



**GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FREDERIK MEIJER  
HONORS COLLEGE**



**Graduate Profiles**

**Grand Valley State University**

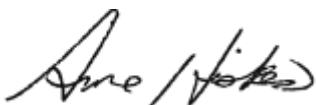
**Class of Fall 2017**

**“Live. Learn. Lead.”** This is the motto of the Frederick Meijer Honors College. It was adopted because it describes what Honors students do. Even a cursory glance through the profiles of the graduates included in this booklet will confirm this. Honors students are accomplished scholars and extraordinary leaders, and they contribute to a remarkable array of fields. They are also global citizens, as is demonstrated by how many of them have studied abroad, have been involved in service activities and organizations, and plan to devote themselves to the public good in their professional and personal lives. Given their successes and contributions, there is no question that these graduates will go on to do even greater things.

Few of the graduates will say that it has been easy to get to this point – they have been challenged and tested along the way. It takes exceptional motivation, persistence, and achievement to graduate in good standing in the Meijer Honors College.

Graduates, it is with great pleasure and pride that we congratulate and commend you upon your graduation. We are privileged to have played a role in your education, delighted by your triumphs, and eager to hear about your future successes. Please stay in touch and let us know where you go and what you do.

With our esteem and best wishes for your future,



Anne Hiskes, Dean  
Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies



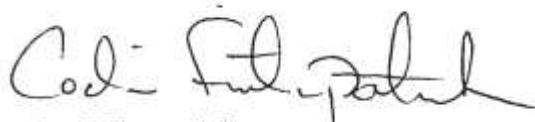
Meg Marshall  
Honors Academic & Enrichment Advisor



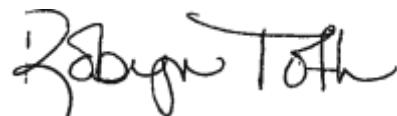
Kelly McDonell  
Honors Academic & Enrichment Advisor



Roger Gilles  
Interim Director, Meijer Honors College



Coeli Fitzpatrick  
Chair of the Honors Faculty



Robyn Toth  
Meijer Honors College Assistant



**Congratulations Graduates!**

The Frederik Meijer Office of Fellowships part of the Frederik Meijer Honors College, commends you on completing your undergraduate studies at Grand Valley State University. We know you have bright futures and look forward to your many accomplishments in years to come.

Remember that our services are available to alumni!

Competitive scholarships, fellowships and awards support graduate study, language study, public service, research, foreign service, teaching and other opportunities in the US and overseas. These awards reward past performance, recognize future promise, and often serve as springboards to greater opportunities. Begin your search at [www.gvsu.edu/fellowships](http://www.gvsu.edu/fellowships) under "Award Opportunities" and <http://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships-list.htm>.

To learn more about inter/nationally competitive awards, visit our homepage, email [fellowships@gvsu.edu](mailto:fellowships@gvsu.edu) or click on the "schedule an appointment" button and select "alumni" under [www.gvsu.edu/fellowships](http://www.gvsu.edu/fellowships).

We look forward to working with you!

Wishing you continued success,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Harrington Lambert".

Elizabeth Harrington Lambert  
Director

**Chelsea Ayotte, English, Minor in Linguistics**



**Senior Project title:** “Depression and Other Friends” An Exploration into Mental Illness Through Poetry

**Summary of senior project:** For my project, I will be composing poems which draw on my own experience with mental illness. By doing so, I hope to show how writing poetry can be an excellent coping mechanism for those who suffer from mental illness. My project will also include personal narratives to accompany the poems, as well as research about how mental illness affects college students.

**Research and presentations:** For my English capstone, I presented a project entitled ““Women is Losers”: Janis Joplin and Women’s Language, where I examined how women’s language has been used and modified, especially through rock music. I showed that by examining how Janis Joplin redefined so called “woman’s language” in her songs, and in the music industry, we can discover how to do the same with woman’s language today.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** For me, the greatest accomplishment is graduating college. I am a first-generation student, so the fact that I’m even here is a huge accomplishment.

**Plans after graduation:** After I graduate, I will be moving to China to teach English as a second language. I hope to work with the UNHCR one day as an ambassador to refugee camps in foreign countries.

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## Kelsey Brennan, Computer Science



**Senior Project title:** Bio Tower Defense Mobile Game

**Summary of senior project:** We created a Tower Defense-style Android app to model antibiotic resistance. The app includes educational information about the bacteria in the game and the antibiotics used to control them.

**Research and presentations:** For my capstone project, I worked with a team of other computer science students to develop a mobile app for the Grand Haven Musical Fountain that will facilitate audience participation through live polling.

**Leadership Activities:** I was an Honors freshman mentor for two years, and have served on the executive boards of the Women in Computing Club, and the Civil War Club.

**Activities/Awards:** Award of Excellence for Computer Science, Upsilon Pi Epsilon International Honor Society for the Computing and Information Disciplines member

**Study Abroad experience:** I spent two weeks in Switzerland in July 2016 studying cloud computing at Zurich University of Applied Sciences.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** I interned at Steelcase from May 2017 through the end of the fall semester on the Engineering Systems team in the IT department.

