between trials to limit practice effects. Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC) were used to determine the inter-rater, intra-rater, and test-retest reliability of the CTCT.

Results: Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC) results demonstrated good intra-rater reliability (r = .81 and .82 D, and r =.78 ND), good inter-rater reliability (r= .99 and 1.00 D, and .99 and 1.00 ND), and moderate test-retest reliability (r = .54 D and .50 ND**).**

Discussion: When compared to other standardized dexterity assessments, the CTCT demonstrated comparable inter-rater reliability (r =0.98 to 0.99) intra-rater reliability (0.68 to 0.99) and test/retest reliability (r= 0.37 to 0.99).

Conclusion: Therapists can be confident in the reliability of using the CTCT when evaluating and monitoring patient dexterity with palm-to-finger translation and proprioceptive target placement.

Key Words: Hand, Motor Skills, Proprioception, Psychometrics, Fingers

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- **George Ebeling, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**
  - **Project Title: "**Automated Chess Board"

Specifically, George has created a chess board that can both automatically sense the location of pieces and move pieces. This allows for physical chess play against not only physically present players but also artificial intelligence engines and remote players. The chess board is not limited to interactive chess matches but can also play both sides of previous matches – including famous matches – and present chess puzzles to users. This project exemplifies an exceptional project by leveraging both George's existing undergraduate knowledge and graduate knowledge in a culminating deliverable that is not only technically impressive, but assessable and visually engaging. The level of effort required is well beyond the standard project expectations.

ABSTRACT

The game of chess is simple to understand, but difficult to master. Traditional methods for studying chess involve setting up a chess board to slowly work through chess books, to study one's previous games, or to study the games played by chess grand masters. Modern digital chess tools are excellent for helping identify mistakes and explore better alternative ideas. Each practice has limitations: traditional practices lack the accuracy of modern tools, and modern practices fail to prepare a student for playing at a physical board. With a chess board that moves the pieces itself, the traditional experience of sitting in front of a physical chess board can be combined with modern study tools. Using a Raspberry Pi, a 2D positioning system, an electromagnet, and a display, such a chess board was built.

- **Rebecca Gonser, Master of Science in Engineering**
  - **Project Title: "**The Effects of Adding PMSM Dynamics in the ABC-Frame to a Kalman Filter for Estimation of Aircraft Flap Speed and Position"

Rebecca's project was done in partnership with Eaton Corp with the goal of developing new systems to be implemented in the new generation of commercial aircraft. Her final report is superbly written, and the work is relevant to the current state of the art. If it was not protected under NDA, her work would be ideal for dissemination in an IEEE Transactions journal; however, it did result in the creation of significant IP (intellectual property), and Eaton is in the process of pursuing a patent based on Becca's work. To be successful in this work, Becca needed to learn new techniques on a variety of topics common for PhD level course work. Her project successfully accomplished something that had never been attempted before and was so challenging that it took the collective knowledge of her committee to sufficiently guide her. While there are publicly available academic solutions to the problem she was working on, she was able to work within real-world constraints that made the project much more challenging and required for aviation safety. Her ability to see the big picture, independently seek out needed information, and try new techniques is truly superb.

Rebecca's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

In aerospace, there is a movement toward More Electric Aircraft (MEA). Electric motors are beginning to take the place of traditional hydraulic systems. With this movement comes the need to accurately estimate the speed and position of the motor so that proper control may be maintained. The existing solution implemented by Eaton Aerospace utilizes a Kalman filter with a constant acceleration model. Through the use of sensor fusion, a very accurate position estimate is output from the filter.
The research presented in this report studies the effectiveness of including motor dynamics in the Kalman filter. With a more descriptive system dynamics model, it was hypothesized that the filter should have a faster response to speed changes and result in a more accurate position estimate under more dynamic speed and load inputs. Several challenges presented themselves during the research process. First, the motor dynamics for a permanent magnet synchronous motor had to be linearized for use in the Kalman filter. Second, because of the system setup, the Kalman filter had to be developed in the natural abc-frame of reference rather than the traditional direct-quadrature frame.

The results of this research were mixed. Dynamic loads and reference speed inputs were applied to the system and significant improvements in the flap speed estimate were achieved using the new design. Limitations of the speed response were also identified and discussed. No improvements were observed for the flap position. It was concluded that this was a result of using the same measurement scheme for both designs, which directly measures position. Measurement noise was the dominant contribution to position error, meaning it is a property of the system rather than something that can be solved through a more accurate system dynamics model. Finally, areas for future improvement or development were identified.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Joseph Tekelly, Master of Science in Communications**
  - **Project Title: "**M&M's, Mars Wrigley, and Reputation Management: A Case Study"

Joseph (Joe) explores in detail Mars Wrigley's public relations crisis concerning their "spokes candies" product. In his case study, Joe reveals how Mars Wrigley was able to successfully utilize one of the biggest public relations platforms in the world—the Super Bowl—to emerge on the other side of the controversy in a stronger brand position. Through careful analysis, Joe points out that a new public relations strategy had emerged—the "Trend Jacking" strategy of crisis management. This case study demonstrates that Trend Jacking was successful for the long-term health of Mars Wrigley and the M&M's brand and could be applied to other, similar, corporate public relations crises. This is a complex, multi-step project that is sophisticated in its scope and is at the forefront of research in the communication field.

Joseph's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

M&M's anthropomorphized "spokescandies" recently ignited a public relations situation for its global parent company Mars Wrigley. While the controversy is most often described as a political stunt initiated at one end of America's political spectrum, this case study provides a template for how Mars Wrigley successfully navigated the early days of a potentially viral public relations crisis and emerged from the situation in a stronger market position. Through analysis of corporate press releases, Twitter, and other social media platforms, the M&M's public relations crisis is charted from inception through the waves of backlash that resulted from a 2022 rebranding effort and the subsequent firestorm led by former Fox News host Tucker Carlson. The online backlash created a situation rife with danger and opportunity for Mars Wrigley. The steps the company took, including hinting at a possible retirement for its longstanding spokescandies, provide a potential roadmap for corporations who find themselves in similarly politically-charged public relations controversies.

M&M's was able to successfully utilize one of the biggest public relations platforms in the world, the Super Bowl, to further its efforts to emerge on the other side of the controversy In a strong position as a brand. Through careful analysis, a new and potentially exciting public relations strategy has been discovered. M&M's ability to control the narrative of the crisis throughout has given rise to the "Trend Jacking" strategy of crisis management. Further research will analyze if this strategy has broader applications for the public relations industry, but for now, this case study certainly indicates that "Trend Jacking" was successful for the long term health of Mars Wrigley and the M&M's brand.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION
Fall 2023

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- **Daniel Dietsche, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**
  - **Publication Title:** Divide-and-Conquer Algorithms for Computing Three-Dimensional Voronoi Diagrams

Daniel has pushed forward the boundary in the field of computer science with his work, "Divide-and-Conquer Algorithms for Computing Three-Dimensional Voronoi Diagrams". He implemented two novel algorithms more advanced than the traditional approach and compared the execution speeds empirically across possible diagrams. To get here, Daniel formulated theoretical material, implemented code based on such idea, and then measured his solution against existing solutions in the field. He expanded the applicability from limited models of planar surfaces to true three-dimensional representation, and his work can be used in flight controls, space flight, and more. Daniel was published in the 2023 IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) International Conference on Electro Information Technology (eIT). His work will no doubt provide incredible value to academics and industrial professionals.

