

Graduate School Citation Awards

Winter 2022

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 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!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey A. Potteiger'.

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

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**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Winter 2022**

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN THE DEGREE PROGRAM

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Melissa Culbertson-Brown, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Nanette Hersberger, Educational Leadership
- ❖ Ryan Martin, Health Administration
- ❖ Allison Nieboer, Literacy Studies-K-12 Reading Specialist
- ❖ Holly Honig, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership
- ❖ David Morgan, Public Administration
- ❖ Mikaela Padgen, Social Work

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Jiří Hoffmann, Applied Computer Science

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Lillian Lieffers, Physical Therapy
- ❖ Brennan Burk, Public Health

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Carly Vaitkevicius, Applied Linguistics
- ❖ Kierstdea Petzold, Biostatistics
- ❖ Austin Schian, Cell and Molecular Biology
- ❖ Brett Huddleston, Communications
- ❖ Ashlyn Haraburda, School Psychology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Kelsey Crampton, Nursing-Doctorate

OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Gabriel Melching, Engineering

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Megan Sanders, Biology
- ❖ Brittany Bahl, Communications

OUTSTANDING FINAL PROJECT

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Stacie Fifelski, Social Work
- ❖ Kaylee Kessler, Special Education

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Ellie Phillips, Biology
- ❖ Louis Walter, Cell and Molecular Biology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Shawna Thomas, Nursing-Doctorate

OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Sebastian Vanderest, Physical Therapy

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ April Butler, Nursing-Doctorate

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Deon Atkins, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Nicolina Evola, Health Administration
- ❖ Natalie Davenport, Public Administration
- ❖ Irene Torres, Social Work

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ George Ebeling, Applied Computer Science and Engineering

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Zachary Capulong, Physical Therapy

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Ellen Foley, Biology – AWRI
- ❖ Alexis Hoskins, Cell and Molecular Biology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Autumn Baldwin, Nursing-Doctorate

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO GVSU

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Brock Buozis, Health Administration
- ❖ Andrew Hintz, Public Administration
- ❖ Thomas Worm, Social Work and Public Administration

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Jammie Hernandez, Physical Therapy

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Victoria Johnson, Cell and Molecular Biology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Julie Hubner, Nursing-Doctorate

PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GVSU

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Haak Betiem, Health Administration
- ❖ Lauren Enos, Social Work

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Joshua Olson, Physical Therapy

EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Alexis Neff, Biology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Marstie Bunting, Nursing-Doctorate

3-MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION WINNER

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Marlee Busalacchi, Biomedical Sciences

*Congratulations to the Winter 2022
Graduate Student Association Faculty Award Recipients!*

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION FACULTY AWARDS
Winter 2022

KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Carrie Buist, Criminal Justice

FACULTY MENTOR AWARD

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Nagnon Diarrassouba, Literacy Studies-Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Josie Fowler, Speech-Language Pathology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Amy Manderscheid, Nursing-Doctorate

OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Kristen Vu, Medical Dosimetry
- ❖ Cathy C. Harro, Physical Therapy
- ❖ Heather Wallace, Public Health

*Congratulations to the Winter 2022
Graduate Student Association Faculty Award Recipients!*

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN THE DEGREE PROGRAM
Winter 2022**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Melissa Culbertson-Brown, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**

Melissa has demonstrated academic excellence through her discipline, hard work, and 3.8 GPA. She has remained focus and excelled in her coursework despite the pandemic during her degree program. Not only has Melissa engaged in independent scholarship, she has also collaborated with the School of Criminal Justice faculty on research projects, grant applications, and curriculum development. Her dedication and commitment extend beyond the classroom and into the community. Melissa has worked with a variety of community organizations, and is active in victim advocacy and support services. Her skills and passion have rewarded her with a full scholarship and Graduate Assistantship at Western Michigan University, and plans to begin her Ph.D. in Sociology in the Fall of 2022.

❖ **Nanette Hersberger, Master of Education in Educational Leadership**

Nanette has exceeded expectations in her program through her leadership and passion. She has an excellent academic record over the course of a master's degree in education with an emphasis in curriculum and instruction that was awarded in 2018, as well as the educational leadership certification program. Her GPA of 3.7 exceeds overall across both programs from 2011 to present. Nanette was able to teach full-time as a teacher while also taking on parental responsibilities as a mother and spouse. In the past year, she has been influencing and leading students and teachers as an assistant principal at Grand Rapids Public Schools.

❖ **Ryan Martin, Master of Health Administration**

Ryan began the MHA program in the Fall of 2017 as a professional working in the pharmaceutical industry. Throughout his tenure in the program, he has continued to advance in pharmaceutical leadership while maintaining a straight A average in his classes. He has brought more than intellectual capacity and integrity to the classroom, and he also brings a professional

demeanor and leadership. While working on team assignments, Ryan exemplifies professionalism and decorum with all teams he works in. He gives both respect and guidance to his younger team members, spurring his classmates on to higher levels of academic achievement and professional development. In his own work, he brings the highest level of thoroughness and completeness to every paper he writes and oral presentation he makes. Ryan is as an exemplar of academic and professional integrity.

❖ **Allison Nieboer, Master of Education in Literacy Studies-K-12 Reading Specialist**

Allison has established a high GPA with exceptional grades and performance within her courses. She is currently enrolled in her final K-12 Reading Specialist practicum for leadership and professional development, reflecting on how to encourage and grow literacy instruction working with classroom teachers. Her thoughtful and conscientious persona has led her to create meaningful experiences for teachers, growing them as effective instructors of reading and writing. Faculty have looked to Allison as a leader in their courses, and see her as an emerging leader in the field. Her dedication to the education of students is obvious, as well as her commitment to her own growth and learning.

❖ **Holly Honig, Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership**

After joining the MPNL program in Fall of 2020, Holly made an immediate impression on her professors and peers with her inquisitive nature and fierce advocacy for a more equitable world. Her work and writings have included her passionate push for prison reform and the humanitarian treatment of incarcerated individuals. Her work ethic and dedication has earned her a 3.963 GPA in her program. She also has experience serving as a graduate teaching assistant at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy where she assisted two endowed faculty chairs with their research. Faculty and students of the MPNL program have no doubt that she will continue to be a fierce fighter for social, racial and economic justice upon graduation.

❖ **David Morgan, Master of Public Administration**

David has proven to be an exceptional student since the beginning of his enrollment in the MPA program. His dedication has awarded him a 3.973 GPA. During his studies, he has worked full-time in operations for a local nonprofit and has never hesitated to utilize his work experience to strengthen classroom discussions, and to bring real world experiences into the classroom. David has been an excellent collaborator on numerous team projects, a significant asset to his classmates, and is one of the MPA's most distinguished students in recent memory.

❖ **Mikaela Padgen, Master of Social Work**

Mikaela has shown exceptional academic performance with her 4.00 GPA, leadership, and contributions to the culture of the School of Social Work. Despite the pandemic, she was able to excel inside and outside the classroom. She has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to professional service and community engagement by presenting at Teach-Ins, presenting at conferences, and leading reading groups. While Mikaela continued to shine within the program, she also transcended her social work role expectations at her internship site. Her hard work rewarded her a professional role by her internship site in January. She has been a model in the classroom through facilitation of group projects, a positive attitude, and top tier work. She is a great model for all social work students in her studious, thoughtful, engaged, and insightful approach to social work education.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Jiri Hoffmann, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**

Jiri has demonstrated being an exceptional student since his undergraduate studies in the computer science program. He has shown excellent academic performance as an undergraduate and has maintained his exceptional grades in the graduate program. In addition to his outstanding GPA, he holds a coveted Graduate Assistantship position in the Applied Computing Institute. Faculty describe him as "curious", "a joy to have in the class", and "almost like a colleague." Jiri is considered an exemplar for what the program likes to see in their students.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Lillian Lieffers, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Lillian has distinguished herself with excellence in both didactic and clinical coursework. She is an academic leader in her cohort, displaying a deep understanding of foundational concepts and applied practice in physical therapy. She initiates and engages in rich discussions in the classroom; and consistently considers and applies evidence in clinical practice. In addition to maintaining a near perfect GPA, she is a significant contributor to service for her class as well as the community. She serves as the Fundraising Coordinator for her cohort and is a consistent participant in the Physical Therapy Day of Service. Her service to the community includes roles as a geriatric exercise group leader, pre-school service aid, and girls' volleyball coach. Her commitment and passion have rewarded herself as notable in a very strong class of academic peers.