**Plans after graduation:** I am planning to work as a software developer in Stockholm, Sweden after graduation, and eventually coming back to Grand Rapids and working locally as a software developer.

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**Rose Cunningham, Information Systems**



**Senior Project title:** Website Redesign for the Mu Kappa Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi

**Summary of senior project:** I designed and developed a new website for my honorary band service fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi. The new website features a responsive design that allows it to be viewed on any device and web optimized content about our chapter and events.

**Leadership Activities:** Technology Chair of the Mu Kappa Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi 2016-2017

**Activities/Awards:** 2017 Award of Excellence in Information Systems - GVSU School of Computing and Information Systems

**Internship/Practicum experience:** Raytheon Professional Services: Software Development Intern - Summer 2015, Meijer: Web Development Intern - Summer 2017

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Spending 5 years in the Grand Valley Laker Marching Band.

**Plans after graduation:** Contracting as a Front End Web Developer for Meijer.com

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**Aleck Ebels, Finance & Business Economics**



**Senior Project title:** The Fear Index

**Summary of senior project:** An analysis of how well the VIX index predicts stock market returns and to what degree investors react to negative stock market news. Completed with Professor Vijay Gondhalekar.

**Research and presentations:** An analysis on the financial crisis of 2008, how well the US Government and Federal Reserve responded to it, how our current economy compares to that time period, and what's likely to occur in the future for our economy. Completed with Professor Aaron Lowen.

**Leadership Activities:** Executive board member of GVSU's Investment Portfolio Organization as a portfolio manager for 2 semesters.

**Activities/Awards:** 5 semesters on the Dean's List.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** 11 months as an intern followed by 9 months as a Financial Analyst for the Grand Rapids-based investment bank, Charter Capital Partners.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Successfully completing a semester of both full-time work and full-time school, with only one trip to the doctor's office needed.

**Plans after graduation:** Continue my career with Charter Capital Partners, while traveling and spending time with family as much as possible.

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**Marisa Enokian, Finance & Economics, Minor in Spanish**



**Senior Project title:** ¡Que Delicioso

**Summary of senior project:** Her senior project was a culinary exploration into Hispanic and Latino traditional dishes and how they are linked with their culture. The project includes an educational cookbook and supplementary paper.

**Leadership Activities:** She was a leader on campus, as she was an executive board member for both the Seidman Investment Portfolio Organization (VP) and the Economics Club (VP of Marketing).

**Internship/Practicum experience:** In the summer of 2017 she completed a finance internship with the Raymond James Financial Home Office in Southfield, MI.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Her greatest accomplishment at GVSU is graduating with honors with a double major and minor in 3 and 1/2 years.

**Plans after graduation:** After graduation, she will be moving to the fabulous Las Vegas area to begin her career as a Financial Representative with Fidelity Investments.

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**Lauren Hamberg, Spanish & Secondary Education**



**Senior Project title:** A Reverse-Engineering of the English Language

**Summary of senior project:** My senior project almost wrote itself. It started off as a blog that would record my adventures as an intern in an English classroom in Spain. The blog naturally grew itself to become an in-depth research based comparison between the Spanish (Basque) education system and our own.

**Leadership Activities:** Resident Assistant

**Activities/Awards:** I am Grand Valley, Outstanding Senior of the Year nominee

for the Frederick Meijer Honors College, Outstanding Senior of the Year for Spanish Department.

**Study Abroad experience:** Academic year in Bilbao, España

**Internship/Practicum experience:** Internship in Education – La Universidad de Deusto, Teacher Assistant – Grand Rapids Union High School, Student Teacher -

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** I consider my greatest accomplishment to be my study abroad experience in Bilbao, Spain. It was the most challenging and rewarding time of my educational career.

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**Rachel Harvey, Allied Health Sciences**



**Senior Project title:** Concussions

**Summary of Senior Project:** My senior project was a comprehensive study of what a concussion is, as well as the incidence rates in high school athletics in Michigan. The final project is a brochure, including definitions, signs and symptoms, incidences, long term effects, and possible prevention strategies.

**Leadership Activities:** Member of the Honor's transitions leaders and on the executive board for a few years.

**Activities/Awards:** I participate in intramurals through Grand Valley, and was also a member of the Dean's List every semester.

**Internship/Practicum Experience:** I have worked at Spectrum Health and Mercy Health Saint Mary's.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Keeping a competitive GPA while also working and being involved with other opportunities on campus.

**Plans after graduation:** Attend a Physician Assistant Graduate program.

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**Alicia Jones, Communications, Minor in Spanish**



**Honors Senior Project Title:** The Truth Behind the Racism: The Effects of the HOLC and FHA on the Modern-day Housing Market

**Honors Senior Project Description:** This project was the design and production of a visual representation that highlighted and explained the structure of the 1933 housing crisis. It included a written and visual explanation of what the efforts were to resolve it during the Great Depression. It also included in-depth research and analysis on the efforts of the HOLC (the Home Owners' Loan Corporation) and its successor, the FHA (Federal Housing Administration) as they implemented policies that would reshape how Americans purchased homes until the present day.

**Activities/ Awards:** My all-time favorite activities were those with my organizations I was lucky enough to be a part of during my time at GVSU. I ended up volunteering over

200 hours of my time helping the local community through my co-ed fraternity Alpha Phi Omega, as well as got the opportunity to join Alternative Breaks down in Oklahoma volunteering with Cherokee Nation and learning about the current struggles Native Americans face day to day while living on reservations.

