

Student Spotlight: Gyula "Julius" Szilagyi

Kristie Scanlon, Assistant Director

When people meet Julius Szilagyi for the first time, they will likely ask two questions: how do you say your last name and where are you from?



His family story starts in Romania, where both of his parents were born and his grandparents still live. His parents fled

to Hungary in 1988 and later moved to Austria to begin their life and start a family. Szilagyi's family taught him the value of hard work and encouraged him to pursue a college degree. He is the first in his family to attend college and he now realizes that he is setting an example for his two younger sisters.

Szilagyi is a senior, majoring in communications and broadcasting. He has been working in the Office of Multicultural Affairs since his Freshman year and serves as the sports director for WCKS. He was recently hired at WLAV-FM to help with broadcast production and hopes to host an on-air talk show some day.

Szilagyi chose GVSU because he liked the campus feel and strong academic programs. "I feel very at home here and have met a lot of really nice people. The faculty are very friendly and always willing to help students," he said.

When asked what he has learned from his time at Grand Valley, Szilagyi said: "I am so grateful for the opportunities I have been given. Working for WCKS and WLAV has really helped me sharpen my broadcasting skills. I have learned valuable life skills by living on my own and taking responsibility for my career."

Director's Corner

Connie Dang, Director

Welcome to the 2011–2012 academic year! The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) staff is proud to present a variety of cultural heritage celebration programs and diversity lecture series. As we kick off another year, it is essential to thank our campus partners for continued support to make these programs dynamic and sustainable for our community.

Please join us at the annual Intercultural Student Reception, September 15, to welcome incoming students, new faculty and staff members. The first event of Hispanic Heritage Month, *Caribbean Nights – Noche Caribeña*, performed by Grupo Ayé, will be held September 16 at the Pew Grand Rapids Campus Courtyard. This monthlong program will feature a variety of cultural and educational events that run through October 13.

In partnership with Seidman College of Business, OMA will present a nationally and internationally acclaimed speaker, Dr. Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, for the fall Professionals of Color Lecture Series. Suarez-Orozco is the co-founder of the Harvard Immigration Project and a member of the National Academy of Education. His lecture, "What is the Impact of Globalization and Immigration on Businesses around the World?" will be held October 13. To celebrate Native American Heritage Month, the next Professionals of Color Lecture Series will feature Dennis Zotigh, who will speak on "American Indian History and Culture" on November 9. Zotigh is a Kiowa, San Juan Pueblo and Santee Dakota Indian and a member of the Kiowa Gourd Clan. Please refer to OMA's website, www.gvsu.edu/oma, for details on other events during Native American Heritage Month.

In conjunction with the Kaufman Interfaith Institute, the Interfaith Dialogue Association and numerous campus departments, we will host a

series of interfaith dialogue for students, faculty and staff members which starts this fall. The series provides a space for our campus community to engage in conversations about issues of religion, spirituality and interfaith cooperation. Please register at www.gvsu.edu/dos/interfaith.htm.

New this year, in collaboration with WGVSU, OMA will debut the CinemAwareness Series. The series offers opportunities to raise awareness on an array of diversity and multicultural topics. Movies will be shown in the lobby of OMA on the third Friday of each month—the popcorn is always free!

This fall, OMA welcomes 153 freshmen into the Multicultural Cohort Programs. OMA is committed to providing students with a positive, supportive and academically challenging environment that will assist them throughout their college education. It is noteworthy to mention that four Multicultural Cohort Program students—Sharquel Campbell, Phoebe James, Latrice Jones and Jessica Young—received support from OMA to participate in study abroad programs. Those students have actively participated in the cohort programs since attending Grand Valley. Last, on behalf of the scholarship selection committee, I am proud to announce the first recipient of the Dean Emeritus Don Williams Sr. Multicultural Business Education (MBEC) scholarship, Bridget Robinson. Bridget joined the MBEC program in fall 2007, majoring in management and health care information systems. The scholarship was created and funded last fall by Ray Bennett, '92, alumnus of the OMA's MBEC program.

Have a successful year. Go Lakers!

Warmest regards,

Connie Dang,
 Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs

Wade H. McCree Summer Bridge Program

Danny Ha, Program Coordinator

This summer, the members of the Wade H. McCree, Jr. Incentive Program and high school class of 2012 had a taste of college life through Grand Valley's inaugural Wade H. McCree Summer Bridge Program. For some students, it was their first step on a college campus. For all students, it was a step closer to achieving their goal of attending college.