❖ **Brennan Burk, Master of Public Health**

During Brennan's time in the MPH program, all faculty have had the opportunity to observe his outstanding work ethic, positive attitude, and commitment to completing coursework above and beyond expectations. He excels in analytic thinking and application, and has received the highest grade for advanced quantitative research methods. He stands out based on his consistent commitment to engage in classroom learning activities and classroom discussions. He has always been one of the first or only student to volunteer to answer complex questions during class lectures. Brennan has consistently demonstrated excellent oral communication skills and high-level understanding of complex topics and methodologies through his active participation. His passion for epidemiologic methods and critical thinking about diverse public health issues and application is inspiring and serves as an example for his peers.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Carly Vaitkevicius, Master of Applied Linguistics**

Since the beginning of Carly's MA program, she has excelled in her studies. Her MA thesis, *Memory Tricks: Mnemonic Devices and their Impact in Vocabulary Acquisition*, represents her culminating work which reflects her past two years of full-time study in applied linguistics and language acquisition theory. Her careful examination of the psychological processing and cueing of mnemonic devices in second language vocabulary acquisition has furthered the research in this area. If the approach is empirically proven valid and reliable by using non-language-specific pseudo-words, it will have wider implications for learning and teaching of second language vocabulary than only English vocabulary. Faculty value Carly's ingenuity and insight gained from this research, and applaud her for her successes in her thesis research and in her collaboration with faculty in sociolinguistics that resulted in conference presentation and publication

❖ **Kierstdea Petzold, Master of Science in Biostatistics**

Statistics faculty have applauded Kierstdea's strong and engaging participation in the courses of the program's curriculum. Her attention to detail has been superlative in all assigned work and projects. She is described as an excellent student with great curiosity and drive, who consistently asks insightful questions, seeking to learn more about statistics and data analysis. Her internship at Integrated Behavioral Health Analytics also commented on Kierstdea's work having a positive and lasting impact on a local community's youth substance use prevention and mental health awareness efforts. She is kind and helpful to other students, and has strong communication skills. Kierstdea will graduate this semester after a very strong performance throughout the Biostatistics Master's program.

❖ **Austin Schian, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**

Austin has maintained an excellent GPA in a demanding sequence of courses in uncertain times. He was instrumental in helping set up the Molecular Monitoring lab in the department. He was among several Professional

Science Masters students to collaborate with two CMB faculty to help equip and run the wastewater testing laboratory when the university, local, and state health agencies were attempting to craft an effective response to manage the pandemic. While all of the students made vital contributions, Austin's were particularly invaluable. Austin has distinguished himself among many students who were in their final year of the program while he was only in his first semester. As the project progressed and the scope of work of the lab expanded, Austin was generous in spending time to help train incoming analysts. He has keen attention to detail, good lab skills, and a generous spirit.

❖ **Brett Huddleston, Master of Science in Communication**

Faculty has described Brett to exhibit a level of mastery of subject matter that is rare among graduate students. His academic performance has been superlative and exceeds the expectations of the program. Not only does he possess a remarkable reading knowledge relevant to the field of communication, but he skillfully and successfully applies conceptual principals to practical communication problem-solving situations. Brett's pursuit of graduate education speaks to the heart of his character—an individual who is deeply passionate about education and committed to learning.

❖ **Ashlyn Haraburda, Master of Science in School Psychology**

Ashlyn has exemplified academic excellence each year of her graduate training. She has earned some of the highest course grades and one of the highest graduate GPAs amongst her cohort. She is viewed as a leader amongst her cohort, and served as the Vice President of the program's student association last year. Her cohort has been most affected by the pandemic, abruptly interrupting her first year and creating countless challenges in her second- and third-year field placements. However, Ashlyn has never been one to complain or dwell on these challenges; she is a motivated and positive individual. In addition to her practicum with local K-12 schools to support academic, behavioral and social needs of students, Ashlyn has also juggled various Graduate Assistantship positions. Faculty know they can rely on her to complete high quality work in a timely manner at a level that exceeds most other graduate students.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Kelsey Crampton, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Kelsey's determination outstanding academic performance has earned her a 4.0 grade point average in her program. Her excellent performance has proven itself in her DNP project, which exceeds the criteria required as a HRSA grant recipient. Each component of her project has been carefully designed, crafted, and implemented according to the needs of patients, providers, and the rural community in which she serves. Completion of scholarly work within her Organizational Assessment and Literature Review propelled her to an early project proposal in the Fall of 2021. Her DNP budget was considered "one of the best" by her committee members in which she was featured in her DNP Immersion course. She continues to lead her project with excellence through uncharted territory and with unforeseen challenges that will ultimately lead to a highly successful project experience. Kelsey has already contacted a number of journal editors for consideration of a published manuscript this Spring. She is successfully completing her project and is on track to defend and graduate in April of 2022.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR
OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS
Winter 2022**

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ **Gabriel Melching, Master of Science in Engineering**
 - **Thesis Title:** Upright Vacuum Cleaner Swivel Steering Design Considerations

Gabriel has proven to be an excellent student throughout his time with the program. He is diligent, intelligent, and has excellent problem-solving skills. His project provides a great deal of value for his company. His advisor comments that he has exceeded the deliverables in the design, build, and documentation. While the details of his project are confidential as Bissell has many competitors, the value brought to the company includes the ability to estimate user interactions and provide a baseline and guidance for future product models. Previous to this project, Bissell had very limited means to predict and measure key product characteristics. This enables Bissell to shorten its development cycle thus making them more competitive.

Gabriel's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, upright vacuum cleaners have utilized very basic steering and control methods. Since approximately 2005, swivel steering has increased in popularity with consumers. Upright vacuum cleaning products utilizing a well-designed swivel steering feature are generally easier to use and more intuitive than their dated counterparts. As the popularity of swivel steering increases with consumers, swivel joint performance characteristics become of increasing importance to product development engineers. BISSELL Homecare Inc.'s current base of knowledge on swivel steering design is limited. Advances in this area have potential to improve both product quality and product development time.

Loosely defined terms related to swivel geometry are discussed. Formal definitions for several swivel geometry details are proposed. The impact of swivel angle, tip-back axis position, and yoke height on steering responsiveness, steering torque, and straight-line push force are evaluated using a combination of experimental results and ridged body kinematic simulation. Experimental procedures for measuring steering responsiveness and steering torque are suggested.