**Internship:** I had the most wonderful internship experience with Van Andel Global Trade Center. My bosses Sonja, Katherine, and Mark all helped me develop my understanding of international trade by putting me on the NAFTA team and helping clients prove their NAFTA certification, while also working in the marketing department and designing flyers and ads for the center.

**Greatest Accomplishment at GV:** My greatest accomplishment here at Grand Valley was definitely just finding a major that I loved. I moved around and switched my course of study quite a few times until finally landing in the Communications field, and I have zero regrets for taking my time in finding my major. My experience here at GV is incredibly well rounded and I am so grateful for it.

**Plans after Graduation:** I am currently searching for a position in the graphic design field, but until I find something, I plan to spend as much time with my family and dog as humanly possible.

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**Elizabeth Konen, Health Communications, Minor in Marketing**



**Senior Project title:** Crisis Communication: A Change Through Time

**Summary of senior project:** An analysis of the rise of technology and social media in crisis communication, through the lenses of both the Zika and Ebola cases. The shift in communication management from the Ebola Crisis to that of the

Zika crisis drastically changed resulting in many new policies and procedures in the public health world.

**Research and presentations:** Divergent Perspectives in the French Enlightenment – Student Scholars Day 2016 Panel Presentation

**Leadership Activities:** During the 2016-2017 school year I was the Research Director for GVSU's National Student Advertising Competition Team (NSAC). I was the ANCHOR Service Chair from September 2014 until April of 2016 during which time I organized multiple service projects for students in the Honors College to participate in.

**Activities/Awards:** The NSAC team that I was on won first place in our district and fourth place in the nation. I also won the Best Presenter award for the American Advertising Federation's District 6 competition and our team won the National Best Use of Marketing Research award. I am a Speech Consultant with the Speech Lab here where I get to share my passion for public speaking with other students. I was the inaugural winner of the GVSU Speaking Competition in which I presented an educational system on consent in order to prevent sexual assault. I was a member of Dance Troupe at GVSU for my first three years here and choreographed as well.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** I had the opportunity to intern with Clark Construction Company during the summers of 2015 and 2016. I then had an internship with the Greater Michigan Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association the summer of 2017. Shortly after, I began interning with SYNERGi, a media agency in Zeeland, where I currently work.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** My greatest accomplishment at Grand Valley is my time on the National Student Advertising Competition Team. The best part of it was winning the National Best Use of Marketing Research award and placing 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

**Plans after graduation:** I will be working full time at SYNERGi in marketing strategy and media buying immediately after graduation.

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### **Jessica Mathew, Human Resource Management & Marketing**



**Summary of senior project:** My thesis focused on what Human Resources is, where the function is going in the future, and characteristics of a successful strategic manager. The paper concluded with a managerial analysis of Toby Flenderson from "The Office."

**Leadership Activities:** During my years at GVSU, I was the Secretary and Assistant Treasurer for my sorority, Alpha Omicron Pi. In addition to this, I worked as a Desk Assistant for GV's Housing and Residence Life and an Advertising Account Executive at the Grand Valley Lanthorn.

**Activities/Awards:** Outside of work, I was a Transitions Leader for the new, incoming students to Grand Valley and I was a member of the Society for Human Resource Management.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** Between semesters, I had the opportunity to work as an Operations Intern for Zeal Credit Union and as a Honor's Staffing Intern for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** I would say that my greatest accomplishment was being able to balance all of my extra-curricular activities while still keeping up with workload of classes.

**Plans after graduation:** After graduation, I plan to continue working for the government for a couple of years and then go graduate school for a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resource Management.

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**Angela Meyer, Accounting**



**Senior Project title:** Revenue from Contract with Customers: A Student Analysis

**Summary of senior project:** An analysis of the new revenue recognition standard for FASB and IASB, the effects that the standard will have on an average company, and the effects that the standard will have on the accounting firms auditing these companies.

**Activities/Awards:** Dean's list every semester

**Internship/Practicum experience:** Assurance Intern at Plante Moran from June 2017 - August 2017, Assurance Intern at Plante Moran from January 2018 - April 2018

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Dean's list every semester

**Plans after graduation:** Becoming a CPA, working in Assurance at a Public Accounting Firm

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## Samantha Milano, Statistics, Minor in Data Science



**Senior Project title:** *An Exploration of Data Visualization*

**Summary of senior project:** Samantha's senior project explores the history, significance, and modern use of various data visualizations, as well as serving as an independent study to learn a popular statistical programming language, R.

**Research and presentations:** She spoke about her experiences with DataFest and big data in academics at the 2017 Big Data Ignite conference earlier this year in Grand Rapids. In addition, she has presented her work analyzing one of the Grand Valley study abroad programs at Student Scholars Day.

**Leadership Activities:** Thus far, she has joined numerous honors societies and leadership societies including Mu Sigma Rho National Statistics Honors Society, Sigma Alpha Lambda Honors Society, Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society, National Society for Collegiate Scholars, and Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Society.