ABSTRACT

While Voronoi diagrams are used in a wide range of applications, leading algorithms (e.g., Fortune's algorithm) are limited to two-dimensional Voronoi diagrams. Problematically, many of the space-dividing applications of Voronoi diagrams exist in three-dimensional spaces rather than two-dimensional spaces. While two-dimensional Voronoi diagrams have been used in cases where three-dimensional space can be simplified to two-dimensional space with an acceptable loss of precision, such simplification is not always feasible. In this paper we extend existing work on divide-and-conquer algorithms for computing two-dimensional discretized Voronoi diagrams by introducing and comparing two novel algorithms for calculating three-dimensional discretized Voronoi diagrams. A comparison of the two algorithms is presented for a

Michael Doran, Master of Science in Engineering

- **Publication Title:** Embedded Virtualization on RISC-V with SEL4

Michael's paper, "Embedded Virtualization on RISC-V with SEL4", won the Best Paper Award at the IEEE UEMCON 2023. His publication was based on his graduate work that made novel use of hardware design for a variety of applications. With his background in design modeling, design methods, digital systems synthesis, and microprocessors, Michael utilized the latest software opportunities to carry out his cutting-edge research. He is described as an outstanding student, one who is dedicated to his education, as well as being able to work in harmony with others. His ambitiousness and self-motivation amplify his excellent oral and written communication skills.

ABSTRACT

Embedded virtualization is a key enabler for system designers to meet SWaP-C requirements for mission critical systems that execute various military, aerospace, medical, and commercial applications. The demand is now on the software designer to implement high assurance software that can reliably satisfy safety and time critical requirements. This article presents the first public implementation of the formally proven microkernel, seL4, on the RISC-V hypervisor using H-extension v0.6.1. This implementation uses the Rocketchip softcore executing in the FPGA fabric of a Zynq

- **Nathan Dugener, Master of Science in Biology**
  - **First Publication Title:** Running out of oxygen: Revealing the interannual and intra-annual dynamics of bottom water hypoxia in a Great Lakes estuary
  - **Co-Authors:** Weinke, A.D., Stone, I.P., and Biddanda, B.A.
  - **Second Publication Title:** Out of oxygen: Stratification and loading drove hypoxia during a warm, wet, and productive year in a Great Lakes estuary
  - **Co-Authors:** Weinke, A.D., Stone, I.P., and Biddanda, B.A.

Nathan's research on lake hypoxia was influential and ground-breaking, leading to not one but two separate publications in Hydrobiologia, The International Journal of Aquatic Sciences, and the Journal of Great Lakes Research. He carried out his thesis work intersecting water quality, climate change, and society. The quality of his written thesis and defense presentation received unanimously high commendations from the thesis committee. The two chapters were published under the free open-access model, and have received more than 2000 views, including a handful of citations demonstrating their potential. Nathan's dedication extends beyond scholarship and into outreach and service. His well-rounded tenure at Grand Valley makes him a model graduate, an unofficial ambassador for the program, and an emerging leader in the environmental science profession. Nathan is currently working as the On-Scene Coordinator at the Office of Emergency Response at Illinois EPA, Chicago, and hopes to pursue a rewarding career protecting our nation's natural resources.

Nathan's abstracts appear on the next pages.

ABSTRACT 1

Hypolimnetic hypoxia is expanding globally due to anthropogenic eutrophication and climate warming. Muskegon Lake, a Great Lakes estuary, experiences annually recurring hypoxia, impairing ecological, social, and economic benefits. Using high-frequency, time-series Muskegon Lake Observatory (MLO) data, we quantified the dynamics of hypoxia and developed a hypoxia severity index to estimate the spatiotemporal extent of hypoxia during 2011–2021. We also analyzed United States Geological Survey's temperature and discharge data on the Muskegon River to explain the annual variability in the hypoxia severity index. Severe hypoxia occurred in warmer years with greater stratification, fewer wind mixing events, warmer winter river temperatures, and less winter and spring precipitation, as in 2012 and 2021. Conversely, milder hypoxia was prevalent in colder years with a later stratification onset, more mixing events, colder river temperatures, and more winter and spring precipitation, as in 2015 and 2019. Thus, knowledge of environmental conditions prior to the onset of stratification may be useful for predicting the potential severity of hypoxia for any year. While consistent multi-year trends in hypoxia were not discernible, our findings suggest that temperature and precipitation are major drivers of hypoxia and that as surface waters warm, it will lead

ABSTRACT 2

Hypolimnetic hypoxia, or low oxygen in bottom waters, impairs ecosystem services of freshwater lakes and estuaries globally. Both hypoxia incidence and intensity are increasing around the world due to eutrophication and climate change. As the hypolimnion becomes hypoxic and ultimately anoxic, sediment-bound legacy phosphorus is released. Water column mixing due to large storm events or fall turnover entrains these nutrients to the surface, causing harmful algal blooms. To assess the dynamics of hypoxia throughout the growing season, we evaluated Muskegon Lake, where hypoxia recurs annually, utilizing high-frequency time-series data from the Muskegon Lake Observatory (MLO) buoy (https://www.gvsu.edu/wri/buoy/), biweekly nutrient sampling, and seasonal respiration experiments during 2021. While water-column stratification set the stage for hypolimnetic hypoxia, frequent wind-mixing events, and episodic intrusions of cold, oxygenated, upwelled Lake Michigan waters intermittently reduced the thickness or intensity of the hypoxic zone. Respiration experiments revealed that riverine and surface organic matter inputs contributed most to hypolimnetic hypoxia in the spring, whereas surface inputs did so during summer, and riverine inputs during fall, indicating seasonally variable sources drive hypoxia. Biweekly measurements indicated increased soluble reactive phosphorus in the hypolimnion during anoxia via internal phosphorus loading from the sediment with the potential for fueling surface blooms with net export of soluble reactive phosphorus and total phosphorus to nearshore Lake Michigan. Our findings on the role of seasonally changing temperature, loading, phytoplankton production, hypolimnetic respiration, and internal phosphorus loading in shaping hypoxia dynamics have relevance to similarly afflicted ecosystems in the Great Lakes Basin. Severe hypoxia occurred in warmer years with greater stratification, fewer wind mixing events, warmer winter river temperatures, and less winter and spring precipitation, as in 2012 and 2021. Conversely, milder hypoxia was prevalent in colder years with a later stratification onset, more mixing events, colder river temperatures, and more winter and spring precipitation, as in 2015 and 2019. Thus, knowledge of environmental conditions prior to the onset of stratification may be useful for predicting the potential severity of hypoxia for any year. While consistent multi-year trends in hypoxia were not discernible, our findings suggest that temperature and precipitation are major drivers of hypoxia and that as surface