Steering responsiveness is observed to decrease with an increase in swivel angle and increase with a decrease in swivel angle. Experimental results are found to correlate very closely to ridged body simulation. Steering torque is found to decrease with an increase swivel angle and increase with a decrease in swivel angle. Straight-line push force is observed to increase with a forward shift in tip-back axis position.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Megan Sanders, Master of Science in Biology**

- **Thesis Title:** Developing novel molecular detection techniques for hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*)

Michigan's hemlock forests are under threat from the highly invasive insect, hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), which feeds on hemlock nutrients and can kill healthy trees in four to ten years. In Michigan, the priority for managing this pest is early detection. Megan's thesis evaluated the potential to use airborne environmental DNA (eDNA) approaches to aid in these efforts. Her work has found eDNA traps are highly efficient at capturing HWA,

particularly during the mobile crawler stage of the insect. Through the success of her thesis work, the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program has funded the continuation of these monitoring efforts. In 2022, 100 traps will be deployed throughout Michigan in high-risk hemlock stands along the northern edge of Michigan's current infestation. Her work has also led to interest from the Canadian Forest Service where they plan to deploy her traps near infested areas in the Niagara region. Megan's thesis has resulted in an incredible body of work that has the potential to significantly improve early detection efforts of this highly invasive pest.

ABSTRACT

Hemlock forests in eastern North America face a deadly threat: the invasive insect, hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), *Adelges tsugae*. Early detection of this pest remains a key focus for management groups to ensure rapid response to control and stop the spread of HWA. In Chapter II, our goals were to develop an affordable, easy-to-use trap that is compatible with airborne eDNA sampling techniques and assess its efficiency as a monitoring tool for HWA. We tested three potential trap designs (i.e., passive trap, funnel trap, and motorized trap) against a standard sticky trap. Our passive, funnel, and motorized traps estimated adelgid capture success probabilities compared to sticky traps were 0.87, 0.8, and 0.4, respectively. We then further assessed the motorized trap after modifying the original design. In the secondary study, the motorized trap increased in estimated success probability to 0.67. We also evaluated how many traps would be needed in a set area size to maintain high probability of detecting HWA and measured how environmental variables affected trap performance in capturing adelgids. We found that number of traps placed within a 3-acre area did not impact trap capture success over a 16-week collecting period, but trap elevation and distance to an infested hemlock did affect adelgid numbers. In Chapter III, we continued to assess the motorized trap's performance across varied height and distance to an infested hemlock stand. We also determined how well a rapid molecular assay worked to detect HWA from the environmental samples caught by the trap. Again, trap distance to an infestation impacted trap capture success, but the height of a trap did not. The molecular assay reached a 0.9 probability of detecting HWA when a trap sample had approximately 14 adelgids present. This technology showed to be very promising as a monitoring tool for HWA and could help preserve valuable personnel and financial resources for HWA eradication efforts across its invasive range.

❖ **Brittany Bahl, Master of Science in Communications**

- **Thesis Title:** Princes, Moms, and Warriors: A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of Toxic Depictions in Film

Brittany's thesis advisor has described her work as a timely and important rhetorical criticism of three artifacts found in popular culture. In addition, her works has also been recognized by the larger academic community. An early draft of one of her chapters was presented at the Midwest Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association convention in October of 2021. Another chapter was not only presented at the Central States Communication Association convention, held in April of 2022, but it was also recognized with two awards, including a top graduate student paper designation and a top debut paper recognition. Brittany is also well prepared for her future studies as she has been accepted to the Communication Studies Ph.D. program at the University of Iowa.

ABSTRACT

Various forms of toxic rhetoric have been the subject of academic study for decades. Despite some advancements toward a more progressive society, toxic rhetorics have continued to persist within the United States, especially within entertainment media. Toxic rhetorics within film, in particular, have remained steadily prevalent and continue to strongly impact audiences and constructions of identity. This thesis utilizes primarily close reading and feminist rhetorical criticism to examine rhetorics of toxicity within three popular film franchises: (1) toxic masculinity in *Coming to America* (1988) and *Coming 2 America* (2021); (2) toxic femininity in *Bad Moms*; and (3) straightwashing as a more toxic form of heteronormativity in *Wonder Woman* (2017) and *Wonder Woman 1984* (2020). The definitions and primary characteristics of these concepts are discussed, including brief histories of their foundations and usage. Some of the main topics addressed in this thesis include concerns regarding representation, visibility, and erasure of marginalized groups within film, as well as the problematic treatment of consent.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
OUTSTANDING FINAL PROJECT
Winter 2022**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Stacie Fifelski, Master of Social Work**

- **Project Title:** Practicing Resilience Conference

Stacie’s intellectual curiosity led her to research her topic of interest and to identify a gap in the training of health and mental health professionals. She went above and beyond what was required for her course work by planning a conference on the practice of resilience and bringing this resource to the GVSU and West Michigan community. The one-day conference hosted by GVSU took place on April 14, 2022. The conference provided students in health professions and related professions with the opportunity to learn more about the long-lasting impacts of trauma and the importance of supporting resilience building for individuals, families, and communities. Stacie has shown great determination to see her project come to fruition in a short period of time. She has excelled in her planning, networking, and research of her topic to develop ideas and locate relevant speakers. Her final capstone project is an outstanding example of her engagement in her professional work, her internship experience, and her coursework at every turn.

❖ **Kaylee Kessler, Master of Education in Special Education**

- **Project Title:** Addressing the Employment Gap and Barriers to Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

Kaylee’s project focuses on the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. In her work she was able to identify a problem and put her energy into identifying a potential solution. She used historical data and research to demonstrate the many efforts to address the problem, while also providing scholarly evidence to illustrate just how pervasive and damaging the lack of a solution is for individuals with disabilities. Kaylee built her project for public school teachers and administrators to help provide the solution that not only helps in her own district, but can also be useful to any educators involved in transition related services. As a teacher, she wanted to ensure that the solutions she explored were options that could

be addressed in a school environment, where special education teachers or administrators are able to have an impact. Kaylee is an outstanding teacher, student, and a promising scholar. She is described to be an important leader to her students, to the Hudsonville Public Schools, and to GVSU.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Ellie Phillips, Master of Science in Biology**

- **Project Title:** Au Sable, Manistee, and Muskegon River Hydroelectric Projects; Emergent Wetlands Monitoring Program, Year 2020 Assessment
- **Project Advisor:** Alexandra Locher – Department of Biology

Ellie's project was funded through Consumers Energy in fulfillment of their obligations to submit a Wildlife and Forest Management Plan (WFMP) to be approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) assessing impacts of their hydroelectric project dam areas on wetlands. Since the Summer semester of her program, she has worked tirelessly to complete her field work to meet the strict reporting timeline with Consumers Energy. It was initially planned for Ellie to have a paid student assistant to help collect field data, but COVID restrictions eliminated that possibility. She creatively found solutions to the restrictions and was able to collect the data she needed independently. Her final report was successfully approved by FERC, and she also produced a more detailed report for the Hardy Dam project area upon request from Consumers Energy. Her work was extremely well-received, and praised by the Consumers Energy project manager. Additionally, they asked her to be featured in their annual Hydro Reporter 2021 publication. As a result of Ellie's experience and report, she was hired for a permanent position as a wetland specialist with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).