**Activities/Awards:** Samantha has been extremely involved in the Grand Valley statistics community throughout her time at Grand Valley: she has worked on campus as the statistics office assistant for two years, served as a statistics tutor for two years, and currently works in the GVSU statistical consulting center as a statistical consultant. She participated in a team of all female statisticians in Grand Valley's first ever DataFest in 2017, and walked away with a medal for winning Best Data Visualization. In addition, she received the "I Am Grand Valley" award in 2016, she was nominated for the 2017 GVSU Intern of the Year award, received her International Baccalaureate diploma, and was recognized as a Phi Kappa Phi freshman Nominee for Academic Excellence.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** She has spent two summers working in Minneapolis, MN as an Advanced Analytics Intern with 3M, and will work at Amway this upcoming summer as a Data Science Intern prior to her final year in the Data Science and Analytics master's program at GVSU.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Her greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley was being able to be so involved in the statistics community. The statistics department has opened so many doors for her and provided so much support for her both personally and academically, allowing her to pursue her passion and develop into a successful member of the community herself.

**Plans after graduation:** Samantha will be graduating Magna Cum Laude with her bachelor's degree in just 3.5 years, majoring in statistics and minoring in data science. While doing so, she was able to take multiple graduate level courses allowing her to complete approximately 25% of her master's degree prior to graduating with her bachelor's degree. These graduate credits will be applied to the Data Science and Analytics master's program at Grand Valley, which she will graduate from in April 2019.

**Payton Mills, Finance & Marketing**



**Senior Project title:** Herman Miller Innovation Project

**Summary of senior project:** A collaboration between GVSU, Kendall College of Art and Design, and Herman Miller. Working on an interdisciplinary team, Herman Miller gave our team an emerging market opportunity. We used design thinking to build a product and create a market strategy. We pitched our product to Herman Miller executives at the end of the project.

**Research and presentations:** Design thinking to meet real world needs: Redesigning the role of the GVSU Holland Campus -

[https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lib\\_undergrad/25/](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lib_undergrad/25/)

**Leadership Activities:** Campus Ministry @ GVSU leadership team

**Activities/Awards:** Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization member

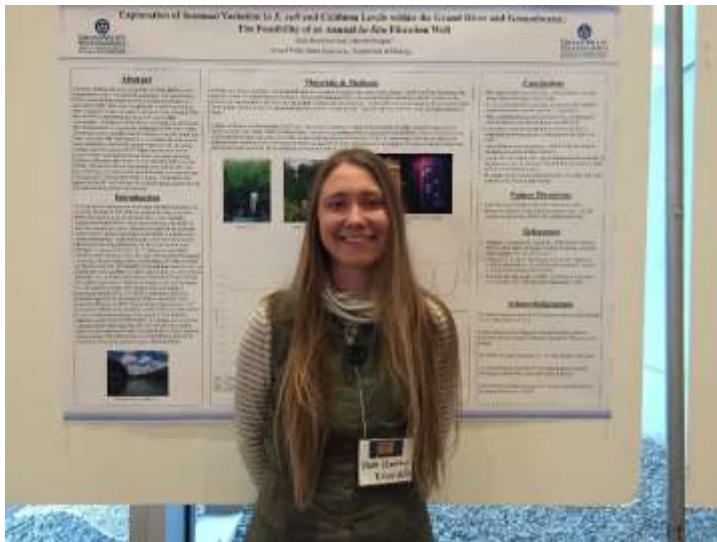
**Internship/Practicum experience:** Steelcase – New Business Innovation

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Founded a group within Campus Ministry @ GVSU, called Finding Freedom, to tackle the epidemic of pornography among young men, bringing freedom to many GVSU men through Jesus Christ.

**Plans after graduation:** Travelling to Thailand for the month of January on mission to help teach English in a government school. After Thailand, I plan to be employed in the business realm of Grand Rapids. My employer has yet to be found.

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## Halle Marie Nienhaus, Natural Resources Management, Emphasis on Environmental Science



**Senior Project title:** An Ecological Analysis of Benthic Algae Communities in Ecuadorian Streams

**Summary of senior project:** Data was collected in 5 Ecuadorian Cloud Forest streams. Data was analyzed using a synecological approach which observed algal community structure along with influential environmental factors.

**Research and presentations:** S3 scholar, conducted research on 1) surface and groundwater *E. coli* and coliform contamination and 2) the removal of *E.*

*coli* within ISF wells using a groundwater model. Presented at Summer Scholars Showcase and the Undergraduate Research Conference at Van Andel Institute.

**Leadership Activities:** Volunteer camp counselor at MDA summer camp, SAP volunteer, WMEAC volunteer

**Activities/Awards:** GVSU ski and board team, GVSU rock climbing club, volunteer work (described above)

**Study Abroad experience:** Biology/Conservation Biology in Ecuador

**Internship/Practicum experience:** WMEAC Low Impact Development Intern

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** S3, Endowed Koeze Fellow

**Plans after graduation:** Grad School @ TBD

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**Carlee A. Pacholek, Nursing**



**Senior Project title:** Sexual Assault and Forms of Abuse: A Project to Create Awareness Among Nursing Students

**Summary of senior project:** A comprehensive overview of basic definitions related to sexual assault and abuse, and GVSU specific data. The project had a nursing focus to teach future nurses how to best care for victims and make prevention efforts.