- **Sarah Madinatu Hassan, Master of Social Work**
  - **Publication Title:** Children Have Faced Several Challenges: Analyzing Reports of Children Who Became Orphans Caused by COVID-19

Even though Sarah has only been in the United States since Fall 2021 for her Master of Social Work degree, she has authored and co-authored three journal articles and four peer-reviewed academic conference presentations. Sarah took a qualitative analysis of orphans with her work, "Children Have Faced Several Challenges: Analyzing Reports of Children Who Became Orphans Caused by COVID-19". Not stopping here, she has been extensively engaging in ongoing scholarly activities relating to the link between mental health and mass violence incidents, and nutritional outcomes in senior centers. Both of these are expected to result in additional authored journal articles. Sarah is no doubt an excellent representative of Grand Valley's graduate education.

ABSTRACT

Many children have become orphans due to COVID-19. Their experiences have been under reported due to focus on other areas. This study explores adverse social consequences of children who became orphans due to COVID-19. With the aid of a documentary review approach, this study extracts and analyzes reports from 11 highly ranked news reporting sites in the United States of America that contained expert opinions and narratives on the negative social consequences of being orphaned by COVID-19. Analysis of data followed the narrative thematic analysis procedure. The outstanding themes identified are the loss of caregivers and primary social support system, and increased risk of mental health concerns. The findings demonstrate the need for emergency financial support for COVID-19 related orphaned children and the involvement of experts trained in Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavior Therapies (TF-

- **Shannon Metzger, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy**
  - **Publication Title:** Occupational Therapists' Perceptions on Addressing Spirituality: A Cross Sectional Survey
  - **Co-Authors:** Jeanine Beasley, Jordan Marheineke, Amy Stites, Amy Riley, and Christine Byam

Shannon's work, "Occupational Therapists' Perceptions on Addressing Spirituality: A Cross Sectional Survey", has been accepted for publication in the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy. With this group project, with interdisciplinary faculty on the committee, she was the primary author and saw the paper through several revisions. She also had the opportunity to present the manuscript at the annual meeting of the American Occupational Therapy Association in Kansas City, MO, this past spring. Shannon has a passion for the field and persistence in the publication process. She is a model student of the Occupational Science and Therapy department.

ABSTRACT

Occupational Therapy (OT) was founded as a holistic profession that addresses the mind, body, and spirit. Research indicates that occupational therapists feel uncomfortable incorporating spirituality into practice This study aimed to identify perceptions of OT practitioners in addressing the spiritual needs of their clients. A cross-sectional Qualtrics survey was adapted from the Religious/Spiritually Integrated Practice Assessment Scale (RSIPAS). The survey was electronically sent out by several professional OT organizations. It was sent to occupational therapists and OT assistants to obtain their perspective of incorporating spirituality in practice. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis was completed. 46 of the 52 participants that completed the Likert scale items on the survey were open to learning about spiritual beliefs that differ from their own. 97% of participants believed incorporating spirituality can improve client outcomes and achieve goals; 95% could address unfamiliar beliefs; and >90% that it was essential to address clients' spiritual beliefs. Qualitative themes involving barriers to spiritual implementation included: too little time, lack of education, and workplace integration complications. Although spirituality is accepted as part of the OT process, there are a multitude of barriers that impact the feasibility and inclusion of spirituality in

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION
Fall 2023

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Narelle Hickmon, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**

  Narelle has been invaluable in her Cold Case Investigation class, working with other students, the Michigan State Police, and in the investigations and administrative requirements in working on actual cold cases from our 6th district. Narelle has led presentations beyond Grand Valley in partnership with Michigan State Police 6th District at the Michigan State Sociological Association Conference, and she will continue to present at the International American Society of Criminology. Narelle has also worked as a Marine Deputy in Berrien County, which further speaks to her dedication to the community's safety and well-being. Additionally, Narelle serves as the finance officer in the Graduate Student Association, and she has informed many students in the criminal justice program about the resources that the GSA and The Graduate School offer.

- **Kayla Poma, Master of Social Work**

  During her time at Grand Valley State University, Kayla has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to the well-being of others. Her tireless efforts extend beyond the GVSU campus, as she actively engages in community service and goes above and beyond in her professional endeavors. Kayla's service to the community is best exemplified by her work with children in public schools and her outstanding contributions at Wellspring Lutheran Services. In her internships, she has provided critical case management services to children, their placement families, and their biological parents. Her dedication to ensuring the well-being and safety of children in need is truly inspirational. Kayla's passion for advocating for youth is evident in her unwavering commitment to these vulnerable individuals. Her genuine concern for the welfare of children and her determination to provide them with a voice in society are qualities that set her apart. She truly believes that today's youth is the future of our nation, and she works tirelessly to protect and advocate for them.

- **Monica Patton, Master of Health Administration**

  Monica began her career as a radiation therapist in 2011 and has progressively moved into more responsible leadership roles through the past 13 years and past 5 years in the MHA program. As Monica moved into leadership positions, she recognized her need for leadership training to become the best leader possible in her cancer treatment center. In addition to being a part-time MHA student, she has maintained an active family and work schedule and actively participated in her profession serving in the Society of Radiation Oncology Administrators and American Registry of Radiation Technologists (Board Certified). In addition to the above activities, in the past 5 months, she has participated in the State of Michigan CON MRT Workgroup and Michigan Radiation Oncology Quality Consortium as well as three other professional activities.

- **Dominique Rickett, Educational Specialist in Leadership**

  Dominique's contributions to courses are very well thought out, complementing, and extending the insights of others, and building the collaborative atmosphere for which we strive in Ed. S. program. She also brings a perspective from the east side of the state of Michigan that is unique from that of her West Michigan colleagues. She shares this in ways that help others understand the nuanced differences she faces in her role. Faculty are always pleased to see her on a roster at the beginning of the term as we know her contributions to class will be of high quality, serving as a positive role model for her colleagues. In addition to her significant professional contribution, Dominique accepted an invitation to participate as a panelist in the recent symposium *Calm the Chaos: Honoring All Voices in Public Education* sponsored by the Padnos/Sarosik Center for Civil Discourse this past fall. In addition to the personal challenge of taking time off from work to travel from the Detroit area, Dominique's value addition to the symposium was excellent.

- **Kam Robles, Master of Public Administration**

  Along with his strong work and dedication as a student in the MPA program, Kam has meaningfully engaged his profession and served the Grand Rapids community as a police officer with the Grand Rapids Community College

since 2015. His recent promotion to police sergeant reflects well on his leadership capacities. We are grateful for the unwavering dedication he demonstrates to the values of public service. Sergeant Kam Robles is highly deserving of this recognition, and we are proud of the way he represents the highest ideals of the MPA program.