❖ **Louis Walter, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**

- **Project Title:** Detection of COVID Variants in Wastewater with QPCR

Louis joined the Molecular Monitoring lab in the CMB department at GVSU to complete his internship as one of the analysts. He became a critical part of the effort to develop a wastewater-based method to quantify the proportions of genotypes that differ in only one to a few nucleotides, such as the variants

of SARS-CoV-2. He is adapting a strategy that is widely used in the field of “personalized medicine” to detect the prevalence of different genotypes from a blood sample from a single individual. Now that the Omicron BA.2 sub-variant is on the rise, Louis designed an assay for this variant and is vetting it prior to deploying it with wastewater samples. If successful, this will be the first reported use of this strategy in wastewater. Louis has expressed that he has gained confidence and competence in lab work, communicating professionally, critical thinking, and troubleshooting skills—all of which are core to the CMB PSM program.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ **Shawna Thomas, Doctor of Nursing Practice**
 - **Project Title:** Behavioral Health Toolkit Developed After Gap Analysis of Three Rural Emergency Departments

Shawna’s project has demonstrated excellence in its conception, merit, significance, in its presentation, and in its sustainability. She is completing the initial phase of this project despite the presence of multiple barriers including a new IRB process, the COVID-19 pandemic, illness-related absences by her site mentor, and the barrier of three distant rural areas in Northern Michigan where she is enacting this project. Despite the challenges, Shawna demonstrates her strong commitment to mental health populations in rural settings by aiming to provide equitable care to vulnerable populations. Shawna diligently shared her knowledge and experience in mental health care principles by conducting a thorough gap analysis, and developing a toolkit for frontline staff. She achieved this through carefully planned scaffolding of trusting relationships, thoughtful communication, and rigorous assessment and tool development in three rural EDs. Shawna has demonstrated flexible creativity in managing an evolving IRB process, working with multiple site mentors, and adding a toolkit to the original request for a gap analysis. Her diligence, scholarship, and strong collaborations have been described as a tremendous asset to KCON and to her project.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION
Winter 2022**

College of Health Professions

- ❖ **Sebastian Vanderest, Doctor of Physical Therapy**
 - **Publication Title:** Outcomes of a child-based manual wheelchair skills peer training program: an exploratory case report
 - **Co-Authors:** Dr. Lisa Kenyon – Department of Physical Therapy, Elizabeth Hesse, Katelynn Pakkala

Sebastian co-authored a publication that focused on exploratory case series to describe the outcomes for both a child-learner and a child-peer after a single manual wheelchair (MWC) skills training session involving child-based peer training techniques, followed by related home-based skills practice. Sebastian was integral to the successful submission of this manuscript. He conducted multiple literature searches related to manual wheelchair skills training in children, and the use of child-based peer-modeling and peer-training techniques in health education and school-based settings. He assisted with the outcomes analysis and interpretation processes, and created the visuals used to represent the data in the manuscript. He drafted the introduction, discussion, and implications for rehabilitation sections of the manuscript and led the final editing process for the complete manuscript.

Sebastian's abstract appears on the next page

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this exploratory case series was to describe the outcomes for both a child-learner and a child-peer after a single manual wheelchair (MWC) skills training session involving child-based peer training techniques, followed by related home-based skills practice. **Materials and methods:** Participants were a 9-year-old with L4–L5 spina bifida (pseudonym: Amari) and a 3-year-old with T10 spina bifida (pseudonym: Mary). Pre-intervention examination included administration of the Wheelchair Skills Test Questionnaire (WST-Q), the MWC short scale within the Mobility domain of the Paediatric Evaluation of Disability – Computer Adapted Test (MWC PEDI-CAT), and the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM). The peer training session, facilitated by a physical therapy team, involved games and activities involving MWC use. When appropriate, Amari was asked to talk aloud and verbally describe the components of the skills she was performing. Each child and her mother were instructed in specific MWC skills to practice at home over a 3-week period. **Results:** Both participants’ post-intervention WST-Q capacity, confidence, and performance scores increased. Increases in parent-proxy COPM scores indicated clinically meaningful change in all identified occupational performance problems. Mary’s total MWC PEDI-CAT post-intervention score increased by 11 points. Both mothers reported that the participation in the activities helped also to improve their child’s self-esteem and self-image. **Conclusions:** Both the participants in this exploratory case appeared to demonstrate improvements in MWC skills, self-esteem, and self-image following a single child-based MWC skills peer training session and related home-based skills practice. Future research involving such peer training methods is warranted.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **April Butler, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

- **Publication Title:** An Integrative Review of Incivility in Nursing Education
- **Co-Authors:** Susan Strouse - Kirkhof College of Nursing

During April’s first year of the DNP program as a Graduate Assistant for Dr. Susan Strouse, she has co-authored a synthesis of an extensive literature review focusing on incivility in nursing education. This review will soon be published in the Journal of Nursing Education.

ABSTRACT

Background: Incivility is a persistent problem in nursing education, with research documenting this phenomenon for more than 40 years. Left unaddressed, incivility persists as nursing students enter the profession, influencing patient outcomes. This integrative review describes the current literature on incivility in nursing education. Concept mapping of this integrative review revealed many facets and participants in this ongoing problem. **Method:** Torracó's method guided this integrative review. Databases searched included Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, ProQuest, and PubMed for research studies. **Results:** Twenty-four research studies were identified for inclusion in this integrative review. **Conclusion:** Incivility in nursing education is well documented in the research literature. Intervention studies mainly focused on changing the behaviors of students without considering the way in which faculty contribute to the problem of incivility. Concept mapping assisted in identifying commonalities in uncivil behaviors experienced by students and faculty. Future interventions may focus on uncivil behaviors demonstrated by both groups

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE
TO THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION
Winter 2022**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Deon Atkins, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**

Deon has served as a United States Capitol Police Officer (PFC) for the past six years. In this capacity, he is charged to protect members of Congress, as well as its employees, visitors, and facilities. He is also sworn to enforce federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations. On January 6, 2021, Deon served not only his local community, but the national community, as well as his profession in defending the Capitol of the United States from rioters, earning a Unit Citation in Recognition of Outstanding Professionalism and Patriotism. He has also earned the following recognitions during his tenure as a Capitol Police Officer:

- Inaugural Award for Exemplary Performance during the 59th Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies Washington, D.C. (2021)
- Letter of Appreciation for performance during the Lying in State of Senator John McCain Washington, D.C. (2018)
- Letter of Appreciation for performance during the 34th America National Peace Officer Washington, D.C. (2017)
- Inaugural Award for Exemplary Performance during the 58th Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies Washington, D.C. (2017)

❖ **Nicolina Evola, Master of Health Administration**

Nicolina has demonstrated outstanding service and arising from her engagement with the Walk to End Alzheimer's, the "world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research." She initiated a relationship with the local Alzheimer's Association as a community engagement and service opportunity for the students in the Health Professions Graduate Student Alliance (HPGSA) and faculty and staff in our healthcare-related programs. The HPGSA is a student affiliate of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), and Nicolina served as an officer this past academic year. Through her efforts, she helped to encourage the entire body of students preparing to be healthcare executives

to engage in meaningful contributions through volunteerism to their profession and community. Initiating this partnership will benefit the MHA program and student leaders well into the future.

❖ **Natalie Davenport, Master of Public Administration**

Natalie exemplifies a commitment to professionalism and excellence in all she does—both in the classroom and in the workplace. During this past academic year, she served as President of the International City/County Management Graduate Student Chapter, and took the lead on organizing several excellent events. One of these events brought 25 area city and county managers to campus to have lunch and network with graduate and undergraduate students and faculty. The event was a success thanks to her leadership and preparation, and served as a significant bridging activity connecting students with professional public servants. Natalie has been an active part of seeking to improve diversity in the city management profession, and is a graduate of the 16/50 Women’s Municipal Leadership Program. Through her work, she has sought and attained additional credentialing by completing the Redevelopment Ready Communities training through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. All of this has helped position her to advance to a new position with Gaines Charter Township, a well-deserved step forward in her career.