**Research and presentations:** I was a featured presenter for a Michigan Women's Foundation event, focused on teaching girls 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade about higher education in the health sciences.

**Leadership Activities:** I have been a member of the Student Nurses Association for 2.5 years.

**Activities/Awards:** Freshman year I was a coxswain for the men's rowing team, I have volunteered for various organizations all through college, I work at Helen Devos Children's Hospital, and I am a dean's list honoree. "I am Grand Valley" recipient.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** I completed my nursing leadership at Helen Devos Children's Hospital in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** I am very proud of my senior project. I spent a year developing it with Title IX and the Kirkhof College of Nursing, and finally presenting this fall on two separate occasions.

**Plans after graduation:** I wish to find professional and personal fulfillment.

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**Mattie Phillips, Computer Science**



**Senior Project title:** Learn to Code

**Summary of senior project:** My senior project consists of lesson plans aimed to introduce middle schoolers and elementary students to computer science and coding. Through the course of this curriculum the students learn about the field of computer science and build a website.

**Research and presentations:** I spent the last two years researching network security with Professor Kalafut. I analyzed recommended

security practices for web servers and ran experiments to measure the adoption frequency of recommended standards.

**Leadership Activities:** Participated and took on leadership roles within Grand Valley's Women in Computing club. I held the position of President for one year.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** Internship as an application developer at Open System Technologies in Grand Rapids and internship as a software developer at American Express in Phoenix, AZ.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** My education and experience from Grand Valley allowed me to travel across the country and intern in Phoenix for a summer.

**Plans after graduation:** Working at Open System Technologies in Grand Rapids as a Data Analytics Specialist.

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**Leah Pletcher, Marketing**



**Senior Project Title:** Intern In Sports

**Summary of Senior Project:** I worked to create a website that compiled as much insight into the working in the sports industry as possible. Different pages of the site work together to offer personal experiences and reflections from myself and others accompanied by relevant class work. This piece not only improves my personal brand but serves as a resource for those who are interested in learning

more about the behind the scenes aspects of their favorite game or those who are considering pursuing a career within an industry often referred to as "highly competitive" or "hard to get into."

**Leadership Activities:** I served on the executive boards of Gamma Phi Beta and the American Marketing Association (AMA). I attended conferences in Indianapolis, IN and New Orleans, LA due to my roles in both of these organizations in addition to numerous conferences offered on Grand Valley's campus. Furthermore, I spent time as a Transitions Leader and an Honors Mentor.

**Activities/Awards:** I worked for Campus Dining, played Intramural Sports, took part in campus wide volunteer days, went on a mission trip with Campus Ministry, and attended firm tours with AMA. I also took advantage of every opportunity Gamma Phi Beta had to offer which overall positively shaped the person I have become.

**Internship/Practicum Experience:** I currently work as a Fan Services Intern with the Grand Rapids Griffins. I also worked with them as a Game Night Intern with them last season when they won the Calder Cup! In both of these roles I gained experience in their Ticket Operations Department. The internship experience that was most influential for me though was serving as the Community Relations Intern with the West Michigan Whitecaps. There I gained a lot of insight into not only the hours it takes to work in sports, but the impact that an organization can make through hard work and dedication.

**Greatest Accomplishment While At Grand Valley:** Setting up and conducting an interview with T. Hass during my first semester.

**Plans After Graduation:** Not rushing to settle for a full-time position. I want to find a job that I know I will really enjoy having. I plan on trusting the process instead of overthinking all aspects and trying to plan the every detail of my future.

"You can't control everything. Sometimes you just need to relax and have faith that things will work out. Let go a little and just let life happen." -Kody Keplinger

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**Adam Pond, German, Minors in General Business & History**



**Senior Project title:** Populism's Pull: Investigating the Rise of Alternative for Germany

**Summary of senior project:** My research focuses on the rise of far-right parties in Europe, specifically parties like Alternative for Germany which uses populism as its main tactic to attract voters. I investigate the specific reasons for such a rise in popularity, and why exactly these tactics are so successful on the national stage. Topics such as the pros and cons of globalism, social media's role in the party's success, and fear mongering are discussed in further detail.

**Activities/Awards:** Member of Delta Phi Alpha German national honor society, Beta Gamma

Sigma business honor society, member of Grand Valley's IPO club, winner of the Max Kade Foundation Scholarship for the Junior Year in Munich Program, and certified B1 level in Germany fluency while abroad.

**Study Abroad experience:** Attended the Junior Year in Munich program through Wayne State University and spent a whole academic year in Germany in 2015. Classes were held both at the JYM building in the heart of Munich, as well as Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany's premiere university. The JYM program is also the longest-running Germany-American study abroad program in the country, and I am honored that I was able to be a part of it.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** The completion of my study abroad program was, without a doubt, one of the most important things I accomplished while at Grand Valley. If it wasn't for the amazing German department faculty at this school, I would have most likely stayed home my junior year. Instead, I had one of the most transformative and meaningful year-long experiences in my entire life, and made a handful of truly life-long friends while abroad. Given the fact that I was hesitant to spend more than one semester abroad, the support and advice I received from Grand Valley faculty pushed me to take on challenges and obstacles that I never knew I had the ability to overcome. My greatest accomplishment was excelling not only in academics while abroad, but changing myself for the better at the same time. That, to me, is truly priceless and something that will follow me for the rest of my life.