College of Health Professions

- **Stephanie Lester, Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology**

  Stephanie's service has benefited the community and current and future students in the program. She not only has positive and kind intentions, but she takes the time and effort to follow through with them. Stephanie was a graduate student volunteer at the National FRIENDS: The National Association of Young People Who Stutter in Chicago, IL this past summer. At this conference, she positively impacted the lives of many children and adolescents who stutter. Stephanie has also regularly taken the time to consider how improvements can be made for her and future cohorts. Some of these improvements she has taken on herself and others she has brought forward to the program faculty.

- **Torey Todd, Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

  Torey is a dedicated student and always puts the care of others first. Torey works tirelessly to expand his knowledge to be the best PA he can be. But what sets Torey apart from his peers is not only does he strive academically, but he always remembers who he is doing this for, his future patients. His empathy towards his patients, colleagues, and peers does not go unnoticed. During his internal medicine rotation at OSF St. Francis Hospital Torey volunteered with his preceptor to visit students participating in the local Head Start program. Torey and his preceptor educated the children on the importance of seeing their healthcare provider. They spent time listening to their hearts, being active outside, and just having fun! This is just one example of how Torey exemplifies what it means to be a PA.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Grayson Kosak, Master of Science in Biology**

  Grayson has prioritized sharing his passion for and knowledge of freshwater mussels with the general public. He has also demonstrated significant service to the profession by working with the organizing committee to bring malacology professionals to Michigan for a national conference. Grayson offered classes to inform graduate and undergraduate students about mussels in Michigan. He also did a workshop for the staff and volunteers at John Ball Zoo. Grayson has also volunteered his time and led at least five river surveys to identify and describe freshwater mussels for a variety of public organizations including the Plaster Creek Watershed Council, the Rogue River Watershed Council, and the Crockery Creek Watershed Council, to name a few. Grayson is volunteering his time to serve on the organizing committee for the upcoming American Malacological Society meeting in Detroit, MI, Summer 2025.

- **Bridie McClusky, Master of Science in Cell & Molecular Biology**

  Bridie worked with the Kent County Health Department to establish their needs in mosquito species surveillance, normally a technically demanding summer-time job requiring hours per day in front of a microscope. She developed a rapid molecular assay for the most common dangerous Michigan mosquitoes, including one that carries Eastern Equine Encephalitis ("triple E") that was very commonly misidentified with the microscope (after all, dead mosquitoes look very similar!). Her work will allow mosquito surveillance to identify species of concern more accurately in Kent County. In addition to the generous funding provided by the GVSU Presidential Research Grant and a NASA Space Grant, Bridie was awarded a competitive fellowship by the Michigan Mosquito Control Association. She also became a certified Mosquito Identification Specialist through a 2- week workshop at the Florida Medical Entomological Laboratory. Bridie has recently accepted a position as Lab manager of MSUs Transgenic and Genome Editing Facility.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO GVSU
Fall 2023

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Robyn Grant, Master of Health Administration**

  As the president of the Health Professionals Graduate Student Association, Robyn has helped to expand the number of association members by double digits and grow the programs that support the GVSU community. While the events continue to grow under her leadership, the educational opportunities have also expanded through Robyn's leadership. HPGSA has widely marketed participation in the pediatric case simulation and adult case simulation events being held in February and April on the campus of GVSU and through healthcare-related content for undergraduate and graduate students on HPGSA's YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.

- **Samuel Jacobs, Master of Public Administration**

  Sam's service at GVSU runs deep. During his undergraduate studies, he served as a leader on the student senate and began as a participant in the Cook Leadership Academy (CLA). As a graduate student, Sam has continued his connection with the CLA and has provided guidance in various student organizations, including serving on the board of the International City/County Management Graduate Student Chapter. He also was a founding member and Vice President of the Ford Leadership Forum Student Chapter at GVSU.

- **Kelley McGuckin, Master of Social Work**

  Kelley has shown a remarkable dedication to leadership and service throughout her time at GVSU, with a focus on positively impacting the university community and beyond. She served as the student representative on the Social Work Hybrid Program Committee, a role that is particularly commendable given her full-time work commitments, her graduate coursework, and her substantial internship responsibilities, which demand over 10 hours of her week. Kelley's work on the committee is invaluable, as it

represents the voice of weekend hybrid students who might otherwise go unheard. She takes her responsibilities seriously, fostering open and respectful communication with faculty and staff to ensure that the needs and concerns of students in her program are addressed. Her efforts have played a pivotal role in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

College of Health Professions

- **Noelle Kraus, Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

  Ms. Krause has been an outstanding student in our program, both academically and in student leadership. Academically, she is committed to learning and providing the best patient care possible. Leadership is where Noelle shines. Her organization and communication skills are some of the best we have ever had in the PA Student Society, where she serves as its President. She is detail-oriented and raises the level of those around her while treating others with respect and professionalism. To be the leader of an organization of this size with two campuses and very busy schedules, it takes a very specific and special person and Noelle was that person. During Ms. Kraus' leadership, the Richard P Clodfelter PA student society thrived! They were able to successfully raise an unprecedented amount of money through fundraising, supported fellow classmates with activities and events, produced a national award-winning video that was featured on the national PA education associations website, AND, her cohort won the state quiz bowl competition, beating out 7 other PA programs in the state.

- **Sydney Spotts, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy**

  Sydney excels and serves as an active voice in the classroom- she currently holds a 4.0 GPA, serves as the co-president and active member of Pi Theta Epsilon (the occupational therapy honor society), has volunteered her time to help with departmental recruitment events, and serves as the current graduate assistant for the Student Success Network. She is always professional and positive in her interactions with faculty and other students.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Varsha Jawahar, Master of Science in Cell & Molecular Biology**

  Varsha has served in the Professional Association for Graduate Scientists (PAGS) student organization since her arrival at GVSU. The student organization serves many different programs in the Professional Science Masters (PSM) degree. Under her leadership as Financial Officer, this club was very successful in securing funding to hold events such as the Mass Proteomics Workshop, and for student travel to various conferences. These events enabled students to gain valuable professional and technical experiences in their field. Varsha is now training the next Financial Officer in the organization to provide much-needed continuity. Throughout her association with PAGS, Varsha has shown excellence in leadership and service to GVSU.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- **Upoma Saha, Master of Science in Engineering**

  Upoma served as a Graduate Assistant and is currently a visiting faculty in the School of Engineering. In her research, she has been exploring areas to improve the manufacturing process to save material, money, and the environment. As a GA and currently as a visiting faculty, Upoma shows an excellent example of serving and supporting the students. Her teaching focus is freshman and sophomore level courses. As a fresh graduate, she has been successful in finding the balance between a mentor and faculty/GA to the students. Upoma is a hardworking and organized researcher and currently, a dedicated faculty.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GVSU
Fall 2023

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Ketashia Berrien, Master of Social Work**

  Ketashia is a remarkable individual who has overcome numerous barriers to becoming a role model for both our community and social work students. Her journey to success is truly inspiring. As an African-American mother and a first-generation college student, she has faced many challenges to just showing up, let alone being a role model for others. One of the most touching moments in Ketashia's journey, which I believe exemplifies her commitment to promoting diversity, occurred recently when her mother expressed her pride and emotions after seeing Ketashia's profile in Psychology Today. It is moments like these that highlight the transformative impact individuals like Ketashia can have on their families and communities. Her mother's tears of pride serve as a reminder of the significance of recognizing Ketashia's accomplishments and her continued commitment to diversity.