❖ **Irene Torres, Master of Social Work**

Irene is an outstanding student with a strong commitment to human rights and social justice. She is passionate about her work with immigrant and refugee populations and is an outspoken advocate. She is currently serving as a social work intern at Bethany Christian Services. In her work with refugee families, she has strived to provide culturally appropriate services and to promote practices and policies that are human rights based. She is dedicated to advocating for her clients’ right to access services and to live in communities that are welcoming. To this end, Irene devotes time to educate her peers and the community on the journeys refugee families are experiencing. Moreover, she provides opportunity for others to engage and think about how they can best support these families transition to making a new home in West Michigan. Irene’s work will infuse the social work profession with an inclusive view and increase cultural competence,

particularly in raising consciousness to the lived experiences of refugee individuals and families.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **George Ebeling, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science and Engineering**

Throughout George's time in the program as a Graduate Assistant, he has exceeded expectations in his performance. He was instrumental in delivering pilot courses of a stretched version of the Applied Programming for Engineers Course. This course is intended for students who are struggling with material and require a slower pace. As a result, this course requires more learning intervention techniques and individualized feedback per student on average. George's presence in the classroom and aid in providing feedback has had a significant impact on the performance of students in the class. His contributions to the classroom provided the opportunity to explore more creative and ambitious activities that allow students to generate unique solutions and figure out ways to make them work. In addition to the impact he has made in these sections, he is also a Graduate Assistant for other instructors of the same course. All faculty have observed the significance of his help in the classroom, and have expressed absolute trust in him as they would a fellow faculty member to assist and guide students.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Zachary Capulong, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Zachary serves as the class APTA- Michigan Student Liaison. In this role, he is one of the key points of contact between the DPT Class of 2022 and the state organization for the physical therapy profession. His responsibilities are essential in growing and maintaining a strong relationship between both organizations. In addition to his service to the profession, Zachary is a passionate volunteer in the running community. He volunteers his time and expertise at running events including the MHSAA LP Regional Cross-Country Meet, Allendale Falcon Cross-Country Invitational, and Michigan

Titanium Triathlon. The GVSU DPT faculty had no doubt to nominate Zachary for his passion and commitment to his community and profession.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Ellen Foley, Master of Science in Biology - Annis Water Resources Institute**

Ellen has demonstrated her passion and dedication to her field through her excellent academic performance. Her thesis research is centered on examining the impact of de-icing salt runoff on the ecology of Church Lake in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Salinization of freshwater bodies in Michigan is a growing problem, and Ellen's work is not only geared to provide scientifically defensible lake management advice to the Church Lake homeowners, but other lakefront residents experiencing similar problems. Ellen's research has already received media attention and she has been asked to present her findings at several conferences around Michigan this Spring. Her research findings will assist the Church Lake Homeowner's Association in restoration efforts to reduce lake salinity, and provides a template of restoration for other lake associations in the state experiencing similar issues. Her research, *Examining the Interactive Effect of Salinity and Excess Nutrients*, will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal this Summer. Ellen has shown an impressive ability to conduct and communicate research that has significant community benefits, and does so in a professional manner that shines brightly on herself, AWRI, and GVSU as a whole.

❖ **Alexis Hoskins, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**

Alexis is one of the many graduate students who stepped up to make the collaboration between the Kent County Health Department and the CMB department a success. She has been involved in most aspects of the project and regularly travels to the Kent County Health Department to prepare the samples for ddPCR and then run them there. Alexis' supervisors observed her to be one of their most technically accomplished analysts. Since she joined the lab in Fall 2021, she has played a key role in the ongoing efforts to help KCHD, MDHHS, and CDC keep abreast of the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. In the Winter of 2022, she chose to dive into their historical database to determine wastewater variables which affect the recovery of amplifiable viral RNA. The results of her work will inform the

discussion about the effectiveness of wastewater testing for this and potentially other viruses—a discussion that is front and center of a national effort to track SARS-CoV-2. Alexis is quiet, focused, determined but always smiling—qualities which will serve her well as she embarks on her career focused on improving medicine.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Autumn Baldwin, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Autumn's passion and work ethic as contributed to her excellence in service to the profession. She was instrumental in the development and growth of the preventive cardiology clinic in a local health system, and followed 400 patients taking a novel treatment for hyperlipidemia. In addition, she is assisting with development of a hypertension clinic. Autumn exemplifies great strength and perseverance by contributing to multiple projects in addition to being a mother of four, working, and going to school full-time.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO GVSU
Winter 2022**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Brock Buozis, Master of Health Administration**

Brock currently serves as the president of the Health Professionals Graduate Student Association (HPGSA). HPGSA is the student professional association associated with the American College of Healthcare Executives. Brock has utilized his effective and engaging leadership abilities and commitment to service in the development and implementation of several major initiatives that have significantly and positively impacted GVSU. To list a few examples, he was instrumental in developing a program where second-year graduate students mentor newer MHA students to facilitate acclimation to GVSU and foster service to the university and community. He also helped developed an internship/fellowship opportunities database for GVSU MHA students. He is actively engaged in the recruitment of potential graduate students into the MHA Program through marketing efforts and onboarding. With his contributions, the board and membership of HPGSA has grown in inclusivity and diversity through pro-active membership and seminar topics/information provided by HPGSA. All major advances would not have been possible without Brock's effective use of empowered leadership and the development of a culture supportive of service to GVSU and the community.

❖ **Andrew Hintz, Master of Public Administration**

Andrew is a tremendous asset to the university showcasing his servant leadership as a community police officer with the Department of Public Safety. During his tenure, Andrew has been able to manage his career and serve the university community, all while pursuing an MPA degree that complements his commitment to public service. According to GVSU's Chief of Police Brandon DeHaan, Andrew's every day actions demonstrated servant leadership while working with students, faculty, and staff. His approach to community policing on the campus is grounded in his integrity and humility, striving to make GVSU a better place for students every day.

❖ **Thomas Worm, Master of Social Work and Master of Public Administration**

Tom has distinguished himself as an outstanding student in the both MSW and MPA Program. He has demonstrated great capacity as a servant-leader and shows advanced leadership skills. Faculty has described Tom to clearly demonstrate social work values, particularly the dignity and worth of the person, integrity, and competence. He is knowledgeable, respectful, flexible, and inclusive. Tom is capable of being sensitive and supportive to others who are struggling, and offers excellent ideas and responses when others have questions or need help. He has also served as President of the Executive Board of the Graduate Student Association. This experience has both revealed and refined Tom's resilience as a leader. Due to the pandemic, he transitioned into the position without much on-boarding from the previous board. His commitment to the continuity and success of the GSA is reflected in his great efforts to ensure that the incoming e-board would not be left in the same position he experienced. The new board has been elected and the on-boarding is in progress. Tom truly embodies the best qualities of leadership and service, both lifting others and leaving things better than he had found them

College of Health Professions

❖ **Jammie Hernandez, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Jammie is a proud representative of Grand Valley State University through her involvement as a graduate student, and currently serves GVSU in several capacities. She is the Vice-President for the DPT Class of 2022, and additionally contributes to GVSU in her activities on the Grand Valley State Women's Basketball Alumni Board and Laker Leadership Development Program. She was a member of the GVSU Women's Basketball Team and served as the team captain from 2014-2016. Jammie was recognized by the "I am Grand Valley Leadership Award" as well as the "Laker Alumni Award" in 2016. Her leadership and passion to her community at GVSU has led DPT faculty to unanimously agree she is extremely deserving of this award.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Victoria Johnson, Master of Cell and Molecular Biology**