**Plans after graduation:** Despite the fact I'll be graduating with a degree in German, I plan on pursuing a career in Financial Analysis, and wish to prepare concurrently for the CFA Level 1 exam that takes place in June of next year.

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## **Joshua Sackleh, Athletic Training**



**Senior Project title:** Safe In My Hands: An LGBT+ Anthem

**Summary of Senior Project:** I will be completing an analysis of an LGBT Anthem thematically as well as other anthems and representations of LGBT characters in popular media and how they have influenced the current political climate.

**Research and Presentations:** I completed research with Dr. Stephen Glass on the Effect of an Unstable Training Device on Muscle Activation During Leg Extension and presented it at the student scholars day seminar at Grand Valley.

**Leadership Activities:** I have lead through the Athletic Training Program at Grand Valley as the Head athletic training student, representing the students of the program to the faculty. I have also served on a committee that has created a new scholarship for

athletic training students. Through the Honors College, I have served as a mentor to incoming freshman as well as on the Mentor Council. In my earlier years at Grand Valley, I was on the E-Board of GrooVe, an a cappella group, and served on Grand Valley's Performing Arts Committee and their Funding Board.

**Awards/Activities:** I am the recipient of two I Am Grand Valley awards and have been recognized on the Dean's List throughout my years at Grand Valley. In addition to being involved in the a cappella community on campus, I have also been part of the athletic training honors society (Iota Tau Alpha) and was a teaching assistant for the cadaver lab.

**Study Abroad experience:** In May 2017, I travelled abroad to Taiwan with the University of Georgia and worked in the athletic training clinic at the National Taiwan Sports University, administering healthcare to athletes and learning holistic traditional eastern Chinese medicine techniques.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** In addition to four clinical rotations through Grand Valley's Athletic Training Program, I have also had clinical experiences working in a family medicine doctor's office as well as in the emergency room at North Ottawa Community Hospital.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** My greatest accomplishment was being accepted to my Taiwan Study Abroad and travelling across the world on an adventure of epic proportions. This has been a goal of mine since before attending Grand Valley, and for a long time I thought that it wasn't going to happen, so I am proud that it did.

**Plans after graduation:** I will be working in the athletic training room at Wayne State University in an internship from January to May, and will be pursuing a Masters degree in the future.

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**Kasey Setlock, B.S Economics, Minor in Psychology**



**Senior Project title:** The Relationship Between Gender and Ethnic Diversity On Company Performance in Terms of Profit for the Boards of Directors of Fortune 500 Companies

**Summary of Senior Project:** My senior project analyzes the effects of gender and racial diversity in boards of directors on the corporate performance of Fortune 500 Companies. While the workplace has experienced an increase in diversity in recent decades, the top positions held at a company still tend to be held by white men. This paper considers whether having white men mainly in leadership is out of habit or because it does really provide some sort of financial gain for the company. Through regression

analysis I find that there is a significant and positive relationship on profit for both gender and ethnic diversity. Therefore, it would be advisable for companies to branch out of the habitual demographics and add more women and racial minorities to their boards.

**Research and Presentations:** I have been doing research about gender and ethnic diversity on Fortune 500 Boards of directors with Drs. Sonia Dalmia and Claudia Smith Kelly of the economic department since April of 2016. I have had the distinct opportunity of presenting some of my findings to the Michigan Women's Commission and on the Shelley Irwin Show on WGVU radio.

**Leadership Activities:** I was secretary of the GVSU campus Lions Club during my sophomore year.

**Awards/Activities:** I am a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma business honors society.

**Internship/Practicum experience:** I have been a part of the Business Research Intern at the Right Place, Inc., an economic development organization in West Michigan since January 2017.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** My greatest accomplishment at Grand Valley was being inducted into the Beta Gamma Sigma Honors Society, as well as, getting to present my research findings to several audiences.

**Plans after Graduation:** I plan to pursue a career in Business Research and Data Analytics and will continue working as an intern at the Right Place until I find a full-time position.

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**Dante Seychel, Accounting and Finance**



**Activities/Awards:** Participated in Kids in Motion for 4 semesters, which is a volunteer group that assists in supervising children in underprivileged areas. Awards include the Crowe Horwath Accounting Scholarship as well as the Accounting Alumni Scholarship award, which both helped pay for my final year of education.