- **John Jawara, Master of Health Administration**

  John was the first student from Sierra Leone who enrolled in the MHA program. He shortly developed an enthusiasm for the program and regularly requested program information to send back to his home country to encourage others to apply. Since his enrollment, we have had an increase in applications and enrollments from Sierra Leone. After additional students have enrolled, John has actively engaged with them to assist with their acclimation to the US, Grand Rapids, GVSU, and the MHA program. He is always open to reaching out to fellow students to offer support and explanations. As most of our applications from Sierra Leone are from people with several years of work experience, they would not have ready access to the university’s recruitment at local universities. John’s self-motivated efforts to increase applications and enrollments have helped to ensure the diversity of the MHA student body.

College of Health Professions

- **Trevor Dunn, Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

  Trevor served as a dedicated member of the executive board for the Richard Paul Clodfelder Committee and through his leadership as the Executive Representative of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (JEDI) was instrumental in driving positive change during the didactic phase of the program. One notable event was a small clinic at Exodus Place, a local non-profit rehabilitation clinic, where Trevor and his team provided essential medical education and screening exams for residents. This initiative showcased Trevor's dedication to making a tangible difference in the community. In addition, he attended a luncheon event with the focus of prioritizing diversity, inclusion, and equity in the workplace. This experience allowed him to learn from successful executives about promoting diversity in the workplace, the knowledge he eagerly shared with colleagues to inspire future medical professionals and leaders. While in clinical rotations, Trevor continued to support the next cohort in their strives to continue advocating for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion**.**

- **Madelyn Schrot, Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology**

  Madelyn was in a group of supervised speech-language pathology graduate students as they delivered Tier 1 services to children and adolescents aged 4-15 years in the context of a summer camp. Most of the campers were from African refugee families. Madelyn helped her classmates understand the importance of the work that we were doing, and I am so grateful to have had her in the group. She has been a teacher in a charter school working with children from refugee families as well. Madelyn is committed to serving historically marginalized populations and will be a strong advocate for them.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Mary Parr, Master of Science in Biology**

  Mary is a tribal member of the Sault St. Marie band of the Chippewa and has worked tirelessly to both promote women in science and bring awareness to the role indigenous people have had in managing natural resources. Within the university, Mary is a member of the Native American Student Association and has served as a guest speaker for multiple classes and student groups. She discussed her role as a female and indigenous wildland firefighter to undergraduates in my NRM/BIO 230 Introduction to Wildland Fire Management course. Mary has also spoken to undergraduates in NRM 150, NRM 377, the GVSU Student Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and the GVSU Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society about navigating career opportunities post-college as a woman in STEM. Mary estimates that she has spoken with over 200 students through these classes and club guest lectures over the last 2 years. Outside of the university, Mary also has an impressive record of promoting inclusion and diversity. Most recently, Mary presented "Firekeepers of the Past and Present: An Indigenous Woman's Perspective" at the Kalamazoo Nature Center and will be a featured guest on the "Learning to Listen to the Fire Plants and Animals" panel for the Lake States Fire Science Consortium in January 2024.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY
Fall 2023

Each Excellence in Sustainability award nominee has demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovative thinking in the community by implementing sustainable best practices. The award recipients must have given life to a sustainability initiative in one or more aspects of the triple bottom line in sustainability (economic, social, or environmental).

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Marianne Kelso, Master of Science in Biology**

Marianne's thesis research focuses on one of the most threatened groups of animals on the planet – turtles. As part of a multi-state and agency U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funded competitive State Wildlife Grant, Marianne tackled an ambitious project aimed at generating the first demographic data for wood turtles in Michigan. Wood turtles are currently under review for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and this listing will appear very likely soon. This means wildlife management agencies will soon need to prioritize the recovery of this species, yet Michigan is sorely lacking any data about wood turtles and their status, which will hamper recovery efforts. Over the past two and a half years, Marianne has coordinated and led field teams through rough conditions to collect critical data on wood turtle populations throughout Michigan's lower peninsula. The fieldwork for this project was intense – long days of slogging through wetlands searching for turtles, but Marianne successfully tackled everything that was thrown at her. She works closely with the Michigan DNR, the U.S. Forest Service, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, and the Midwest Wood Turtle Working Group to ensure her data are collected in a way that is most useful for these agencies, for the recovery of these turtles and ecosystem management more broadly. Marianne has given numerous presentations about her work and has consulted on best practices. Her project will provide the first estimates of critical demographic parameters that will form the baseline of knowledge about wood turtle populations in Michigan.

- **Elena Tislerics, Master of Science in Cell & Molecular Biology**

  Elena worked in the CMB department's Molecular Monitoring Laboratory to identify and track contamination in recreational surface waters in Barry and Eton counties to protect recreational users of this resource from water-borne diseases. This work directly supported the sustainability of water resources in Michigan. In addition, Elena worked at an internship at the Grand Rapids Water Resource Recovery Facility Laboratory where she developed a bioaerosols project in which she reviewed current literature in order to design and implement methods for capturing and analyzing airborne pathogens at the facility to protect the workers from dangerous levels of exposure. In this case, her work supported the sustainability of the workplace at her internship site.

MAGS DISTINGUISHED THESIS NOMINEES
OUTSTANDING THESIS 2023

The Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) calls for nominations for the annual Distinguished Thesis Award. Each school is allowed to nominate one student thesis for the award competition in each discipline category. This year's nominations are in the category of Mathematics/Physical Sciences/Engineering and Social Sciences. The theses representing GVSU are selected by a committee of faculty members from multiple disciplines and approved by the Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- **Jennifer Kinne, Master of Arts in English**
  - **Title:** "A Call for Planetary Kinship: The Development of New Forms of Subjectivity and Connection in Jeff VanderMeer's Annihilation"
  - **Committee Chair:** Dr. Brian Deyo – Professor of English