Victoria has shown great leadership and commitment throughout her time in the program. For the past two years she has been serving as the President of the Professional Association of Graduate Scientists—a graduate student group serving the PSM students at GVSU. In her role as President of the PAGES student organization, Victoria's responsibilities include generating student interest in the group, organizing formal meetings with guest speakers, and organizing informal socializing and networking events. She was instrumental in keeping the club relevant when most meetings were held virtually in 2021. With her help, the PAGES club was able to organize fun social meetings and virtual networking events despite of the pandemic. Victoria's willingness to serve the graduate student population and excellent leadership as President over a tumultuous time has made her notable in her program.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Julie Hubner, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Julie has demonstrated innovation, leadership, and advocacy skills along with teamwork to develop a new Greater Grand Rapids Student chapter of Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioner (MiCNP). She has particularly demonstrated leadership in taking on the role of president in formation of the new MiCNP student chapter. This involved advocacy skills in seeking approvals for a new student group through both University and MiCNP channels. She has shown her flexible creativity in establishing a new budget and attending regular trainings from both organizations. She has worked endlessly to market this new group, establish the leadership group, and develop succession planning. Her rich experience and calm leadership actively engaged others, and the chapter showed extensive growth. Faculty have described her diligence, leadership, and strong collaboration to be a tremendous asset to KCON and to this new MiCNP student chapter.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN
PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GVSU
Winter 2022**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Lauren Enos, Master of Social Work**

Lauren is an outspoken, passionate individual who does not shy away from difficult conversations about microaggressions and implicit bias in the daily experiences of GVSU community members. She has exemplified this by bringing the GVSU social work community together to challenge biases and behaviors, and to examine professional roles with an anti-racist lens. She has exhibited this same tenacity in her internship role at Affinity Mentoring, becoming an integral part of the team. In addition to helping Affinity secure grants and helping to lead professional development opportunities, she has also devoted her time to Affinity's internal DEI team with a goal of creating a more inclusive organizational culture and providing advocacy and training for programming. Lauren additionally took on an Independent Study project to build an entire website dedicated to research, resources, videos, articles, and best practices for building an anti-racist mentoring model. This model will be made available to all team and board members, as well as all mentors at the organization. She has done all of this work on top of holding a full-time job, being a mom, and being a Graduate Assistant in the school of social work. In each of these roles, Lauren continues to embody her work to reflect the values of inclusion and diversity.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Joshua Olson, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Joshua has demonstrated passion and commitment in his profession of physical therapy. He has promoted inclusion and diversity through his role as a Pro Bono Clinic Coordinator. His responsibilities include coordinating weekly patient management at the GVSU Family Health Center pro bono clinic for physical therapists and student physical therapists to provide rehabilitation services to individuals who are uninsured or underinsured. Joshua further promoted inclusion and diversity through coordinating a Parkinson's exercise class, mentoring through Kids Hope and as a CHAMPS YMCA volunteer. These activities provided opportunities for individuals to participate in exercise-based activities to improve their quality of life.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY
Winter 2022**

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

❖ **Alexis Neff, Master of Science in Biology**

Alexis has shown her passion through her research focused on evaluating the fish community in the downtown reach of the Grand River in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This survey gives the ability to evaluate the effect of a large, multi-million-dollar restoration project that seeks to reconstruct the rapids in this unique stretch of the Grand River. Alexis has been compiling the data from three previous years of surveying to establish a robust dataset that clearly captures the fish community assemblage prior to restoration. In addition, she has conducted surveys of a specific fish, the common logperch (*Percina caprodes*), which an endangered freshwater mussel depends upon for successful propagation and dispersal. This mussel, the snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*), is Federally- and State-threatened and is in danger of extinction. Alexis has disseminated the results of her analysis, and the data she has compiled serves as a foundation for evaluating the economic, social, and environmental benefits and/or costs of the restoration project—specifically, through the lens of the fish community. Her passion for freshwater conservation and fish ecology are contagious ensures her professional career to grow and develop.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Marstie Bunting, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Through Marstie's engagement with the Mercy Health Hart Family Medicine, she assessed the needs of the organization and developed quality improvement initiative that establish a standardized workflow to increase the completion rate of Medicare Annual Wellness Visits (AWVs) and depression screening at a Midwest Rural Health Clinic, thereby improving screening. This initiative promoted preventive services among the aging population and improving the revenue stream for the clinic. She was also a recipient of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) federal funding to support DNP students in integrating mental health care in primary care settings to augment the care provided to rural and underserved populations. Prior to implementation of the intervention, less than 1% of eligible Medicare beneficiaries served by the Mercy Health Hart received an AWV as of August 31, 2021. A total of 170 AWVs were completed during the QI project with 34 individuals receiving the intervention. Upon completion of the QI project, 44% of eligible Medicare beneficiaries served by the clinic had completed their AWVs. Further, 100% of eligible Medicare beneficiaries participating in an AWV underwent depression screening. Marstie's outcomes of improving health and social function for vulnerable elders while improving the economic viability of a rural health center are inspiring and commendable.

3-MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION 2022 First Place Winner

The Graduate School hosted GVSU's annual 3-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition on February 17, 2022. Students presented their independent research in exactly three minutes with the aid of one static PowerPoint slide. A panel of faculty judges from a variety of disciplines at GVSU determined the winner.

The GVSU faculty who served on the 2022 3MT judging panel included:

- Dr. Andrew Booth, College of Health Professions
- Dr. Brian Hatzel, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Dr. Tonisha Jones, College of Education and Community Innovation
- Dr. Libby MacQuillan, College of Health Professions
- Dr. Cray Mulder, College of Education and Community Innovation
- Dr. Wendy Reffeor, Padnos College of Engineering and Computing
- Dr. Gregory Warsen, College of Education and Community Innovation
- Dr. Janet Winter, Kirkhof College of Nursing

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

- ❖ **Marlee Busalacchi, Master of Health Science in Biomedical Sciences**
 - **Presentation Title:** Impacts of Microbial Experience on Monocyte and Macrophage Polarization in B16 Melanoma

Dr. Kristin Renkema, of the Department of Biomedical Sciences, stated, "Marlee is a second year MHS student in the Biomedical Sciences department and is a dedicated and talented scholar and scientist. She trained and supervises a team of undergraduates, and she has taken ownership of her thesis project. Our lab is interested in how immunity is impacted long-term by microbial experience (i.e. how many and how often someone is exposed to microbes, especially during childhood). Specifically, we hypothesize that increased microbial experience will increase anti-tumor immunity. Marlee's thesis project revolves around macrophages, which normally function to promote inflammation and contribute to fighting infections. However, tumor associated macrophages (TAMs) have a different phenotype/function and actually promote tumor growth. Understanding the signals that influence

macrophage function is critical to designing effective cancer immunotherapies.”

RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

Impacts of Microbial Experience on Monocyte and Macrophage Polarization in B16 Melanoma

Traditional research models used to study cancer feature mice which are genetically bred to be free from specific pathogens. While the use of these “clean” mouse models have provided extremely important data in the understanding of the immune response to cancer, it does not accurately represent the immune system of a healthy human adult. By cohousing the “clean” mice with a pet store mouse, exposure to pathogens occurs creating a more developed immune system in the cohoused or “dirty” mice. This “dirty” mouse model allows us to study the influences of microbial exposure on an immune system better representative of an adult with cancer. Macrophages, a cell of the innate immune system, have the ability to polarize into different subtypes depending on the signaling they receive for activation allowing them to take on various functional roles in an infection. Most commonly, macrophages are known to secrete inflammatory signaling molecules and ingest pathogens to help fight infection. Tumor associated macrophages (TAMs) are a type of macrophage known to promote the growth and survival of tumors by decreasing the inflammatory response. Using a “dirty” mouse model allows us to understand how a developed immune system, and specifically macrophage polarization into subtypes, is affected by long-term microbial exposure. We hypothesize that the cohoused mice with increased microbial experience will display more inflammatory and anti-tumoral functions. The use of cohoused mouse models is important in understanding how the developed immune system responds to infections and cancer and can provide vital information in development of cancer immunotherapies. Treatments and immunotherapies can therefore become more targeted through further understanding and development of methods to change tumor associated macrophage subtypes into ones exhibiting anti-tumor immune responses.