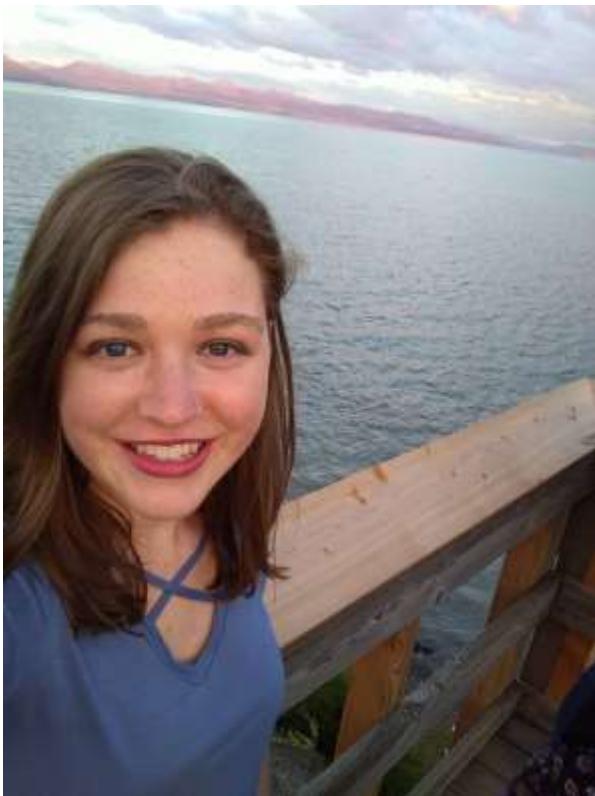
**Internship/Practicum experience:** Multiple internships through BDO USA, LLP here in Grand Rapids in both Accounting and Finance.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Being able to work with BDO through multiple semesters while still graduating in 3.5 years.

**Plans after graduation:** To begin a Tax internship with BDO USA lasting from January to April, then begin my Master's program in Accounting here at GVSU. I will be working towards an MBA as well as studying for the CPA exams.

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**Laura Shinavier, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Minor in Business**



**Senior Project title:** The Importance of Hospitality Training in Law Enforcement

**Summary of Senior Project:** The purpose of this project was to analyze the interactions between law enforcement and civilians and whether or not hospitality training would help foster positive relationships. The thought is, that by completing hospitality training with the Grand Rapids Ambassadors program, officers would be provided with the knowledge and procedures to effectively interact with their communities. This training would increase approachability of law enforcement as well as decrease hostilities that are a result of miscommunication and behavioral interpretations. By having a comprehensive hospitality program, officers would have the opportunity to nurture their interpersonal skills and apply them to civilian interactions.

**Internship/Practicum Experience:** I have had the opportunity to intern with three different

establishments, the first being S&S Farm Market and Greenhouse in Middleville, MI. The second, Georgio's Gourmet Pizza in Grand Rapids, and the Lake Hotel Dining Room in Yellowstone National Park.

**Plans after graduation:** I will be moving to Detroit in February to work at Wayne State University as the new Food Service Manager. I am very excited about this opportunity, and look forward to the experiences coming my way.

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**Corey Sorg, Studio Art, Illustration Emphasis**



**Senior Project title:** Paradise Nigh

**Summary of senior project:** An animatic set in a future-noir cyberpunk setting, made in an effort to better familiarize myself with the process of storyboarding and animation.

**Research (other than senior project) and presentations:** I researched the works of the contemporary illustrator Sachin Teng, examining the appeal and marketability of his work.

**Leadership Activities:** I've served as the vice president of SIGIL (Student Interest Group For Illustrators) for nearly two years.

**Activities/Awards:** I've had my artwork selected by the university to become part of its permanent collection!

**Study Abroad experience:** I visited Los Angeles to learn about job opportunities and the traits of successful illustrators from the professionals.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** I helped to organize the first Halloween gallery show/ball at the Calder Arts Center, which had one of the biggest turnouts in the history of the facility and has now become an annualized event!

**Plans after graduation:** I'll expand my business practice, begin tabling at art conventions, and continue to explore different mediums for storytelling through my craft.

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**Laura Sowatsky, Exercise Science-Clinical Emphasis, Minor in Psychology**



**Senior Project title:** How to Fight Low Back Pain: A Handbook of Stretches, Exercises, and Prevention Techniques

**Summary of Senior Project:** In recent years, there has been a sharp increase in the prevalence of low back pain in adults: both old and young. This project provides a handbook for anyone dealing with low back pain not attributed to a specific cause. Laura designed a multi-staged exercise program complete with detailed directions, pictures, modifications, and progressions. Handbook details prevention techniques to avoid low back pain. Additionally, an included DVD demonstrates techniques to ensure user safety, and research paper provides users with some background information on the condition. The goal of this project was to provide an option for low back pain treatment and management.

**Leadership Activities:** In her years at Grand Valley, Laura served as a Campus Ministry life group leader and Rotaract Club secretary. She was also a Freshmen Orientation leader, Student Ambassador, Tour Guide, and Tutor.

**Activities/Awards:** Laura participated in over 600 hours of community service including three service trips to Tennessee, Alabama, and West Virginia with Campus Ministry. She is also an active member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

**Internship/Practicum Experience:** Laura completed an internship at GVSU's Biomechanics and Motor Performance Laboratory. While there, she was trained in biomechanics theory, 3D motion capture, and electromyography. She assisted on four research projects focusing on long jump, overhead deep squat, spinal fusion, and balance contributing to concussion protocol. In addition to this research, she completed an in-class study on moderate intensity exercise and reaction time which was also presented at Student Scholars' Day.

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Her greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley is that she consistently pushed the boundaries of her comfort zone and became a confident leader.

**Plans after graduation:** Laura recently accepted a position in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Washington University in St. Louis and will begin classes next fall.