Dr. Brian Deyo, Jennifer's thesis committee chair, stated, "I can also attest to the social, pedagogical, and ecological value of her M.A. thesis, "*A Call for Planetary Kinship: The Development of New Forms of Subjectivity and Connection in Jeff VanderMeer's Annihilation*," GVSU's nominee for the 2024 Midwest Association of Graduate Schools Master's Thesis Award competition in the Humanities category. Dr. Deyo's first impression of her was of someone with a genuine desire to engage critically and imaginatively with literature—and other people—to make sense of the multiple, intertwined crises of the times we're living through. Moreover, the "making sense" part seemed to be clearly linked to a desire to help others, especially the most vulnerable among us—and he adds that, if you read her M.A. thesis, you'll know that the ambit of her concern extends well beyond the human, and in a way that judiciously draws sustenance from various traditions of humanistic thought. Since then, my impression of Jenny's character has become stronger. She's the sort of person who is in possession of social instincts that are always striving to make connections with—and drawing out the best—in others. In my opinion, this character trait is beautifully expressed in her thesis on Jeff VanderMeer's novel, Annihilation, considered by many respected writers, scholars, and critics alike to be a classic example of "climate fiction." I should also add

that—especially after witnessing Jenny's thesis defense several months ago—I am immensely glad to know that she is teaching VandMeer's novel to her students at Grand Rapids Community College: I have no doubt that she is making an impression on her students, as she is gifted with the knack for inspiring others. Jenny's creative and sharp moral intelligence informs all her endeavors and responsibilities.

ABSTRACT

This thesis joins a vibrant conversation on the importance of storytelling in an age of climate change through an analysis of Jeff VanderMeer's Annihilation, a strange and prophetic novel whose environments and characters are confronted with significant ecological devastation and transformation. It explores the ways in which VanderMeer opens liminal spaces between the human and nonhuman through his usage of the New Weird genre, uncanny and abcanny imagery, and monstrous characters. In my first chapter, I will explore the emerging world of New Weird fiction and argue that this genre is uniquely suited to addressing climate change, namely because of its experiments with conventional notions of setting and character development. Rather than being clearly defined and bordered, settings and characters within New Weird fiction are blurry, shape-shifting, and permeable. My second chapter will then look at the kinds of images and creatures that are produced in VanderMeer's Annihilation. I will use Freud's concept of the uncanny and Noys's and Murphy's abcanny to analyze how VanderMeer opens readers up to a world in which the human and nonhuman connect in uncomfortable but opportunity-rich ways. In my final chapter, I will turn to Annihilation's main character, the biologist, whose transformation throughout the novel signals to readers what we must do to survive and thrive in an age of ecological devastation. Through a physical and psychological evolution, the biologist develops a kinship with the entire world, human and nonhuman, and becomes a part of Area X. Ultimately, I argue that Annihilation creates a new kind of human, or new kind of creature, who has the potential to recognize its connection to the rest of the natural world, making possible a healing of the wounds that threaten to obliterate so much life on this planet

- **Maggie Petersen, Master of Science in Biology, Annis Water Resources Institute**
  - **Title:** "Microplastics and Microbiomes: Impacts of weathered microplastic ingestion on fathead minnows (Pimephales promelas)"
  - **Committee Chair:** Dr. Charlyn Partridge – Annis Water Resources Institute

Dr. Charlyn Partridge, a committee member on Kevin's thesis, stated, "Through the success of Maggie's thesis work, she has significantly advanced our scientific understanding of the health implications these micropollutants have on a model freshwater fish species." The goal of Maggie's study was to evaluate how ingestion of environmentally relevant concentrations of weathered microplastics impacts the health of adult male and female fathead minnows (Pimephales promelas). This was a comprehensive study that examined the effects of microplastics on multiple biological levels, including its impacts on general health indicators (growth and condition), molecular responses (gene expression), and how it altered an individual's natural gut microbiota. She found that microplastics could have significant health implications, even at environmental concentrations. However, she also found that environmental factors are likely to drive changes in gut microbial communities more than microplastic ingestion. While previous studies have questioned whether microplastics can significantly impact aquatic organisms at the concentrations they are typically found in lakes and streams, Maggie's work suggests this indeed is the case, and that microplastic pollution should be a concern for freshwater fish.

Maggie's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Microplastic contamination is a ubiquitous contaminant of concern in natural and built environments. These particles are found in freshwater surface waters and sediments at concentrations that may threaten the biota with which they interact. Laboratory studies are conducted to understand what impacts microplastics have on freshwater organisms like the fathead minnow (Pimephales promelas). Exposure experiments should use ecologically relevant concentrations of microplastics to draw realistic conclusions about the risk of environmental microplastic contamination. Environmentally weathered particles differ from pristine microplastics as they develop a microbial biofilm and may adsorb hydrophobic contaminants. To build on previous microplastic exposure studies, I incubated 500 μm polyethylene beads in the surface water of Muskegon Lake, Michigan, USA for eight weeks and embedded them in commercial fish food pellets. I fed these to adult male and female fathead minnows at two different concentrations (4 and 16 particles/fish/day, respectively) in a 28-day chronic exposure experiment in a flow-through system using Muskegon Lake water. I measured the health endpoints of growth, condition factor, and hematocrit as well as hepatic gene expression of representative immune and stress related genes in the males. I also evaluated the effects of weathered microplastics on the gastrointestinal microbial community of the fish as they may introduce a novel biofilm. There were no relative gene expression differences; however, there was a significant impact to the growth in male fathead minnows in the high concentration treatment, leading to a slight loss of mass over the course of the study. Additionally, I found some impacts to richness and diversity metrics with changes in the relative abundance of several taxa in the gut microbial communities. However, the overall community composition was not impacted by microplastic ingestion, which may have been overwhelmed by the influence of the 6-surface water in the study system. I did see distinct sex effects in the health endpoints, the gut microbial species richness estimates, and microbial community composition. Our study suggests that weathered microplastic ingestion does have organismal health effects, but these were sex specific and probably not driven solely by changes to the gut microbial community.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD
Fall 2023

The Outstanding Teaching Award distinguishes faculty who deserve special recognition for exemplary teaching. This includes contributing to graduate student development by using thoughtful and creative methods of instruction, assisting in deeply understanding course content, and engaging students in a dynamic and inclusive manner.

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Dr. Greg Warsen, Educational Leadership and Counseling**
  Nominated by: David A. Johnson, Educational Specialist in Leadership

  David writes: "Dr. Warsen was adamant that the projects, research, and work I did for the Specialists degree be relevant and directly connected to my work in the field of education. It was never a drag to Zoom into each course. He was exceptional at keeping the Zoom room just as engaged as the in-person classroom. Dr. Warsen acknowledges at the start of every class that on the best of all possible days, the coursework we've undertaken comes third in the priority list after family and work. Dr. Warsen took the time and energy to meet with me anytime I was trying to determine the best possible way for the learning we'd undertake in a course to dovetail with my daily work expectations. We'd discuss possible paths to completing an assignment, and I'd conduct the necessary research and come back with drafts. He was always willing to look at something before I'd turn it in for credit, and he was always willing to provide me timely feedback in a way that underscored his recognition that I was still learning about these things myself."