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD
Winter 2022**

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

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Dr. Carrie Buist, Department of Criminal Justice**

Nominated by: Haley Rothe, Criminal Justice

Haley writes: "Dr. Carrie Buist is an outstanding example of deservingness of the Kimboko Inclusion Award. Dr. Buist has an advanced understanding of underrepresented groups and has demonstrated this knowledge within her many works as a criminologist. Dr. Buist has published not just a textbook, but the textbook that sets the standard for Queer Criminology. Dr. Buist's publications have focused on feminist criminology, critical criminology, transgender victims and offenders in the criminal justice system, and more focusing on gender and LGBTQ+ topics involving the criminal/legal system. Within both my undergraduate and graduate classes, I have had the pleasure of learning from Dr. Buist. Dr. Buist has taught over 14 different classes within her career which demonstrates her wide knowledge within the field. Within her classroom, she facilitates important and open-minded conversation focused on inclusion to all. Her knowledge and willingness to share it has unlimited potential to improve the quality of life of individuals within the LGBTQ+ community intersected with the criminal/legal system. She is always encouraging involvement in programs, presentations, and clubs at Grand Valley State University. She is beyond helpful to all her students and is always willing to sit down and talk about class materials in depth with each student. She focuses on her students soaking up all the knowledge she shares.

Dr. Carrie Buist has greatly contributed to many students' success here at Grand Valley State University. She creates a safe space for all and a learning environment that provides so much room for growth for everyone. She is a world changer."

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
FACULTY MENTOR AWARD
Winter 2022**

The Faculty Mentor Award serves to acknowledge faculty who exemplify a deep commitment to fostering the professional and personal development of graduate students. This includes encouraging the development of individual talent through advising graduate-level research, promoting professional development opportunities beyond the classroom, and providing a successful transition from graduate studies to individual careers.

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Dr. Nagnon Diarrassouba, Department of Literacy Studies – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages**

Nominated by: Molly Roesler, Literacy Studies – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Molly writes: “Dr. Diarrassouba is a fantastic example of an Outstanding Mentor. I have had the privilege of being in six of his classes, and each time has been incredibly supportive and helpful, as well as professional and exacting in his expectations of his students.

Dr. Diarrassouba always encourages compassion, empathy, and hard work in his classes. As a mentor he always challenges students to see things from other perspectives. He also highly encourages communication and collaboration with other professionals in order for his students to gain more knowledge in the field.

Dr. Diarrassouba provided explicit guidance in implementing TESOL theories and strategies in my teaching classroom and encourages the exploration of new techniques with my students. Additionally, as a graduate mentor, he always challenged my thinking and encouraged me to push myself out of my comfort zone.

Dr. Diarrassouba is consistently available to his students and takes a personal interest in their lives. Many times, he inquired about my two pet cats and

how my students were doing. Dr. Diarrassouba is a genuinely caring person, and this is reflected in his interactions with his students.

Dr. Diarrassouba also encourages professional development in his students. He notified his students of many opportunities to attend or present at professional conferences related to TESOL and language studies. He has encouraged me to present my project at MABE and other language and literacy conferences.

Dr. Nagnon Diarrassouba is an excellent teacher, mentor, and colleague. I am a better student and teacher because of his influence.”

College of Health Professions

- ❖ **Ms. Josie Fowler, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**
Nominated by: Jenna Snyder, Speech-Language Pathology

Jenna writes, “Ms. Fowler was first a professor to me and she is now my clinical supervisor, helping me navigate my learning and reflect as I engage in clinical placements. I was an elementary teacher with a M.Ed. and I decided to change careers at age 29 and go back for a second graduate degree, this time in speech-language pathology. Throughout my educational journey I have had many strong mentors and professors at the graduate level, but not one has made the same impact that Ms. Fowler has. This life change has been incredibly taxing, especially as I deal with the emotional fall out of such a huge decision. I have felt like an “imposter” of a good student and graduate clinician at times, something I now know is actually quite common. Throughout this journey I have learned to trust that I am in the right place because every step along the way Ms. Fowler has made me feel confident, calm, and competent. She has been there as an ear to listen, a sage to turn to for good advice, and somebody whose expertise I trust. I am confident my experience at Grand Valley would not have been as enriching and as fulfilling if she were not there to mentor us. Ms. Fowler is an absolute asset to anyone she works with, mentors, or teaches, and Grand Valley is incredibly lucky to have her. In closing, I hope you will confer my highest regards and heartfelt nomination to the committee who selects the winners of this award.”

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Dr. Amy Manderscheid, Kirkhof College of Nursing**

Nominated by: Kelsey Crampton, Nursing-Doctorate

Kelsey writes: "I have been so fortunate to have been assigned Dr. Manderscheid for my project advisor for my doctoral program. Not only is she kind, encouraging, and supportive, she displays exemplary leadership. Throughout my time working with her she has encouraged me to reach beyond what I thought possible for myself. She has guided me, step by step, through the creation of my graduate project and I do not think I could have done nearly as well without her. She is reliable, dependable, and although busy, she is a master at managing her very busy schedule while still ensuring that there is ample time available to help me with anything that I may need. She has volunteered her own time, multiple times, to help me and my classmates with issues that may not be covered in class. Most recently she took 2 hours out of her Saturday to discuss board testing and preparation with us. She is the vice president of Sigma Theta Tau and has recently been charged with being one of the head faculty for our immersion class. She respects our time and viewpoints and has already been asking for our opinions on what can be done so we get more out of these immersion classes and experiences. She has helped me determine conferences to attend, professional organizations to join, and where/how to publish my graduation manuscript. I could not have asked for a more outstanding mentor. I hope you will reward her hard work with this honor."

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD
Winter 2022**

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 Health Professions

❖ **Ms. Kristen Vu, School of Interdisciplinary Health**

Nominated by: Kelly Alley, Medical Dosimetry

Kelly writes: “Kristen Vu is an asset to GVSU and should be recognized for all her hard work and dedication. Kristen is a very wonderful professor, medical dosimetrist and person in general. She truly cares about her students and their understanding of the incredibly important material she is providing us. This year, Kristen has taught 20 new students the skills necessary to aid in curing cancer. She is not only impacting our lives as future dosimetrists, but also the cancer patients themselves, their friends, and families. With one cohort of students, she is changing the lives of thousands of people, and that is more than worthy of an outstanding award.”

❖ **Dr. Cathy C. Harro, Department of Physical Therapy**

Nominated by: Hayley Hall, Physical Therapy

Hayley writes: “Dr. Cathy Harro immediately came to mind when reading the Teaching Award description. Her Neuro Interventions course carries a reputation as very rigorous, sitting at the pinnacle of the DPT curriculum in its intensity and challenge. Classroom and lab components emphasize breadth and depth of understanding both the theories and their clinical applications. Cathy masterfully scaffolds these concepts throughout the semester and compiles them in her comprehensive course pack, which included notes and additional resources. My class took this course in Fall 2020, so Cathy had to adapt and deliver this core content over Zoom and an adjusted lab setting. She met the challenge head-on in 2020, and then as Cathy’s GA in Fall 2021 I had the privilege of joining in and assisting with the

lab. At our first meeting, she helped me form a private study group for students she had identified as struggling with the midterm. We had frequent communication about the progress of that group, and it was very clear that she wants to put every single student in the best position to deeply learn, understand, and test well with the material. As a GA I also had a front-row seat to her meticulous organization and preparation for each lab in order to maximize limited time. She also demonstrated incredible creativity with the resources and spaces available across CHS and DCIH. Additionally, Cathy spearheads our DPT research initiatives and is highly involved in the community, leading a class for people with Parkinson's and supporting students' service initiatives."