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**Briana Turner-Gilmore, Criminal Justice, Arabic Minor**



**Senior Project title:** To walk or not to walk: A Study on vehicle vs pedestrian accidents in the greater Grand Rapids area

**Summary of senior project:** My senior project is a study on pedestrian vs vehicle accidents in the greater Grand Rapids area, including both of Grand Valley's main campuses. Along with the study I have created pamphlets to increase awareness of surroundings, and watching out for pedestrians and vehicles.

**Research and presentations:** CJ 482 – Education, Hiring, and Training Practices in Policing; CJ 495 – Packing Heat: Stricter Gun Laws in America

**Leadership Activities:** Supervisor (LPES) - parking enforcement for GVPD

**Activities/Awards:** I Am Grand Valley – 2016/2017 academic year

**Internship/Practicum experience:** FBI Honors Internship Program – Starting summer 2017

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Obtaining my summer internship and being accepted into the National Society of Collegiate Scholars Grand Valley Chapter.

**Plans after graduation:** After graduation I am hoping to receive a full-time job opportunity with the FBI with the intentions of working counterterrorism and counterintelligence cases while protecting the people of the United States and upholding our constitution. If a full-time job offer is not available right after graduation I plan to pursue other careers in law enforcement.

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**Madelynn Willemstein, Biomedical Sciences, Minor in Mathematics**



**Senior Project title:** Prions: An Epidemiological Enigma

**Summary of senior project:** A review of what is known about prions and current research being done in terms of mechanism, transmission, pathology, and treatment of prion diseases.

**Research and presentations:** Presentation on iterations in the innovation process while in Nicaragua

**Leadership Activities:** InterVarsity Christian Fellowship Small Group Bible Study Leader for 3 years

**Activities/Awards:** I participated in InterVarsity's Compelling conference four years in a row. I also participated in InterVarsity small groups and large groups for four years, leading my own small group for 3 years. I participated in InterVarsity's Chapter Focus Week as well. In addition, I volunteered on Make a Difference Day.

**Study Abroad experience:** 2015 AGII Trip to Nicaragua (with presentation on iterations in the innovation process)

**Greatest accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** Graduating ☺

**Plans after graduation:** Go to PA school and eventually become a PA for the Navy

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**Margaret Worm, Sociology, Spanish Minor**



**Senior Project title:** Child Welfare Changes through 20<sup>th</sup> Century America

**Summary of senior project:** This project looks at the changes in attitudes towards children and childhood and that translation into care for children in the public realm over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The project uses a case study looking at a local child welfare agency, D.A. Blodgett- St. John's, to offer a longitudinal look in comparison to greater theory and national child welfare practices.

**Research and presentations:** I presented my senior project at the 2017 Michigan Sociological Conference during the student panel, as well as led a Teach-In with a sociology professor on exploring the connection between racial segregation and racial attitudes.

**Leadership Activities:** I've held an e-board position on my honors fraternity, Phi Sigma Pi, as well as being an active member for 5 semesters. I have also been active working with at-risk youth through volunteering in PALS Student Mentors for the duration of my time at Grand Valley.

**Activities/ Awards:** I am currently an employee at a local child welfare agency in Grand Rapids. I have been awarded the Rynbrandt Sociology Scholarship, a recipient of the "I am Grand Valley" award, a Phi Kappa Phi Freshman Honoree, and have been on the Dean's List each semester.

**Study Abroad experience:** I had the opportunity to study abroad in Costa Rica summer of 2016. I stayed with a host family in the capital city of San Jose, and took Spanish classes at a local university, Veritas.

**Greatest Accomplishment while at Grand Valley:** I have had the privilege to have a wide variety of experiences here at Grand Valley that have shaped me to who I am, but being able to present my paper at a professional sociology conference was an honor that I am grateful for after my work on the research.

**Plans after graduation:** After graduation I will be pursuing my masters in social work while working in the child welfare field.

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**Jessica Zink, Allied-Health Major with a Pre-PA emphasis**



**Senior Project: Pura Vida in San Jose**

Pura Vida in San Jose was a blog about my study abroad trip in Costa Rica and an interactive lesson on Spanish language. It was a comparison between the American culture and that of Costa Rica's. It shared my experiences of the world with world and encourages others to do the same. It's not often we can get out of our comfort zone but when we do you grow and learn much more than expected. The project was to embody this notion and help others push themselves beyond their limits as well.

**Leadership/Activities/ Awards:** I have worked as a peer mentor with Bethany Refugee Service and a Certified Nurse Assistant at Sheldon Meadows for the last 2 years. I participated as an artist in Art Prize Eight and won second place in Colors of Community. I am an active member of Grand Valley Dance Troupe as both a choreographer and dancer. I have served on 2 mission trips through Grand Valley's campus ministries; Mobile, Alabama and Pharr, Texas.

**Greatest accomplishment:** My greatest accomplishment at Grand Valley would be pushing myself to travel and explore. I would have never thought entering college that I would have studied abroad or gone on mission's trips throughout the country. Now that I have, I have discovered a huge new passion.

**Plans after graduation:** After graduation, I will be pursuing a Master's of Physician Assistant studies. I wish work in an emergency room and in later years, family practice as a PA. I also wish to continue serving on mission trips where eventually I can create a foundation and provide free medical care to those who have no access.

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