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- **Dr. Nicole Harpold, Nursing**
  Nominated by: Monase Chibambo, Doctor of Nursing Practice

  Monase writes: "I have had the privilege of being under her guidance and mentorship, and I am confident that her impact extends well beyond my own experience. Faced with an adverse situation that significantly impacted my

ability to progress in the program, Dr. Nicole Harpold displayed compassion. She took the initiative to develop an individualized plan, complete with realistic deadlines, tailored to my circumstances. She went above and beyond by making herself available outside regular office hours, creating a safe space where I could express my concerns and seek guidance without feeling discouraged. I attribute my ability to overcome the challenges I faced during that period to her dedication, guidance, and encouragement. Her genuine care for the well-being of her students, sets her apart as a truly outstanding educator and mentor. She actively participates as a faculty member of the KCON Graduate Student Organization (KCON GSO). In this role, she advocates for the students and ensures that their concerns are addressed promptly. She is diligent in her follow-ups, providing valuable feedback and contributing to a positive and nurturing academic community."

Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies

- **Dr. Daniela Marini, Integrative Studies**
  Double nominated by: Ty Krueger & Jowei Yek, Master of Arts in Social Innovation and Master of Business Administration

  Ty writes: "Dr. Marini brought a new approach to teaching social innovation from a food justice and equity framework. In this course, Dr. Marini combined learning the historical context of food injustice with hands-on community engagement and research. She partnered with local community organizations to provide face-to-face opportunities for learning how social innovations directly impact historically marginalized people. Dr. Marini set up the classroom environment for open and insightful discussions and debates on the pros and cons of what we learned in the field. My experience in her course helped me make sense of my learning in the program and encouraged me to continue working with her beyond the project first as a graduate assistant and finally as my project advisor. Dr. Marini was a crucial part of my experience in the program."

  Jowei writes: "Daniela was my instructor for SI 650 in the Social Innovation Program (PMASI), and she was a huge proponent of my mindset as a social innovator. As an instructor in the PMASI program, Daniela was able to bring an authentic and pragmatic approach that rekindled everyone's passion and perspective for the program. From my experience, I believe that most students chose the PMASI program largely due to a hunger for action.

Through her network, despite being a Grand Rapids transplant, she got the class an opportunity to work with major food pantries in Kent County through the Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF). Empowered by her instruction, I chose her to advise my graduate research. Daniela has offered her expertise in methodology and data analysis to my work. Most notably, she was extremely supportive when I changed my research premise from food justice to immigrant rights."

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OUTSTANDING MENTORING AWARD
Fall 2023

College of Education & Community Innovation

- **Dr. Laila McCloud, Educational Leadership & Counseling**
  Nominated by: Obed Boateng, Master of Education in Higher Education

  Obed writes: "Her extraordinary dedication goes above and beyond the typical parameters of mentorship, fostering a vibrant and welcoming environment that supports her students' personal and professional development. Her inclusive approach is impeccable. As a student under her mentorship, I have witnessed tremendous growth during my time in graduate school here at GVSU. Embracing the belief that "we create worlds with our words," Dr. McCloud empowers her students and mentees to believe in their own capabilities and carve unique paths to success. Her consistent encouragement of a growth mindset and the embrace of challenges as opportunities for development significantly enhanced my confidence and resilience. Personally, benefiting from Dr. McCloud's extensive network, I have had the privilege of gaining valuable insights and guidance from experts in the field of higher education during my practicum at the University of Pennsylvania and my plans post-graduation. These interactions have played a pivotal role in shaping my career decisions and advancement. Dr. McCloud's tireless efforts to cultivate a supportive and inclusive learning environment have been transformative in shaping my educational journey. Her mentorship has not only enriched my academic experience but has also equipped me with the skills and confidence needed for success in my future endeavors."

- **Dr. Joel Wendland-Liu, Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies**
  Nominated by: Amy Phillips, Master of Science in Criminal Justice

  Amy writes: "Dr. Joel Wendland-Liu taught my first class in the Social Innovation program, mitigating my decades-long absence from academia with his calm demeanor. When he called my final paper "excellent," I allowed myself to dream; when he suggested I submit the paper to a conference, I snapped awake to my potential. That first conference built my

confidence, and I would go on to present at three more plus a poster session. He also asked me to co-author an article, which was recently published in an international academic journal; the planning meetings alone were master classes in writing, publishing, and trusting myself. In this new, inspired state, I wrote effusive, frequent emails seeking his input, which he met with patient, thorough replies. Having Dr. Wendland-Liu teach my very first class and serve as my thesis project advisor are fitting bookends to three years of knowing he was an email away."

College of Health Professions

- **Dr. Cara Singer, Communications Sciences and Disorders**
  Nominated by: Autumn Cannon, Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology

  Autumn writes: "Her support allowed me to begin and finish an ambitious research project that I could not have completed without her cheering me on. Dr. Singer has always encouraged me to take my research and graduate studies to new levels. For example, she helped me find opportunities to present my research at conferences, compete and win 2nd place and the People's Choice Award in the GVSU 3-Minute Thesis Competition, and write a manuscript of my research that we will submit to publish soon. She has consistently pushed me outside of my comfort zone and built my confidence to take on new challenges. Without the support and encouragement of Dr. Singer, I would not have considered many of the opportunities that I am so grateful to now have experienced. Finally, not only has Dr. Singer been a tremendous supporter during my academic career, but she has also shown genuine care for my well-being. She always takes the time to check in to see how I'm doing. She cares about every student holistically and reminds me to take time to rest even with all of my other responsibilities. Dr. Singer has been the best mentor that I could have asked for during my academic career."

- **Dr. Jennifer Smart, Audiology**
  Nominated by: Jenna Reynolds, Doctor of Audiology

  Jenna writes: "When seeking out a graduate program many factors were on my list of importance. One of those is having a safe space to show up as my authentic self. To some, this task might seem simple to replicate. From the perspective of a masculine presenting female in the LGBTQ+ community that

isn't always the case, especially in higher education/healthcare. Over my time in the Doctor of Audiology program, Dr. Smart has exceeded what I never could've imagined in my training. She has made numerous efforts to include DEI education in our coursework, seminars, and research together to create a safe space. In our many conversations, she has mentioned to me, "I want to impact each of my students' lives and see them reach their goals here and then out in the field. This keeps me motivated". The lasting impact Dr. Smart has made on my life continues each day. She has taken numerous hours to ensure that I am getting to where I want to be. In writing this nomination, emotions are high, because she truly has made a long-lasting impact on my life. She goes above and beyond for her faculty, students, and other disciplines. She has been a safe space for me to show up as my authentic self and I hope to continue her legacy."