❖ **Dr. Heather Wallace, Department of Public Health**

Nominated by: Leigha Filips, Public Health

Leigha writes: "I have had Dr. Wallace for three courses during my time in the MPH program and is currently my project advisor for my MPH project. In her classroom, she starts off with mindfulness to create a stress-free environment and during class time, she facilitates classroom discussions on weekly topics to stimulate critical thinking and social skills amongst myself and my peers. Instead of having papers and exams like a typical class, she has us apply what we have learned in the program to a wide range of topics, such as health disparities amongst different communities, such as the LGBTQIA+ community and immigrants. Although our current class is around certain sensitive topics, such as religion and spirituality, she does an amazing job creating a safe space to speak our thoughts and often gives critical feedback. Her knowledge of health and disease disparities as they relate to social determinants of health and behavioral theories has allowed me to have a better understanding of why certain things exist in public health and how I can approach these problems once I am in the field. Moreover, she deeply cares about her students. I recently lost my home due to an apartment fire, and when I notified her via email, she offered me a place to stay and a pair of shoes. She truly wants what is best for her students and wants to see them succeed."

GRADUATE STUDENT PRESIDENTIAL RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Spring/Summer 2021

Bain, Matthew. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Pre-restoration Survey of the Benthic Macroinvertebrate Community in the Grand Rapids Reach of the Grand River, MI*

Bunda, Nicholas. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.

Title: *In Vitro Anti-PD-1/Anti-CTLA-4 Checkpoint Blockade in “Dirty” Mice*

Dugener, Nate. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology/AWRI.

Title: *Out of Oxygen: Exploring the Causes and Consequences of Bottom Water Hypoxia in a Great Lakes Estuary Using Time-series Measurements, Experiments, and Analyses*

Eckstein, Delaney; Mangat, Tanveer; Peters, Alyson; Smith, Kayleigh. College of Health Professions, Occupational Therapy.

Title: *Pediatric mTBI: School Staff and Occupational Therapy Practitioner Perceptions*

Foley, Ellen. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology/AWRI.

Title: *Lake Responses to Elevated Levels of Chloride and Phosphorus*

Forest, Erika. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Relationships Between Age and Relative Telomere Length in Pteropus Bats: Implications for Conservation and Phylogenetics*

Fox, Rachael. College of Health Professions, Occupational Therapy.

Title: *Occupational Deprivation and Emotional Well-being of Immigrant Mothers*

Harrison, Claire. College of Health Professions, Occupational Therapy.

Title: *Identifying Barriers to Accessibility: A Public Museum Re-Design*

Lift, Mackenzie. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Can Leaf Vascular Architecture Help Predict Plant Performance in a Changing Arctic?*

Martin, Kelly. Padnos College of Engineering and Computing, Biomedical Engineering.

Title: *Development of a Novel Device for Snake Envenomation Therapies*

Neff, Alexis. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Habitat Use and Movement Patterns of Burbot (*Lota lota*) in the Grand River Watershed*

Petersen, Maggie. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology/AWRI.

Title: *The Impact of Microplastic Ingestion on Gut Microbial Communities and Their Downstream Health Effects in a Freshwater Fish Species*

Vander Stelt, Nicholas. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology/AWRI.
Title: *Habitat and Biological Assessment of Boardman River Tributaries: Implications for Arctic Grayling Reintroduction*

Fall 2021

Mulford, Alison. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Comparative Anatomical Study of the Brachial Plexus of Primates*

Walker, Zachary. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Adjustments of Aggression via a Neuropharmacological Agent*

Winter 2022

Baldwin, Autumn; Finn, Thomas; Hill, Elizabeth. Kirkhof College of Nursing, DNP.
Title: *Reducing Delirium and Functional Decline in a Health System: Implementing Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) - An Evidence-based Intervention*

Busalacchi, Marlee. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Impacts of Microbial Experience on Tumor Associated Macrophages*

Mali, Kuhelika. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Effects of Estrogen and Aging on Male Reproduction*

Olen, Tara. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Effects of Serotonin on the Chronic Stress Response in Crayfish Following Nonylphenol Exposure*

Plata, Hailey. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.
Title: *Comparison of Reproductive Function in Three Strains of Mice*

**OTHER GRADUATE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN WINTER 2022**

**GLENN A. NIEMEYER AWARD
FOR OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENTS**

*This is a university-wide award honoring the most outstanding graduate students;
selection is made by the Provost's Cabinet.*

Outstanding Graduate Students

- ❖ Keith Abraham, Nursing-Doctorate
- ❖ Hayley Hall, Physical Therapy

Excellence-in-a-Discipline Awards 2021-2022

Seidman College of Business

- ❖ Julia Hofmann, Accounting
- ❖ Hans Broeckert, General Business

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Alexis LaFata, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Brock Buozi, Health Administration
- ❖ Olivia Knodel, Higher Education
- ❖ Taylor Triemstra, Instruction and Curriculum
- ❖ Abigail Williamson, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Holly Honig, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership
- ❖ Kate White, Public Administration
- ❖ Stacey Skorupski Abbs, School Counseling
- ❖ Thomas Worm, Social Work and Public Administration
- ❖ Kristina Koning, Special Education
- ❖ Matthew Lewis, Educational Specialist in Leadership

Padnos College of Engineering and Computing

- ❖ Elizabeth Mitchell, Applied Computer Science

- ❖ Jacob Coddair, Cybersecurity
- ❖ Alyssa Hawker, Data Science and Analytics
- ❖ North Yates, Engineering
- ❖ Sierra Strutz, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Alex Coon, Athletic Training
- ❖ Alyssa Koopman, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Stephanie Graham, Medical Dosimetry
- ❖ Bethany Abramczyk, Occupational Therapy
- ❖ Morgan Klein, Physician Assistant Studies
- ❖ Jaylee Brown, Public Health
- ❖ Robin Skrbina, Speech-Language Pathology
- ❖ Zoe Lionas, Audiology
- ❖ Malorie Vasseur, Physical Therapy

Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies

- ❖ Daniel Falknor, Social Innovation

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

- ❖ Kellie Corbett, Applied Linguistics
- ❖ Megan Woodworth, Applied Statistics
- ❖ Alyssa Swinehart, Biology
- ❖ Nicholas Bunda, Biomedical Sciences
- ❖ Alicia Stowe, Biostatistics
- ❖ Alexis Hoskins, Cell and Molecular Biology
- ❖ Brittany Bahl, Communications
- ❖ Josh Aldrich, English
- ❖ Abigail Coberly, School Psychology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Kelsey Crampton, Nursing

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President: Tom Worm, Social Work and Public Administration

Vice President: Shelinda Knight Davenport, Social Innovation

Finance Officer: Pavan Kalyan Pallapu, Engineering

Administrative Officer: Jazmine March, Social Work

Communications Officer: Mae Rickey, Higher Education

Advisors:

Dr. Jennifer Pope, Department of Marketing

Valerie Guzman, Office of Student Life

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Dr. Amy Campbell, Psychology

Vice-Chair:

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Dr. Mark Staves, Cell and Molecular Biology



Dr. Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School

Irene Fountain, Administrative Assistant

Trista Bergerud, Assistant Director of Programming and Communication

Graduate Assistants:

Kassie Nguyen, Public Health

Maggie Scannell, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership

Student Assistants:

Riley Begeman, Advertising and Public Relations (undergraduate)

Long Ho, Management (undergraduate)

Sarah Spencer, Writing (undergraduate)

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