Named in honor of Wade H. McCree, Jr., former U.S. solicitor general and distinguished professor at the University of Michigan, the program reflects a unified commitment by Michigan's public universities to further increase and enhance opportunities in higher education for first-generation college students. The Wade H. McCree, Jr. Incentive Program at Grand Valley provides an outstanding educational opportunity for students to reach their full potential as scholars in the classroom and as citizens in their respective communities.

In its first year, the Summer Bridge Program gave high school students opportunities to take a deeper look into



the academic programs and the resources available on campus. Students received a welcome from George Davis, associate director of Admissions, who gave an overview of Grand Valley's admissions process and timeline. Students were provided with team building challenges, and, while strategizing how to conquer various obstacles, they started to learn about themselves and how to rely on each other.

Next, the students were split into smaller groups to compete in the Amazing Race: GVSU edition. Equipped

with nothing but clues and water bottles on a hot summer day, the students took to campus to race against time and the heat. From the eye-popping, "red shoes" displayed in Lake Ontario Hall to the newly dedicated Kelly Family Sports Center, students discovered many of Grand Valley's treasures.

The day included tours of resources available in the Student Services Building, Kirkhof Center, as well as various classrooms, labs and lecture halls. But the best challenge came at the end of the day when the students took

on the Recreation Center's climbing wall. With 2,600 square feet of climbing surface, students tested their strength, endurance, focus and problem-solving skills.

The goal of the Summer Bridge Program is to encourage the students to continue their education after high school and diminish their fears about college. We hope it also encourages them to see their futures here at Grand Valley and become a part of our community.

GEAR UP Students to Graduate June 2012

Bobby Springer, Associate Director



Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP) will soon graduate the class of 2012. After five years of intense involvement, the program is proud to present its first graduating cohort of 523 seniors.

The grant started in the fall of 2006 to provide an opportunity for underrepresented students to discover firsthand the potential of a college education. Grand Valley's GEAR UP/College Day Program targeted Grand Rapids Public Schools middle school students in the seventh grade, working with them until their senior year.

GEAR UP/CD is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, State of Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth and Grand Valley.



Study Abroad: Shanghai, China

Shaka Campbell, Junior, Social Work
Grand Rapids, MI • Member of Multicultural Higher Education Cohort

Traveling abroad has always been a dream for me. My dream finally came true this summer when I participated in the Grand Valley trip to East China Normal University in Shanghai, China. I was very anxious prior to leaving and even doubted if I could really do it. However, I knew this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I didn't want to miss my chance.

I participated in the faculty-led program with Professor Geling Shang from the Philosophy Department. There were 16 students from Grand Valley who participated. While overseas, our group stayed in the international student dorms and I completed a business ethics and comparative philosophy course.

My goal for study abroad was to learn about a culture different than my own. I wanted to immerse myself in a culture and experience it firsthand. It is amazing to me that in just a few short weeks, I was able to learn so much about the Chinese culture through conversation, listening and observing. This experience has allowed me to see the world through a new lens.



While in China, we were able to do a lot of exploration. We hiked up to the Great Wall of China, visited Buddhist temples, gardens and the site of the 2008 Olympic Games. We also spent a lot of time with Chinese students to learn about each other's cultures and histories.

I would advise anyone interested in study abroad to meet with advisors in Padnos International Center. When you study abroad, be willing to allow for growth in different areas of your life, including new friends, new food and new experiences. I am so glad that I had this experience and am grateful to Grand Valley for its support.

Kansas City Chiefs Internship

Mark Bland, Senior, Sports Leadership
Southfield, Michigan
Member of Multicultural Business Education Cohort

The day I started working for the Kansas City Chiefs Football Club changed my life and confirmed my passion to work in sports marketing.

I was fortunate to be offered a marketing internship with the Chiefs organization in September 2010. The selection process for student interns is highly competitive, with thousands of students applying from all over the country. I was happy just to get an interview, and thrilled when I was actually offered the job!

I was very nervous for my first day on the job. As soon as I walked into the building, I knew I was meant to be there. Everyone greeted me with open arms and made me feel right at home. My first week on the job was very special to me; I was able to celebrate my 20th birthday at the team's pep rally in downtown Kansas City, then top it off at a playoff game.

During my time with the organization, I was involved in a variety

of projects and programs. Some of my favorites included planning radio ads for the draft party, working with the finance department, and working with the production crew during cheerleading try-outs. My duties also included ticket operations and sales, sponsorships, and guest services.

Throughout my internship, I was given ample opportunities to network with colleagues and executives. I was able to develop a working relationship with the team's CEO/president and the vice president of media and marketing. I was so honored that they took the time to teach me the business and share their wisdom. I know that this experience will help me build a solid career in the sports marketing business.