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- **Dr. Christina Quick, Nursing**
  Nominated by: Julia Treme, Master of Science in Nursing

  Julia writes: "Through her encouragement and guidance, I developed and submitted a first-author publication to a peer-reviewed nursing journal in my first semester of graduate school that was later accepted for publication. Without her vision and encouragement, this is something I never would even have thought to try. By the end of my working relationship, I had published and presented twice. She brought me into a national advocacy group for the well-being of children in foster care where I had the opportunity to compile data that was used as the basis of their advocacy work. Even more than her influence on my professional and academic achievements, I humbly thank Dr. Quick for her superb relationship building skills. Dr. Quick was a safe space for me to discuss and disclose my struggles, fears, and concerns. Dr. Quick's impact on my life both personally and professionally is immeasurable."

- **Dr. Dianne Slager, Nursing**
  Nominated by: Monase Chibambo, Doctor of Nursing Practice

  Monase writes: "Dr. Slager has exemplified unparalleled dedication to mentoring, spending countless hours providing one-on-one guidance and support. Her unwavering encouragement has played a pivotal role in my

academic and professional journey. Dr. Slager possesses a unique ability to make mentees feel seen and valued. Her intelligence, professionalism, and extensive experience in the field contribute to a mentorship characterized by depth and authenticity. In moments where I faced challenges, Dr. Slager provided the necessary push, fostering an environment where I could overcome obstacles and achieve my goals. What sets Dr. Slager apart is her realistic approach and diverse understanding. She goes beyond the theoretical, offering practical insights that have been instrumental in my growth. Dr. Slager and I have worked closely in collaboration on various projects. She has provided invaluable guidance and has passionately advocated for my success."

Padnos College of Engineering and Computing

- **Dr. Wael Mokhtar, Engineering**
  Nominated by: Upoma Saha, Master of Science in Engineering

  Upoma writes: "His teaching demonstration, student encouragement, and management skills inspired me to work further with Dr. Mokhtar. I chose him as my research advisor for my master's thesis. I have been working under his supervision since the Fall of 2022 to till date. He helped me to shape my research skills. Throughout my research journey, he has been a great inspiration for me. Whenever I made very little improvement in my research, he used to motivate me a lot. Even the day, I didn't make any improvement in my research, he inspired me even more so that I would work harder in my next meeting. I wanted to participate in a conference based on my research topic. Dr. Mokhtar encouraged me to participate as well as helped me financially through graduate school. When I applied for a faculty position at GVSU, I reached out to him for advice and that helped me to get the job. Even in my professional life, I always look up to him and try to be a good Faculty for my students. A school always needs a faculty member like Dr. Wael Mokhtar. It's been an absolute joy working with Dr. Mokhtar as a student as well as a faculty."

❖ **Dr. Abishek Balsamy-Kamaraj, Engineering**
Nominated by: Anton Petrenko, Master of Science in Engineering

Anton writes: "With him as my mentor, I was able to enroll in an independent study to find the effect of pulsed power during electrochemical surface modification on the wettability of titanium and aluminum. Through him, I learned and gained a greater appreciation for the research process. I learned more about implementing a full design of experiments with different testing levels, about the effort and tools required to conduct research, and about writing a journal manuscript. There were multiple times when I felt dejected or overwhelmed with results I was obtaining or schoolwork that was going on and he always helped me center myself. Upon Dr. Kamaraj's advice, my work from the independent study was submitted to the ASME IMECE conference in New Orleans. My work was accepted with minor revisions, and I was able to go to the conference where I was able to not only listen to others but also present my own publication. Even more, Dr. Kamaraj pushed for my manuscript to be published in a journal. None of this would have happened without Dr. Kamaraj's help."

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD
Fall 2023

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- **Dr. Marie VanderKooi, Nursing**
  Nominated by: Monase Chibambo, Doctor of Nursing Practice

  Monase writes: "As a minority student, I encountered significant obstacles during my academic journey. Dr. Vanderkooi, with a deep understanding of these challenges, has actively collaborated with the college to establish resources for underrepresented groups. Her strategic leadership ensures the availability of resources and support mechanisms crucial for the success of minorities. Dr. Vanderkooi goes beyond asking the right questions; she actively listens and takes decisive actions to dismantle barriers, creating an inclusive academic environment. Dr. Vanderkooi is a dedicated mentor who not only supports students but also faculty, fostering an inclusive atmosphere. Her commitment to diversity is evident in her efforts to bring teams together, providing leadership that ensures the success of underrepresented groups. I am successful because of Dr. Vanderkooi's leadership and ongoing mentorship. She consistently advocates for awareness of available resources, encourages their utilization, and maintains an open-door policy, providing realistic support for her students. "

GRADUATE STUDENT
PRESIDENTIAL RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Spring/Summer 2023

Lauren Czajka, Emily DeMers, Elise Kuiper, Andrea Valdes Flores, Jenna Prohaska. College of Health Professions, Occupational Science & Therapy.
Title: *The Effectiveness of Technology and Smart-Home Based Teaching Modules for Direct Care Workers*

Drow, Jamie. College of Health Professions, Occupational Science & Therapy.
Title: *Bridging the Gap for Acute Care Occupational Therapists Treating Bariatric Patients: Utilizing Knowledge Translation to Provide a Hands-on Learning Experience*

Hoyt, Tyler. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Contribution of resident and migrant yellow perch to angler harvest in drowned river mouth lakes*

Kolanowski, Mason. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Effects of Cannabidiol on Compartment Specific Dopamine Release in the Striatum*

Kosak, Grayson. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Tributary Confluence Effects on the Distribution, Density, and Diversity of Freshwater Mussel (Unionidae) Assemblages in the Lower Grand River*

Kuzma, Faith. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Headstarted eastern box turtle (Terrapene carolina carolina) growth, survival, and spatial ecology in southwest Michigan*

Loinyio, Allan. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Phylogenomics, Systematics, and the Evolution of Reproductive Traits in the African Plant Genus Aneilema in Response to Diverse Habitats*

Lucas, Katherine. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Impact of climate change and restoration on phosphorus loading in impaired wetlands*

Fall 2023

Paige Flickinger, Allyssa Toth, Madielyn Knaggs, Jonathan Newby, Renee Olsen. College of Health Professions, Department of Occupational Science and Therapy.
Title: *Cerebral Palsy and Social Participation: A Case Report*

Melton, Callie. College of Education and Community Innovation, Public Administration.
Title: *An Examination of the Clean Water Act's Navigable Waters Rule and Recommendations from the Field*

Raona, Anthony. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.
Title: *Understanding the Relationship between Strongyloides robustus, Flying Squirrels (Glaucomys spp.), and other Sciurid Species*

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Vice President: Vaishnavi Rasane, Applied Computer Science

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Finance Officer: Brooks Twist, Accounting

Communications Officer: Jhon Kerby Gerli, Business Administration

Advisors:
Dr. Tonisha Jones, Criminal Justice
Melissa Baker-Boosamra, Office of Student Life
Dr. Sarah Nechuta, Public Health
Dr. Matthew Christians, Cell and Molecular Biology

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Aruna Karkee, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership

Student Assistant:
Ashley Derfiny, Management and Marketing (undergraduate)

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