MBEC Scholarship Winner

Kristie Scanlon, Assistant Director

Bridget Robinson knew that joining the Multicultural Business Education Cohort program would help her be successful in her college career. What she didn't know is that her participation would provide her with a unique scholarship opportunity.



Robinson, a senior majoring in management and health care information systems, was selected as the first recipient of the Dean Emeritus Don Williams Sr. Multicultural Business Education Scholarship. This scholarship was established by Ray Bennett, '92, an alumnus of the MBEC program and senior vice president of lodging development for Marriott International. Bennett wanted to create the scholarship to recognize and assist MBEC students with the cost of education. Bennett chose to name the scholarship after Williams as a tribute to his work and legacy at Grand Valley.

Robinson was one of many students who applied for the scholarship. The selection process included a written essay describing why they deserve the scholarship, future career goals and plans to help others and serve their communities. All candidates were interviewed by the scholarship committee.

Robinson is from Detroit and a 2007 graduate from Mumford High School. She chose Grand Valley for its location and to experience a more diverse group of people. When she first arrived on campus, she had to quickly learn to live independently and adjust to college life and the demands of classes. She was very happy with the level of support she found at Grand Valley, especially through the MBEC program.

When asked what advice she would give other students, Robinson said: "Ask for help. It's OK to seek help from your professor, counselor or go to tutoring. Take advantage of every resource made available to you." She also encouraged students to stay on track for graduation. "Stay focused on your coursework, even if you are feeling frustrated. Just remind yourself that it will all be worthwhile after you graduate," she said.

After graduation, Robinson plans to work in the health care field in a business management role.

Office of Multicultural Affairs

Fall 2011 Schedule of Events

September 15 4:00–6:00 p.m.	Intercultural Student Reception Grand River Room, Kirkhof Center
September 16 2:00 p.m.	CinemAwareness: Farmingville 1240 Kirkhof Center
September 16 6:00–9:00 p.m.	Caribbean Nights – Noche Caribeña: Performance by Grupo Ayé Pew Campus Courtyard
September 20 1:00–2:30 p.m.	Hispanic Heritage Month: L@tinos Health Services in Grand Rapids Cook DeWitt Center
September 28 12:00–1:00 p.m.	Diversity Brownbag Series: Understanding Our Differences: Mexicans and Americans 1240 Kirkhof Center
October 4 2:00–4:15 p.m.	Tres Vidas: A look into the lives of three legendary Latin American Women Cook DeWitt Center
October 13 2:00–4:00 p.m.	Hispanic Heritage Month: Immigrations true impact on higher education in the United States Grand River Room, Kirkhof Center
October 13 6:00–7:30 p.m.	Professionals of Color Lecture Series: What is the Impact of Globalization and Immigration on Businesses Around the World? Loosemore Auditorium
October 21 2:00 p.m.	CinemAwareness: Welcome to Shelbyville 1240 Kirkhof Center
November 2 12:00–1:00 p.m.	Diversity Brownbag: Native Americans and the Great Lakes 2204 Kirkhof Center
November 9 4:00–5:30 p.m.	Professionals of Color Lecture Series: American Indian History & Culture featuring Dennis Zotigh Grand River Room, Kirkhof Center
November 18 2:00 p.m.	CinemAwareness: Trudell 1240 Kirkhof Center

Visit www.gvsu.edu/oma
or call 616.331.2177
for complete event details.



Office of Multicultural Affairs Staff

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For the latest news and events, check us out on the Web www.gvsu.edu/oma

Archived copies of the OMA's newsletters can be accessed through our Web site address above.

About Us

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) fosters a respect for and an appreciation of the history, tradition, and culture of different ethnic groups and empowers ethnic minority students to be active participants in Grand Valley's community through programs that promote academic, social, and cultural development for students.

OMA's vision is to promote acceptance and appreciation of an inclusive campus community that values the diversity of people, backgrounds, and perspectives of each individual.

Guiding Principles:

- Fosters a campus climate that respects and appreciates the history, culture, and traditions of various ethnic groups.
- Empowers students to be active participants in the Grand Valley community.
- Stimulates and encourages intercultural awareness and dialogue among university members.
- Takes an active role in promoting academic, social, cultural, leadership and professional development for students.

The OMA staff serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff on issues of inclusion, diversity, multiculturalism, and interculturalism.

Our Contact Information

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OMA News is a bi-yearly publication of the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Project Manager/Editor: Kristie Scanlon

Design and Production: Ruth Oldenburg, Rainstick Studio